

Litigation Daily

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Good morning! It's October 23 and I'm Lit Daily editor Jenna Greene, here with your Daily Dicta. Reach me at jgreene@alm.com or on Twitter [@jgreenejenna](https://twitter.com/jgreenejenna).

The Pro Se Litigant Who Won a Federal Jury Trial

Brian Vukadinovich was a high school shop teacher in northern Indiana when his job was terminated.

He sued his employer, the Hanover Community School Corporation, in federal court—and he won, beating a team of experienced lawyers from Frost Brown Todd and Newby, Lewis, Kaminski & Jones. After a five-day trial, a jury in 2016 awarded him \$203,840.39 in damages for violating his due process rights.

Now the executive director of The Posner Center, Vukadinovich just wrote a book, “Motion for Justice: I Rest My Case” about his experience as a pro se litigant.

It's not pretty.

“For those who do not have the ability to pay, they find out rather quickly that, in the end, they essentially have no rights,” he wrote. “And you may wonder, how can this be when we are taught that every person in our country has certain inalienable rights? The honest answer to this question is very simple. It is called our ‘system of justice!’”

Vukadinovich is understandably delighted with his victory. The chapter in his book describing his closing argument is particularly powerful. Here's how he recounts the aftermath, as he looked over at opposing counsel:

The “lawyers knew they were whipped and were going to lose. I could see it in their eyes as they sat there motionless, each with a very worried look on their faces. They thought they could just come to the trial and lie and get away with

what they did. I am sure they probably figured that there was no way that a shop teacher would be able to go into a weeklong federal jury trial without a lawyer and present his case and be able to beat them and their team of lawyers. They were very wrong!”

Check out his book [here](#).
