Former CSU campus president accused of harassment to earn $343,920 in new university job

Los Angeles Times
ANDREW KHOURI
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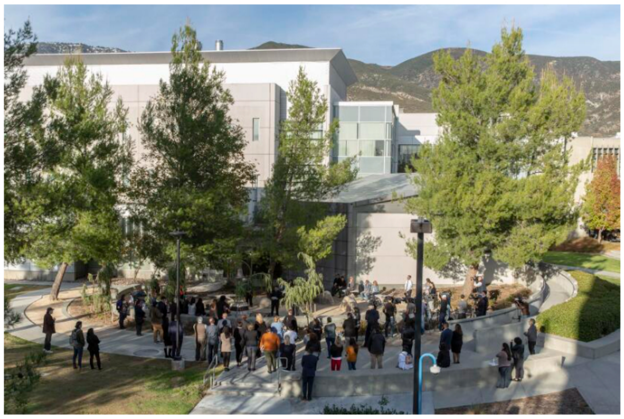

Cal State San Bernardino's president announced last year — before a lawsuit was settled — that he was stepping down at the end of the 2025-26 academic year. Above, the campus in 2019.(Allison Zaucha/For The Times)

The California State University system will pay $343,920 in compensation to the outgoing president of Cal State San Bernardino — who was named in a discrimination and harassment civil suit that CSU settled for $12 million — as part of his one-year "transition" assignment, Chancellor Mildred Garcia announced Wednesday.

Garcia praised President Tomás Morales during a board of trustees meeting for his "outstanding leadership at Cal State San Bernardino and systemwide." She did not mention the lawsuit.

That suit, filed in 2023 by two former Cal State San Bernardino administrators, accused Morales of gender discrimination and alleged "ranting" at female employees. It also alleged that he failed to approve salaries on-par with male colleagues and created an environment where harassment is "standard operating procedure." In addition to Morales, the suit named a former dean under him and the CSU Board of Trustees.

The suit said Morales' alleged actions were reported to then-interim Chancellor Jolene Koester, who "did absolutely nothing," and that the university allegedly retaliated against the administrators for raising concerns about Morales and the former dean.

Morales did not respond to emailed requests for comment. In court documents Morales, the former dean and the Board of Trustees denied all allegations in the lawsuit.

In a statement sent by CSU spokeswoman Amy Bentley-Smith, the university said the lawsuit against Morales and CSU "did not result in any findings against him individually, and litigation outcomes do not determine an employee's standing."

The statement said Morales remains in "good standing," a classification that makes him eligible for the new transition job.

The university system, which has been dogged by sexual harassment scandals in recent years, settled the case in March. In its statement, CSU denied all wrongdoing and said it "entered into the settlement to avoid further costs of litigation."

The transition plan for Morales has drawn outrage from faculty leadership groups.

Morales announced last year — before the suit was settled — that he was stepping down as president at the end of the 2025-26 academic year.

On Wednesday, CSU announced the appointment of a new president for the San Bernardino campus. Terri Gomez, a 27-year veteran in higher education and a lifelong resident of the Inland Empire, is currently the provost and vice president for Academic Affairs at Cal Poly Pomona, a university statement said. She is a first-generation college graduate who began her higher education journey at San Bernardino Valley College.

She joined Cal Poly Pomona in 1999 as a faculty member in the Department of Ethnic and Women's Studies. Her academic leadership roles at the university have included those of interim associate dean, associate vice president for Student Success, and associate provost for Student Success, Equity and Innovation, the statement said.

Morales, as part of his transition job, will be available to advise Gomez. He will also "focus on advancing the CSU's international engagement and strengthening global partnerships," Garcia said.

She said Morales' pay was consistent with the university's "transition program" for executives that CSU has said helps recruit for high-level posts in a competitive market and ensures institutional knowledge is retained once university leaders step down from their posts.

Andrew Friedman, a lawyer who represented the two former administrators in their lawsuit, called the payout to Morales a "a real shame."

"CSU has a significant problem when it comes to dealing with gender discrimination and harassment and retaliation and we've seen nothing to date to show that it's taking this issue seriously," said Friedman, a partner with Helmer Friedman LLP.

