



250 EXONERATED

TOO MANY WRONGFULLY CONVICTED

AN INNOCENCE PROJECT REPORT ON THE
FIRST 250 DNA EXONERATIONS IN THE U.S.

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INTRODUCTION

The people you will meet in this booklet did not simply endure injustice that nobody else can begin to imagine; they prevailed. Each and every one of them was proven innocent — simply, elegantly and definitively—through DNA testing.

We are privileged to know most of the 250 people whose stories follow. Without warning or cause, all of them were swept off the streets one day, forcibly separated from their families and friends, and wrongfully imprisoned for years or, often, decades. Some narrowly escaped execution.

Even in their first days of freedom, the euphoria that many exonerated people feel is tempered by a profoundly personal understanding of the larger problem and an unwavering resolve to help fix a broken system. They don't want anyone else to be robbed of life and liberty as they were.

When we founded the Innocence Project in 1992, we wanted to walk as many innocent people out of prison as possible—and to turn the horror each one experienced into a “learning moment” that could help repair the systemic failings in our criminal justice system. The demand for our services has grown tremendously, as has the network of organizations working tirelessly to free the innocent and reform the system.

Today, there are more than 50 organizations in the Innocence Network, and many of them helped exonerate the individuals in this booklet. Together, we are in a race against time—a race to test evidence before it is destroyed, and to prove the truth before one of our innocent clients spends one more birthday behind bars. And we are in a race against time to reform the criminal justice system before more innocent people are wrongfully convicted.

The most common question we are asked is, “How many innocent people are in prison?” Nobody truly knows the answer—but the question itself is haunting, since it reflects the common knowledge that there are undoubtedly more. Because just a small fraction of cases involve evidence that could be tested for DNA—and even when such evidence exists, it is often lost or destroyed—we know that these first 250 DNA exonerations are the tip of the iceberg.

Each wrongful conviction that has been overturned through DNA evidence could have been prevented if eyewitness procedures had been better, if interrogations had been recorded, if crime labs had been subjected to greater oversight, if the system had been more skeptical of jailhouse informants, or if other reforms had been in place. Since the first person in the U.S. was exonerated through DNA, states, counties and individual law enforcement agencies have enacted these reforms.

Our mandate—society's duty to these 250 people and the ones who will follow them—is to free more innocent people while fixing the system to prevent wrongful convictions. We owe these people, and ourselves, no less.

Barry Scheck and Peter Neufeld



GARY DOTSON • 1989



DAVID VASQUEZ • 1989



EDWARD GREEN • 1990



CHARLES DABBS • 1991



BRUCE NELSON • 1991

10 YEARS
ILLINOIS

Based on eyewitness misidentification, **Gary Dotson** was convicted of rape and aggravated kidnapping in May 1979. The victim eventually recanted her testimony, saying she had fabricated the rape. Still, Dotson served four more years behind bars before he was fully exonerated through DNA testing.

4 YEARS
VIRGINIA

David Vasquez, who has substantial cognitive limitations, pled guilty to murder. His “dream statement,” along with his lack of an alibi, convinced a jury of his guilt, and he was convicted in 1985. He served four years before DNA testing exonerated him.

1 YEAR
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Edward Green was apprehended in 1987 at a location where both a rape and an attempted rape had occurred. The victims of both crimes identified Green, and he was convicted. Prior to his sentencing, his lawyers secured DNA testing of the evidence and Green was excluded as the perpetrator.

7 YEARS
NEW YORK

Charles Dabbs is the distant cousin of a woman who was raped in 1982. She identified Dabbs as one of her assailants, saying that the man who raped her wore clothing similar to his. DNA testing exonerated Dabbs seven years after his conviction.

9 YEARS
PENNSYLVANIA

In 1982, **Bruce Nelson** was implicated in a rape and murder based on the confession of Terrence Moore, who was also charged with the crime. When police questioned Nelson (with Moore also present in the room), Nelson asked Moore what he had previously told police — and that question was used as a confession in Nelson’s trial. In 1990, the prosecution agreed to subject several pieces of evidence to DNA testing, which proved Nelson’s innocence.

THE FIRST 250

Each individual exonerated through DNA is unique. Their convictions were different, and their experiences after exoneration vary. Collectively, they illustrate the criminal justice system’s failings and the need for reform.

