



Jury Awards \$17.5 Million in Auto Death Case

Truck's Toothpick Repair Led to Death of Army Lieutenant

Waco, TX ([PRWEB](#)) April 25, 2005 -- A jury in Waco has found an Indiana-based trucking company at fault for a March 2002 accident that killed a U.S. Army lieutenant, and awarded his family \$17.5 million.

23-year-old 2nd Lt. Matthew Giuliano had just graduated from officers training school, and was driving from Ft. Knox, Kentucky to his first assignment at Ft. Hood, Texas, when his car slammed into the rear of a tractor trailer owned by Celadon Trucking Services, Inc (Nasdaq: CLDN). The truck had been traveling in the high speed lane of Interstate 30 near Texarkana, when it came to an abrupt stop. Lt. Giuliano, who was unable to avoid a collision, was killed when his car slid beneath the 18-wheeler.

Testimony showed that prior to the accident, the truck driver "with the company's knowledge" had repaired a hole in a high-pressure brake hose with a toothpick, before resuming the trip. Two hours later that repair failed, causing the truck's immediate stop, and bringing about the accident that killed Lt. Giuliano.

"You don't have to know a thing about car or truck repair to know that using a toothpick isn't going to be a safe or effective means of repair," said attorney John Cummings of Fort Worth, who along with Steve Laird, represented Lt. Giuliano's family. "Frankly, I think the jury listened to the evidence about how this trucking company operated, and got angry. Celadon chose to cut a corner here, and because they did, Lt. Giuliano is dead."

As an indication of their anger, the jury's award includes \$2 million in compensatory damages, and another \$15.5 million in punitive damages.

Lt. Giuliano, who grew up in Connecticut, died just days before his 24th birthday. At the time of his death, he was engaged to marry a woman he had met in college.

The case, Linda Giuliano et al v. Nelta Armstrong Osborn and Celadon Trucking Services, Inc. (Cause No. 2004-895-4) was tried in the 170th District Court in McLennan County, Texas.

For more information on the jury's \$17.5 million verdict, contact Mark Annick at 800-559-4534, pager 214-967-2299, or mark@legalpr.com.

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**Contact Information**

Mark Annick

214-559-4630

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