

# SOUTH CAROLINA Lawyers Weekly

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## Jury awards \$2.2M to man injured in car crash

By: Bill Cresenzo December 18, 2018

In what his attorney believes is the largest automobile accident verdict in the history of Dorchester County, a jury there has awarded \$2.2 million to a plumber and married father of three who suffered serious back injuries after he was rear-ended in car crash.

Terence Weese was driving south on Bacons Bridge Road in Summerville in 2016 when a teenage driver, Samantha Johnson, rear-ended him while he was at a stoplight, said Mark Bringardner of the Joye Law Firm in Charleston.

Weese suffered disc herniation to four upper vertebrae and spinal cord compression, both of which can cause significant pain, and underwent a three-level spinal fusion surgery.

"The pain and distress caused by the impact were significant, but that was just the beginning," Bringardner said. "This man suffered during the weeks and months of his recovery. He experienced excruciating pain. He underwent a serious and invasive spinal fusion surgery. He will be dealing with the results of this collision for the rest of his life."



Bringardner

The jury returned the verdict on Nov. 28 after a three-day trial and two hours of deliberation. Diane Goodstein presided over the trial.

Nickisha Woodward of Turner Padgett in Charleston represented the insurance company. She did not return a request for comment.

Bringardner said he believed the jury returned such a hefty verdict because there was overwhelming evidence that Weese would require a lifetime of medical treatment, including a revision surgery.

"He has a permanent injury that will only get worse over time," Bringardner said. "It has affected nearly every aspect of his life, from the ability to work as a plumber, to doing certain activities with his son, or to simply sleeping through the night without waking up in pain. He will have to live with significant limitations, and the jury compensated him appropriately for the harm, given how long he will have to live with the consequences caused by the defendant."

There isn't a cure for Weese's injury, Bringardner said, "and all the while, he feels like the insurance company is not taking him seriously and giving him the runaround. We had to force the insurance company to make this right for him."

Bringardner said that he believed the defendant was distracted and possibly looking at her cell phone when the crash occurred. The defense disputed that the defendant was looking at her phone, but admitted that she was at fault for the crash. The defense also argued that Weese's pain was from pre-existing degenerative conditions, not the crash, Bringardner said.

It is the largest such verdict from the county that has ever been reported to Lawyers Weekly.

**SETTLEMENT REPORT — PERSONAL INJURY**

**Injuries alleged:** Disc herniation to four vertebrae, spinal cord compression

**Case name:** *Terence Weese v. Samantha Johnson*

**Court:** Dorchester County Circuit Court

**Case No.:** 2017-CP-1801447

**Judge:** Diane Goodstein

**Date of verdict:** Nov. 28

**Special damages:** \$353,000 in past medical bills; \$170,000 in future medical bills

**Insurance Carrier:** Geico

**Attorney for plaintiff:** Mark Bringardner of the Joye Law Firm in Charleston

**Attorney for defendant:** Nickisha Woodward of Turner Padgett in Charleston

Tagged with: PERSONAL INJURY

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