



FINNEY INJURY LAW
- TRIAL LAWYERS -

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HONORING LOCAL HEROES *Thank You, Nurses and Teachers!*

May is a big month! School is almost out for the year, people are starting to plan summer road trips (see Page 2 for some tips), and Memorial Day caps off the month. With summer just on the horizon and vaccines rolling out, we're all feeling more hopeful than ever that we'll get to do some of the fun things we've had to forgo for the last year.

Though we've all made sacrifices in the last year, we want to be sure to honor two groups of local heroes this month! In May, we celebrate National Teacher Appreciation Day (May 4) and National Nurses Month. There's no better time to show your appreciation for these professionals who've been working hard for the last year.



Some of you got to see — up close and personal — the role your child's teacher plays in their daily life as you took over helping to organize their school day and keep them on track while schooling at home. Many people are leaving this school year with a renewed and deep appreciation for all that our local teachers do to make sure our kids get a great education. One way to show your appreciation is to reach out to your local school and ask what the teachers need or if there's a grant program you can donate to. You could also donate books or send a simple thank-you note. Whatever you choose to do, it will be greatly appreciated after a year of so many challenges.

Early in the pandemic, it was common to see homemade signs expressing gratitude for our local health care workers. Over a year later, nurses are still working hard every day to test, care for, and vaccinate patients. We're so grateful for their ongoing efforts to keep our community safe, especially during one of the most difficult health crises of our lifetime. If you know a nurse personally, a small gift or card expressing your gratitude can be a wonderful pick-me-up. If you want to say thank you to the providers at your local hospital or clinic, call to ask if you can have coffee, pastries, or lunch delivered on your dime.

Thanks again to the many local heroes who've kept our community healthy and our kids educated this year!



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OUR ETHOS: REPRESENTING YOU

The buzzer will sound two times for a verdict and one time for a question. That is how jurors communicate with the bailiff during deliberations. Someone in that jury room has the job of hitting that buzzer.

Twelve jurors file out from the jury box after you've argued your final points. They leave in silence, having just received an instruction from the judge. The bailiff is sworn by the judge to keep the jurors free from outside influence and disruption. The only sounds are the ruffling of clothes and shuffling of feet. The only person or people left will be the alternates. They do not get to go to the jury room.

At these times, I can barely control myself. I cannot look at any jurors. All I can think about is what I said and what I should have said. What separates a great closing argument from a mediocre one is the decision of those 12 people. Did we make the right calls? Did we put on the right witnesses? Did the jurors get where we were going? Were any of them with us? Was juror No. 3 with me? Do they even care? What time did the jurors go out? Did someone write down the time? Does that even matter? Is my client happy with our efforts? Should we talk about a settlement with the insurance defense lawyer? Hell, is there even still an offer? How bad was this? Who am I?

These are the thoughts running through my head when a jury leaves to deliberate. The following time, while they deliberate, is unlimited. They can be in that room for minutes or hours. They may even share a meal together. My co-counsel and I will sit for hours on pins and needles. It is almost always my cousin as my co-counsel, who I have come to believe has a deranged optimism in the courtroom. It is frightening how positive he remains. I'd have probably settled every case while the jury was out without him there to keep me straight.

It takes an incredible amount of trust in the jurors. Incredible. That is my constant battle. Do I trust them enough? Do they trust me? Do they see who I am or who my client is? Do I represent values I would be proud of, values I can come home to my kids and say, "I did the best I could and did it with integrity?"

The more I think about that sentence, that thought, the more I think *that* is my real fear in the courtroom. Not whether we will get a fair verdict but did I betray my values? Don't get me wrong, I want a real verdict that is fair for my client. Absolutely. But can I really control that? Can I really deliver that? I don't get to sign the verdict form and present it to the judge for their review. I can only deliver the best case I know how. For someone who likes control, that is a harrowing idea.

It seems hokey and cliché to just say, "Do your best." It very well might be. But I want to do my best. I want to win, but I have no control over what is ultimately written on that verdict form.

