

## **PENSACOLA NEWS JOURNAL, June 24, 1989**

### **“Wreck simulated by a computer; \$7 million award”**

Fort Lauderdale – A computer graphic simulation of a 1983 crash helped bring about a \$7 million jury award in the first case in the state using the technology to refute an accident report, attorneys said Friday.

The accident sequence was the key element in the three-week trial for lawyers representing Jill Grant, who was in a coma for three months following the April 19, 1983 accident involving a Publix Super Markets Inc. 18-wheel truck, said Fort Lauderdale attorney Scott Schlesinger.

The computer simulation done at Cornell University in Ithaca, N.Y. indicated the Publix truck rear-ended Grant’s car near the Delray Beach exit of Florida’s Turnpike. There were no witnesses to the 4:30 a.m. crash other than two Publix drivers who told police that Grant was driving erratically and caused the crash.

Schlesinger said the Broward Circuit Court trial was Florida’s first in which a computer has been used to calculate how an accident occurred, rather than to bolster the conclusion of investigators.

“We know of no other time when a computer was used to actually show a jury what went on,” said Schlesinger.

He said details about the crash, such as the damage to the vehicles and the location of paint chips, were entered into the specially programmed computer, developed by physics professor Dr. Arthur Paskin.

The final sequence was shown on a video screen to jurors, who returned the award on Thursday, Grant, now 40 and living in Illinois, remains unable to walk without the aid of a cane. She could not recall the details of the crash.

There has been no decision on whether to appeal the decision.