

**PALM BEACH COUNTY**  
**SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

RIC L. BRADSHAW, SHERIFF



FEBRUARY 3, 2016

**MEDIA ADVISORY**

The jury verdict reached today is both shocking and disappointing. Sgt. Adams Lin, who is a minority himself, and who had worked in the high crime neighborhood where the incident occurred for many years had never used deadly force prior to his unfortunate encounter with Mr. Stephens. In fact Sgt. Lin had worked with many residents in the community including raising funds to send underprivileged African American youth to Washington D.C. on school field trips. Sgt. Lin also fostered an African American child and he had many encounters with African Americans and other minority citizens prior to his encounter with Mr. Stephens. Based upon Mr. Stephens' actions, Sgt. Lin reasonably mistook a cell phone that Mr. Stephens held in his hand for a firearm, and fearing for his life, he shot Mr. Stephens. Sgt. Lin then saved Mr. Stephens life due to the fact that he had extensive medical training as a result of serving his country as a member of the U.S. Army while on deployment in Afghanistan in 2008. He did so by rendering first aid to Mr. Stephens until EMS arrived.

The narrow issue decided by the jury in this case was limited exclusively to whether Sgt. Lin intentionally used excessive force upon Mr. Stephens on September 13, 2013. The civil rights claim against the Sheriff's Office was properly dismissed by the Court before trial. The Court dismissed the civil rights claim against the Sheriff's Office because there was no evidence to support a claim that the Sheriff's Office's customs policies, practices and procedures including investigations of officer involved shootings, could have caused the use of excessive deadly force in this case. As a result the jury was not asked to decide any claims against the Sheriff's Office regarding its customs, policies, practices or procedures, including the investigation of officer involved shootings.

The only remaining claim against the Sheriff's Office was a state law battery claim for excessive force which has a cap on damages in the amount of \$200,000.00 absent passage of a claims bill by the state legislature.

The defendants intend to appeal this verdict.

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