**Percentage is based on cases where information is available to make a determination.*

Note: The Innocence Project strives to track DNA exonerations chronologically, however some of the 250 profiles that follow may deviate from strict chronological order depending on the availability of information in each case. The year of exoneration, as listed, is accurate.

Of the first 250 people exonerated through DNA:*

They served an average of



GLEN WOODALL • 1992

4.5 YEARS
WEST VIRGINIA

Glen Woodall was sentenced to two life sentences plus 203 to 335 years for two rapes. Since neither victim clearly saw the perpetrator, their identifications of him were shaky at best — they identified him after being hypnotized, and their identification was based in part on smell. Fred Zain, a fraudulent lab technician, provided evidence that helped convict Woodall. Early DNA tests suggested Woodall's innocence and his conviction was vacated; further testing yielded the same results and he was exonerated.



STEVEN LINSOTT • 1992

3 YEARS
ILLINOIS

In 1982, **Steven Linscott** was convicted of murdering his neighbor. Linscott told police that he had dreamt about the crime, and his description of the dream mirrored the crime in several ways. In 1992, after three years in prison and seven years on bond, DNA testing excluded Linscott as the perpetrator.



JOE JONES • 1992

6.5 YEARS
KANSAS

Outside a nightclub frequented, a woman was kidnapped and raped in 1985. Based on eyewitness misidentification and the fact that Jones owned a pair of jeans that resembled those worn by the perpetrator, he was convicted. DNA testing ultimately proved Jones' innocence, and he was exonerated in 1992.



LEONARD CALLACE • 1992

5.5 YEARS
NEW YORK

Leonard Callace was charged with sexually assaulting a young woman in the parking lot of a shopping center. Based on misidentification by the victim, his resemblance to a composite sketch of the perpetrator and a serology test that suggested he could be the perpetrator, the jury convicted Callace in one hour. In 1991, Callace's request for DNA testing was granted and showed that he did not commit the rape.



KERRY KOTLER • 1992

10.5 YEARS
NEW YORK

In 1978 and again in 1981, a man in a ski mask raped and robbed a woman at knifepoint in her home. She identified **Kerry Kotler** as her assailant, though her initial description of the man did not resemble Kotler. He had spent over a decade in prison when DNA testing led to his exoneration. He was later convicted of different charges on the basis of DNA evidence.

**13 years in prison —
and a combined total of 3,160 years.**



WILLIAM KELLY • 1993

2.5 YEARS
PENNSYLVANIA

William Kelly confessed to killing Jeanette Thomas and dumping her body in a landfill. Kelly, who has a low IQ and a history of alcoholism, was led to believe that he had committed the crime. The case was reopened when authorities, led by Joseph Miller, discovered two more bodies in the same landfill. Miller later confessed to killing Thomas; DNA testing matched Miller and confirmed Kelly's innocence.



WALTER SNYDER • 1993

6.5 YEARS
VIRGINIA

Walter Snyder's across-the-street neighbor identified him as the man who raped and robbed her in 1985. His mother was the only person who could corroborate his alibi. Snyder served six and a half years of a 45-year sentence before he was proven innocent through DNA testing.



KIRK BLOODSWORTH • 1993

8 YEARS
MARYLAND

Kirk Bloodworth was arrested for the rape and murder of a nine-year-old girl after an anonymous caller claimed to have seen him with the victim. Bloodworth became the first person to be exonerated by post-conviction DNA testing who had served time on death row.



DWAYNE SCRUGGS • 1993

7.5 YEARS
INDIANA

Dwayne Scruggs was convicted in 1986 of rape and robbery and sentenced to 40 years in prison based on the victim's misidentification of him. The perpetrator had tried to hide his face during the attack, but the victim identified him in part based on the shoes he was wearing. In 1993, DNA testing vindicated Scruggs.



MARK DIAZ BRAVO • 1994

3 YEARS
CALIFORNIA

Mark Diaz Bravo was a nurse at a Los Angeles hospital where a patient was raped in 1990. She implicated Bravo, and although he had a strong alibi, he was arrested. Serological testing revealed that the perpetrator had a blood type shared by only 3% of the population—and Bravo could not be excluded. Bravo's attorney said the prosecution refused to allow DNA testing before the trial. Bravo was convicted and spent three years in prison before DNA testing proved his innocence.

