

Corboy & Demetrio Obtains \$6.75 Million for Streeterville Pedestrian Killed by Charter Bus

CHICAGO, IL, USA, August 29, 2013 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Corboy & Demetrio](#) has secured a \$6.75 million settlement for the family of Justyna Palka, a Chicago resident who was killed by a charter bus as she was crossing the street in 2011.

The Chicago law firm of Corboy & Demetrio has obtained a \$6.75 million settlement on behalf of the family of Justyna Palka, a talented 26-year-old graphic designer, who was struck and killed by a charter bus as she crossed a Streeterville street in 2011.



Justyna Palka

Palka was killed on May 3, 2011 as she walked home from work at the Chicago Design firm of Ogilvy & Mather, across N. Columbus Drive at E. Illinois Street. Within days of the incident, [Corboy & Demetrio](#) obtained video footage from two separate angles (one from an outdoor camera at P.J. Clarke's and one from a Red Light Camera) that showed Justyna Palka walking in the crosswalk with a green light, when a right-turning tour bus struck and ran her over.

“

The loss of a child is devastating. That the loss was caused by a man who should never have been behind the wheel of a tour bus is incomprehensible.”

Thomas A. Demetrio

Born in Poland and raised in Germany, Justyna Palka was a tri-lingual rising star in the design world. After graduation from the School of the Art Institute, Palka worked at Ogilvy & Mather's Chicago office. Her work was featured in local magazines and her designs utilized by Fortune 500

companies. At work, she was a constant source of comedy, inspiration and warmth.

The tour bus was driven by David Soto, a Pontarelli Group Charter bus driver with a significant criminal history. Soto was a convicted Sex Offender with 20 moving violations to his name and a Chauffeur's License that had been revoked by the City of Chicago. At the time he was driving the Pontarelli bus, Soto was the subject of an Investigative Bulletin issued by the Chicago Police Department regarding allegations of child molestation. At the hospital following the incident, Soto tested positive for the presence of cocaine in his system. Soto currently remains incarcerated on one count of reckless homicide, as well as two counts of aggravated criminal

sexual abuse and two counts of predatory criminal sexual assault of a child.

The Palka family was represented by Thomas A. Demetrio, a founding partner of Corboy & Demetrio and William T. Gibbs, an attorney at the Chicago [personal injury law firm](#). Gibbs stated, "Justyna Palka's infectious spirit, fun-loving personality, and genuine caring nature touched all that were lucky enough to have known her. Justyna was, and is, an inspiration to all. The Palka family lost a beautiful, gifted, wonderful daughter and sister." He added, "This driver should have never been behind the wheel of a deadly weapon. Pontarelli promised on its website that it performed background checks on all its drivers....If the bus company had simply done its due diligence, Soto would have never been behind the wheel that day and Justyna would still be gracing us with her presence." Gibbs indicated that Corboy & Demetrio will now work with legislators to craft Justyna's Law – a measure aimed at disqualifying convicted sex offenders from driving tour buses.

"The loss of a child is devastating. That the loss was caused by a man who should never have been behind the wheel of a tour bus is incomprehensible," Demetrio said. "This settlement allows the Palka family to honor Justyna by helping young students of the Art Institute with a scholarship that has been established in her name," Demetrio added.

The lawsuit alleged that if Pontarelli had performed proper background checks, it would have discovered Soto's driving record, his sordid past and that Soto was the subject of investigative bulletins regarding claims of predatory sexual assault, and it would have never hired him or allowed him to continue driving tour buses.

In addition to the \$6.75 million, Pontarelli agreed to help fund the Justyna Palka Memorial Scholarship Fund of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Case No. 2011L005064 Malgorzata Palka, Special Administrator of Justyna M. Palka, deceased, v. Pontarelli Group Charters, Inc. and David Soto, Cook County Circuit Court.

Press release courtesy of Online PR Media: <http://bit.ly/142EjEL>

Helen Lucaitis
Corboy & Demetrio
312-550-2077
[email us here](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/165347015>
EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable

in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2024 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.