

Thank you from the CPCS Innocence Program!

As we enter the holiday season and look ahead to 2017, we wanted to take a moment to reflect on some of the inspiring successes many of you have achieved on behalf of your Innocence Program clients, and to thank you for your tireless persistence in the face of injustice. Although geographic distance, busy lives, and diverse practices often make it impractical for us to come together as a community, we want you to know that we are inspired every day by your contributions to this important work, and that we deeply appreciate and value all that you do. We hope to have the opportunity to work with many more of you in the year ahead.

2016 was an exciting year for innocence!

In January, **Jerome Rubin** was exonerated due to the efforts of Angela Lehman (in obtaining a new trial in 2015) and Austin Tzeng (in securing a dismissal of the charges in Superior Court after remand).

In February, **George Perrot**, who spent 30 years in prison for crimes he did not commit, was granted a new trial and released on personal recognizance through the collaborative efforts of his pro bono lawyers from the law firm of Ropes & Gray (Kirsten Mayer, Nick Perros, and Christopher Walsh), the Strategic Litigation Unit of the Innocence Project (Chris Fabricant and Dana Delger), and the CPCS Innocence Program (Lisa Kavanaugh).



In April, we had the privilege of accompanying four Innocence Program clients to the Innocence Network Conference in San Antonio, Texas: **Ronjon Cameron** (exonerated in 2015 after 14 years in prison, thanks to his long-time lawyer Laura Chrismer Edmonds, with support from co-counsel Harry Miles, Lisa Kavanaugh, and Debra Krupp), **Angel Echavarria** (exonerated in 2015 after 21 years in prison, thanks to Leslie O'Brien), **George Perrot** (freed in 2016 after 30 years in prison, still fighting on appeal), and **Victor Rosario** (freed in 2014 after 32 years in prison, after a decade of investigation and work by Andrea Petersen in partnership with Esther Horwich, Lisa Kavanaugh, Debra Krupp, Stephanie Page, the New England Innocence Project, and others).



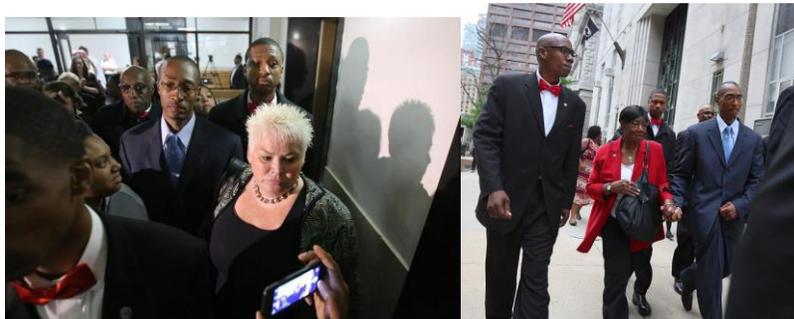
In June, after 14 years of court battles, Chauncey Wood, assisted by his associate Matthew Malm and IP staff attorney Ira Gant, secured the release of their client, **Natale Cosenza**, who served 16 years in prison.



In July, after a trip to the federal court and three separate trips to the SJC, Janet Pumphrey prevailed in her years-long fight to obtain post-conviction DNA testing for her wrongfully convicted client.

In August, another Innocence Program client was exonerated (and relieved of his obligation to register) thanks to a team of private and public counsel lawyers including Alexa Flanders, Jill Sheldon of the CPCS Pittsfield Superior Court office, and Emily Cardy of the CPCS Appeals Unit.

In September, the SJC affirmed Rosemary Scapicchio’s 2015 new trial motion victory on behalf of **Sean Ellis**, who gained his freedom in 2015 after serving 19 years in prison.



In November, Andrea Petersen and Lisa Kavanaugh argued **Victor Rosario**’s case in the SJC, just days after Mr. Rosario (released in 2014) completed the remarkable feat of running the New York City Marathon.



Also in November, Dennis Shedd’s client in a second degree murder case was granted a new trial and permitted to withdraw his guilty plea, 14 years after he pled guilty.

Looking forward to 2017...

Throughout 2016, attorneys achieved many other important incremental victories on behalf of their Innocence Program clients, instilling hope that many more will achieve freedom in 2017.

DNA testing was ordered and is presently underway in cases being handled by Amy Belger, Michael Cutler, Ed Fogarty, Ira Gant, Dana Gravina, Eva Jellison, Lisa Kavanaugh, Joseph Kenneally, Angela Lehman, Kathleen McCarthy, Ed O'Brien, Kathleen O'Connell, Janet Pumphrey, Rosemary Scapicchio, Robert Shaw, and Chauncey Wood as well as by our partners at the New England Innocence Project.

Evidentiary hearings were granted (for 2017) or held in 2016 (with motions under advisement) in cases being handled by John J. Barter (in partnership with Lisa Kavanaugh and Neil Austin of Foley, Hoag), Amy Belger (in partnership with Ira Gant), and Jennifer O'Brien.

New trial motions raising compelling claims of innocence were filed in cases being handled by Amy Belger, Jeff Harris, David Lewis, and Lisa Kavanaugh, all standing to benefit from recent victories affecting innocence claims, including *Sullivan* (Dana Curhan), *Brescia* (Alan Black), *Epps* (David Hirsch, Dennis Shedd), and *Ellis*.

Innocence Program continuing to grow...

2016 also brought many new and exciting program developments and partnerships. We hired our first staff investigator, **Robert Selevitch**, who is hard at work with many panel attorneys on their innocence investigations. Throughout the year, we continued to build upon our partnership with the **Boston College Innocence Program**, headed by Professors Charlotte Whitmore and Sharon Beckman. Through this partnership, and with the support of too many to be named at CPCS, staff investigators **Steve Gillett** and **Julio Ortiz** worked with law students to support a growing number of Innocence Program cases. We also collaborated with the New England Innocence Project on numerous amicus projects and case assignments. In September, we said goodbye to our beloved Support Specialist, **Emma Zack**, soon welcoming her phenomenal replacement, **Kristen Gondim**, to our team.

Our **microscopic hair analysis review**, initiated through a federally funded partnership with the New England Innocence Project, Massachusetts State Police Crime Laboratory, and Middlesex District Attorney's Office – supported by pro bono support from Ropes & Gray and the Harvard Law School Criminal Justice Policy Program – is now officially under way, with exciting work ahead for the coming year. Federal grant funds have also supported the **costs of DNA testing** in over a dozen post-conviction cases, with more to come in 2017.

Thank you for everything you do!

As you all know, post-conviction cases – and innocence cases in particular – are incredibly hard, and the victories are few and far between. When we lose, our hearts are broken. That's why we wanted to take the time to tell you that we know how hard you fight and how deeply you care about these important cases. Thank you for everything you do, and for being a part of this amazing community of warriors for justice.

With our deepest gratitude, Lisa Kavanaugh, Ira Gant, Kristen Gondim, and Rob Selevitch