

ATTORNEYS OBTAIN UNANIMOUS DEFENSE VERDICT IN AN “ENGLISH ONLY” TRIAL

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[Georgia Staton](#)



and [Elizabeth Gilbert](#), attorneys at Jones, Skelton & Hochuli, P.L.C.,

obtained a unanimous verdict in favor of Pima County Community College in a highly contested two-week civil trial involving Arizona's “English Only” Constitutional Provision.

Plaintiff, a nursing student at the Desert Vista Campus, claimed that her learning was disrupted when Spanish-speaking students would occasionally speak to each other in Spanish in class. Plaintiff claimed that the College failed to “preserve, protect and enhance” her rights as someone who used the English language. The College introduced evidence that her rights to use English at the College were not infringed upon and that there was no evidence that anyone ever spoke Spanish to her. Administrators confirmed that all instruction, written material, exams and classroom interactions were conducted in English.

Plaintiff confronted a student stating: “This is America. You're not in Mexico. Speak English.” She also referred to the Spanish language as “gibberish”. Plaintiff became increasingly antagonistic referring to Hispanic students as “spics, beaners and illegals”. She also threatened a Hispanic student stating that she had a black belt and could “kick her ass.” She also intimidated her instructor and a staff member. The Plaintiff was suspended from the nursing program because of her conduct. She appealed her suspension to the president of the Desert Vista Campus who upheld her suspension. Plaintiff was allowed to return to the nursing program in January 2014 if she agreed to comply with the College's student conduct standards. She refused and, instead, sued the College.

The jury deliberated for less than three hours and returned a unanimous verdict in favor of the College.

[Ms. Staton](#) has been a partner at Jones, Skelton & Hochuli, P.L.C. for over 31 years. She is a Fellow in the American College of Trial Lawyers and only one of three female attorneys holding that designation in the State of Arizona. She is certified as a specialist in the area of Personal Injury and Wrongful Death. She has spoken at seminars around the country regarding litigation-related issues and has been an instructor at the Arizona Trial College since 1992 where she has taught trial skills. She concentrates her practice in defense of governmental entities in civil rights cases, catastrophic personal injury and employment law. She has tried an excess of 70 cases to verdict.

[Ms. Gilbert](#) joined Jones, Skelton & Hochuli, P.L.C. in August 2010. She began her career as a prosecutor in February 1996 and has tried over 70 cases, both criminal and civil. Ms. Gilbert concentrates her civil litigation practice on governmental entity defense with an emphasis on civil-rights matters and employment litigation.

Jones, Skelton & Hochuli, P.L.C. is one of the largest and most experienced defense trial law firms in Arizona. Having been in existence for almost 32 years, the firm specializes in trial practice; insurance coverage; defense of corporations; self-insureds; governmental entities; and insurance carriers. For additional information please visit www.jshfirm.com or call (602) 263-1798.