

The Louisiana Jury Verdict Reporter

The Most Current and Complete Summary of Louisiana Jury Verdicts

October 2024

Statewide Jury Verdict Coverage

15 LaJVR 10

In This Issue

Orleans Parish

Truck Negligence - \$3,405,525 p. 3

Medical Malpractice - \$150,000 p. 10

St. Landry Parish

Truck Negligence - \$219,910,110 p. 1

Federal Court - Lake Charles

Medical Malpractice - \$500,000 p. 5

Ascension Parish

Underinsured Motorist - \$350,000 p. 7

East Baton Rouge Parish

Utility Negligence - Defense verdict p. 8

Caddo Parish

Medical Malpractice - Defense verdict p. 11

Notable Mississippi Verdict

Port Gibson, MS

Truck Negligence - \$1,050,000 p. 12

Civil Jury Verdicts

Timely coverage of civil jury verdicts in Louisiana including court, division, presiding judge, parties, case number, attorneys and results.

Truck Negligence - A paramedic suffered a devastating TBI (and skull fractures and other injuries) when she was thrown about the rear of an ambulance (she was providing an IV to a patient) in a collision with a truck that pulled into the ambulance's path – an Opelousas jury valued the plaintiff's non-economic damages at \$155.5 million

Tramble v. LineTec, 22-10939

Plaintiff: Richard F. Zimmerman, III, Justin R. Glenn and Misti L. Bryant, *Gordon McKernan Injury Attorneys*, Baton Rouge and Michael P. Fruge and A.M. "Tony" Clayton, *Clayton Fruge & Ward*, Port Allen

Defense: Gerald A. Melchiode, Jeffrey R. Struckoff and Trey Williams, *Melchiode Marks King*, New Orleans and Peter F. Caviness, *Falgoust & Caviness*, Opelousas

Verdict: \$219,910,110 for plaintiff

Parish: **St. Landry**

Judge: A. Gerald Caswell

Date: 9-23-24

Sherri Tramble, age 36 and of Carencro, LA, was working on the evening of 7-8-21 as a paramedic for St. Landry Parish EMS. She was in the rear of an ambulance (a 2019 Ram Express model) assisting a patient (Kenneth Isles) who was on the way to Opelousas General Hospital. She was placing an IV. Tramble was not restrained although there was a seat belt available to her. Another paramedic (Margo Bellard) was driving the ambulance.

Bellard was driving on WB 182 in St. Landry Parish near I-49. It was a little after 7:00 in the evening. At the

same time, Joshua Briscoe, was driving a 2019 Chevrolet Silverado pick-up for his employer, LineTec Services. The company provides electrical line restoration services. Briscoe was driving several co-workers home from a job in Louisiana and was attempting to reach an I-49 entrance ramp.

Briscoe turned in front of the ambulance. The ambulance t-boned the pick-up truck. It was a significant (but not catastrophic) impact that left a large indentation on the side of the pick-up. The ambulance too suffered noticeable front end damage.

Tramble, unrestrained in the rear of the ambulance, was thrown about in the collision and struck her head. She suffered a large laceration to her head (it bled profusely) and she was unconscious at the scene. She was also barely breathing as blood blocked her airway.

Tramble was transported to a hospital in Lafayette. A shaken Briscoe (he'd caused the accident) had texted ahead to the hospital to check on Tramble as based on her appearance (taken away unconscious), he feared she was dead.

Tramble survived but her injuries were serious. Besides the laceration already described, she suffered multiple skull fractures (her eye socket, cheek and nose too) and a subdural bleed. Tramble also suffered a C-7 spinal fracture.

The most serious and permanent injury has been the effects of a

and he took \$150,000 more for non-economic damages. Madison (the sister) was awarded \$20,000 for her non-economic damages. Karla's medical bills were \$11,625 and she took \$90,000 more mental anguish. Finally Darrell's medicals were \$3,000 and his mental anguish was also \$90,000. The bench verdict totaled \$527,440 and the issue of the Med Mal cap (med mal or negligent infliction of emotional distress) was made moot as the non-economic damages did not exceed \$500,000.

Underinsured Motorist - The plaintiff complained of wide-ranging injuries (cervical facet syndrome and ulnar nerve) after a right-of-way collision – while the plaintiff took medical bills of \$158,841 for an extensive course of pain management, her non-economic damages were just \$107,509

Spriggs v. USAA, 125970

Plaintiff: Jeffrey N. Rabb and Tucker

F. Giles, *Dudley DeBosier Injury*

Lawyers, Baton Rouge

Defense: Valerie B. Bargas and

Kolby P. Marchand, *Kinchen Walker*

Bienvenu Bargas Reed & Helm, Baton

Rouge

Verdict: \$350,000 for plaintiff

Parish: **Ascension**

Judge: Steven Tureau

Date: 8-16-24

It was 9-9-18 and Julie Spriggs, then age 46 and a speech pathologist, traveled in Prairieville on LA 42. She was driving a large Infiniti QX 70 SUV. At the same time Claudia Larraga pulled from a CVS parking lot and cross three of four lanes of LA 42. Larraga was driving a Chevrolet SUV.

Larraga had pulled out directly in front of Spriggs. Spriggs t-boned the



The Spriggs vehicle at the scene near the CVS reflecting minor damage

turning Larraga. The collision resulted in minor damage. Fault would not be a jury issue.

Spriggs went to see a chiropractor the next day for apparent whiplash. She had some 28 chiropractic visits overall. Spriggs subsequently saw her PCP and began a course of physical therapy. Her pain continued and she was ultimately referred to a pain management physician, Dr. Sean Graham, Baton Rouge.

Graham ultimately treated Spriggs for a cervical facet syndrome and whiplash. His care has included RFA therapy, cervical injections and medial branch blocks. He also referred Spriggs to Dr. Mary Anderson for evaluation of elbow injury. An MRI identified an ulnar

condition and Spriggs underwent a cubital release. There was proof that additionally Spriggs will regularly perform pain management care. Spriggs incurred medical bills of \$158,841 and she sought significant sums for in the future.

In this lawsuit Spriggs first moved against Larraga and her insurer, Dairyland County Mutual. Larraga settled and paid her \$30,000 limits. Spriggs continued and sought damages from her UIM carrier, USAA. She sought her medical specials as described above as well as future care as quantified by Elizabeth Martina, Life Care Planner and Randolph Rice, Economist.

USAA's defense of the case tended to minimize the claim of its insured. It