

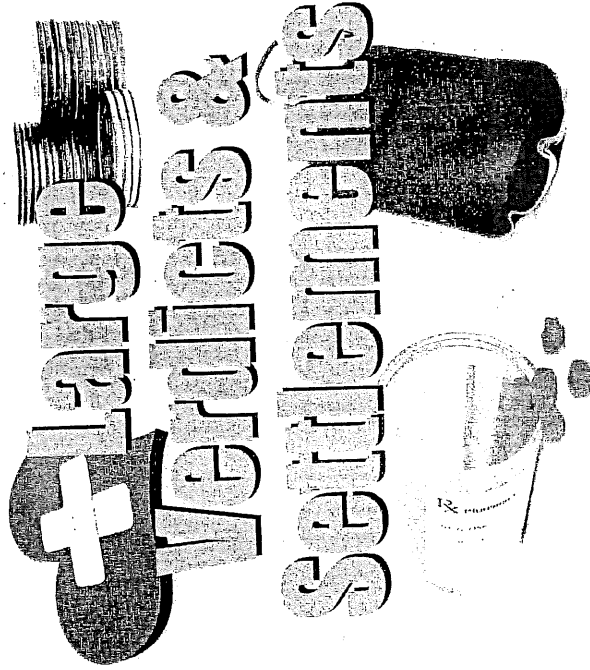
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Largest & Verdicts & Settlements

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Compiling the top verdicts and settlements reported to Lawyers Weekly during the past 12 months underscores how, in the realm of civil litigation, almost nothing is ever certain, and jury verdicts are not the end of a case. They are a new beginning.

That is underscored by two of the top three verdicts and settlements reported to Lawyers Weekly in the past year. In both of those cases — one a \$37 million verdict in a dispute over a contract to build plasma centers, the other a \$12.887

million verdict in a pharmaceutical liability action — defendants have moved for JNOVs or new trials.

Finality is less tenuous in four of the \$10 million-plus cases on this year's roundup because they involved either settlements or arbitration awards. Those cases included claims of investment adviser fraud, medical malpractice, banking misrepresentations and breach of trust.

The top verdicts and settlements also featured two large heart-balm verdicts — a \$9 million verdict entered by a Guilford County jury and a \$5.9 million verdict entered by a Pitt County Superior Court judge.

In addition to personal injury and medical malpractice, land condemnation also made a big showing on the ranking. Teaming with other attorneys in his firm, Raleigh attorney George B. Autry Jr. recorded a trio of multimillion-dollar settlements in cases involving condemnation and eminent domain actions brought by the N.C. Department of Transportation.

Two of those cases involved the construction of the Western Wake Expressway.

The listing is a collection of the top 25 verdicts and settlements that attorneys reported during the past 12 months.

Large Verdicts & Settlements

Contact Greg Froom at greg.froom@nc.lawyersweekly.com

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\$3,545,150

Land condemnation

Raleigh attorneys George B. Autry Jr. and Stephanie Hutchins Autry, both of Cranfill Sumner & Hartzog, represented Onslow County landowners whose 19 acres were taken by the N.C. Dept. of Transportation under the power of eminent domain. The taking resulted in significant access limitations.

In a mediated settlement conference with Ron L. Perkinson on Jan. 12, 2011, the parties agreed to settle the case for \$3,545,150.

Summary

Type of action: Eminent domain/land condemnation

Injuries alleged: Taking of 19 acres of a 99-acre tract in Onslow County, with significant access limitations

Case name: *N.C. Department of Transportation v. Jones, et al. (R. M. Tallman Heirs)*

Case number: 10 CVS 1150

Court: Onslow County Superior Court

Name of judge, arbitrator or mediator: Ron L. Perkinson

Verdict or settlement: Mediated settlement

Date: Jan. 12, 2011

Amount: \$3,545,150

Experts: Dennis Gruelle, MAI (Raleigh and Virginia Beach, Va.); Don Johnson, MAI (Henderson)

Landowners' attorneys: George B. Autry Jr. and Stephanie Hutchins Autry, both of Cranfill Sumner & Hartzog (Raleigh)

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\$2.909 million

Land condemnation

Raleigh attorneys George B. Autry Jr. and Stephanie Hutchins Autry of Cranfill Sumner & Hartzog reported the settlement of another case involving the NCDOT and the Western Wake Expressway.

Owners of 12.83 acres of farmland under threat of condemnation ultimately settled for \$2,909 million.

Summary

Type of action: Land condemnation /eminent domain

Injuries alleged: Taking of 12.83 acres, development limitations, partial control of access and change of elevation

Case name: *Department of Transportation Turmpike Authority v. Billy Joe Batchelor, et al.*

Case number: 09 CVS 25348

Court: Wake County Superior Court

Mediator: Ron Perkinson

Verdict or settlement: Mediated settlement

Date: Sept. 9, 2010

Amount: \$2,909 million

Offer: Department's first offer: \$1,761,300

Were liability and/or damages contested? Yes

Was the opposing party represented by legal counsel? Yes

Has the landowner been successful in actually collecting the judgment? Yes

Landowner's attorneys: George B. Autry Jr. and Stephanie H. Autry of Cranfill Sumner & Hartzog (Raleigh)

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\$3.5 million

Land condemnation

A landowner who contested the NCDOT Turmpike Authority's planned taking of 24.60 acres of 25.55 acres he owned along the planned Western Wake Expressway settled on Oct. 21, 2010, for \$3.5 million, according to Raleigh attorneys George B. Autry Jr. and Brady W. Wells of Cranfill Sumner & Hartzog.

Summary

Type of action: Eminent domain

Injuries alleged: Taking of 24.60 acres from two parcels totaling 25.55 acres

Case name: *NCDOT Turmpike Authority v. Charles Blythe*

Case number: Settled before condemnation was filed

Verdict or settlement: Settlement

Date: Oct. 21, 2010

Amount: \$3.5 million

Were liability and/or damages contested? Yes

Was the opposing party represented by legal counsel? Yes

Has the landowner been successful in actually collecting the judgment? Yes

Landowner's attorneys: George B. Autry Jr. and Brady W. Wells of Cranfill Sumner & Hartzog (Raleigh)