

Jury awards \$60M to family of teen in drunk driving crash

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The mother of a Collier County teen who was injured in a car crash more than 10 years ago was rendered speechless when a jury awarded her \$60 million in damages in court on Friday.

Joan Antonuccio's daughter, Angela Crowe, was paralyzed after a 2003 car crash in which she was a passenger. Her boyfriend, Isaac Steves, was driving while drunk. He was later arrested for driving under the influence.

The two were on their way home after a night out at a now-defunct bar called Spectators Sports Pub in Naples. The suit alleged the bartender was providing drinks to Crowe, who was 19 at the time. Crowe's boyfriend crashed his car on Golden Gate Boulevard. Her boyfriend "dozed off" and veered off the road, colliding with a tree, court documents show.

Spectators, in Naples, has since closed.

"I've been in survival mode forever," said Antonuccio, 54. "It still hasn't set in."

Antonuccio's lawyer, Miami-based attorney Ray Rasco, said it was unlikely they would be able to recover the entire amount, but the jury's decision will go a long way to help Antonuccio.

"That definitely is something that goes a long way psychologically," Rasco said. "After several years of litigation, it's certainly satisfying."

Approximately \$7 million in damages were awarded for Crowe's medical expenses. Antonuccio said her daughter spent four months in a coma with multiple traumatic brain injuries.

Crowe, who is now 31, is living in an assisted-living facility, Antonuccio said. Antonuccio now lives in Tampa.

"She doesn't understand what's going on, she doesn't have any memory of the accident," Rasco said. "Her life completely changed."

Rasco said his law firm was pursuing different avenues to see how much in damages they could claim. Rasco declined to comment on how much his law firm would be earning from the lawsuit.

"If we don't collect, we will get paid nothing," he said.

Antonuccio, who bartends at Tropicana Field, said the bartender at Spectators should not have been giving her daughter drinks.

"She was a beautiful, beautiful 19 year old with her whole life ahead of her," Antonuccio said. "It

destroyed my life, it destroyed my family."

It took Antonuccio a long time to decide to file a lawsuit, she said.

"I would not trade my kid for any money on the planet," Antonuccio said.

She hopes any money that comes her way will be able to help her stay afloat and purchase her own home.

"I'm staying with my son now," Antonuccio said. "That's how tapped out I am."