**6% were under the age of 18
when they were**



DALE BRISON • 1994

3.5 YEARS
PENNSYLVANIA

Dale Brison was arrested for rape and kidnapping in 1990 after the victim identified him near her apartment building. Brison's request for DNA testing was denied at the time of the trial. But several years later, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruled that the evidence must be tested if it was available. The results proved that Brison could not have been the perpetrator.



GILBERT ALEJANDRO • 1994

3.5 YEARS
TEXAS

Gilbert Alejandro was convicted of aggravated sexual assault in 1990, based mostly on the fraudulent testimony of forensics technician Fred Zain. Subsequent DNA testing indicated that Zain had made his findings before he had even completed the test, and, in fact, the results excluded Alejandro as a contributor of the biological sample.



FREDERICK DAYE • 1994

10 YEARS
CALIFORNIA

Frederick Daye had been wrongly incarcerated for six years when another defendant in his case made a statement that Daye was not involved in the rape, kidnapping and vehicular theft for which he was convicted. An additional four years passed before DNA testing proved Daye's innocence.



BRIAN PISZCZEK • 1994

3 YEARS
OHIO

A man gained entry into a woman's apartment by claiming to be a friend, then raped and burglarized her. **Brian Piszczek** had visited the victim's home before with a mutual friend. Only his girlfriend could corroborate his alibi, and he was convicted. In 1994, Piszczek was exonerated on DNA results.



EDWARD HONAKER • 1994

9.5 YEARS
VIRGINIA

A rape victim, and her boyfriend who witnessed the attack, identified **Edward Honaker** as the perpetrator. Centurion Ministries later discovered that the victims had been hypnotized, and that their initial description was not consistent with Honaker. DNA testing ultimately proved his innocence.

wrongfully convicted;

21% were 21 years old or younger.



RONNIE BULLOCK • 1994

10.5 YEARS
ILLINOIS

In 1983, a man impersonating a police officer raped two young girls. **Ronnie Bullock** was identified by a police officer based on a composite sketch and was later misidentified in a lineup by both victims. Over ten years later, DNA testing proved his innocence.



TERRY CHALMERS • 1995

7.5 YEARS
NEW YORK

Terry Chalmers' photo was the only one repeated in photo arrays shown to a rape victim. With no other evidence, Chalmers was convicted in 1987. Chalmers filed an appeal but his conviction was upheld. With the help of the Innocence Project, he petitioned for DNA testing and was exonerated.



DAVID SHEPHARD • 1995

9.5 YEARS
NEW JERSEY

David Shephard was convicted of raping and robbing a woman in a parking lot. Two men assaulted the victim but only Shephard, who was identified by the victim (in part based on his voice), was charged with the crime. He served nine and a half years in prison before DNA testing exonerated him. He is now a family services worker in Essex County and the Founding President of AFTER, which assists exonerees after release.



RONALD COTTON • 1995

10.5 YEARS
N. CAROLINA

Based on a photo identification made by the victim, **Ronald Cotton** was convicted of rape and burglary and sentenced to life plus 54 years. DNA testing cleared Cotton, and he and the rape survivor from the case, Jennifer Thompson-Cannino, speak publicly together to educate people about eyewitness misidentification and wrongful convictions.



WILLIAM O'DELL HARRIS
1995

7 YEARS
WEST VIRGINIA

William O'Dell Harris was convicted of raping a nurse based on the testimony of a lab technician and false testimony of a police officer. When state lab technician Fred Zain's misconduct in other cases was revealed, Harris and others who were convicted as a result of Zain's testimony were granted special appeals processes. In 1994, two rounds of DNA testing proved Harris' innocence. The police officer who provided false testimony about the victim's identification was later convicted of perjury.

60% are African American;



ROLANDO CRUZ • 1995

10.5 YEARS
ILLINOIS

In 1983, **Rolando Cruz**, then a teenager, was charged with raping and killing a little girl. According to detectives, Cruz had reported “visions” of the murder, which closely resembled the actual details of the crime. He and a co-defendant, **Alejandro Hernandez**, were sentenced to death. Shortly after their trial, a convicted murderer confessed to the crime, but he was never tried. Cruz and Hernandez served nearly 11 years on death row before DNA testing proved their innocence.



