

# [***Ex-NFL Lineman Michael Oher Says Blind Side Story Was A Lie, Accuses Family Of Tricking Him Into Financial Deal***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68Y6-5201-JBCM-F32C-00000-00&context=1516831)

Forbes.com

August 14, 2023 Monday

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**Length:** 877 words

**Byline:** William Skipworth, Forbes Staff

**Highlight:** Michael Oher s lawsuit alleges Sean and Leigh Anne Tuohy never adopted him as they have repeatedly publicly claimed.

**Body**

**Topline**

Retired NFL offensive lineman Michael Oher, whose childhood inspired the 2009 film**The Blind Side**, filed a petition in a Tennessee state court Monday alleging Sean and Leigh Anne Tuohy never adopted him as the film portrays and accusing the family of tricking him into signing a conservatorship agreement, which allowed them to make millions of dollars on his story without paying him anything.

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Michael Oher is pictured during the 2009 NFL draft with members of the Tuohy family at Radio City Music Hall in New York City. (Photo by David Bergman /Sports Illustrated via Getty Images)

Sports Illustrated via Getty Images

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**Key Facts**

The petition, which was filed in a Shelby County probate court, alleges that the Tuohys, who allowed Oher then a ward in the foster care system experiencing homelessness to live in their home as a high school student, never adopted him as they have repeatedly publicly claimed.

The couple allegedly tricked Oher into signing an agreement to make them his conservators he says he was led to believe this was virtually the same as adoption soon after he turned 18, giving them legal authority to make business deals in his name, including a deal that allegedly earned them and their two birth children millions of dollars in royalties from**The Blind Side**, a film about Oher s childhood, while Oher received no financial compensation from the film.

The petition also alleges that since the movie s release, the Tuohys have continued using Oher s name to enrich themselves, describing the now-37-year-old as their adopted son in an effort to promote their foundation and Leigh Anne Tuohy s work as an author and motivational speaker.

The petition explained that Oher did not discover the nature of his agreement with the Tuohys until February when to his chagrin and embarrassment he learned that the Conservatorship to which he consented on the basis that doing so would make him a member of the Tuohy family, in fact provided him no familial relationship with the Tuohys but rather gave the family total control over his business dealings.

The petition said the Tuohys saw Oher as a gullible young man whose athletic talent could be exploited for their own benefit.

**Chief Critic**

The Tuohys have not responded to Forbes request for comment, but Sean Tuohy toldthe Daily Memphianthat the family was devastated when they heard about the petition. He claimed the family never made any money off the movie and that the conservatorship was a way of appeasing concerns from the NCAA about improper recruiting when Oher was considering playing at Ole Miss, a university where Tuohy was a former basketball player and a booster. He did acknowledge that each family member earned $14,000 from the book the movie was based on, but said that Oher also received that. He said the family would of course agree to end the conservatorship. No question, the allegations are insulting, he told the**Daily Memphian**, but, look, it s a crazy world.

**Key Background**

**The Blind Side,** based of a book of the same title**,**tells the supposedly true story of Oher, a poor child in the Tennessee foster case system, defying the odds to play football on a full-ride scholarship in college and then in the NFL, with the help of the generous Tuohy family, who brought Oher into their home, adopted the teenager and helped him hone his football skills on the varsity team at a Memphis-area Christian high school. The film, which starred Sandra Bullock, who won an Oscar for best actress, while the movie earned $309 million at the box office. Monday s petition casts doubt on the accuracy of the film, arguing that a main plot point is a lie. Oher was a star lineman at Ole Miss before the Baltimore Ravens selected him in the first round of the 2009 NFL Draft. He spent eight seasons in the NFL between the Ravens, Tennessee Titans and Carolina Panthers, winning a Super Bowl in 2013.

**Tangent**

Over the years, Oher has been publicly critical of the film, saying it unfairly depicts him as unintelligent. "People look at me, and they take things away from me because of a movie," Ohertold ESPNin 2015. "They don't really see the skills and the kind of player I am." Last week, he released a book,**When Your Back's Against the Wall: Fame, Football, and Lessons Learned Through a Lifetime of Adversity,** in which he wrote: "There has been so much created from**The Blind Side**that I am grateful for, which is why you might find it as a shock that the experience surrounding the story has also been a large source of some of my deepest hurt and pain over the past 14 years Beyond the details of the deal, the ***politics***, and the money behind the book and movie, it was the principle of the choices some people made that cut me the deepest," according toESPN.

**What To Watch For**

How this case proceeds. The petition asks the court to end the conservatorship, bar the Tuohys from using Oher s name, image and likeness and require the Tuohys to provide Oher his fair share of the earnings made off his story plus interest and punitive damages.

**Further Reading**

'Blind Side' subject Oher alleges Tuohys made millions off lie(ESPN)

Sean Tuohy responds to Blind Side allegations: We are going to keep loving Michael (Oher) (The Daily Memphian)

**Load-Date:** August 15, 2023

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