

Gibson Dunn's Landmark Victory: LAPD Officer Held Accountable for Injuring George Floyd Protester



Following the murder of George Floyd by a police officer in 2020, protests erupted across the United States to condemn police brutality and racism. During this time, many peaceful protesters were injured by police officers using excessive force. Deon Jones, a 31-year-old entertainment and brand consultant from Los Angeles who was shot in the face with a rubber bullet by a police officer, narrowly avoiding potential blindness or death.

Gibson Dunn, a prominent Biglaw firm ranked at No. 11 on the Am Law 100, represented Jones pro bono, with lawyers from the firm's offices in New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C., collaborating to secure a verdict that could set a precedent for future civil rights cases. Orin Snyder, one of the firm's most senior attorneys and a leading trial lawyer and litigator in the United States, led the case to victory.

Take the first step towards finding your dream legal job - sign up for LawCrossing today.

A federal jury found that LAPD officer Peter Bueno had violated Jones's civil rights in the shooting and held Bueno personally liable for Jones's injuries. The jury awarded Jones \$375,000 in damages (\$250,000 in actual damages and \$125,000 in punitive damages), marking the first time anyone has successfully sued the LAPD arising from the 2020 protests.

Jones reacted to the verdict with a sense of vindication, stating that it was his victory for all those who had historically protested against police brutality. He hoped the verdict would send a powerful message to law enforcement to respect the constitutional rights of peaceful protesters.

Snyder hailed the verdict as a historic moment for civil rights, expressing hope that it would lead to meaningful reforms in how the police approach demonstrations in the future. He noted that the verdict sends a powerful message upon the rights of peaceful protesters and stated that the victory was a testament to the importance of pro bono representation for marginalized communities.

In this case, Gibson Dunn's representation of Jones is part of the firm's broader racial justice initiative, which reaffirms its commitment to advancing racial justice and equity. Gibson Dunn's largest client is its pro bono practice. The firm has spent over \$100 million in pro bono work for causes and clients, including racial justice, free speech, immigration, LGBTQ rights, women's rights, and international human rights.

Katie Marquart, Gibson Dunn's pro bono chair, expressed her pride in the firm's work on the case, stating that it was a powerful reminder of why she became a lawyer. She noted that the firm had worked tirelessly to fight for Jones to be free from excessive force and expressed her gratitude to the jury for recognizing the importance of holding police officers accountable for their actions.

The victory for Gibson Dunn and Jones is a significant step forward in the fight against police brutality and racism. It represents a powerful message to law enforcement that they must respect the constitutional rights of peaceful protesters. As the fight continues to move forward, Gibson Dunn will work to secure further victories against the City of Los Angeles and the Los Angeles Police Department.