

## Flight attendant wins harassment lawsuit

By BRYON OKADA  
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH -- An American Airlines flight attendant who suffered years of lewd harassment at the hands of a co-worker was awarded \$15.6 million by U.S. District Judge Terry Means on Thursday, although the defendant likely cannot pay the award.

From February 2001 through 2003, American Airlines Fleet Service clerk Tim White, 43, made a series of depraved, often-violent phone calls to flight attendant Jamie Abrams, 43, her family and friends, according to court documents.

Affecting the scratchy voice of Karl from the movie *Sling Blade*, he threatened to kill her and cut her up -- sometimes as often as 15 times a day. In October 2003, Dallas/Fort Worth Airport police arrested White. He was eventually sentenced to 10 years of probation in a Tarrant County court with a requirement not to contact Abrams.

Meanwhile, Abrams sued White, American and American's corporate security chief, Henry Moore, alleging a hostile workplace and gender discrimination. She also sued White for slander. Means ordered a default judgment against White but dismissed Abrams' claims against American and Moore.

In the two weeks leading up to Thursday's hearing, the phone calls started again. Abrams' lawyer, Raul H. Loya of Dallas, played answering machine recordings of the threats in court. Abrams and her husband, Darren, 42, both testified that the voice on the answering machine is White's.

In the default judgment, Means found that Abrams is entitled to recover \$15.6 million from White -- \$600,000 for past and future lost wages, \$5 million for pain and suffering and \$10 million in punitive damages. Means said that the dollar amounts are "symbolic" of the gravity of the offense but that White likely cannot pay such amounts. More significantly, Means permanently enjoined White from "having any further contact whatsoever" with Abrams and her family. A violation would likely result in prison time.

Jamie Abrams, who has been grounded for medical issues associated with the harassment, says she plans to appeal Means' decision to dismiss the rest of the case. Darren Abrams continues to work for American.

White resigned from American in November 2003 and is believed to be living in Tennessee.

BRYON OKADA, 817-390-7752  
[okada@star-telegram.com](mailto:okada@star-telegram.com)