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Settlement in accident case

A Las Vegas U.S. District Court jury has awarded \$1.2 million to the parents of two young Japanese women who were killed in a 1980 plane crash into the Grand Canyon.

The two women were killed in a July 1980 when a Cessa twin-engine aircraft crashed immediately after takeoff from the Grand Canyon National Park Airport. The estates of both women, Sawako Minato, 22, and Hiroko Miyazawa, 22, were represented by Thomas A. Demetrio of Corboy & Demetrio.

The two Japanese college students were touring the United States when the accident occurred. During the three-week trial, plaintiff experts testified that the airplane was manufactured and sold in a defective condition, because it did not have a fuel injection system. The injection system, the expert testified, would have controlled the amount of fuel fed into the engine in relation to the amount of air the engine was ingesting.

Another plaintiff expert testified on the significance of the parent-child relationship in Japan. The parents of both women testified through an interpreter. The verdict was against both the manufacturer of the airplane, the Cessna Aircraft Co., and Scenic Airlines, Inc., which operates a commuter sightseeing service on the west coast.

The defendants' offer before trial was \$100,000 per family. Scenic Airlines was represented by James B. McQuillan and William C. Brown of the New York firm of Bigham, Englar, Jones & Houston. Cessna was represented by Edwin W. Green and Sheldon J. Warren of the Los Angeles firm of Bronson, Bronson & McKinnon.