

# Suit: Black donor's sperm sent to white woman

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**A** white Ohio woman is suing a Downers Grove-based sperm bank, alleging that the company mistakenly gave her vials from an African-American donor, a fact that she said has made it difficult for her and her same-sex partner to raise their now 2-year-old daughter in an all-white community.

Jennifer Cramblett, of Uniontown, Ohio, alleges in the lawsuit filed Monday in Cook County Circuit Court that Midwest Sperm Bank sent her the vials of an African-American donor's sperm in September 2011 instead of those of a white donor that she and her white partner had ordered.

After searching through pages of comprehensive histories for their top three donors, the lawsuit claims, Cramblett and her domestic partner, Amanda Zinkon, chose donor No. 380, who was also white. Their doctor in Ohio received vials from donor No. 330, who is African-American, the lawsuit said.

Cramblett, 36, learned of the mistake in April 2012, when she was pregnant and ordering more vials so that the couple could have another child with sperm from the same donor, according to the lawsuit. The sperm bank delivered vials from the correct donor in August 2011, but Cramblett later requested more vials, according to the suit.

Cramblett is suing Midwest Sperm Bank for wrongful birth and breach of warranty, citing the emotional and economic losses she has suffered.

An attorney for Midwest Sperm Bank said the company would not comment on pending litigation.

"On August 21, 2012, Jennifer gave birth to Payton, a beautiful, obviously mixed-race baby girl," the lawsuit states. "Jennifer bonded with Payton easily and she and Amanda love her very much. Even so, Jennifer lives each day with fears, anxieties and uncertainty about her future and Payton's future."

Raising a mixed-race daughter has been stressful in Cramblett and Zinkon's small, all-white community, according to the suit. Cramblett was raised around people with stereotypical attitudes about nonwhites, the lawsuit states, and did not know African-Americans until she attended college at the University of Akron.

"Because of this background and upbringing, Jennifer acknowledges her limited cultural competency relative to African-Americans and steep learning curve, particularly in small, homogenous Uniontown, which she regards as too racially intolerant," the lawsuit states.

Part of that learning curve has included getting her daughter's hair cut, which according to the suit requires Cramblett to travel to a black neighborhood, "where she is obviously different in appearance, and not overtly welcome."

She fears that her "all white and unconsciously insensitive family," which has never been able to fully embrace

Jennifer's homosexuality, could have a negative effect on her daughter, according to the lawsuit.

"Though compelled to repress her individuality amongst family members, Payton's differences are irrepressible, and Jennifer does not want Payton to feel stigmatized or unrecognized due simply to the circumstances of her birth," the lawsuit states. "Jennifer's stress and anxiety intensify when she envisions Payton entering an all-white school."

Cramblett's therapists have advised her that for her and her child's psychological well-being, she must relocate to a racially diverse community with good schools, according to the suit.

The lawsuit alleges the error occurred because the sperm bank keeps handwritten instead of electronic records, which allowed the donor numbers to be misread.

A month after Cramblett said she learned of the mistake, according to the lawsuit, the sperm bank sent her a typed letter of apology along with a refund check for the six vials of incorrect sperm that were sent to her in September 2011.

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