

Columbine families reach \$2.5 million in shooting settlements

April 19, 2001

Web posted at: 9:13 PM EDT (0113 GMT)

LITTLETON, Colorado (CNN) -- The families of the victims and survivors of the Columbine High School shooting rampage reached a nearly \$1.6 million settlement with the parents of the student gunmen, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, a lead attorney said Thursday.

Additionally, the families won another \$900,000 in settlements with the two men who provided Harris and Klebold with a gun used in the massacre.

The settlements were announced on the eve of the second anniversary of the nation's deadliest school shooting.

Klebold and Harris killed 12 students and a teacher in the April 20, 1999 shooting-and-bombing attack, before killing themselves. Another 23 students were wounded.

Attorney Stephen Wahlberg expressed relief after more than a year working on the settlement, but added "I don't believe there's going to be any real closure for anyone who took a bullet."

He said the money would be paid by the homeowner's insurance policies of the Harris and Klebold families, which amounted to a combined \$1.6 million (\$1.3 million for the Klebolds; \$300,000 for the Harris). He said the money would go into escrow within about two weeks. He added that \$32,000 had been withheld for now for any future claims.

All 36 families of those killed or wounded can participate in the settlement, Wahlberg said. He said six families had declined to join.

Once all families have responded, retired Colorado Supreme Court Judge Jim Carrigan will decide how to allocate the funds to the families, Wahlberg said.

"He's a wise ol' man coming in to divide the money," he said, "but he's got an extremely difficult job ahead."

Wahlberg said all 36 families had agreed to settle with Mark Manes and Phil Duran, both of whom helped provide Klebold and Harris with a TEC-DC9 semiautomatic weapon while they were minors, for \$720,000 and \$250,000, respectively.

Harris and Klebold used explosives and four guns in the shooting rampage. Authorities have said the TEC-DC9 was used by Klebold to kill four people and injure two others.

A tentative agreement was reached with Robyn Anderson, a teen who dated Klebold and bought weapons for him, for about \$250,000 to \$300,000, Wahlberg said, adding he hoped that deal will be completed by Monday.