GERALD DAVIS • 1995

8 YEARS
WEST VIRGINIA

A family friend of the **Davis's** accused Gerald of sexually assaulting her while she was at their home doing laundry. Because Fred Zain, a fraudulent lab technician, was involved in the serological testing of the case, Davis was allowed to file for DNA testing. DNA tests proved that he was not the source of male biological material in the rape kit, and his conviction was vacated. The prosecution retried him for the crime, but a jury acquitted him, and he was finally exonerated.



DEWEY DAVIS • 1995

7 YEARS
WEST VIRGINIA

Dewey Davis was convicted of abduction, sexual assault and sexual abuse in 1987 based on the claim that his son, Gerald, had raped a woman in his home and he had done nothing to stop it. Gerald Davis was allowed to file for DNA testing because a fraudulent forensic scientist was involved in the serological testing of the case. The results ultimately exonerated both men.



ALEJANDRO HERNANDEZ
1995

10.5 YEARS
ILLINOIS

Together with his co-defendant, Rolando Cruz, **Alejandro Hernandez** was sentenced to death for rape and murder and was later exonerated through DNA evidence. The detectives working on the case claimed that both Cruz and Hernandez made incriminating statements. During appeals, one of the detectives recanted his testimony.



VINCENT MOTO • 1996

8.5 YEARS
PENNSYLVANIA

Vincent Moto of Philadelphia was pushing his baby son in a stroller when the victim of a rape and robbery that had occurred five months earlier identified him on the street as one of her two assailants. He was arrested and convicted based on this misidentification. DNA testing finally led to Moto's exoneration. Today, he is a musician and father of four.

8% are Latino;
29% are Caucasian.



RICHARD JOHNSON • 1996



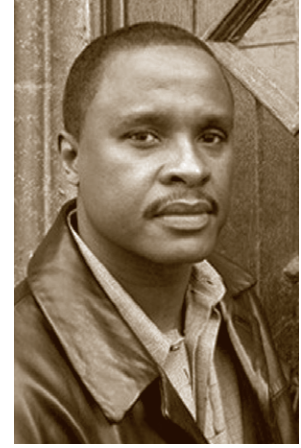
THOMAS WEBB • 1996



KEVIN GREEN • 1996



VERNEAL JIMERSON • 1996



KENNETH ADAMS • 1996

4 YEARS
ILLINOIS

13 YEARS
OKLAHOMA

15.5 YEARS
CALIFORNIA

10.5 YEARS
ILLINOIS

17.5 YEARS
ILLINOIS

In 1990, a graduate student at the University of Chicago was raped and robbed. Serological testing of the biological evidence suggested that **Richard Johnson** was not the perpetrator, yet Johnson’s attorney did not present this evidence at trial. DNA testing was not done at the time, but four years later, test results established Johnson’s innocence.

The victim of a 1982 rape was unable to identify her assailant from an initial photo lineup. **Thomas Webb** was one of only two men who were included in both the first and second photo lineups, and the one that most closely resembled her description. Webb was convicted and served over 13 years of a 60-year sentence before DNA testing led to his exoneration.

Kevin Green was found guilty of the attempted murder of his wife and the death of their unborn child. His wife, who suffered severe brain damage and amnesia as a result of the attack, testified against him. Over a decade later, the biological evidence in the case was run through a DNA database and matched to a serial killer known as the “Bedroom Basher” who confessed to the attack and five other murders.

Verneal Jimerson was convicted in 1985 for a 1978 Chicago rape and murder that came to be known as the “Ford Heights Four” case. Paula Gray, who claimed to be an eyewitness, implicated Jimerson and three other men. Jimerson had served years on death row when a group of journalism students at Northwestern University, led by Professor David Protes, uncovered evidence that led to three other suspects. DNA testing ultimately exonerated Jimerson and his three co-defendants.

Kenneth Adams was convicted of rape and murder as one of the “Ford Heights Four.” Adams was implicated based on the false confession of Paula Gray. He was convicted, sentenced to 75 years, and exonerated by DNA testing in 1996.

