

LEGAL/PRIVACY

Barneys chooses to settle racial profiling case

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Barneys New York Madison Avenue flagship store

By STAFF REPORTS

The civil suit brought against Barneys New York and the City of New York has settled with a \$45,000 award to the plaintiff.

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Trayon Christian brought a lawsuit against the store and the New York Police Department after the black student visited the retailer's flagship to buy a Ferragamo belt and was held and questioned by cops after leaving with his purchase. Barneys previously agreed to pay fines and instituted employee training around discrimination, but this settlement further brings the case to a close.

Repairing relations

According to [Reuters](#), Mr. Christian went to Barneys and bought a \$349 belt in April 2013. When he was leaving, he was stopped outside the door by police and was put through a series of questions about whether his card was fraudulent and why he could afford the accessory.

Last August, Barneys said it would pay \$525,000 in costs, fees and penalties following the high-stakes discrimination lawsuit from late last year.

The retailer also agreed to institute a number of policies, including hiring a consultant, to minimize the chance that racial-profiling happens again. Although Barneys' reputation took substantial hits following the controversy, it seems to have mitigated what could have been devastating repercussions ([see story](#)).



Promotional image for Barneys Intel smart bracelet

This settlement with the plaintiff represents another move toward repairing its image. Barneys' agreement with Mr. Christian is unknown at this time.

Barneys is not the only luxury brand to be accused of mistreatment based on race.

British fashion house Alexander McQueen and its parent company Kering have had a lawsuit brought against them by two store employees.

The plaintiffs, Christopher Policard and Duane Davis, filed a suit in a New York court that claims the brand has "engaged in systematic racism" against its African-American employees. Consumers are increasingly looking at the practices of the brands they buy into, in which even an alleged wrongdoing may sway their sentiment ([see story](#)).

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