

\$950,000 Settlement After Pedestrian Struck by Vehicle

How our attorneys overcame the opposing party's argument and helped our client recover compensation

It's not every day that a quiet walk down an alleyway turns into a fight for one's life. But for one of our clients, that's exactly what happened. What began as an ordinary stroll through a familiar path behind a D.C. car wash quickly turned tragic when an employee lost control of a vehicle and sent it careening into the alleyway. In the split second that followed, that out-of-control car changed everything.

But this story isn't about the [pedestrian accident](#) itself. It's about what came after. Our client suffered pain and a long recovery. The opposing party disputed liability. But in the end our client got the justice he deserved.

How did the pedestrian accident happen?

Our client was walking through an alleyway adjacent to a local Washington, D.C. car wash. This is a path often used by pedestrians to get from one block to another. Without warning, an employee who was moving a customer's vehicle lost control. The car suddenly accelerated, jerking forward into the alleyway where our client was walking. Before anyone could react, the vehicle struck him with significant force.

The collision left him injured, disoriented, and in pain. What should have been a manageable workday for a car wash employee and an ordinary walk for our client turned into a catastrophic event that triggered months (and ultimately years) of physical and neurological challenges.

What was the extent of the injuries?

The physical injuries were bad enough on their own, but the trauma went far beyond what could be seen on the surface. The impact caused:

- **Traumatic brain injury (TBI):** Though labeled "mild," the client suffered a TBI that led to post-traumatic headaches, dizziness, vertigo, and difficulties with balance.
- **Secondary complications:** The client also developed central sleep apnea, central auditory processing disorder, and attention deficit disorder, all of which interfered with his ability to think clearly, concentrate, and rest properly.
- **Cognitive issues:** The client suffered cognitive-communication and dysexecutive disorders, which complicated his ability to process and respond in social or professional settings.
- **Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD):** The head injury also gave rise to PTSD and convergence insufficiency, which means even focusing his eyes became an exhausting effort.

- **Facial injuries:** Beyond his neurological injuries, the left side of his face suffered numbness, tingling, and paresthesias.
- **Injuries to the body:** He also sustained cervical and lumbar strains, painful hip damage, and multiple abrasions and contusions.

A complicated legal battlefield

When our firm took on the case, there was no question the vehicle struck him. The core dispute was about why and whose fault it truly was. The defense quickly tried to shift the focus. Instead of accepting clear responsibility for the employee's negligence, they began suggesting that our client's intoxication at the time of the incident might have contributed to what happened.

It's a familiar defense strategy and one that tries to blur the clear line of liability by pointing the finger back at the victim. Our job was to keep the focus on the car wash employee who lost control of the vehicle and the employer responsible for providing a safe work environment. We combed through records, interviewed witnesses, reconstructed the sequence of events, and built a narrative rooted in fact and science, not speculation or stigma.

How was fault for the impact proven?

The cornerstone of the case rested on causation and responsibility. The defense wanted the court to believe that intoxication had somehow played a role in the collision, as if our client's mere presence in the alleyway while under the influence was enough to cause him to be struck by a car.

But evidence, common sense, and the law all disagreed. Whether our client had been drinking or not, the physical reality is that he was walking, the car was moving, and the employee lost control. Nothing our client did caused that vehicle to accelerate out of the car wash and into him.

Through expert testimony and careful evidence presentation, we demonstrated the key points:

- The employee's actions were the sole cause of the impact.
- The alley in question was used regularly by pedestrians; it wasn't a restricted area.
- The car wash had a duty to ensure vehicles were moved safely and under control at all times.
- The client's physical condition had no causal relationship to the employee's negligence.

We brought in crash reconstruction specialists to model how the car lost traction and accelerated into the alleyway. Medical experts helped the jury understand the full extent of our client's injuries; not just the initial trauma, but the cascading effects that would continue for years to come.

The human side of the case

Legal terms such as “causation” and “negligence” can sound dry, but behind them are real people. In this case, it was a man who saw his independence stripped away by a single careless moment.

Before the collision, our client led an active life filled with daily routines, family responsibilities, and steady work. Afterward, even simple tasks became challenging. Balancing on one foot felt uncertain. Reading for longer than a few minutes triggered headaches. Conversations became mentally exhausting. Sometimes, words wouldn’t come, or focus would fade mid-sentence.

That’s the hidden toll of a brain injury. Unlike a broken arm, you can’t see when someone’s cognitive energy is depleted or when their world is spinning even while standing still. For our client, recovery wasn’t a linear road. It involved repeated doctor’s visits, therapy, and moments of deep frustration as he worked to reclaim pieces of his old life.

As his legal advocates, we made sure that the courtroom didn’t just see medical reports; they saw the man behind them. They heard his story, his struggle, and his determination to move forward despite every obstacle.

How we overcame the intoxication defense

The intoxication issue could have easily clouded the case. Many jurors carry preconceived notions about alcohol that can unintentionally influence perception of fault. We tackled that bias head-on.

Our approach was twofold: first, to be transparent about the allegation, and second, to show why it had no bearing on the cause of the collision. We made it clear that even if the client had been drinking, he was walking in a lawful place. He wasn’t interfering with traffic or causing danger to others. The car, on the other hand, was a deadly force in motion, and the employee controlling it had full responsibility over its path.

By reframing the issue around fairness and accountability, we reminded everyone that negligence doesn’t get excused because of who the victim is or what state they were in. It’s defined by the actions of those who caused the harm.

What was the final legal resolution?

Through persistent advocacy, we secured a result that reflected justice for our client. The opposing side had to recognize that speculation couldn’t wash away the facts. Our client was struck because an employee failed to control a vehicle, plain and simple.

The \$950,000 settlement compensated for the wide-ranging injuries and lifelong implications of his trauma. Beyond the financial recovery, though, came something harder to quantify: validation. Our client finally saw his experience acknowledged, his suffering believed, and his dignity restored.

On its surface, this may seem like a simple pedestrian accident case, but it carried deeper implications. It reminds businesses that operational shortcuts and safety lapses are never harmless. It also speaks to an enduring truth in personal injury law: every client deserves to be judged by the facts, not assumptions. Intoxication, socioeconomic status, or background should never diminish a plaintiff's right to seek justice.

Talk to a Maryland pedestrian accident lawyer today

[Goldberg Finnegan](#) has extensive experience handling even the most complicated pedestrian accident claims throughout Maryland. That includes cases in Montgomery County, Prince George's County, Howard County, Frederick County, Charles County, and surrounding communities, as well as D.C. and Virginia.

Our legal team knows how to dig into the evidence, deal with uncooperative insurance companies, and build a strong case that clearly shows how a negligent driver turned your life upside down. When you reach out to Goldberg Finnegan and schedule your free consultation, we'll review what happened, answer your questions, and map out the next steps. [Contact us online](#) or call us to get started, with no obligation and no upfront cost.