



FINNEY INJURY LAW  
- TRIAL LAWYERS -

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## From Aggravated Assault to Dental Drama

### RUNAWAY 'DENTIST' DODGES DETECTION

While TikTok may be a go-to app for funny videos, it's probably not the best way to find a new dentist.

Last year, Texas-based "dentist" Nikki Calloway used TikTok to generate buzz for her business, ISmilez Cosmetic Designz. The campaign attracted new patients, including one who scheduled an appointment after receiving a \$1,350 quote from Calloway to have 16 teeth removed, replaced, and a bridge added. There was only one problem: "Nikki Calloway" wasn't a licensed dentist. In reality, she was Juanetta Solomon, a notorious local felon with a long history of crime. The botched dental surgery left the patient dizzy, bleeding, and with a tooth that fell out shortly afterward — and prompted Solomon to go on the run from the law.

According to authorities, Solomon had operated her "dentistry" office while out on bond for a weapons charge. Her past offenses include assault with a deadly weapon, aggravated assault with a deadly weapon, and unlawful carrying of a weapon by a felon — and that was just in 2023 and 2024! In one infamous case, she was accused of shooting at her boyfriend's former girlfriend. Her record also includes a December 2016 conviction for the delivery of a controlled substance.

"Juanetta Solomon is the definition of a career habitual offender," commented Andy Kahan, director of victim services and advocacy at Crime Stoppers of Houston, in a story on Katy Magazine Online. "She's been in prison multiple times in different counties, so it's no surprise she is once again wanted.



Her latest offense is extremely brutal, pretending to be a dentist [and] causing undue pain and stress on individuals, so the quicker we get her back in custody, the less anyone has to suffer as a result of her criminal conduct."

Law enforcement was still attempting to capture Solomon at the time of this writing. Her bizarre turn as a "dentist" serves as a chilling reminder that Google and a little research — not social media — are the best tools to determine whether your chosen provider is a professional or someone destined for prison.



# TRIALS & THEIR TALES

- NEWSLETTER -

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## Growing Pains

### A PROMISING NEW YEAR WITH SOME ADJUSTMENTS

Happy New Year! We have some different things happening starting this month. First off, Alex will be writing a column on the inside of each newsletter. It is about time you all get a different perspective than mine. My hope is that it allows you to get different information about the office and practice of law. If his first column is any indicator, this will be a great read. I hope you enjoy that.

Secondly, we added a chief financial officer and another attorney. Will is a CPA and an Eagle Scout. I wrote briefly about his hiring on LinkedIn. He brings a sense of order to the chaos. Regular meetings to move through projects and address roadblocks are something we have never been able to accomplish. Now, we have them weekly. We have someone who is available to the office and can fix any problem that pops up. Not only is he better at this than I am, it frees up more time to work on cases. It is the classic win-win.

Jen is our new intake and pre-litigation attorney. To say she was needed is an understatement. Jen brings a lot of experience but, most importantly, a dogged commitment to get things done — like if she cannot finish a project, she will melt or something. It is actually pretty incredible to watch. She immediately started revamping how we intake cases, screen them, and put a process in place for the entire situation. It is awesome.

The growing pains are real, though. There truly is a necessary "hurt" to go through when someone new is added to the team. It is not painful but it is more of a realignment. Different responsibilities will arise and there will be an adjustment period where everyone is getting up to speed. That is exactly where we are now. And even in this adjustment period, it is abundantly clear we are on the right path. The team realizes that as well. We have to trudge through this to get to that. We are. By the time you read this, we will be humming along. I can feel it.



We will have also tried a case by the time you read this. It is a big case, with serious injuries. The defense recognizes it as well. In fact, the defense lawyer told me they've spent \$100,000 on focus groups and mock trials for this case. When he told me that, I almost fell over. I didn't have words. I still don't think it is all true. There is no way. They have made better-than-expected (but still terribly low) offers. Seems like they are serious.

Then I thought, oh my God. There is no sliding past unnoticed anymore. We cannot capitalize on the other side falling asleep at the wheel. They will be ready. They will be aware of every fact in the case and every witness. It made me nervous. Thoughts of failure crept up. Our client is deserving. We would not be trying the case if she wasn't. It is a catastrophic harm. We need to put on our best case, our clearest case, and our most authentic case. We will.

It truly is an opportunity. A chance to show people who our client is and what she stands for. That people cannot be brushed to the side after the failures of others. That her life and her freedoms matter. That responsibilities matter and there are consequences to negligence. A chance to learn more about ourselves, to get better at what we do, and, most importantly, a chance to walk the walk. We cannot claim to be trial lawyers if we don't try cases. So, let's shut up and go to trial.

Ch.





# The Issues We Face

ALEX REFLECTS ON THE PAST 5 YEARS

It's hard to believe it has been five years since I joined Chris at Finney Injury Law. Starting in 2025, I will be contributing my thoughts in this monthly newsletter. I'm excited to provide some additional perspective of our day-to-day work and to nerd out on the law and the issues we face in helping our fellow human beings.

