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Jury Awards More than \$1 Million In Lafon Nursing Home Tragedy

Verdict earned by James Carter and legal team will help compensate family of Francis Robinette, who was among those injured or killed when the facility failed to evacuate residents during Hurricane Katrina in 2005

NEW ORLEANS, La. – June 23, 2015 – A New Orleans legal team earned a \$1.375 million verdict for the family of the late Francis Robinette – one of dozens of residents of the Lafon Nursing Facility of the Holy Family who were injured or killed during Hurricane Katrina.

With deadly Katrina bearing down on New Orleans, administrators made the fateful decision not to evacuate more than 100 elderly residents of the home. Katrina’s thrashing winds and devastating flooding left the home damaged, waterlogged and without power on Aug. 29, 2005. By the time searchers got to the home several days later, a total of 17 residents – including Robinette -- had died.

The case – Joachim Robinette, et. al. vs. Lafon Nursing Facility of the Holy Family, et. al., was tried earlier this month in New Orleans Civil District Court.

In its verdict, the jury found that the failure to evacuate its residents constituted a breach of Lafon’s responsibility to protect the health and safety of Robinette – and that this breach led to the pain, suffering, mental anguish – and eventual death, of Robinette on Thursday, Sept. 1, 2005.

The \$1.375 million verdict obtained by Carter and co-counsel Roderick Alvendia, Amy Fontenot and Anthony Iripino, included compensation for Ms. Robinette and surviving family members Joachim, Michael and Louis Robinette.

“Though this tragic event happened 10 years ago, the pain is still fresh for the family of Francis Robinette – and in fact, for many of the families who lost loved ones at the Lafon Nursing Facility,” Carter said. “What is clear is that the inhumane death of Ms. Robinette and the 16 other deceased residents at Lafon was completely preventable – and only occurred as a result of the negligent actions by the administration and staff at the home.”



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The family of Robinette is hopeful that this case will help to establish a set standard of care for all nursing home facilities going forward, in order to prevent other families from suffering the losses they have had to experience.

James Carter is no stranger to seeking justice. A former New Orleans City Councilman and New Orleans Criminal Justice Commissioner, Carter is the lead attorney at James Carter & Associates, LLC. A native of New Orleans, Carter has extensive trial experience and a high rate of favorable verdicts. James Carter has been recognized both locally and nationally for his leadership abilities. He has been named to the New Orleans City Business Magazine 2012 Class of Leaders in Law and was appointed as a fellow to the VERA Institute of Justice. Carter was also nominated for a 2014 Litigator Award by the Trial Lawyer Board of Regents. Additionally, he holds the distinction of being a member of the Million Dollar Advocate Forum and Multi-Million Dollar Advocate Forum. James maintains an active national trial practice, fighting for his clients and serving as a trial attorney for other law firms.

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