

# Piccuta Law Group Settles Police

***Monterey Based Attorney Charles Tony Piccuta Settles Lawsuit Against Police for Client Who Was Allegedly Beaten Unconscious and Tasered While Handcuffed.***

Earlier this month, Charles Tony Piccuta of the Piccuta Law Group settled a civil rights, police brutality, lawsuit against the City of Clovis in Fresno County. The City and its officers agreed to pay \$650,000 to resolve the federal lawsuit. The high-profile lawsuit was closely followed by local media outlets in Fresno.

Piccuta alleged in the lawsuit that in September of 2012, his client George Macias, who was then 20 years old, was savagely beaten by four City of Clovis police officers for no reason. Piccuta also alleged that his client was tasered while handcuffed and even threatened by the arresting officer as he was

laying on a gurney being attended to by emergency medical personnel.

Piccuta alleged in the lawsuit that: Macias was pulled over on his motorcycle for his license plate light supposedly not being bright enough and then cited for not having a proper motorcycle license. After Macias received his citation, he was allowed to leave the scene on foot with his helmet and keys as the officers impounded the motorcycle. The officers later decided they wanted the keys to make towing the motorcycle easier. The officers then made contact with Macias about a ½ mile from the stop and requested the keys. Macias refused to give the keys to the officers who then arrested him for obstruction.

In transport to the police station, Macias moved his handcuffs from the back of his body to the front. Piccuta alleged that Macias did this because he wasn't properly placed in the back of the patrol unit and was uncomfortable. In response to this, the transporting officer pulled over on the side of the road and called for additional officers. Three other officers arrived and formed a semi-circle around the back door of the patrol unit. Macias was then ordered out of the unit. As he stepped out, he was immediately beaten by the officers and tasered. Piccuta alleged in the lawsuit that his client posed no threat, did not fight back and was struck multiple times in the back of the head while on the ground until he was unconscious.

Macias was later charged with resisting arrest—a misdemeanor punishable of up to one year in jail. Macias fought the charge and was found not-guilty after a judge ruled that Macias had no duty to give the officers the keys. Piccuta alleged in the lawsuit that the officers knowingly tried to convict his client of a crime he did not commit to justify their excessive use of force.

During the civil lawsuit that Piccuta handled, he uncovered that the main officer had been subsequently terminated from the police department after an Internal Affairs investigation revealed that he had lied repeatedly, falsified reports and made material misstatements to investigating officers with respect to other matters. When asked about his client, Piccuta said "My client was a good kid who never drank, did drugs or ever had any problems with law enforcement before that night. He was the captain of his high school football team and had aspirations to be in law enforcement himself. I truly believe that if the officers knew his background, they would never have done that to him." Macias has since moved to Texas where he is now a correctional officer in the state prison system and enrolled in the Army Reserves.

When asked about the result, Piccuta stated "This was a tremendous result for our client. He did not have extensive physical injuries and only

went to see his doctor once for x-rays to make sure nothing was broken. His medical expenses were less than \$3,000.00. The amount we were able to obtain for him will change his life forever." When asked about the case, Piccuta offered "This was a complex and hard case that took almost four years to resolve. The defense fought us every step of the way—especially when it came to getting the Internal Affairs records. Look, if someone is hurt or taken advantage of, someone needs to be held accountable. It doesn't matter if it's a car accident,

trip and fall, police brutality case or contract dispute. If someone is injured either physically or emotionally, they deserve to be made whole."



*Macias (center) with Piccuta (right) after settling the case.*



*George Macias days after the incident.*



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Effective.**

Charles Tony Piccuta represents individuals and small business owners who have legal issues caused by the misconduct of others. He handles cases involving: personal injury, business disputes, real estate matters, consumer fraud and civil rights violations. Piccuta graduated from Indiana University School of Law with honors (Top 25 law school-US News 2016) and passed the bar exams of Arizona, California, Illinois and Nevada. He practiced in Chicago and Orange County before returning home to the Monterey Peninsula and starting the Piccuta Law Group with his father who is also an attorney. The Piccuta Law Group has offices in Monterey, San Jose and Scottsdale, Arizona.

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