

# Rahul Ravipudi



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Panish Shea & Boyle LLP

Los Angeles

**Practice:** Personal and catastrophic injury, wrongful death, product liability

referring to the pretrial maneuvering that preceded the settlement. "She's not that hurt.' 'Maybe she could have seen the car coming.' There were a lot of inferences that were offensive to me and I think would have been to a jury, too."

On the first day of jury selection, the case settled. A condition of the settlement was that the defendant's name and the Los Angeles County Superior Court case number would not be disclosed by the plaintiff. The information is readily available online.

Insurance companies dislike paying what cases are worth, Ravipudi said. "They lowball and try to settle for lesser dollar amounts." An earlier example came in 2016, when he obtained a \$13.9 million jury verdict for a 19-year-old client, Jake Newland, who suffered serious orthopedic injuries in 2013 when he was hit by a vehicle driven by an off-duty Los Angeles County public defender. The county refused to indemnify the public defender, Donald Prigo, arguing that he did not require a vehicle to do his job. Evidence developed by Ravipudi demonstrated otherwise to the jury.

Newland v. County of Los Angeles, BC514945 (L.A. Super. Ct., filed May 25, 2016).

In 2015, Ravipudi won a \$20.5 million jury verdict for the mother of a high school student who was killed by a motorist while walking to a bus stop in Fontana. Despite the defendant school district's effort to hide evidence and misrepresent facts - which resulted in significant issue sanctions by the trial judge - the San Bernardino County jury assigned 100 percent liability to the district for having placed a school bus stop in an illegal location. During closing arguments, the defense attorney asserted that the relationship between the victim and his mother, who had adopted him a year before his death, was worth \$1.5 million. Jun v. Chaffey Joint Union High School District, CIVDS1112258 (San Bernardino Super. Ct., filed Oct. 24, 2011).

"Hopefully, these cases set a tone that these efforts at undercompensation are no longer permissible," Ravipudi said. "The word is getting out and insurers are evaluating cases more appropriately now."

— John Roemer

Ravipudi said his recent cases have demonstrated to insurance industry defendants that the plaintiffs he represents deserve adequate compensation. "My track record doesn't hurt" in putting that point across, he added. "I'm proud of it."

Case in point: In January, Ravipudi obtained a \$8.25 million settlement for client Kristina Diamantoni, a young actress who was severely injured in 2015 when she was struck by an SUV as she attempted to enter her own vehicle. Diamantoni was legally parked in Santa Monica when she was struck from behind by the defendant's Lexus GS350.

The force of the impact caused the victim to strike her head against her car before being thrown about 30 feet. She suffered multiple pelvic fractures, head trauma and other injuries. Pretrial, the defense offered \$1.75 million. Ravipudi rejected the offer.

"Although they had admitted negligence, they started through their experts to blame Kristina," Ravipudi said, "She's not that hurt.' 'Maybe she could have seen the car coming.' There were a lot of inferences that were offensive to me and I think would have been to a jury, too."