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LOCAL BROWARD



■ PEMBROKE PINES

Dancer injured in crash settles lawsuit for \$1.6 million

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An Israeli dancer injured in a 1992 Pembroke Pines car crash recently settled her lawsuit for \$1.6 million.

Galit Haik, 27, a member of the Shalom Dance Troupe, was on her way to a March 1992 performance at Century Village when the van she was riding in turned in front of an oncoming car. Several others in the van were hurt, Haik most seriously.

"We felt so bad about it," said Toni Gleeson, director of the Pembroke Pines clubhouse where Haik was to perform.

Haik had a promising career with the

Israeli folk dance troupe and was a top math and physics major at Tel Aviv University. The accident ended all that, said Diana Santa Maria, Haik's Davie attorney.

"Her life will never be the same. She was extraordinarily talented," Santa Maria said.

Haik has brain damage, memory lapses, constant ringing in her ears and depression stemming from her radical change in lifestyle after the injury, said Santa Maria, who lives in Cooper City. Haik is still with the dance troupe, but does clerical work, Santa Maria said.

Santa Maria sued the owner of the rental van Haik was traveling in, InterAmerican

Car Rental in Miami. Florida law states that the owner of a vehicle is responsible for the negligence of the driver.

Charles Rice, the Miami attorney representing InterAmerican, called the case routine. His job was to find other insurance companies to absorb some of the loss, he said. The insurance company for the Arie Kaduri Agency, which booked the rental van, paid \$750,000 of the claim, Rice said.

The Shalom Dance Troupe is a popular attraction around Broward. It tours the area at least once a year to entertain and foster a greater understanding of Israeli culture.