

Statement on Ladona Poore's case by her attorneys, Thomas Mortensen and Dan Smolen

First and foremost, I am proud to know LaDona Poore and consider her a personal hero. I can specifically recall advising her early on in the process that she would have to endure unspeakable assaults on her character, and that she would ultimately be blamed for anything that happened to her. Despite my repeated attempts to warn her of the humiliating process, she pressed forward with little hesitation and told me the reason for her persistence, "I don't want this to happen to anyone else...".

True to form, the jury trial was unnecessarily long and LaDona found herself on the stand having to defend herself against an extremely perverse and twisted interpretation of her previous statements. I expected as much, however, I didn't expect the effect it would ultimately have on LaDona. After some time to contemplate and digest what had happened, it appears testifying and telling her story had a transformative and therapeutic effect when she was able to finally describe what happened to her. In the past, she was unsuccessful in therapy and treatment due to her unwillingness to re-live the events.

Not only was her testimony therapeutic, it was validated when the jury was gracious enough to vote on her. There aren't many people who have voted on her in the past, and she considered herself damaged goods with little to no hope of becoming a valued person. I am hopeful and interested to see the positive effect this case may have on her in the future, and we have the jury to thank for that.

Regarding the jurors, I'm concerned that once they get beyond the defense's negative spin, and realize that every bit of LaDona's story was real - that they may regret that they didn't send more of a message with their verdict. I truly hope that isn't the case because their verdict has done so much for LaDona and her ability to finally cope with the trauma of the events that unfolded in the Tulsa County Jail. I'm extremely proud of what the jurors accomplished, and am hopeful that their decision will influence a narrative between the past and the future. With regard to the advancement of safety policies for juvenile females, I'm sure the history books will speak highly of the jury's courage and conviction in finding the Sheriff liable for the systemic deficiencies that have resulted in a great deal of harm...to a great deal of people.