

LAW OFFICE OF
RONALD MICIOTTO, LLC
628 STONER AVENUE, SUITE C
SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA 71101
Telephone: (318) 424-0200
Fax: (318) 424-3730

Justin P. Smith
justinsmithlawoffice@gmail.com
*Admitted in LA & AR

February 7, 2020

VIA FAX: 629-1435
Attn: JUDGE LAFITTE

RE: Jackelyn Yanong v. Jenny Dawson Coleman, et al; Docket No: 609,429-C
First Judicial District Court; Caddo Parish, Louisiana

Dear Judge Lafitte,

This letter is in response to your request for each party to address damages in this matter. On behalf of Jackelyn Yanong we have requested an award of \$50,000.00 with all three defendants in this conspiracy to be solidarily liable.

Factors we believe are relevant to the amount of damages are as follows:

1. The defamatory comments were not just made one time. They were made over, and over again, during a course of several months.
2. The defamatory comments were provocative, lude, vulgar, degrading, and embarrassing.
3. The following is a summary of the list of comments:
 - a. Jackelyn is an illegal alien
 - b. Jackelyn is a prostitute
 - c. Jackelyn was purchased
 - d. Jackelyn is involved in sex trafficking
 - e. Jackelyn is 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, or 17 years old
 - f. Jackelyn was taken for a "test drive" before purchased
 - g. Jackelyn is living in a dungeon on Danny Lawler's compound
 - h. Jackelyn is forced to use a sex swing
 - i. Jackelyn should be in a booster seat in a car because she is a little girl
 - j. Jackelyn is uneducated and impoverished
 - k. Jackelyn worked in a Nike sweat shop
 - l. Jackelyn wears daisy dukes
 - m. Jackelyn is laid up like a little girl in Silence of the Lambs
 - n. Jackelyn had to sell herself so her family could eat
4. These comments will continue to follow and harm Yanong's reputation and relationships into the future.
5. The defendants specifically sought to harm Jackelyn by targeting and sending false information to Jackelyn's family in the Philippines. As Jenny Coleman stated in one video that was played at trial, she even made the unusual step of contacting Ms. Yanong's family members directly in the Philippines and shared these defamatory comments with them.

6. The defendants specifically and intentionally sought to inform Philippine authorities and U.S. customs to affect Jackelyn's immigration status.
7. The defendants intentional and knowingly made these statements forcing Jackelyn to have to explain to her mother and father why she is being called a prostitute and engaged in sex trafficking.
8. Ms. Jackelyn Yanong did not know the defendants and never had met any of them. Despite this, and according to Amy Senn, she was targeted as a way to hurt someone that Danny Lawler loved.
9. The defendants acted with purpose and intent to cause harm to Jackelyn Yanong.
10. The statements were made over a variety of mediums. There are multiple videos that were shared with hundreds of individuals and can still be viewed even today. There were additional Facebook posts that were also viewed and commented upon from hundreds of individuals.
11. These defamatory statements caused delays and additional interrogation by customs officials.
12. Jackelyn Yanong was already in a stressful situation when she moved to the United States. She knew no one here and uprooted her entire life to move here. She wants to find a way to meet new friends and create a new life. Instead, from the moment she arrives she has to explain to members of her church, community, and even strangers at the supermarket that she is not a prostitute, sex slave, nor does she live in a dungeon in Danny Lawler's compound while forced to use a sex swing as stated by the defendants.

"Damages from defamation are not confined to pecuniary losses; harm to the plaintiff's reputation will support an award." Steed v. St. Paul's United Methodist Church, 728 So.2d 931, 940 (La.App. 2nd Cir., 1999). "General damages may include injury to reputation, personal humiliation, embarrassment, mental anguish, anxiety and hurt feelings." Id. at 942. In Steed, the jury returned an award of \$90,000.00 for general damages to the pastor of a church and against a former employee of the church who publicly accused the pastor of attempting to kiss her and hugging her and touched her in uncomfortable ways. The verdict was upheld on appeal.

In Thompson v. Bank One of Louisiana, NA 134 So.3d 653 (La.App. 4th Cir. 2014) the court of appeals upheld the trial court's award of \$150,000.00 in general damages to a church pastor for defamatory comments made about him that he embezzled \$51,000.00 in church funds and was a thief and a liar. The \$150,000.00 in general damages was in addition to the \$180,000.00 in special damages for lost income.

In, Melancon v. Hyatt Corp, 589 So.2d 1186 (La.App. 4th Cir., 1991) the court of appeals held that \$10,000.00 for a single defamatory statement made by an employer about an employee. In that case, the employee was wrongly accused of stealing towels. This case is distinguishable from the case at bar because it involved one false comment to a small group of individuals. Additionally, the subject matter was a minor theft. Furthermore, an award of \$10,000.00 approximately 30 years ago would have a value today of \$19,205.00 after inflation. In the case at bar, the defamatory statements about Ms. Yanong were numerous, they were made over a several month period, they were publicly broadcast, and their level of vulgarity much greater.

In Chase v. H&E Equipment Services, Inc., 34 So.3d 959 (La.App. 3rd Cir. 3/31/10) the award of \$25,000.00 in general damages for defamation was upheld for a case involving false accusations of theft of a bulldozer. In that case, there was a dispute as to a business transaction to trade a bulldozer for a newer model. The defendant made defamatory statements that the plaintiff stole the bulldozer.

In each of the cases cited above, the statements were made over a short period of time. Additionally, the statements were often made to a small group of the public or closely associated individuals. In the case at bar, the defendants sought to broadcast their remarks on live internet streaming serves to as many people as possible. They sought to publish their false and lude comments to a much wider group of individuals. The defendants sought to humiliate the plaintiff by informing her family, her friends, and even government officials. They specifically acknowledge that they targeted her in hopes of hurting her.

The plaintiffs request for \$50,000.00 is not only reasonable, but it actually is on the lower end of the scale considering other similar cases. Should the court request any additional information, the Plaintiff would be happy to respond.

Sincerely,

Justin Smith
Ronald Miciotto
Attorney's for the Plaintiff