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# Jury Awards \$7.1 Million In Sex Case

By JANE GROSS,  
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**SAN FRANCISCO, Sept. 1**— A former secretary at the world's largest law firm who said she had been sexually harassed by a partner there was awarded \$7.1 million in punitive damages today, a staggering judgment that is sure to send a chill through legal and business circles.

The judgment against the law firm of Baker & McKenzie, the legal giant based in Chicago, and one of its former partners, Martin R. Greenstein, is believed to be the largest ever in a sexual harassment case. It is also almost twice that sought by the plaintiff, Rena Weeks, 40, who worked at the firm for less than two months.

The award sends a powerful message, experts say, about an employer's responsibility to respond promptly and vigorously to complaints of harassment, even when they come from low-level employees against powerful bosses.

"The jury's decision sends a message about entitlement," said Freada Klein, the president of Klein Associates, a Boston-based firm that advises businesses about bias in the workplace. "I would read it as law firms are not allowed to ignore the law, so it's a comment on hypocrisy. It is also a statement that highly successful professionals or revenue-producers are not entitled to be uncivil to support staff." Earlier \$50,000 Award

Ms. Weeks was awarded \$50,000 in compensatory damages by the same jury last Friday for the emotional distress she suffered as a result of Mr. Greenstein's clumsy gropings and crude remarks. The jury of six men and six women found in the first phase of the trial that Baker & McKenzie knew of Mr. Greenstein's harassing behavior and failed to rein him in, despite a previous complaints against him by other women employed at the firm.

In the second phase of the trial, after two days of further testimony and a day of deliberations, the jury awarded Ms. Weeks \$6.9 million in punitive damages from Baker & McKenzie, which had the highest gross revenue of any law firm in America last year, and \$225,000 more from Mr. Greenstein, 49, who was dismissed in the midst of the lawsuit and now runs a one-man firm in San Jose.

The total punitive award of \$7.1 million far exceeded that requested by Ms. Weeks's lawyer, who sought \$3.5 million from firm and \$200,000 from Mr. Greenstein. In instructing the jurors in the second half of the trial, Judge John E. Munter of San Francisco Superior Court cited three criteria for determining punitive damages: the reprehensibility of the conduct, the deterrent effect of the award and a reasonable

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relationship to the actual harm done to Ms. Weeks. 6 Other Women Testify

Ms. Weeks' lawyer, jubilant after the verdict, said that the jury had clearly understood "the gravity of the situation" faced by his client and other women at the firm, six of whom testified here about sexual harassment. "The law firm had a responsibility to its women and absolutely turned it away," said the lawyer, Philip E. Kay.

In a statement issued from its main office in Chicago, Baker & McKenzie said the firm was "extremely disappointed" with the jury's award and planned to appeal.

"Baker & McKenzie has always respected the values of people of all beliefs and backgrounds and rejects the implication that it tolerates professional misconduct of any type," said John McGuigan, chairman of the firm's executive committee.

In the second phase of the trial, Mr. Greenstein's lawyer, Thomas M. Gosselin, tried to present his burly client as a reformed man. Mr. Greenstein had been seeing a psychiatrist since Ms. Weeks's lawsuit in order to improve his interpersonal relationships and to prevent similar problems from recurring, Mr. Gosselin said. Consultant Is Hired

Mr. Greenstein, a divorced father of four children, earned \$550,000 in his last year as a partner at Baker & McKenzie, according to court testimony. He nows earns \$225,000 to \$240,000 a year and his net worth is \$1.93 million.

Baker & McKenzie, for its part, said the firm had made great strides in the treatment of sexual harassment complaints since Ms. Weeks's lawsuit and the subsequent ascension of Mr. McGuigan to the post of chairman. The firm brought in a consultant who worked with the Navy after the Tailhook sexual harassment case and developed a videotape about the correct way to handle such situations.

Baker & McKenzie had gross revenues of \$512 million last year, according to court testimony. The firm distributed \$189 million to its partners and had net profits of \$65 million.

Several jurors said their judgment was roughly calculated by taking 10 percent of the firm's capital. "When you get religion, you should tithe," said a juror, Bill Carpenter, alluding to the firm's testimony about its new attitude toward harassment complaints. "A tithe is 10 percent."



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