

VERDICTS & SETTLEMENTS

Spa reaches \$3M settlement over unlicensed masseuse's misconduct

■ ERIN ACHENBACH

A massage parlor in Kansas City will have to pay a \$3 million settlement for a massage therapist who inappropriately touched a client and did not have a valid license.



Scott S. Bethune



Wes Shumate



Kevin D. Buchanan

an “inappropriate and offensive manner.”

The plaintiff was not named in the settlement against Rainforest Massage and Spa, operating as Fusion Spa.

According to the suit, which was settled outside of court, the plaintiff bought a massage at Fusion Spa on Jan. 15, 2021. An employee named Gui Jiang, who did not have a valid license, performed the massage. Throughout the massage, Jiang repeatedly touched the plaintiff in

This was not the first time a client had complained about offensive touching by Jiang. The spa's owner, Kemin Geng, had knowledge of a prior complaint against Jiang, and knew that he did not have a valid license.

The plaintiff claimed mental and emotional trauma in their suit. This is the third incident related to Fusion Spa, Geng and Jiang.

A settlement was reached between the two parties on Sept. 18 for the \$3 million policy limits. The plaintiff was represented by lead attorney Wes Shumate and Kevin Buchanan of Davis, Bethune & Jones in Kansas City. Lead attorney Michael Shunk of Baker Sterchi Cowden & Rice in Kansas City was listed as the attorney's defendant. Defendant's insurance carriers are Great American Insurance Company and Travelers Casualty Insurance Company of America.

Shumate said that while the case was settled for insurance limits, which vary depending on the year, they were not necessarily satisfied with the outcome since this has

been an ongoing problem with the spa which is still in business.

“In my mind, I wish there was more that could be done for these victims. I think what happens to them is deserving of much more,” Shumate said.

Shunk declined to comment.

Amount of verdict, judgment or settlement: \$3 million

Type of action:
Other personal injury

Case Number/Date: 9/18/2024

Plaintiffs' Experts: None

Defendants' Experts: None

Injuries: emotional, psychological, PTSD

Caption: Confidential v. Rainforest Massage and Spa, LLC d/b/a Fusion Spa, Kemin Geng, Gui Jiang

Plaintiff's Attorneys:
Wes Shumate and Kevin Buchanan of Davis, Bethune & Jones

Defendant's Attorneys:
Michael Shunk of Baker Sterchi Cowden & Rice