

Missouri Lawyers

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WEEKLY

■ \$100,000 SETTLEMENT

Driver receives \$100K settlement after rear-end collision

PERSONAL INJURY

- **Venue:** St. Louis County Circuit Court
- **Case Number/Date:** 15SL-CC03992/April 28, 2016
- **Insurer:** USAA
- **Caption:** Hanah Paluga v. Yakima Young-Shields
- **Plaintiff's Attorneys:** Mark Cantor and Nathan Davis, Cantor Injury Law, St. Louis
- **Defendant's Attorneys:** Meg Fowler and Kate Watkins, HeplerBroom, St. Louis

BY DAVID BAUGHER

Special to Missouri Lawyers Media

A St. Louis County car accident has resulted in a \$100,000 settlement for a motorist.

“This was a clear liability case,” said Nathan Davis of Cantor Injury Law.

The crash occurred when a car driven by Yakima Young-Shields struck 28-year-old Hanah Paluga’s vehicle from behind, according to a submission from the firm. Paluga was stopped in traffic on a crowded roadway and the collision drove her automobile into the vehicle in front of hers.

“[The defendant] was going too fast for conditions, which is just another way of saying she was coming up on them too fast and wasn’t able to stop in time,” Davis said.

The case settled before the matter had progressed very far, Davis said.

“The police report backed up everything our client was saying,” he said. “We didn’t get to depositions so we never got to speak with the defendant.”

Paluga, who reported feeling pain immediately and went to the hospital afterward, alleged significant spinal injuries in the incident and her suit said



Mark Cantor



Nathan Davis

surgery on her lower back would be necessary.

Davis and lead attorney Mark Cantor both said the suit was filed only when the insurance company declined to disclose its policy limits.

“As plaintiff’s attorneys we cannot negotiate without advising our clients as to the amount of insurance available,” said Cantor. “If an insurance company refuses to tell you what insurance is available it is impossible to negotiate fairly.”

He said that his firm has taken the position that suits will be filed immediately if the limits are not disclosed.

Davis said there was some dispute at first over the extent of injury but the settlement came quickly.

“It was pretty clear the further we went that this was going to be a policy limits case,” he said.

The plaintiff’s attorneys listed Meg Fowler and Kate Watkins of HeplerBroom as representing the defense in the matter. Watkins declined to comment on the case. **MO**