

Family sues county over woman's injury

☑ Social worker left with brain damage after beam falls on her head.

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The family of a Scio Township social worker who suffered brain damage when a beam fell on her head while she was attending a gardening class in a Washtenaw County-owned building is suing the county for \$5.75 million.

The lawsuit filed Wednesday in Washtenaw Circuit Court says Gil Anne Crisman-McQuarrie, 45, was injured Feb. 6, 1997, during a course at the Washtenaw County Service Center, at 4133 Washtenaw Ave. in Pittsfield Township. Crisman-McQuarrie was sitting in class between master gardening class lectures offered through Michigan State University Cooperative Services when the wood ceiling beam fell, the suit said.

Crisman-McQuarrie continues to undergo rehabilitation at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital, the suit said.

Oakland County attorney David L. Moffitt, who is representing Crisman-McQuarrie in the lawsuit, said she "had significant career potential and was considered a dynamo by her co-workers and community volunteer colleagues."

"... Now she has to write who she's talking to on the phone, so she doesn't forget cannot drive," Moffitt said, an family uses a pool of 55 people transport her and her two teenage children.

Moffitt said Crisman-McQuarrie can't remember her son's birthday or participate in a conversation has difficulty with reasoning skills.

"This was a person who have been of independent means and who prized that fact," he said. "That's no longer true. It's impossible to put a value on what it means to her to have her life destroyed."

'This was a person who could have been of independent means, and who prized that fact. That's no longer true. It's impossible to put a value on what it means to her to have her life destroyed.'

— Attorney David L. Moffitt on his client's condition

file the suit to give doctors and family a chance to determine long-term seriousness of the injury.

Moffitt said he has been negotiating with Washtenaw County damages, and the two sides will remain in negotiation.

County corporation counsel Curtis Hedger said Wednesday the building where the incident occurred remains in use, and the beam that hit Crisman-McQuarrie was reinstalled.