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A Weekly Warriors Salute to Father and Daughter Team Derek and
Meghan Jones for their Sweet Victory in Federal Drug Trial



It was a late Friday at the old RBR. Most of the floors were already dark, but the lights still burned in courtroom 1708 as father and daughter team Derek and Meghan Jones of [The Jones Law Firm LLC](#) awaited a jury trial verdict in the courtroom of the Honorable Eleanor Ross. Friday evening verdicts by citizens eager to shed their blue and white juror badges and get back to their own lives are often heart breakers for defense lawyers and their clients, but not this time. All eyes were on Judge Ross' courtroom deputy as she stood and read that coveted two word verdict in Northern District of Georgia criminal case 1:15-CR-297 on June 9, 2017 at 7:15pm.

This time it would be Government heart break after the week long battle over the fate of Derek and Meghan Jones' client, a Cuban born man originally accused of drug and firearms offenses. According to the criminal complaint, the client's entanglement with the feds began with a DEA informant's tale that the man was a source of methamphetamine, heroin, marijuana and firearms. Then, on July 9, 2015, federal agents descended upon the man's Paulding County residence with a search warrant reportedly finding three firearms, but no controlled substances. Agents claimed that the man had been convicted of a felony back in 1981. A month after the arrest, the Grand Jury returned an indictment charging him with being a felon in possession of firearms.

Derek was appointed after Federal Defender Wes Bryant discovered a conflict. This brought about Wes' withdrawal from the case after vigorous briefing in a round of suppression motions and hearings. The case took a surprising turn when the Government superseded to add drug charges and later moved to dismiss the felon in possession count when Derek and Meghan refused to do an Old Chief stipulation on the alleged prior felony from 1981.

A strategy session at the Federal Defender Weekly Roundtable Group discussion (*every Tuesday at noon*) produced a cogent argument that dismissal of the 922(g) should be with prejudice. Judge Ross agreed. So, the case proceeded to trial on the drug charges alone on Monday, June 5, 2017.



Three years earlier, Derek Jones and his wife and business partner Yvonne Fuller-Jones, watched as their daughter graduated with her Juris Doctor Degree, *magna cum laude*, from the Georgia State University College of Law in the Spring of 2014. Now as Derek and Meghan flanked their client, Meghan thought of how lucky she felt to be her dad's partner in their family firm.

Meghan says, "I knew my father was a good attorney-- but never realized just how great he was until I worked directly with him." After watching Derek cross examine a witness, Meghan says she felt grateful that he never applied those skills to extract information from her as a teenager. Meghan also says she has been inspired by her father's faith in her. Derek offered her full partnership in the firm in January of 2015. This meant the world to Meghan as this meant that she could work *with* him in the practice as opposed to working *for* him. Derek says that Meghan's help as his second chair in the trial was invaluable. Meghan looks forward to growing the practice as she works alongside Derek in the years to come.

One can only imagine this will be a happy father's day for the Joneses and hopefully a relaxing one.

Well done Derek and Meghan. Happy Father's Day to all!