Where Does the Money Come From?

If you have ever seen a personal injury billboard announcing a $500,000, $1 million, or even $10 million settlement, you may have wondered: Where does all that money actually come from?

The answer is usually not the person who caused the accident.

The O.J. Simpson case is a memorable example of why. In 1997, a jury found Simpson responsible for the deaths of Nicole Brown Simpson and Ron Goldman and awarded Goldman's family more than $33 million. With interest, the amount eventually grew to nearly $58 million.

But there was a problem: a court can award money, but it cannot create money.

After Simpson's death in 2024, his estate acknowledged the Goldman family's claim. But the reports indicate that the estate had only a small fraction of the amount owed. Decades after winning the case, the Goldman family was still facing the reality that a large judgment is not necessarily the same as a large recovery.

This is one of the most important- and often misunderstood- parts of a personal injury claim. When someone is injured in an accident, the person who caused the accident may not have hundreds of thousands of dollars available to pay for someone else's medical bills, lost income, and other damages.

That is where insurance often comes in.

When you see an advertisement for a large personal injury settlement, the money generally comes from an insurance company or another source of available funds- not from the defendant's personal bank account. The amount of insurance coverage can, therefore, make a significant difference in what is realistically available to an injured person.

So often, the question isn't just how much your injuries are worth, it is also where the money is coming from. This is one of the reasons purchasing your own coverage, such as Uninsured/Underinsured Motorist Coverage, is so important.

Ultimately, a successful personal injury claim is about more than just proving who was wrong, it is about finding a realistic path to compensation.

If you aren't sure what type coverage you have purchased for yourself, we are always here to answer any questions.

Sarah and Chuck