Trial Lawyer Mark Lanier: Teen's Bullying, Rape Case Appealed to 'Core Sense of Right and Wrong'

Mark Lanier

Trial lawyer **Mark Lanier** was not looking for new cases when two Idaho attorneys called him earlier this year with an appeal to what he described as his "core sense of right and wrong," according to a post on the website of **Androvett Legal Media & Marketing**.

The Androvett post continues:

> The always-busy Houston lawyer recently earned a $1 billion product liability verdict against J&J and is gearing up for numerous other trials. But when he heard more about the case involving Antwon McDaniel, a developmentally disabled teen who was bullied and raped at a rural Idaho high school, the decision to join the legal team was an easy one.
>
> "It's outrageous. It's horrible," Mr. Lanier told the *Magic Valley Times-News*. "As a lawyer, if I can help in a case like this and I don't, they ought to take away my bar card."
>
> The federal lawsuit, filed last year, claims that the individually named school board trustees, administrators, teachers and coaches of the Dietrich School District chose to ignore the ongoing physical and mental abuse being suffered by Antwon McDaniel, effectively depriving him of his constitutional rights. The racially motivated violence inflicted on the now 19-year-old Mr. McDaniel, who is black,

included anal rape with a coat hanger by several white football teammates in 2015. Criminal cases stemming from the locker room attack have all been resolved, but the civil lawsuit seeking $10 million is ongoing, with the next hearing set for May 9. Trial dates have not yet been scheduled.

Mr. Lanier described his decision to join the lawsuit in an interview with the *Times-News*:

“My goal is to make sure no student in Idaho or anywhere else has this problem again,” [Mr. Lanier] said. “We need to do something to protect our children who don’t fit in, aren’t the right color, aren’t the right religion and don’t fit that model profile. There’s a chance to do something here.”

There were three main motivating factors, Mr. Lanier said. The need for the school district to be responsible; the “egregiousness of it all”; and because he “cares deeply about racial issues.”

“America is at a place where we have to find a way to be accepting of people of different race, religion, gender, or even political affiliation,” Mr. Lanier said.