

Nike fires Manny over gay slurs

Written by Libertito Pelayo

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Manny Pacquiao is knocked down in the third round while taking on Juan Manuel Marquez during their welterweight bout at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas on Dec. 8, 2012. On Wednesday, Nike, Inc. terminated Pacquiao's contract. (Photo by Al Bello/Getty Images)

Nike, Inc. has made it official on Wednesday severing its relationship with boxing superstar and Sarangani Rep. Manny Pacquiao, lashing out at his comments in which he described homosexuals as "worse than animals."

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“We find Manny Pacquiao’s comments abhorrent,” a Nike statement said.

“Nike strongly opposes discrimination of any kind and has a long history of supporting and standing up for the rights of the LGBT community. We no longer have a relationship with Manny Pacquiao, which is accurate.”

With headquarters in Washington County, Oregon, Nike, Inc. is one of the world’s largest suppliers of athletic shoes and apparel, and a major manufacturer of sports equipment, with revenue in excess of \$24.1 billion.

According to sources, Pacquiao personally tried to save the deal up until the last minute.

But the damage is done.

Here is a statement from Marilyn Abalos of the **Filipino Reporter** regarding Pacquiao’s anti-gay comments:

“It is unfortunate that Manny Pacquiao had imprudently expressed his personal position on LGBT issues such as gay marriage, etc. His unrestraint disdain and disapproval was truly awful and unacceptable. As a result he has lost the admiration and respect of many — gay and straight allies — as well as a major corporate sponsor Nike.

“As a proponent for equal rights, I serve on the national Board of Governors of the Human Rights Campaign, made up of gay and straight people who advocate for the rights and protection of the LGBT community and their families. It is everyone’s task to fight for diversity and inclusion — not just for one group but for all.

“‘Who am I to judge...’ in the words of Pope Francis, ‘Gay men and women must be accepted with respect, compassion and sensitivity.’”