

MADD OFFICERS SUED IN HARASSMENT CASE

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Mothers Against Drunk Driving instills fear in traffic offenders and drunken drivers whose cases it digs into.

Now a former employee says the local organization's staff instilled fear in her, sexually harassing and verbally abusing her for about a year, according to a lawsuit filed Tuesday. Yolanda Martinez Moaddeb says co-worker Mark Woodcum once brought a loaded handgun into the West Palm Beach office - but her subsequent complaints about him and other threatening behavior went unheeded by agency leaders.

The officers, sued individually in the lawsuit, humiliated her and threatened to fire her when she complained, according to the suit filed by **Stuart attorney Lance Richard**.

Moaddeb, a 50-year-old West Palm Beach resident, said Woodcum, a victims advocate, made inappropriate sexual advances toward her after she started work there in June 2001.

Moaddeb discovered Woodcum was a registered sexual offender after The Palm Beach Post reported it about a year later. In the suit, Moaddeb alleges the organization failed to do background checks on him and protect her and the public from him.

Woodcum, 42, of West Palm Beach, did not return a call for comment. According to 1998 police records, Woodcum sent child pornography and propositioned someone he thought was a 13-year-old girl via the Internet. He was fired by the agency last spring.

Also sued were local MADD chapter past President Steve Calamusa, Vice President Ed Hirsh, Secretary Dan Osredkar, MADD's statewide Executive Director Andy Hindman, and an employee of the national office in Texas, Debra Fowler.

Calamusa, a Palm Beach Gardens attorney, said in a statement that Moaddeb's allegations are "completely untrue."

"As you know, anyone can file a lawsuit, even if their claim is frivolous," Calamusa wrote.

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