



Angela A. Smedley Discusses What a Recent Civil Rights Win Means for Police Accountability with Law360

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Winston & Strawn partner and Pro Bono Committee Chair Angela A. Smedley discussed the [trial win for pro bono client Andre Adams](#), who was falsely arrested by three New York police officers, and the growing receptiveness by jurors to give serious consideration to misconduct allegations in a recent interview with Law360.

Angela told Law360 that the team was able to talk to more than half of the jurors after the trial, where they learned that they valued how Angela's opening arguments tried to convey that Adams' case was not about opposing law enforcement broadly, but rather was an attempt to make sure there's accountability when officers fabricate evidence and make false arrests.

"We know that they have hard jobs ... but this case is about what happens in those instances where police do commit false arrests or fabricate evidence, and then how are they held accountable for that," she said. "In the post-trial conversations, a couple of the jurors mentioned that they liked that that was said because they didn't want to be part of a discourse that was generally anti-police."

She noted that in closing arguments, co-counsel Joel Wertheimer worked to drive home the idea that it was up to jurors like those chosen to hear this case to help provide that accountability.

"Joel's closing was really impassioned, which they also [said] really made them feel that he really believed in his client," Angela said. "But he closed it out by saying that this was the jury's opportunity to send a message to the police that you can't do this to people. And he repeated that a couple of times, and I think it was really powerful. But that, I think, is also connected to the reason we got punitive damages."

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