


Teacher's family awarded \$8.1 million


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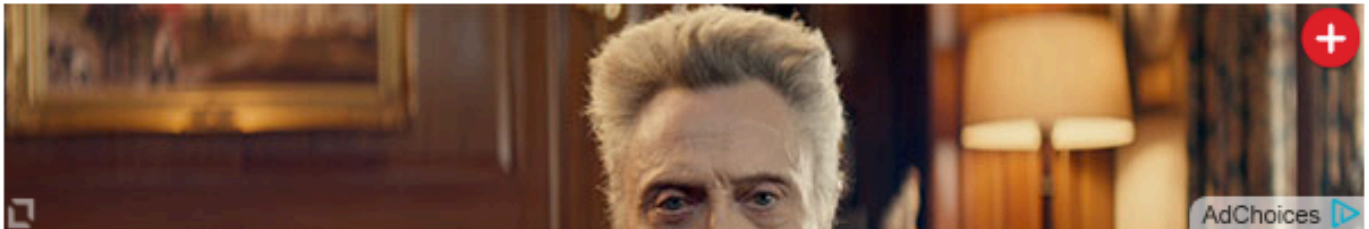
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LOS ANGELES, April 25 -- A Los Angeles jury awarded \$8.15 million Thursday to the family of a pre-school teacher who was killed while saving a 3-year-old boy from a runaway bus. The jury determined that United Transportation Services, which was doing business as Mark IV Charter, was at fault for the June 1994 accident that killed Sara Quezada, 50.

Quezada, who had been chaperoning 29 students on a field trip to the Los Angeles Zoo, grabbed the boy as the bus began to roll and used her body to shield him as the bus rolled over them, attorneys said. Quezada was killed almost instantly, while the boy suffered a broken pelvis and has since recovered. 'We hope our mother's death was not in vain,' the woman's oldest son, Jose, said. 'We are gratified that justice has been served. Our purpose in bringing this lawsuit was to make sure this doesn't happen again so that children and their parents and teachers can feel safe riding a bus.' The family's attorney, Browne Greene, alleged that the bus driver was negligent for leaving the bus running while it was parked on a slope. Quezada, the mother of three children, was assistant director for the Jardin de Ninos Child Care Center, a publicly funded preschool in the Los Angeles suburb of Lincoln Heights. She was posthumously awarded commendations from city, county and state officials honoring her actions.