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# Federal class action lawsuit filed against Pratt & Whitney, other CT aerospace engineering firms

[Daniel Tepfer](#)

Dec. 15, 2021



The Brien McMahon Federal Building, the Federal Courthouse in Bridgeport, Conn. May 2, 2017,  
Ned Gerard / Hearst Connecticut Media

BRIDGEPORT — A Milford lawyer has filed a federal class-action lawsuit against Pratt & Whitney and several other aerospace engineering firms alleging the companies are conspiring to prevent employee “poaching” and therefore restricting employees’ potential wage growth.

The lawsuit, filed in U.S. District Court Wednesday morning, on behalf of David Granata, of Rhode Island, claims the companies conspired to “restrain competition” within the industry’s labor force.

The suit states the alleged conspiracy dates back to at least 2011 through at least 2019 when “senior executives and managers at Defendants entered into a conspiracy not to solicit, recruit, hire without prior approval, or otherwise compete for employees, including engineers and other skilled employees.”

In addition to Pratt & Whitney, other companies named in the lawsuit include QuEST Global Services-NA, Inc., of East Hartford; Belcan Engineering Group, LLC and Belcan Engineering Group Limited Partnership, both of East Hartford; Cyient

Inc., the East Hartford subsidiary of a company based in Hyderabad, India; Parametric Solutions Inc., of Florida; and Agilis Engineering, Inc., of Florida.

The companies did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

“Defendants agreed to restrict competition for their employees’ services with the purpose and effect of fixing, suppressing, and stabilizing wages, salaries, and benefits and restraining competition in the market for their employees’ services,” the suit states. “The conspiracy disrupted the efficient allocation of labor that would have resulted if Defendants had competed for, rather than colluded against, their current and prospective employees.”

The defendants’ action was “an ideal tool to suppress their employees’ compensation that was simple to implement and easy to enforce,” the lawsuit says.

“The defendants in this case knowingly, intentionally, and cooperatively engaged in a contract, conspiracy, in unreasonable restraint of trade,” said Attorney David Slossberg, who brought the lawsuit.

Granata worked for QuEST Global Services-NA from 2013 to March 2018, primarily on projects for Pratt &Whitney, the suit states.

“As a result of defendants’ no-poach agreement, Mr. Granata earned less than he would have absent the alleged agreement,” the lawsuit states. “Further, because of Defendants’ unlawful agreement, he was also denied access to better, higher-paying job opportunities and his ability to change employment was restricted.”

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The lawsuit comes nearly one week after the U.S. Department of Justice unsealed a criminal complaint against a former manager for Pratt &Whitney, Glastonbury resident Mahesh Patel, alleging he participated “in a long-running conspiracy with managers and executives of several outsource engineering suppliers... to restrict the hiring and recruiting of engineers and other skilled laborers among their respective companies,” according to a press release issued by the department.

Patel appeared remotely before a federal court in Hartford on Dec. 7 on a charge of conspiracy in restraint of trade. He was released on conditions including travel

restrictions and a \$100,000 appearance bond, the justice department said, adding that the “charge against Patel is the first in this ongoing federal antitrust investigation.”