Years ago, I told my wife, when she was pregnant with our first child, that I didn't care if I ever won a case, but I was going to be a trial lawyer. I wasn't going to work for corporations. I was going to work for real people with real lives and experiences, and I didn't care if we never made any money. Many days, I need to be reminded of that. There are plenty of days I have failed my clients. I remember the losses much more intensely than the wins. The losses really sting.

As the trials are finally approaching, I need to remind myself of that promise, that ethos — our firm is here to represent people. We are here to try cases, share their stories, and balance the scales. To me, integrity has to be the way to do it. As Gerry Spence once said, jury trials are the best way to find out about yourself and who you are.

Let's bring on the trials.



Get Fit With Your Family

5 Easy Ways to Get Everyone Moving



May is National Physical Fitness and Sports Month. As a parent, you probably know exercise is important for your children's physical development. It helps build healthy bones, muscles, and joints and reduces the risk of developing diabetes and other diseases later in life.

But did you know that physical activity also has many mental and behavioral health benefits? It's been shown to improve children's cognitive skills and concentration, boost their self-esteem, and reduce symptoms of stress, anxiety, and depression.

One of the best ways to encourage healthy behaviors in your children is by modeling them yourself. Studies have found that more than 80% of adolescents and adults are not getting enough aerobic activity, showing that children often follow in their parents' footsteps and that exercising together can benefit everyone.

You may be thinking it's hard enough just to get yourself to the gym, but Stephen Virgilio, author of "Active Start for Healthy Kids," encourages parents not to limit themselves to traditional forms of exercise. Instead, think of exercise more broadly as "leading an active lifestyle." And remember that exercise can be fun and a great way to get in more family time.

Here are five easy ways to incorporate more movement into your family's day.

- 1. Create a walking ritual.** Start walking around the neighborhood before or after dinner each night. Aim for a 20-minute stroll.
- 2. Have a dance party.** Clear some space in the living room, make a playlist with everyone's favorite tunes, and boogie down for as long as you have the energy.
- 3. Turn chores into games.** Dirt has invaded from outer space and must be eliminated. Set the scene with your kids, grab your tools, and get to work removing the enemy while having fun.
- 4. Incorporate simple exercises into screen time.** Start by making up fun names for exercises like situps or jumping jacks. Then, challenge each other to see who can do the most during your favorite show's commercial breaks.
- 5. Get fit in the great outdoors.** Cleaning up the yard, planting and maintaining a garden, or just running around outside are all great ways to get in more movement.

THE COOLEST THING ON 2 WHEELS IS A SAFE BICYCLIST

As the weather starts to warm up, you may be thinking of dusting off your bike, pumping up the tires, and riding your favorite route. May is National Bike Safety Month, and as more people get out on two wheels, it's important to ensure you're cycling safely!

At Finney Injury Law, our team has encountered many people who've been victims of bike accidents and suffered traumatic brain injuries as a result. These injuries can be life-altering, but the good news is that as a cyclist, you can help avoid serious injury by simply wearing a helmet. As the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention puts it, "Bicycle helmets are a proven intervention that reduce the risk of bicycle-related head injury by about 80%, yet bicycle helmets are not worn by most riders."

Some of the most avid cyclists on the road are children, and childhood is also when we learn many of the habits we carry into adulthood. If you're a parent, you can help your little (or even not so little!) ones practice this safe habit in two ways. First, model it yourself. Wear a helmet every time you ride. Even if you're just doing it to set a good example, it still might save your life! Second, do not allow your child to ride unless their helmet fits and is worn properly.



If you know a child in need of a helmet, we have a great local nonprofit devoted to getting a helmet to every young cyclist in the St. Louis area. Local pediatrician Dr. Joe Cangas, aka the Helmet Doctor, founded Helmets First! in 2004. Dr. Cangas knows how important it is for kids to get outside and play and to do so safely. His organization strives to educate parents and children about how wearing a helmet can decrease injuries and even save lives. To learn more about Dr. Cangas' organization or to donate to the cause, visit [HelmetsFirst.com](https://www.helmetsfirst.com).