47% of them had spent at least one-third of their lives



WILLIE RAINGE • 1996

17.5 YEARS
ILLINOIS

Willie Rainge was convicted as one of the “Ford Heights Four.” He and his co-defendants lived in the Ford Heights area and were implicated by the false confession of Paula Gray. Rainge was sentenced to life in prison, but was released 18 years later when DNA testing vindicated all four defendants.



DENNIS WILLIAMS • 1996

17.5 YEARS
ILLINOIS

Like his co-defendants, **Willie Rainge**, **Kenneth Adams** and **Verneal Jimerson**, **Dennis Williams** was convicted of a rape and murder he did not commit in connection with the Chicago “Ford Heights Four” case. He was sentenced to death and spent 17 and a half years in prison before he was finally exonerated. Williams died in 2003 at the age of 46.



STEVEN TONEY • 1996

13 YEARS
MISSOURI

Steven Toney was sentenced to two life sentences for a 1982 rape after the victim identified him in a photo and in a live lineup. On appeal, the defense alleged multiple constitutional violations in his trial. Toney was exonerated 13 years after his conviction based on DNA testing.



TROY WEBB • 1996

7.5 YEARS
VIRGINIA

A woman said she was 99% sure that **Troy Webb** raped her. Serology tests were inconclusive, and he was convicted based on her eyewitness misidentification. When he finally gained access to evidence for DNA testing, the results verified his claims of innocence.



FREDERIC SAECKER • 1996

6 YEARS
WISCONSIN

Frederic Saecker became implicated in a kidnapping and rape when he was found near the victim’s home wearing a bloodstained T-shirt. Saecker did not at all resemble the victim’s description of the attacker, but he was convicted. In 1993, DNA testing proved him innocent. Three years later, he was finally released.

**in prison or on parole
when they were exonerated.**



VICTOR ORTIZ • 1996

11.5 YEARS
NEW YORK

In early 1983, a teenager was abducted at gunpoint and raped after her assailant took her into a wooded area. She identified **Victor Ortiz**, and he was convicted. In 1994, the Innocence Project took his case and secured DNA testing of the evidence. Ortiz was exonerated two years later.



WALTER D. SMITH • 1996

10 YEARS
OHIO

While **Walter Smith** was awaiting trial on unrelated charges, three women identified him as their rapist. Smith pleaded guilty to the unrelated charges, but denied the accusations of rape. He was convicted of two rapes and sentenced to 78 to 190 years in prison. DNA testing proved his innocence, and today he is a motivational speaker and professional bodybuilder.



ANTHONY HICKS • 1997

5 YEARS
WISCONSIN

Stopped for a traffic violation, **Anthony Hicks** became a suspect in a robbery and sexual assault case when someone in the jail thought he resembled the composite sketch. One of five hair roots found at the scene was eventually subjected to DNA testing, and Hicks was exonerated.



MARVIN MITCHELL • 1997

7 YEARS
MASSACHUSETTS

Shortly after a young girl was raped, she was driven around by the police to see if she could identify the assailant. She saw a resemblance in **Marvin Mitchell**, except that he had facial hair and the assailant had been clean-shaven. Police then picked up Mitchell and took a photo of him, which they showed to the victim. At that point, she identified him as her attacker, and he was later convicted. Many years later, DNA testing proved his innocence.



CHESTER BAUER • 1997

8 YEARS
MONTANA

Chester Bauer was convicted of raping a woman at knifepoint. The victim and her husband misidentified Bauer, and a lab analyst testified that several hairs from the crime scene matched Bauer. He was convicted, but evidence later surfaced showing that the analyst miscounted the number of hairs at the crime scene — and that none of them matched Bauer. DNA testing ultimately proved his innocence in 1997.

**On average, they were 27
at the time of the wrongful conviction**



KEVIN BYRD • 1997

12 YEARS
TEXAS

Months after a pregnant woman was raped at knifepoint, she identified **Kevin Byrd**, whom she encountered at the grocery store, as her attacker. Byrd is African American, and the victim initially said a white man had raped her. Byrd was convicted and sentenced to life in prison. The evidence in his case, which was slated to be destroyed, was recovered by chance, subjected to DNA testing and exonerated him.