Five years ago, a word I used to describe myself was “entrepreneur.” I had my own law practice with my name on the door that I started days after I was sworn in to practice law. To be frank, I had no idea what I was doing, but I had the drive to figure it out and, most importantly, I had surrounded myself with great mentors. The year was 2017. My practice quickly began to build. However, it built on my ability to be a jack of all trades. Estate planning, criminal defense, traffic tickets, family law, general civil litigation, and some personal injury claims. I needed this diversity to keep the lights on at the office. In June 2018, a young lady engaged my law firm after suffering catastrophic injuries from a car crash. To put it bluntly, I had a lot of learning and work to do. Several months later, I settled my first personal injury case for another client. I still remember the rush of excitement, accomplishment, and satisfaction my client felt. I wanted more. Helping plaintiffs was all I could think about.

Fast forward to the summer of 2019. A lawyer who shared my office reached out to me, saying Chris Finney was looking for a lawyer. I brushed it off. I was an entrepreneur. He pressed me and encouraged me to reach out. While on vacation with my family, with a wife pregnant with baby No. 3, I sent the email that has transformed me as a human, a teammate, a husband, a



*“Through listening, I learned how an injury to a human being changes them.”*

father, and a lawyer. Chris offered me the job. I quickly came to grips with winding down my own law firm and focused on transferring a handful of personal injury cases to my new law firm. I was eager to learn.

Over the years, Chris and I have grown together in significant ways. Together, we have had the highest highs and the lowest lows. We have been in the trenches. We have been on top of the mountain together. We have been told we are insane. We have been laughed at. After these five years, one word that describes our identity is persistence. You see, when I came over to Finney Injury Law, I did not know the first thing about how you “work up” a personal injury case. It was from Chris that I learned the persistence to always keep learning, to try new things, to stick your head out there, and to listen. Through listening, I also learned by osmosis from successful personal injury lawyers around me. I learned how medical professionals diagnose and treat injuries. And most importantly, through listening, I learned how an injury to a human being changes them.

That case I spoke about earlier from June 2018? The persistence resulted in a seven-figure settlement. Even more fitting for the timing of this article is the fact that the firm just resolved one of the first cases I helped work on from the very beginning, again for seven figures. For this case, we lived on a roller coaster, but it was through persistence that a fellow human being's voice was finally heard.

I cannot wait to share more with you all. To the next five years and beyond!



# DRIVE TO SURVIVE

## Protect Your Teen Driver on the Road

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for American teenagers, and Missouri is the second-most dangerous state in the nation for teen drivers.

Montana was rated the most dangerous state, according to WalletHub, a personal finance company. The rating was based on 23 metrics including accident statistics, driving laws, and insurance-premium penalties for risky behavior.

In recognition of January as Teen Driving Awareness Month, this is a good time to reflect on how parents can help ensure their teens' safety when they get behind the wheel.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), crash risk is highest among teens 16-19 years

old. These older teens are almost three times more likely to crash per mile driven than drivers age 20 and older. Teenage boys are at particular risk, crashing three times more often than girls.

Parents can reduce teen-driving risks by restricting the most risky activities. The most dangerous times for teen drivers are at night or on weekends, the CDC says. Having teenage passengers in the car puts young drivers in greater jeopardy. So does violating some very basic safety rules. More than half of teens age 16-19 killed in vehicle accidents were not wearing a seat belt at the time. Also, 29% of older teens killed on the road had been drinking. Using alcohol or marijuana before driving impairs a user's judgment, motor coordination, decision-making, and reaction time.



Parents also can educate their teens about the huge responsibility driving entails. A wrong decision can result in serious harm to others, including people your teenager cares about most. Emphasize to your child the importance of paying attention, wearing a seat belt, and never driving impaired or while using a cellphone. Parents also should exercise judgment regarding their child's impulsivity, restricting driving privileges for kids who aren't able to put safety first. Above all, parents can set a good example of safe driving themselves!

## VEGAN TACO BOWL WITH TOFU CRUMBLES

*Inspired by BowlsAreTheNewPlates.com*

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp onion powder
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp dried oregano or epazote
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 chipotle chilies in adobo sauce, chopped
- 2 tbsp adobo sauce
- 16 oz extra firm tofu
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 cup diced yellow onion
- 2 cups cooked quinoa
- 1/2 cup salsa of choice

### DIRECTIONS

1. In a large mixing bowl, combine garlic, cumin, black pepper, oregano, salt, chipotle chilies, and adobo sauce.
2. Drain the block of tofu and gently squeeze out the extra liquid using paper towels. Then, crumble tofu using your hands, add to mixing bowl, and toss to coat with spices.
3. Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion and sauté for 3-4 minutes.
4. Add tofu crumbles and cook for 6 minutes. Add salsa and cook for 1-2 minutes.
5. Fill serving bowls with quinoa. Layer tofu taco meat over the quinoa, then top with extra salsa and other garnishes like lime juice, jalapeños, cilantro, avocado, and sliced radishes.

## YOUR REFERRALS MEAN THE WORLD TO US

**There is no greater compliment we can receive than a client telling a friend or loved one about us. If you know somebody who has been injured and needs an attorney who will fight on their behalf and give their case the attention it deserves, please pass along this newsletter and have them call us at 314-293-4222. Thank you for spreading the word about Finney Injury Law.**