Don't forget to support our many local bike shops for your spring tuneup, new or used bike purchase, or even just to get advice on great local trails to ride. If the worst happens and you are in an accident on your bike, remember that Finney Injury Law is just a phone call away at 314-293-4222.

What's Better Than a Summer Road Trip?

The Friday before Memorial Day is National Road Trip Day. Perhaps that's no surprise since it's the long weekend that ushers in summer. After sticking close to home for the past year, many people are heartened by the vaccine news and ready to make plans to hit the open road.

Road trips are a great way to bond with others and, of course, see new places, but they also come with some risks. Drowsy driving, distracted driving (especially when in an unfamiliar place), and car problems can be dangerous and potentially lead to an accident.

To mitigate the risks, **know your route and be prepared.** This means checking your car before you embark on an adventure (especially the air pressure in your tires), ensuring you have basic safety supplies on hand, topping off fluids, and brushing up on how to change a flat tire and replace windshield wipers.

This also means getting a basic understanding of your route, traffic patterns, and potential weather conditions. Luckily, there are plenty of apps that seasoned road trippers swear by.

- The **Waze app** will help you find the most efficient route in any congested area and avoid unforeseen road closures.
- **Roadtrippers** can help you plan your trip from start to finish, including mileage between gas stops and your overall gas cost!
- If you're looking to be more spontaneous but still want a great deal on gas, download the **GasBuddy app** to find which local stations have the lowest gas prices.

Once you hit the road, **drive safely, defensively, and without distraction.** In addition to following all the normal rules

of the road, be sure to stop frequently to rest or change drivers when possible to avoid drowsy driving. If you need a pit stop but aren't sure where to go, add the **Flush Toilet Finder app**, which locates public restrooms in your area.

Bringing the kids along? Be sure to pack plenty of snacks and games to keep them entertained so they don't become a distraction. In addition to bringing a tablet loaded with games or movies, bring along some off-screen options like magnetic travel games, drawing supplies, a car scavenger hunt card game, or good old-fashioned Mad Libs.

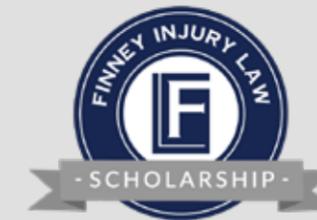
Finally, don't forget to make a playlist of your favorite songs or download a new audiobook and bring plenty of your favorite snacks along for the ride. Happy driving!

APPLY FOR THE FINNEY INJURY LAW SCHOLARSHIP!

Finney Injury Law is proud to continue our scholarship program for a second year. Last year, we intended to give out one scholarship, but after seeing the need for more, we ended up giving out seven. This year we're giving out five worth \$2,500 each. Recipients can use the funds for tuition, books, housing, or LSAT course reimbursement.

About the Scholarship

The Finney Injury Law Scholarship empowers students who are historically underrepresented in the legal profession to pursue their educational dreams. Cost,



support, and guidance are often barriers preventing smart and driven individuals from seeking higher education. Our scholarship will help deserving students break down those barriers, accomplish their educational goals, and prepare them for a future in law.

To see the list of eligibility criteria and application requirements, visit [FinneyInjuryLaw.com/the-finney-injury-law-scholarship](https://www.FinneyInjuryLaw.com/the-finney-injury-law-scholarship).

Application Deadline

All applications must be submitted via the website above by **July 31, 2021, at 11:59 pm CST.**

YOUR REFERRALS MEAN THE WORLD TO US

There is no greater compliment we can receive than a client telling a friend or loved one about us. If you know somebody who has been injured and needs an attorney who will fight on their behalf and give their case the attention it deserves, please pass along this newsletter and have them give us a call at 314-293-4222. Thank you for spreading the word about Finney Injury Law.