


Man shot by police in case of mistaken identity settles for \$1.2 million

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SALT LAKE CITY — An innocent bystander who was shot by a Unified police officer in a case of mistaken identity has reached a \$1.2 million settlement with the police department.

Unified police announced the settlement Friday between the department and Dustin Evans, his wife, Miranda Evans, and their attorney, Ross "Rocky" Anderson.

"I am pleased that one of my last acts as sheriff has been to resolve this case arising out of the tragic mistaken identity shooting of Dustin Evans. We wish Dustin and Miranda Evans the best going forward," Salt Lake County Sheriff Jim Winder said in a prepared statement.

On Oct. 30, 2015, officer Cory Tsouras was trying to arrest Jeremy Michael Bowden, 34. When Tsouras pulled up beside Bowden in his patrol car, he turned and fired several rounds into the driver's side door, according to investigators. Tsouras was struck once in the chest but was wearing a bulletproof vest.

Tsouras drove away from the scene for his safety but then turned around to look for Bowden again.

That's when he spotted Dustin Evans, 30, who closely matched Bowden's description, at the Rocket Express Car Wash, 150 W. 7200 South, in Midvale. Tsouras fired two shots at Evans, who was trying to take cover in the car wash, striking him once in the arm and once in the knee, according to investigators.

Anderson said the Evans' lives were turned upside down that day.

"They face tremendous challenges in the future and are unable to enjoy many of the everyday things they did together with their children and friends before Dustin's serious injuries," he said.

When Evans filed his intent to sue notice in 2016, he said his injuries have left him with permanent disabilities, prevented him from returning to construction work, impacted his relationships with his wife and children, and resulted in ongoing fear and depression.

But Anderson also praised Winder for stepping to the plate and making sure, "that expenses were covered from the very beginning and the compassionate, conscientious assistance of the risk manager and legal counsel for UPD helped Dustin and Miranda make it through this difficult time.

"This case has been a positive example of how these kinds of tragic matters can and should be handled, with integrity, by responsible governmental entities and officials," Anderson continued in his own prepared statement.

The \$1.2 million award will be paid by Unified Police Department's insurance company.

A year ago, Salt Lake County District Attorney Sim Gill announced that the officer-involved shooting was not justified. But Tsouras' actions did not rise to the level of criminal charges.

Bowden was convicted of shooting the officer and sentenced in March to consecutive terms of five years to life for attempted murder, and one to 15 years each for possessing a stolen vehicle and obstructing justice.