

CASE STUDY

Background

The Lambda chapter of Zeta Pi Sorority had a “sober sis” program in which the chapter members would rotate the responsibility of staying sober for a few weekends a semester so that other chapter members would be guaranteed a designated driver on those evenings that they might need a safe ride home.

Scenario

Bridget Jones, Lambda Chapter Member, and several of her friends went out to the local bars for the evening. Because they had been drinking, Bridget called Lambda’s “sober sis” for the evening to come pick up her and her friends and return them safely to the chapter house. Laura Smith was the designated “sober sis” for that particular weekend, so she left for the bars to pick up Bridget and her friends soon after Bridget called. On their way home, Laura came to an intersection with a flashing red light. Believing that the intersection was a four-way intersection, Laura proceeded through the intersection after stopping. The intersection was actually only a two-way intersection with a flashing red light for one direction and a flashing yellow light for the other direction. The vehicle that was coming from the other direction did not stop because he had the flashing yellow light. Subsequently, Laura’s vehicle was struck by the vehicle coming from the opposite direction. Bridget suffered injuries to her upper body and face, none of which were life threatening.

Result

Bridget’s attorneys estimated her current medical costs at \$250,000, and Bridget sued the following individuals and entities for over \$800,000:

- Zeta Pi Sorority: the insurance company settled on the Sorority’s behalf with the plaintiff for \$100,000
- Bob and Linda Smith, Laura’s parents: settled with the plaintiff in excess of \$550,000
- Jim Wallace, the gentleman driving the vehicle that struck Laura’s vehicle: settled with the plaintiff for around \$150,000

**The events described in this case study are based on actual events; however, the names, dates, and several other details have been changed.*