

## For Immediate Release

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### **\$1.3 Million Awarded to Victims of Post-9/11 Hate Crime**

*Katten Muchin Rosenman attorneys serve as counsel in pro bono case*

**CHICAGO** – A Cook County judge today awarded \$1.3 million to Toby Paulose, 28, and Amer Zaveri, 26, victims of a vicious post-9/11 hate crime that occurred in Chicago’s West Loop in November 2002. Joseph Gutierrez, 25, and George Petroski, 24, repeatedly said, “Are you Taliban?” and “Go back to your country!” before attacking Paulose and Zaveri, American-born citizens of Indian descent. Gutierrez punched and kicked Paulose, causing a blowout fracture to his face. Zaveri sustained a three-inch gash when Petroski smashed a beer bottle on his head. Judge Donald J. O’Brien, Jr. awarded the two \$300,000 in compensatory damages and \$1 million in punitive damages.

Zaveri stated: “This lawsuit was not about the money. This judgment shows that hate crimes do not go unpunished. No crime should be committed because of race, religion, or ethnic origin. Our families, like all American families, were hurt by the 9/11 attacks. We grieved, we mourned, just like you.”

Paulose continued, “Just because we’re a different color doesn’t give someone the right to attack us or associate us with a terrorist group. We are Americans born and raised in this country, just like you. Our parents came to this country for equality, not inequality.”

Paulose and Zaveri are represented by Betsy Shuman-Moore of the Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and pro bono attorneys [Ferris Hussein](#), [Jonathan Baum](#), and [Mark Magyar](#) of Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP.

“It is our privilege as lawyers to be able to help courageous clients like Toby and Amer secure justice for the outrageous and un-American abuse they suffered,” said Hussein.

The Illinois Hate Crime Act allows people injured in these crimes to press criminal charges and file civil lawsuits against those responsible. The Bias Violence Project of the Chicago Lawyers’ Committee provides free legal representation to victims of hate crime. For 38 years, the Chicago Lawyers’ Committee, through its 40-plus member law firms and staff legal team, has provided free legal services to challenge civil rights violations.

*Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP ([www.kattenlaw.com](http://www.kattenlaw.com)) is a full-service law firm with offices in the nation's largest centers of business, government, finance and technology and an affiliated entity in London. With over 650 attorneys in more than 40 areas of practice, Katten provides timely and cost-effective counsel to clients in numerous industries. Katten provides advice for a wide range of public and private companies – from entrepreneurial, emerging-growth, and middle market firms to global Fortune 100 corporations – as well as government entities, institutions of higher learning, museums and a host of other charitable and cultural organizations.*

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