DONALD REYNOLDS • 1997

9.5 YEARS
ILLINOIS

Donald Reynolds was convicted of sexual assault, armed robbery and related charges in 1988. Serious allegations surfaced that exculpatory evidence was not turned over to his attorneys before his trial, and that a lab technician who performed serological testing exaggerated the results. For years, Reynolds sought DNA testing, and the results ultimately vindicated him and his co-defendant, **Billy Wardell**, after serving almost a decade in prison.



BILLY WARDELL • 1997

9.5 YEARS
ILLINOIS

Along with his co-defendant, **Donald Reynolds**, **Billy Wardell** was wrongfully convicted of sexual assault and armed robbery. Serological testing of the evidence did not match Wardell; in spite of this and the testimony of three alibi witnesses, he was convicted. Both Wardell and Reynolds were exonerated in 1997 after DNA testing proved their innocence.



KEITH BROWN • 1997

4 YEARS
N. CAROLINA

In 1993, **Keith Brown** was wrongfully convicted and sentenced to 35 years in prison for sexually assaulting a mother and her nine-year-old daughter. During interrogation and under the pressure of law enforcement, Brown falsely confessed to the crimes. Years later, the rape kits collected in the case were tested and the DNA test results implicated a Florida inmate.



BEN SALAZAR • 1997

5 YEARS
TEXAS

Ben Salazar smoked the same brand of cigarettes and had a similar tattoo as the man who raped a pregnant woman in 1991. He was convicted the following year. Biological evidence in the case could not be located for years, but once found, three rounds of DNA testing proved that Salazar could not have been the perpetrator.

and 42 by the time
they were exonerated.



TIMOTHY DURHAM • 1997

3.5 YEARS
OKLAHOMA

Timothy Durham was sentenced to 3,200 years for the violent rape of an 11-year-old girl. The prosecution relied on the victim's vague description of the attacker and inconclusive hair and semen evidence. In his defense, Durham had 11 witnesses who corroborated his alibi. DNA test results excluded him in 1996 and implicated a convicted rapist.



ROBERT MILLER • 1998

9.5 YEARS
OKLAHOMA

Following a 1986 rape and murder, police canvassed the neighborhood collecting blood samples from African American men. **Robert Miller's** blood type was found to match evidence from the crime scene. Detectives took advantage of Miller's fragile mental health during a 12-hour interrogation where he claimed he had special powers and could see through the killer's eyes; police called his statements a confession and he was convicted. DNA tests ultimately exculpated Miller and implicated another man.



PERRY MITCHELL • 1998

14.5 YEARS
S. CAROLINA

In the woods near **Perry Mitchell's** home, a young woman was raped in 1982. Mitchell was arrested a week later on the grounds that he somewhat fit the description and lived nearby. After viewing three photo lineups, the victim misidentified Mitchell as her attacker. Based on exculpatory DNA test results, Mitchell was exonerated after more than 14 years in prison.



DALE MAHAN • 1998

11.5 YEARS
ALABAMA

Dale Mahan and his brother Ronnie were convicted for a 1983 rape and kidnapping. The prosecution contended that Dale Mahan raped the victim while Ronnie watched. Although the assailants had forced the victim to take drugs and they wore masks during the attack, the victim identified the brothers in a photo lineup. Years later, DNA testing was conducted on the rape kit and showed that both brothers were innocent.



RONNIE MAHAN • 1998

11.5 YEARS
ALABAMA

Along with his brother Dale, **Ronnie Mahan** was wrongfully incarcerated for 11 and a half years based on a rape and kidnapping victim's misidentification. Both brothers were exonerated through DNA testing in 1998.

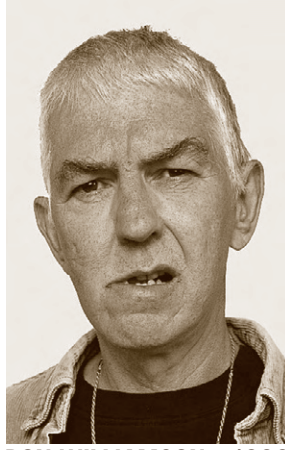
17 of them served time on death row.



