

Lawyers get fees for representing beggars

by UPI

NEW YORK - The lawyers who represented two New York panhandlers in a class-action suit have been awarded more than \$300,000 in legal fees. The lead plaintiff in the suit, Eddie Wise, received a payment of \$100,000 in 2006 after a judge ruled that New York cannot make arrests for peaceful panhandling. Judge Shira Scheindlin ruled last year that panhandlers across the state should receive damages, a finding that is being appealed in federal court. The arrests were made under a law found to be unconstitutional in 1992. The legal fees will be split between Gregory Smyth, a lawyer with a non-profit group, the Bronx Defenders, and two civil rights lawyers, Matthew Brinckerhoff and Katherine Rosenfeld, the New York Daily News reported. They represented Wise and another panhandler, Michael Brown. A city lawyer said New York will not appeal the fees because the judge reduced them from the amount sought by the plaintiffs.

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