

Cassandra Rivera, Client of Anidjar & Levine, Shares Story After Fort Lauderdale Boat Explosion

Burn survivor Cassandra Rivera and Dr. Schulman to speak on family's recovery after Fort Lauderdale boat explosion.

FORT LAUDERDALE, FL, UNITED STATES, August 27, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On Wednesday, June 11, 2025, Cassandra Rivera found the strength to step in front of cameras and share the most painful chapter of her life. Just over two weeks earlier, a Memorial Day boat outing in Fort Lauderdale ended in tragedy when the vessel she and her family were on exploded. The blast left Cassandra, her husband, and her two young sons with serious burn injuries, sent multiple others to the hospital, and claimed the life of a father of four.

“ This tragedy turned the Riveras’ world upside down. Our focus is on getting them the justice they deserve, and helping prevent something like this from happening again”

Glen Levine

Children Still in Critical Care:

The press conference was held at 11 a.m. in Conference

Room T103 at the Ryder Trauma Center at Jackson Memorial Hospital, where Cassandra’s boys, seven-year-old Anthony and five-year-old Kash, are still fighting for their lives in the pediatric intensive care unit at Holtz Children’s Hospital. Both children were badly burned in the explosion. Anthony remains the most critical, requiring heavy sedation and around-the-clock burn care. Cassandra herself has burns covering more than 20 percent of her body, but she refused hospital admission at first, determined to stay close to her sons.

The Horrifying Moments Before the Blast:

With visible emotion, she recounted the moments just before everything changed. “My husband is screaming, ‘I smell fuel. Please stop the boat. Please stop.’ And then all of a sudden, you just see this fuel explosion. It felt like 2,000-degree water was poured on me.”

A Life Lost:

Her husband survived, but the tragedy took 38-year-old Joshua Fifi, another passenger on board and a father of four young children. Cassandra’s voice broke as she acknowledged his death, sharing her heartbreak for his family alongside the pain of her own.

Chaos on the Water:

The accident happened on Memorial Day as multiple families gathered on the Intracoastal Waterway to celebrate the holiday. Several people noticed the strong smell of fuel, but there was no time to act before the boat erupted in flames. Witnesses described passengers being thrown into the water, others trapped in fire, and chaos as families tried desperately to escape. Rescue teams and first responders rushed to the scene, and the most critically injured victims were flown or transported to Jackson Memorial, home to one of the nation's top burn centers.

Doctors Working Around the Clock:

Dr. Carl Schulman, Jackson's lead burn surgeon, joined Cassandra at the press conference. He explained that pediatric burn trauma from boating accidents is extremely rare and very complex. "This is one of the most challenging cases we've seen," he said. "Our team is working around the clock for these children."

[Anidjar & Levine](#) Stand with the Family:

Standing with Cassandra was attorney Glen Levine of Anidjar & Levine, the Fort Lauderdale law firm representing the Rivera family. Levine spoke about the devastating impact on the families and emphasized the importance of uncovering exactly what went wrong. "They went out to enjoy a holiday weekend, and it turned into something no one could imagine," he said. "We owe it to these families to figure out how this happened and if it could have been prevented."

Anidjar & Levine Begin Investigation:

The firm has begun investigating whether mechanical issues, negligence, or missing safety measures may have played a role in the explosion. Levine encouraged anyone with knowledge of the boat or the incident to come forward.

Strength for Her Children:

For Cassandra, though, her world is now narrowed to the hospital room where her sons lie. Her focus is on them and only them. "I'm just grateful we're still here," she said quietly. "But this pain, physically and emotionally, is something no parent should ever go through. I have to be strong for my boys because they need me more than ever."

A Long Road Ahead:

The Rivera family faces a long and difficult recovery. The path ahead will involve countless



medical procedures, emotional healing, and figuring out how to piece their lives back together after such unimaginable trauma. But Cassandra made it clear that, no matter what, she will keep pushing forward for her children.

About Anidjar & Levine:

Founded in Fort Lauderdale, Anidjar & Levine is a leading South Florida [personal injury](#) law firm committed to providing aggressive legal representation and compassionate client service. The firm handles a wide range of cases, including boating accidents, burn injuries, wrongful death, and catastrophic injuries. Attorneys Marc Anidjar and Glen Levine lead a team of experienced trial lawyers who fight for justice on behalf of injured individuals and their families throughout Florida.

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