

## Jury Deliberates on Thomas Jefferson School of Law Fraud Case

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Anna Alaburda is suing her law school, Thomas Jefferson School of Law. Photo courtesy of the New York Times.[/caption]

*Summary: A former student has sued the Thomas Jefferson School of Law, blaming their allegedly misleading employment data as the reason she couldn't get a job as an attorney. On Wednesday the jury met to decide on a ruling.*

The jury met on Wednesday to decide on the case of the former Thomas Jefferson School of Law student who sued the school for false advertising, CBS 8 reports. The case has been closely watched in the legal community because the alumni claimed she was unable to get a job and that the school inflated its employment data.

Anna Alaburda, 37, filed a lawsuit against Thomas Jefferson School of Law in 2011. Her attorney, Brian Procel, told the jury that although she spent \$100,000 on her degree, she was unable to find a full-time job as a lawyer, even though she graduated with honors in 2008. She cited the school's allegedly false employment figures as the reason for her decision to attend law school, and her lawyer said she went to school "under false pretenses."

Alaburda is seeking \$125,000 in damages for tuition and lost wages. She also wants the school to stop misleading students about their chances of finding a job. According to the San Diego Tribune, Procel said Thomas Jefferson reported former students who worked in book stores or restaurants as being "employed" in their data.

Thomas Jefferson claims that their data is "accurate," and their attorney, Mike Sullivan, said Alaburda did not suffer any damages. She attended Thomas Jefferson because that was the only school that accepted her. Sullivan said she was also awarded a scholarship, making her debt \$32,000 after three years. Additionally, he blamed her decisions for her own debt and not having a legal job. He told the jury she chose not to work her first two years in law school, and that after two months of graduating, she had two offers in the legal field. During the trial, Alaburda's lawyer said her legal field job offers were a \$60,000 job at a San Bernardino law firm and a \$70,000 a year job with a legal publisher. Sullivan said she turned down those jobs, and that the school is well-respected with alumni that include District Attorney Bonnie Dumanis and Public Defender Henry Coker.

While the jury has not yet reached a decision, Alaburda's chances of winning are slim. CBS 8 reports that in the past several years, at least 15 similar lawsuits were dismissed. Only Alaburda's and one other remains active. Judges in the prior cases said students opted to go to law school at their own peril and that employment is not guaranteed.

Source: [CBS 8](#)

Source: [The San Diego Tribune](#)