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Jury Awards \$220,000 to Forced Drug Therapy Victim

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (AP) — A U.S. District Court jury has awarded a 20-year-old man \$220,000 damages for being held against his will by a drug rehabilitation clinic.

The jury deliberated about three hours Wednesday before returning the award in the suit brought by Fred Collins of Fairfax, Va., against **Straight, Inc.**

Collins had asked for \$750,000 damages in his suit against the Florida-based group with facilities in northern **Virginia.**

Before the jury received the case from U.S. District

Court Judge Albert V. Bryan Jr., Collins' attorney, Philip J. Hirschkop, urged the panel to assess large damages against Straight, arguing there was a pattern of illegal detention at the clinics.

"Kidnapping and false imprisonment are felonies," Hirschkop said. He also said **Straight** officials "repeatedly ignored Florida state law, locking people in rooms and threatening to commit others to mental institutions."

"Only a substantial monetary award would prevent them from continuing such policies," Hirschkop concluded.

Two weeks ago, the jury found that Collins was held against his will at Straight's St. Petersburg, Fla. facility last June. Straight was, however, exonerated of Collins' charge that he was physically and mentally abused.

Collins, who has denied ever having a drug habit, asked compensatory damages for loss of the family financial support for college and money to pay for psychiatric treatment for emotional problems coming from the treatment.

The jury awarded him \$40,000 in compensatory damages and \$180,000 in punitive damages.