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TUESDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2000

SECTION 5

Man sues driver over mother's death

► **TRAGEDY:** Ian

McLaughlin sending a
message with law suit

By TAMMY A. SCHOLL

Staff Writer

VICTORVILLE — A Victorville man waited a year for an apology from the drunken driver responsible for killing his mother

— Now he plans to send her a message.

Ian McLaughlin said he filed a wrongful death suit against Kathy Darlene Adams in Victorville Superior Court because it's the only thing he can do to make her understand the pain she's caused.

"I'm going to let her know what she's taken from us," the 25-year-old said. "My mother

was a parole officer. She was one month away from retirement."

In April, San Bernardino Superior Court Judge Brian S. McCarville sentenced Adams to a three-year prison term on the charge of vehicular manslaughter for the 1999 death of Geraldine McLaughlin, according to court records.

Adams's criminal lawyer, Brian Skibby, had no comment on

the civil suit.

Skibby said he'd advised Adams not to contact the victim's family.

"She expressed to me that she was upset over what happened," Skibby said. "She is not a bad person, it was just a bad situation."

Ian McLaughlin's lawyer, Steven F. Carlson, said Geraldine McLaughlin, 55, was driving

westbound on Highway 138, just west of Lone Pine Canyon Road on Oct. 23, 1999.

Carlson said Adams had been traveling in the opposite direction, but drove into the oncoming traffic and hit Geraldine McLaughlin's car head on.

"My mom was driving home from my grandmother's birthday party," Ian McLaughlin said. "She lost her daughter on her

birthday."

Carlson said investigators found open containers that smelled of alcohol in Adams' car.

He said Adams, a 42-year-old bus driver from Lancaster, is serving her sentence at Chuckawalla Valley State Prison near Blythe. Carlson said they are seeking an undetermined amount of punitive, compensatory and special damages.