

Leave of Absence Statement - Nadiia Hutcherson

I've been pretty open and vocal in internal conversations about how this administration's action has an effect on me. I even said at the last meeting on Wednesday that I was not comfortable with the attacks on my character and not being allowed to respond without being called non-impartial.

Despite this pretty vulnerable admission, Vice President Algafhir chose to use a defense statement in a complaint that was sent to me as an opportunity to call me malicious and to give a false statement regarding me threatening her with a complaint. I never threatened her, as I said almost exactly "there were a number of violations and they will hear about them shortly" — which actually was not in reference to her but the bill that was voted on despite being ruled unconstitutional. She is projecting because she knows it was inappropriate to ask me if she can do something, hear me say "No", but then proceed to do it anyway. I personally didn't care that she did it, I just found it odd and moved on with my day. More importantly though, There is no way at all that I could have threatened her with the complaint that she was responding to, because the alleged violation did not happen until 12:49am, after the meeting and was not submitted to me until 5pm Saturday. Her decision to add that to the defense statement was done in an meretricious attempt to once again paint me in a negative light, something she and many others have done multiple times over the last 2 months with no evidence to support it — just delusion and projection.

As the only Black woman in leadership within this organization, and only one of less than 10 overall, I can not continue to sacrifice my integrity and well being by being silent for an organization that does not value me. I have continuously been gaslighted to believe I am always wrong. If I react, I am immediately chastised due to a higher standard of behavior than those around me. The Director of Outreach accused me of admitting to acting on emotion in a conversation. I know this to be a lie because I recorded that exact conversation he referenced. Our Executive Assistant has misrepresented interactions with me, refused to acknowledge or apologize for spreading a rumor that was determined to not be rooted in fact, and accused me of unprofessionalism for having and publicly acknowledging a platonic relationship with the President. The Chief of Statement has accused me of not doing my job correctly because I dare to be different than them, called me angry when I simply spoke assertively in a conversation where I was being disrespected and also stated me being around the President "all the time" is "weird" and "inappropriate", This, along with many other things, are pretty clearly micro-aggressions. This doesn't even encompass what I have experienced since the recall election was called for.

It goes without saying that this is my breaking point. I can not continue to work in an environment where I am disrespected repeatedly and can not defend myself. When we as a cabinet had internal conflict in September, I cut off all communication. I was perfectly content taking time away and not saying anything at meetings. The senate requested a recall that I have to be in charge of and then proceeded to attack me for 3 weeks for doing what they forced me to do, with no example of how it should be done. I have simply followed the advice of my

advisors at every step of the way. It is unfortunate that despite me being pretty much the only one in this organization that respects their advice, I repeatedly get the short end of the stick. I have watched the same people who have caused me harm make statements that the toxicity of this administration has influenced their mental health. These people have the support of the cabinet and senate. I have neither of those things. I also do not get the luxury to publicly have tantrums when I don't get my way, something my colleagues do frequently.

It is my hope that the investigation into this administration can provide me with some sense of clarity that I am not the only one who is noticing what is happening. Even if the evidence shows I am at fault, which I strongly doubt it will, I can have some peace in knowing that someone other than myself has finally acknowledged my experience here. I can not simply resign, as my Deputy, who is also a Black Woman, will almost certainly face the same issues as me if it is not addressed and corrected.

I also hope that this opens a larger conversation about the standards women of color, specifically Black women are held to in workplace environments. While I'm not technically an employee of SGA, there are a variety of scholarly articles that mirror the sentiments I have expressed. The assumption that my experience could be explained as simply misogyny or simply racism is incorrect.

I am providing the follow to assist in that writing:

Academic:

- [Failure Is Not An Option For Black Women: Effects Of Organizational Performance On Leaders With Single Versus Dual-Subordinate Identities | Gender Action Portal](#)
- [Worse than Blatant Racism: a phenomenological investigation of microaggressions among black women.](#)
- [Black women: Double solos in the workplace](#)
- [Racial and gender microaggressions on a predominantly-White campus: Experiences of Black, Latina/o and White undergraduates microaggressions college black women - Google Scholar](#)

Non academic:

- ["Say 'no' nicely": Toxic workplace culture demands Black women shrink themselves and never speak up | Salon.com](#)
- [Harvard Business Review:
https://hbr.org/2018/03/how-black-women-describe-navigating-race-and-gender-in-the-workplace](#)
- [Black Women Leaders: Navigating the Intersection of Gender and Race - Knowledge@Wharton](#)
- [Hypervisible, Invisible: How to Navigate White Workplaces as a Black Woman | Career Contessa](#)