

CRAIN'S LIST 2007 VERDICTS AND SETTLEMENTS

From corporate fraud to a fatal brawl, *Crain's* list of verdicts and settlements takes a look at 10 cases that stood out in 2007. We surveyed the Illinois docket to find the most interesting cases—from product liability to medical malpractice to wrongful death—that had the largest verdict and settlement amounts, unique twists and turns or the potential to set precedent. This list is not intended to be comprehensive.

The family of Mariano Hernandez was awarded \$19.0 million in a verdict against the Archdiocese of Chicago for injuries the boy suffered in 2003 when a TV cart fell on him at St. Genevieve Catholic School.

Mariano suffered brain injuries and will require ongoing care, says Stephen M. Passen, his attorney.

\$19.0-MILLION VERDICT

Case: Estate of Mariano Hernandez v. the Catholic Bishop of Chicago

Court: Circuit Court of Cook County

Announced: September

Lead plaintiffs' lawyer: Stephen M. Passen (Stephen M. Passen Ltd.)

Lead defense lawyer: Jeffrey E. Kehl (Yelton & Kehl Ltd.)

The archdiocese admitted liability before trial, so the jury's verdict involved only the award amount. The defense argued that Mariano's injuries were partially related to undiagnosed, pre-existing conditions such as ADHD and dyslexia.

But his teacher testified that at the time of the accident, Mariano, who was in fourth grade, was working at grade level. Now in eighth grade, he is in special-education classes and working at a third-grade level.

Matthew Carmichael