



Insights: News Releases

Kilpatrick Townsend Pro Bono Team Receives Inaugural Tapestri Legal Team of the Year Award

September 18, 2015

ATLANTA (September 18) - Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton announced today that a team of Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton attorneys including Atlanta Office Managing Partner **Audra Dial**, Partner **George Murphy**, and associate **Bill Meyer** were honored with the inaugural **Tapestri Legal Team of the Year Award** for their work to bring a civil case on behalf of a victim of human trafficking. Ms. Dial, Mr. Murphy, and Mr. Meyer were honored at the Tapestri Live Without Fear Fifth Annual Silent Auction and Awards Ceremony on Thursday, September 17.

The Tapestri Legal Team of the Year Award is given to a legal team who has demonstrated excellence in their service to survivors of human trafficking. It is awarded to a team of attorneys who have given back to the community in a meaningful way by helping human trafficking victims and their families rebuild their lives.

Ms. Dial, Mr. Murphy, and Mr. Meyer were recognized for their work on behalf of firm client, Thembi Dlamini. In 2013, Ms. Dial was approached by Tapestri about filing a civil lawsuit on behalf of one of clients, Thembi Dlamini. Ms. Dlamini, was enticed to Atlanta from her native Swaziland, a country in Southern Africa, in 2005 to work in Atlanta for two weeks to cater a couple's son's upcoming wedding. When she arrived in Atlanta, her passport and return plane ticket were confiscated and she learned that everything she had been told was lies and that she was brought to Atlanta to be the slave of this couple.

Ms. Dlamini was forced her to work 16 hours a day, taking care of the couple's grandchildren, cleaning their home and the homes of neighbors, and working in their construction business. She lived in these conditions for 20 months until she had enough and took the risk of telling neighbors and friends of her captors her true circumstances. Fortunately, they helped her escape. Ms. Dlamini's ordeal ended when she boarded a bus to Washington, D.C., where she ultimately reported her story to federal law enforcement officials. And, her captors were prosecuted and sentenced to jail for their crimes.

After winning summary judgment of liability against the traffickers, the case was set for a jury trial in the Northern District of Georgia. On April 27, the team selected a jury and presented Ms. Dlamini's case. On April 28, a jury returned a verdict of \$365,000 in damages in what is believed to be one of the first civil lawsuits in Georgia for labor trafficking. The verdict included full compensation for Ms. Dlamini's lost earnings as well as \$400 per day for each day of her captivity for the emotional distress she endured during her capture.

For more information on Kilpatrick Townsend's commitment to pro bono, please click [here](#).

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