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Jury gives \$1.3M for bike crash

Pickup driver turned left into motorcycle's path at intersection

BY **JORDYN REILAND**
Law Bulletin staff writer

A Cook County jury awarded \$1.3 million to the family of a motorcyclist who was killed in a 2015 collision with a pickup truck.

The verdict was reached last week after a six-day trial before Circuit Judge Clare Elizabeth McWilliams.

Jurors tallied \$2 million in damages, which was reduced to \$1.3 million after they found motorcyclist Patrick Conklin was 35 percent negligent in the crash.

Conklin, 44, was on his way to work at West Suburban Medical Center on Nov. 4, 2015, when a truck attempting to make a left turn hit his motorcycle at the intersection of West Chicago Avenue and North Wood Street on the Northwest Side.

Conklin was taken to Stroger Hospital where he was pronounced dead.



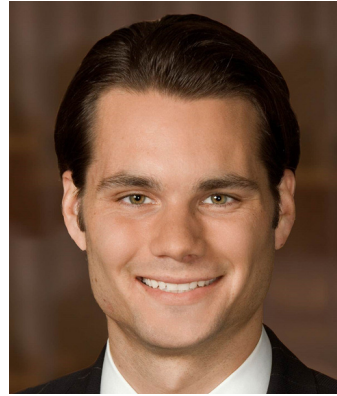
Patrick A. Salvi II

Jason Gilbert, the driver of the pickup truck who was working for Selco Industries, told officers the traffic signal was yellow when he began to turn left.

But an eyewitness said Conklin had a green light when the crash occurred, according to the estate's attorneys.

Mary Malinowski, one of Conklin's sisters, sued Gilbert and his employer. She was represented by Patrick A. Salvi II, Brian L. Salvi and Carly E. Shannon of Salvi Schostok & Pritchard P.C.

At trial, defense attorneys argued Conklin's speeding was the



Brian L. Salvi

reason for the collision, not Gilbert's left turn.

A defense expert testified Conklin was traveling at 54 mph in a 30 mph zone.

Jessica Biagi of Daniel P. Costello & Associates LLC, who represented the defendants, said even though the motorcycle had the right of way, the crash potentially could have been avoided had Conklin traveled closer to the posted speed limit.

While they were hoping jurors would find Conklin at least 50 percent responsible — the threshold to trigger a defense verdict — she



Carly E. Shannon

was pleased the jury recognized negligence by both parties.

Gilbert and Selco Industries Inc. were also represented by Daniel P. Costello and Pamela L. Pierro of Spyrtos Davis LLC.

Patrick A. Salvi II said his clients, Conklin's adult siblings, "were pleased to have their day in court and to have won the case."

"It was never really about the money, but they were also pleased that the jury signed what we think was a fair verdict," he said.

The case is *Mary Malinowski v. Jason Gilbert, et al.*, 16 L 7213. jreiland@lawbulletinmedia.com