

JULY 3, 2023



\$2 Million Settlement for Woman Hit by Car While Sitting on Curb

A \$2 million settlement was reached in a Middlesex County suit on April 14 for an 18-year-old New Brunswick woman who was injured when a motorist struck her while she was sitting on a curb in East Brunswick.

In *Morales v. Drummond*, plaintiff Melanie Morales was seated on the curb on Prigmore Street in East Brunswick when a vehicle driven by Ashleigh S. Drummond struck her on her left side. The car was owned by defendant Richard Drummond.

Morales required surgical intervention, including an anterior cervical discectomy and fusion at C6-7. She also suffered a laceration to her left thigh. Morales' medical expert, neuropsychologist, Dr. Kenneth Kutner, said she developed an acute stress reaction as a result of the accident, which continued into post-traumatic stress disorder. The plaintiff's PTSD improved with therapy, according to her counsel, **Michael T. Heck** and **Daniel N. Epstein** of **Epstein Ostrove** in Edison.



COURTESY OF MICHAEL HECK

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The \$2 million settlement was reached on April 14, prior to trial and after a settlement conference with Judge **Michael V. Cresitello Jr.**, presiding civil judge in Middlesex County. The defendants had a \$250,000 insurance policy with \$1.75 million in excess coverage with Chubb, the lawyers said.

"We fought hard for Ms. Morales," said Heck. "We believed



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in her case, and we're hopeful that this settlement will allow her to move forward with her life after years of litigation."

Ashleigh and Richard Drummond were represented by **Nicole Hollingsworth** of the Law Offices of **Frank A. Viscomi** in Morristown and **Brian Steller** of **Connell Foley** in Roseland. Neither could be reached for comment on the settlement.

— **Colleen Murphy**