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**Civil Rights Law Firms Investigating Penn State Sexual Abuse Scandal  
Lawyers Say Abuse Victims Can and Should Recover Damages from Penn State Officials**

STATE COLLEGE– November 14, 2011 – As the Penn State child sexual abuse scandal has developed over the past week, legal commentators have hit the airwaves and press suggesting that Penn State and University officials might escape civil liability because Penn State is a state institution and a number of officials reported abuse to their superiors. “We disagree,” says David Marshall, a partner with the Washington, D.C., civil rights law firm of Katz, Marshall & Banks, LLP. “We believe Penn State will have to compensate these victims for what has happened.” Marshall’s law firm and Andrew Shubin, one of central Pennsylvania’s leading civil rights attorneys, have teamed up to assess the legal and constitutional issues involved. They are confident that that the victims of sexual abuse by former Penn State football coach Jerry Sandusky will be able to hold Penn State and University officials and coaches accountable in court and recover damages for the harm they have suffered.

“The abused children, many of whom are now adults, can sue for violation of their constitutional rights,” says Shubin, whose law office is in State College just a few blocks from the university. “The Constitution protects children from sexual abuse when a governmental entity is responsible for the harm they have suffered, as a grand jury found that Penn State officials were here.”

Marshall agrees. “There are always complex issues in lawsuits that seek damages from government officials for violating a person’s constitutional rights,” he says, “but there is no way Penn State can avoid liability here. As the grand jury reported, some of the highest officials at Penn State knew for years that Jerry Sandusky was sexually abusing defenseless children in the university’s facilities – and not a single one of them did anything to stop him. In fact, by doing nothing, and by allowing him to use his affiliation with Penn State football to prey on vulnerable children, they deliberately turned their backs on these children and facilitated Sandusky’s horrific crimes.” Marshall says a lawsuit for violation of constitutional rights is the vehicle that abuse victims will need to use to obtain compensation from Penn State officials.

Seth Kreimer, a University of Pennsylvania law professor and an expert in civil rights and constitutional litigation, is working with Shubin and Marshall to formulate a legal case

against Penn State. “We are developing a legal strategy based on the facts as they unfold,” says Kreimer. “It may be that Penn State officials are not the only ones who could be liable for knowing about the abuse and keeping quiet. We may find that officials of the Penn State police, local school districts, and the Department of Public Welfare should be named as defendants as well.”

Centre County civil rights lawyer Justine Andronici, who has worked with both Marshall’s firm and Shubin’s firm on past civil rights cases, is also advising Marshall & Shubin. Andronici works as a domestic violence attorney in State College and has represented many victims of sexual assault and abuse in Centre County. She says, “As a member of this community I feel a tremendous obligation to ensure that the victims get the type of legal assistance they deserve.” Andronici says the victims need experienced legal counsel who will treat them with respect and sensitivity as they take the courageous step to come forward and use the legal system to hold powerful officials accountable. “The focus has to be on the victims and their rights, not on Penn State football or individual legacies. The focus has to be the pursuit of justice for these victims,” says Andronici.

Shubin says he picked a legal team that is specifically geared to the issues in this case. “These victims have been let down enough,” Shubin stated. “I have assembled a powerful legal team that is experienced in civil-rights cases, sex abuse cases and constitutional litigation, that is highly committed to ensuring that the victims and their families make the strongest case for compensation, and which is locally based but nationally recognized.” Shubin, who has represented working people and families in Centre County for 21 years, noted that the both his firm and Marshall’s have brought civil rights cases against large government institutions and universities, and have achieved significant outcomes for their clients.

“A terrible injustice has occurred in our community,” Shubin says. “As a civil rights attorney, and father of three children here in State College, I am committed to seeing that the full magnitude of that injustice is exposed, that those responsible are held accountable to the victims and the community for what they have done, and that the victims and their families receive the full measure of compensation to which they are entitled under the law.”

Marshall and Shubin encourage anyone who experienced sexual abuse by Jerry Sandusky, and who would like to explore the potential for recovering damages from Penn State officials for letting this happen, to contact them at the numbers listed above.