

# Promote black cop: judge

**A BLACK FEMALE COP** awarded \$229,500 in a bias suit last year in Suffolk has now been given a court-ordered promotion to detective.

A federal judge also ordered that a document "containing negative comments about her" be purged from Felicia Collins' file, according to court papers.

"I just hope the outcome of this case will make it easier for others to come forward," said Collins, one of just 16 black female officers among Suffolk's 3,000-member police force.

Her attorney Rick Ostrove added, "This is one of the only cases I've seen where complete justice

**BY LAURA WILLIAMS**  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

has been done."

A federal jury last May found that the Suffolk County Police Department — and three of its members in particular — retaliated against Collins, 33, after she filed an internal race- and gender-bias complaint.

The jury also found that Collins was "subjected to a hostile work environment." Collins was

called "a black b---h" and she was told that "girls don't belong in the police department," the jury found.

Collins also suffered "emotional distress" because she wasn't promoted to detective, the jury found.

Last week, Central Islip Federal Judge Arthur Spatt ordered that Collins get that promotion.

"I'm hopeful this sends a message to those [who] engage in discriminatory conduct, or condone this behavior," Collins said. "Unfortunately, these problems are systemic and have plagued the department for many years."

The judge denied Collins' request for four years of retroactive detective's pay. The jury award covered any lost pay, Spatt wrote.

Spatt also found that a disciplinary charge against Collins, filed in October 2000, was in retaliation for her speaking out about her treatment. The charge is therefore invalid and must be purged from Collins' file, Spatt wrote.

Collins, who joined the police force 11 years ago, claims she was targeted by two supervisors and a fellow police officer when she worked in the domestic vio-

lence unit of the 3rd Precinct in Bay Shore, from 1993 to 2001.

"She's really just a very nice person," Ostrove said, "intelligent and hardworking for the police department."

At 29, Collins became the first woman to run for sheriff and the first African-American to seek a countywide seat in Suffolk. She won the Democratic primary in 2001, then lost in November to the current sheriff, Republican Alfred Tisch.

Christine Malafi, the Suffolk County attorney, couldn't be reached yesterday.