In a news release from May, the California Faculty Assn.'s San Bernardino Chapter President Tiffany Jones said rewarding Morales would be a "stunning failure of accountability and a direct betrayal of students, faculty, and staff."

"At a time when campuses face budget constraints, staffing shortages, and growing student needs, CSU resources must not be used to provide a financial cushion for failed leadership," Jones said in a news release.

Read more: CSU halts program that paid millions to executives after they departed

The transition program at CSU began in 1981.

In 2022, the Times reported that CSU routinely approved transition plans for former executives, including those accused of wrongdoing, that allowed them to collect salaries for a year for work such as providing "advice and counsel" to CSU administrators, but did not track what officials do while being paid.

Following the Times investigation, CSU said it was halting the program until the Board of Trustees reviewed a task force's recommendations.

The university later decided that executives hired after March 2022 would no longer participate in the program.

CSU spokeswoman Bentley-Smith did not immediately respond to questions about what other reforms, if any, were put into place.

The 2023 lawsuit against Morales also named Jake Zhu, the former dean at Cal State San Bernardino's Palm Springs campus who reported to Morales. The suit accused Zhu of harassment and fostering environment where harassment was allowed.

After reporting concerns about harassment to Zhu, associate dean Anissa Rogers was forced to resign, the suit alleged.

Zhu could not be reached for comment.

Rogers' claims went to trial and a jury awarded her $6 million, which was negated by the settlement. Rogers no longer works at CSU.

At Cal State San Bernardino's main campus, the former Vice Provost of Academic Affairs Clare Weber alleged in the 2023 lawsuit that Morales harassed and discriminated against her and other female employees and was retaliated against when she raised concerns.

Weber alleged that after she raised concerns about gender pay disparities, she was pressured to resign her vice provost job and was fired when she refused to do so.

The settlement agreement, provided by Weber's lawyer, required her to resign from her faculty position.

In a written comment to the board of trustees before the Wednesday meeting, both Weber and Rogers called for further scrutiny of Morales' record.

"I am not clear ... how the review for the president being in good standing was conducted," Weber said in an interview after Morales' yearly assignment was announced. "It feels like a slap in the face."

Hours after Garcia announced Morales' transition job, the Board of Trustees gathered to vote on granting him the honorific title of professor emeritus. Before the vote, Garcia once again praised Morales, called him a lifelong friend and said that during his time leading Cal State San Bernardino, graduation rates rose and "equity gaps" narrowed.

The board then voted unanimously to grant him the emeritus title and gave him a standing ovation. Morales said he was "grateful for this recognition."

Times staff writer Colleen Shalby contributed to this story.

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Former JPMorgan Chase banker expands lurid sexual harassment, racism lawsuit

REUTERS | BY JONATHAN STEMPEL
Updated Mon, July 27, 2026 at 10:37 AM PDT

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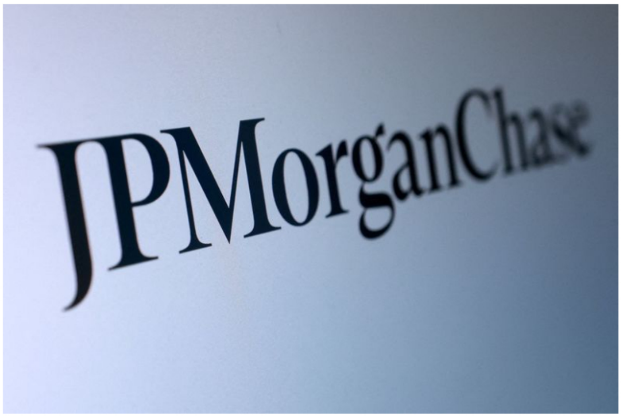

By Jonathan Stempel

NEW YORK, July 27 (Reuters) - The former JPMorgan Chase banker whose lurid sexual harassment lawsuit went viral added new claims and defendants on Monday, saying the largest U.S. bank's acceptance of racism and sexual coercion irreparably destroyed his career.

Chirayu Rana said racism was ingrained in the culture of his otherwise all-white leveraged finance team, where his South Asian heritage "became the punchline for a stream of degrading jokes," including calling him a "monkey" and "brown boy."

