

Winston & Strawn Files Lawsuit Against Northwestern on Behalf of Pat Fitzgerald

OCTOBER 10, 2023

A Winston team led by litigation partners Dan K. Webb and Matthew R. Carter filed a lawsuit in Cook County Circuit Court on behalf of former Northwestern University head football coach, Pat Fitzgerald, against Northwestern and university president Michael Schill. [The complaint](#) asserts that, after unsubstantiated reports of hazing among the Northwestern football team, Northwestern unlawfully terminated Fitzgerald's employment in violation of oral and written contracts and that the defendants defamed Fitzgerald, publicly and callously destroying his reputation.

Fitzgerald is bringing claims for breach of oral contract, breach of his employment contract, intentional infliction of emotional distress, defamation, false light, and tortious interference with a business expectancy. The suit seeks in excess of \$130 million in compensatory damages and as-yet unspecified damages for emotional distress and punitive damages.

"Mr. Fitzgerald has been subjected to unfair, arbitrary, and disgraceful conduct by both the university and its president," Dan said in the [press release](#) announcing the filing of the lawsuit. "Despite no new evidence of hazing, and despite a thorough factual investigation by Northwestern finding that Mr. Fitzgerald had no knowledge of any hazing conduct, the defendants unlawfully terminated his employment and destroyed his good name and reputation. The defendants' actions have exacted terrible, measurable costs to Mr. Fitzgerald and his family. This lawsuit seeks to bring some measure of justice for our client and to hopefully dissuade the defendants from inflicting such harm on others."

The filing was covered by the following media outlets:

- "Fired Northwestern football coach Pat Fitzgerald is suing school for \$130M for wrongful termination," [AP News](#)
- "Pat Fitzgerald sues Northwestern after firing in wake of hazing probe," [USA Today](#)
- "Ex-Northwestern football coach Pat Fitzgerald sues for \$130 million after he was fired in hazing scandal," [NBC News](#)
- "Former Northwestern football coach Pat Fitzgerald suing university for \$130 million," [CBS News](#)
- "Pat Fitzgerald sues Northwestern after he was fired amid hazing allegations," [The Washington Post](#)
- "Pat Fitzgerald suing Northwestern for \$130M for wrongful termination," [ESPN](#)

- “Former Northwestern coach Pat Fitzgerald sues university for \$130 million,” [WGN-TV](#)
- “Northwestern hazing scandal: Attorneys for ex-NU coach Pat Fitzgerald announce lawsuit,” [ABC7 Chicago](#)
- “Pat Fitzgerald sues Northwestern University, president for \$130 million,” [Fox32 Chicago](#)
- “Ex-football coach Pat Fitzgerald sues Northwestern for breach of contract,” [Chicago Tribune](#)
- “Denying there was hazing, ex-Northwestern coach Pat Fitzgerald retaliates with lawsuit,” [Crain’s Chicago Business](#)
- “Fired Northwestern football coach Pat Fitzgerald sues school for \$130 million,” [Chicago Sun-Times](#)
- “BREAKING: Pat Fitzgerald files wrongful termination suit against Northwestern,” [Inside NU](#)
- “Fired Football Coach Sues Northwestern For \$130M,” [Law360](#)
- “Northwestern University is being sued for \$130 million by a football coach who was fired after a hazing scandal,” [Fortune](#)
- “Pat Fitzgerald suing Northwestern for \$130M for wrongful termination,” [Fox Sports](#)
- “Pat Fitzgerald Sues Northwestern for \$130M for Wrongful Termination in Hazing Scandal,” [Bleacher Report](#)
- “Pat Fitzgerald’s Lawyer Announces MASSIVE Lawsuit Against Northwestern,” [Bleacher Nation](#)
- “Ex-Northwestern coach Pat Fitzgerald seeking \$130 million in wrongful termination lawsuit,” [CBS Sports](#)
- “Ex-Northwestern football HC Pat Fitzgerald’s drastic next step after controversial firing, revealed,” [Clutch Points](#)
- “Pat Fitzgerald to file wrongful termination lawsuit against Northwestern, per reports,” [247 Sports](#)

3 Min Read

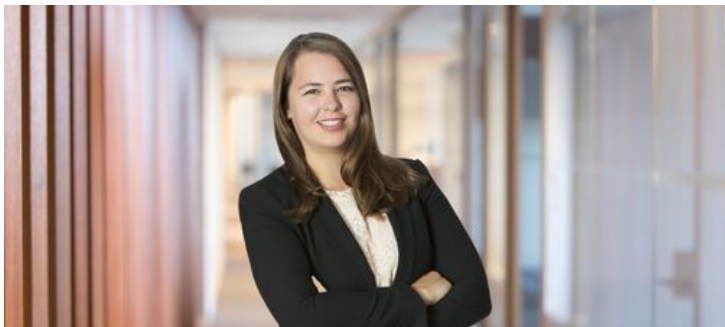
Related Professionals



[Dan Webb](#)



Matthew Carter



Elizabeth E. Grden



Leigh A. Frederick



Tommy Leinenweber



Patrick G. Simonaitis