



Lake County News-Sun

A CHICAGO SUN-TIMES.com publication

Register for free | Login

Former Lake Bluff man awarded \$2M for injuries

By Jim Newton jnewton@stmedianetwork.com September 24, 2013 8:14PM

Updated: September 25, 2013 2:47AM

A man who grew up in Lake Bluff has been awarded \$2.4 million by a Cook County Jury after suffering multiple injuries when Chicago Streets and Sanitation worker Dwight Washington's vehicle struck him and three other people at the corner of Rush and Cedar streets on May 21, 2011.

The jury rendered the verdict Friday afternoon, Sept. 20, to Lake Bluff native Stephen Dewart, who was 27 at the time of the incident.

On the day of the accident, Dewart was participating in a photo shoot for his wife's company when Washington lost control of the city-owned truck he was operating and plowed into Dewart and the other victims. Washington, then 61, tested over the legal blood alcohol limit and police found an open bottle of brandy in his truck.

"Stephen suffered several spinal fractures, his leg was broken in two places, and he was hospitalized for six days," said his attorney, Susan Novosad with the Chicago firm of Levin & Perconti. "Immediately following the accident, he had a rod surgically placed in his lower right leg. He required two additional surgeries and months of physical therapy and rehabilitation following the accident."

Judge Gregory J. Wojkowski presided over the five-day trial. The jury deliberated for less than two hours.

The lawsuit was filed in June 2011 and named Washington and the city of Chicago as defendants. The lawsuit alleged that Washington was driving under the influence of alcohol at high speeds and failed to yield to pedestrians or slow his vehicle to prevent a collision. It also claimed vicarious liability, noting that the city was responsible for Washington's actions because he was an employee.

Novosad said the jury was asked to determine how Stephen should be compensated for the disabilities he must cope with for the rest of his life. "We were pleased that the jury fully understood the devastating effects of Washington's reckless actions and feel that justice was served," she said.

"I am grateful that a group of ordinary citizens understood the pain that my family and I have gone through these past few years," Dewart said. "This compensation will not erase the injuries I experienced and continue to experience, but they will help ensure financial stability for me and my family."

Washington was sentenced last year to nine years in prison after pleading guilty to charges of aggravated DUI.

© 2013 Sun-Times Media, LLC. All rights reserved. This material may not be copied or distributed without permission. For more information about reprints and permissions, visit www.suntimesreprints.com. To order a reprint of this article, click here.



OUR PUBLICATIONS

DAILY PUBLICATIONS

- Chicago Sun-Times
- The Beacon News
- The Courier News
- The Herald News
- Lake County News-Sun
- The Naperville Sun
- Post-Tribune
- The SouthtownStar

PIONEER PRESS - PIONEER LOCAL

- PioneerLocal.com
- Barrington Courier Review
- Buffalo Grove Countryside
- The Doings Clarendon Hills Edition
- The Doings Hinsdale Edition
- The Doings La Grange Edition
- The Doings Oak Brook Edition
- The Doings Weekly Edition
- The Doings Western Springs Edition

- Evanston Review
- Forest Leaves
- Franklin Park Herald - Journal
- Glencoe News
- Glenview Announcements
- Highland Park News
- Lake Forester
- Lake Zurich Courier
- Libertyville Review

- Morton Grove Champion
- Mundelein Review
- Niles Herald-Spectator
- Norridge-Harwood Heights News
- Northbrook Star
- Oak Leaves
- Park Ridge Herald-Advocate
- Skokie Review
- Vernon Hills Review

AFFILIATES

- Chicago Reader
- High School Sports
- Cars for Sale - ToDrive.com
- SearchChicago - Homes
- I Want It - Directories

Deerfield Review
Elm Leaves

Lincolnshire Review
Lincolnwood Review

Wilmette Life
Winnetka Talk