"We don't believe there's any merit to these claims," a JPMorgan spokesperson said on behalf of the defendants. "While numerous employees cooperated with the investigation, the complainant refused."

In an 82-page complaint, Rana, who is of Nepali descent, added allegations that colleagues suggested he transact in rupees, and one texted that he should "run before we call ICEE {sic} on your family," referring to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Rana also renewed allegations that the defendant Lorna Hajdini, a JPMorgan executive director, coerced him into sex and demanded his submissiveness as a condition of advancing his career, repeatedly saying she "owned" him.

Once a "leading" deal originator paid "well over" $2 million a year, Rana has been "effectively blackballed," the complaint said. "His reputation has been destroyed, his professional relationships shattered, and the career he spent years building reduced to rubble. This was not an unintended consequence of defendants' misconduct. It was its intended result."

MULTIPLE CASES BRING UNWANTED ATTENTION

Hajdini has also denied Rana's claims and countersued him for defamation, saying his lies "wreaked havoc" on her life, subjected her to around-the-clock ridicule, and were designed to attract maximum press coverage.

Lawyers for Hajdini did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

The case is one of several matters involving JPMorgan employees to permeate social media this year, generating unwanted attention for a bank that generated $37.6 billion of profit in the first half of 2026.

JPMorgan is challenging a $4.25 million arbitration award to a former wealth manager who was fired after expensing a Super Bowl platter, while a former employee was caught on video dumping out and then walking away with a commemorative trash can during a parade for the NBA champion New York Knicks.

THREE NEW DEFENDANTS

Rana filed his lawsuit in Manhattan federal court, after a state judge on July 16 dismissed a version filed in April so Rana and his new lawyers could add claims.

The new complaint adds JPMorgan managing directors Brandon Graffeo and Jon Wolter as defendants.

Rana said Graffeo "led" his degradation, while Graffeo and Wolter campaigned to poison his reputation in the private credit and leveraged finance industry after he resigned under pressure last October, causing his subsequent employer to fire him in April.

JPMorgan associate Kelly Crowe was also added as a defendant, with Rana saying she called him "brown boy" and an "HR liability."

It was unclear why some new allegations were not in Rana's original complaint.

Rana's 21-count complaint seeks unspecified compensatory damages, punitive damages, front and back pay and other remedies from various defendants for alleged violations of federal civil rights laws, the federal Family and Medical Leave Act, and New York state and city human rights laws.

The claims include sexual and racial discrimination; harassment and retaliation; a defamation claim against JPMorgan, Graffeo and Wolter, and a sexual assault claim against Hajdini.

"JPMorgan has fed the public a false and misleading narrative," Rana's lawyer Jon Norinsberg said in a statement. "We intend to hold the defendants fully accountable in a court of law for the catastrophic harm they caused to Mr. Rana's career, reputation and life."

(Reporting by Jonathan Stempel in New York; Editing by Daniel Wallis)

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Michigan athletic director Warde Manuel will receive a $7 million lump sum in his separation deal

AP | Updated Mon, July 27, 2026 at 6:59 AM PDT

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ANN ARBOR, Mich. (AP) — Michigan athletic director Warde Manuel will be paid a lump sum of $7.14 million as part of his separation agreement with the university, according to a document obtained Monday by The Associated Press.

The school announced July 20 that it would buy out the remaining three years on Manuel's contract and he will step down at the end of 2026. Manuel agreed to step down following investigations into former football coach Sherrone Moore's relationship with his executive assistant and a probe into the athletic department.

In addition to the payout, Manuel will receive former athletic director perks such as being eligible for tickets to Michigan games and having golf privileges. The university also agreed to make a $108,000 contribution to his retirement account and pay his attorney fees of $82,000.

Manuel agreed to remain employed by the university until he voluntary resigns Dec. 31, and his personnel record will reflect a resignation. He also agreed to not be an athletic director or senior athletic adviser for any Big Ten school for two years from the date of his resignation. Manuel is allowed to accept employment outside the Big Ten with no penalty.

The agreement was obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request.