

Crushing Injury To Minor Results In Over \$2 Million Settlement

On August 6, 1995, Jarod Groothouse was seven years old when he was involved in a serious motor vehicle collision. Jarod and his two younger brothers were passengers in a vehicle driven by their mother, traveling southbound on U.S. Highway One in Port St. Lucie, Florida. The defendant was driving northbound on U.S. Highway One when he lost control of his vehicle, crossed the grass median, and smashed into the Groothouse vehicle. A passenger in the defendant's vehicle was killed in the accident. Jarod's mother and

brothers suffered minor injuries. Unfortunately Jarod was not as lucky.

Jarod was taken from the scene by ambulance to a local Port St. Lucie hospital. He was then transferred to St. Mary's Hospital in West Palm Beach via helicopter because of the magnitude of the injuries he had sustained.

He was admitted to trauma services at St. Mary's Hospital. In the operating room he was found to have a lacerated

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\$2 MILLION SETTLEMENT IN CRUSHING INJURY

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mesentery vein which was repaired. Two weeks later, Jarod returned to the operating room to repair a significant fracture of the L-2 vertebrae in his lower back. It soon became apparent that there was instability in the lumbar area and that young Jarod would require an additional operation. He was taken back to the operating room on September 12, 1995 where he underwent further stabilization procedures for the lumbar spine. The entire L-2 vertebrae body was removed, the area was fused, and rods and screws were placed into Jarod's back. He tolerated the procedures well and was discharged from St. Mary's Hospital on September 17, 1995.

As a result of the severe spinal fracture and the reconstructive surgery that young Jarod has undergone, he has been restricted in his activities. He can play no contact sports. He has limitations with respect to bending and lifting. Jarod's limitations are a lifelong consequence of the original injury and the reconstructive surgery. He will be severely limited in his occupational alternatives as well. As of this date, he still has a prominence from the instrumentation in his back which occasionally causes him pain and discomfort. It is anticipated that at some point this summer Jarod will require additional surgery to remove the instrumentation that was placed in his back.

Christopher K. Speed was able to resolve this matter for \$2,075,000 during the discovery phase of the litigation. A portion of the funds will be placed in a guardianship account to provide for Jarod's future medical needs. The remainder has been used to purchase an annuity that will ensure a lifetime income stream for Jarod. ■