

# THE REPORTER

## DISPATCH

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1992

### \$16M awarded family of woman who died in childbirth

*Mother died in 1984  
at Putnam hospital.*

By Cameron McWhirter  
Staff Writer

The family of a mother of four who died eight years ago during childbirth at Putnam Hospital Center was awarded \$16.25 million dollars yesterday by a jury in White Plains.

"While it's a substantial amount of money, the loss for those four children is just incalculable," said Judith Livingston, attorney for the family. "They will grow up without a mother."

The suit, brought by Fred Giampino of Mahopac, accused Dr. Leonard Ricci and the hospital — which was then named Putnam Community Hospital — of malpractice in the death of Giampino's wife, Lorraine, on Sept. 23, 1984.

Giampino, who works for the town of Greenwich, said the recent trial had brought the sadness of his wife's death back to mind.

"It's raised emotions, of late emotions that I would have chosen to forget," he said. "But I look to giving my children a good life."

After a three-week trial before

state Supreme Court Justice Matthew Coppola, the jury found Ricci 70 percent liable and the hospital 30 percent liable for the death. Ricci, who owes about \$11.3 million in the decision, could not be reached for comment. His answering service said the doctor, who has offices in Carmel and Pawling, would be back to work on Saturday.

Putnam Hospital Center officials refused to comment.

Both Ricci and the hospital can appeal the decision.

Lorraine Giampino, who died at age 36, was the victim of a series of errors on the part of Ricci and hospital staff, according to Livingston.

Among other things, Livingston said, Ricci improperly administered a drug to Giampino that caused internal bleeding. He then left the operating room to help in another delivery.

"She was in agony," she said, "because she was bleeding internally, and he never diagnosed it."

Livingston said doctors took action only after the baby was born covered with blood. But even then they improperly diagnosed it as a rupture and began operating. The errors eventually led to Giampino's death about an hour after her baby was born.