

# \$3,300,000 In Middlesex Auto Case

***Gonzalez v. Foley:*** A woman who sustained spinal injuries in a rear-end collision settled her Middlesex County case for \$3,300,000 on October 21, 2022.

According to plaintiff's counsel, on September 12, 2018, plaintiff Rebecca Gonzalez, 26, was driving west on Route 36, in Eatontown, and stopped at a traffic light. The front of an SUV struck the rear of her vehicle. The SUV failed to appreciate the traffic light and could not come to a complete stop in time. Gonzalez sued the SUV's driver, Benjamin Smith-Foley. Gonzalez alleged that Foley was negligent in the operation of a vehicle. The Hon. Jamie Happas, P.J.CV. (ret.), conducted Mediation between the parties, ultimately finalizing the settlement of \$3,300,000.

Gonzalez claimed back injuries. Gonzalez was ultimately diagnosed disc herniations across the L4-L5 and L5-S-1 disc space, also consistent with annular tear. She underwent conservative treatment, inclusive of epidurals and radio-frequency ablations. However, that treatment failed to provide relief, and, as a result Gonzalez underwent a lumbar fusion. The suit claimed she would continue to experience pain and discomfort for the remainder of her life.

The parties negotiated a pre-trial settlement before Judge Happas through September and October, 2022. Foley's insurers Travelers Insurance Co. and Chubb Ins. agreed to pay \$3,300,000.

Plaintiff was represented by Thomas F. Rinaldi and Barry R. Eichen of Eichen Crutchlow Zaslow. The Defendant was represented by Suzanne M. Marasco of Hill Wallack.