

\$250,000 payout for rail fall boy

By: CLARKE Barry

SCHOOLBOY Morgan Jones has received a \$250,000 payout for the horrific injuries he received two years ago when he fell from a train.

Morgan's father, Les Jones, and lawyer **Grant Cameron** agreed to the compensation deal after months of negotiating with **Tranz Rail**, which operated the train Morgan fell from while on a scenic trip from Christchurch to Kaikoura.

Part of the agreement is the money will be held in trust for Morgan (8) until he turns 25, by which time it would have increased substantially.

Tranz Rail spokeswoman Helen Morgan-Banda said the company would not discuss the settlement.

There would be no public announcement. The matter was "now over".

Mr Jones initially wanted \$3 million compensation from **Tranz Rail**. The amount was based on what he believed Morgan would have earned as an adult in a working lifetime, compensation for his injuries and to pay for specialised learning equipment such as computers.

He had planned to file civil proceedings in the High Court but was thwarted by legislation, he said.

Mr Jones said he was pleased with the settlement but could not discuss it further.

Morgan was left blind and missing part of his right leg after falling underneath the Coastal Pacific train on July 2, 1994, when a safety rail on a viewing platform gave way.

The police took a criminal nuisance charge against **Tranz Rail** but it was thrown out earlier this year in the High Court at Wellington.

Mr Jones said Morgan had received \$43 a week from the Accident Compensation Corporation but it was only a "pittance" for what he needed.

"He goes through that amount in a week wearing out clothes crawling around the floor," he said.

Mr Jones himself has been in hospital for two months after being knocked off his bicycle.

He has multiple fractures to an ankle, ribs and a wrist and will be recovering for at least another six months.

Morgan had been a great inspiration for him.

"He comes to the hospital and takes me for a walk. He's really positive, it's great."

_ BARRY CLARKE

CAPTION:

NZ LISTENER MORGAN . . . `inspiration'

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