ANTHONY GRAY • 1999



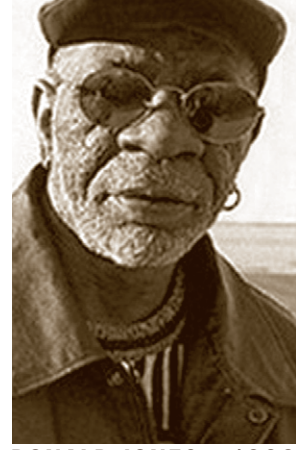
JOHN WILLIS • 1999



RON WILLIAMSON • 1999



DENNIS FRITZ • 1999



RONALD JONES • 1999

7 YEARS

MARYLAND

Police officers coaxed **Anthony Gray** to confess to a 1991 rape and murder. Gray, who has limited cognitive abilities, pled guilty and was convicted; he was sentenced to two concurrent life sentences. Years later, DNA testing revealed a match with a new suspect who confessed to the crime, and Gray was exonerated.

7 YEARS

ILLINOIS

John Willis was convicted of two rapes and robberies among a string of similar crimes in Chicago in 1990. In 1994, Dennis McGruder was arrested for committing similar rapes and robberies in the area. Willis asserted that McGruder had confessed to all of the crimes while the two were in jail. Several more years would pass before DNA testing freed Willis and implicated McGruder.

11 YEARS

OKLAHOMA

Ron Williamson came within five days of execution for the murder of a young woman from Ada, Oklahoma. DNA testing finally vindicated him and pointed to another man who had been one of the state's witnesses at trial. The story of Ron Williamson's wrongful conviction is told by John Grisham in "The Innocent Man." Williamson died in 2004.

11 YEARS

OKLAHOMA

Along with his co-defendant, **Ron Williamson**, **Dennis Fritz** was convicted of murder in 1988. He became a suspect solely because of his friendship with Williamson. For lack of evidence against Fritz, the prosecution nearly had to drop the charges, until a jailhouse snitch claimed that Fritz had confessed. More than a decade later, DNA proved his innocence. In 2006, Fritz published "Journey Towards Justice," the story of his wrongful conviction and exoneration.

10 YEARS

ILLINOIS

Ronald Jones falsely confessed to having sex with a rape and murder victim and struggling with her after she attacked him. An eyewitness identified Jones as an aggressive panhandler who had grabbed the victim earlier that day. Jones was convicted and sentenced to death until DNA testing performed in 1997 proved his innocence.



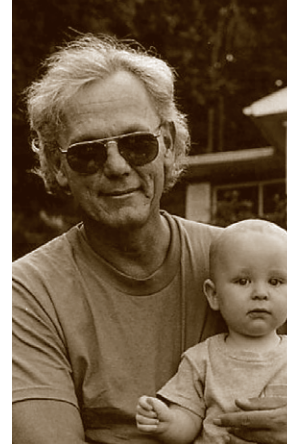
CALVIN JOHNSON • 1999



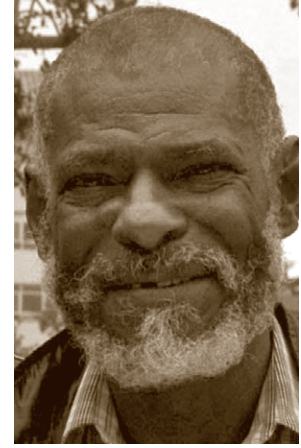
DAVID A. GRAY • 1999



HABIB WAHIR ABDAL • 1999



JAMES RICHARDSON • 1999



CLYDE CHARLES • 1999

15.5 YEARS
GEORGIA

Based in part on misidentification by the victims, **Calvin Johnson** was charged with two rapes and convicted of one in 1983. Since his DNA exoneration in 1999, Johnson co-authored “Exit to Freedom.” He serves on the Board of Directors of the Innocence Project and also of the Georgia Innocence Project.

20 YEARS
ILLINOIS

David A. Gray was sentenced to 60 years in prison in connection with a brutal rape. His first trial ended in a hung jury. At the second trial, the prosecution presented the testimony of a jailhouse snitch who claimed that Gray had confessed to him. Gray maintained his innocence for 20 years. DNA testing finally affirmed this claim.

16 YEARS
NEW YORK

Habib Wahir Abdal, then known as Vincent Jenkins, was convicted of rape despite a lack of evidence against him. Even after police informed the victim that Abdal was the suspect, she did not initially identify him. Years after a first round of DNA testing proved inconclusive, a second round revealed that he did not match the profile of the perpetrator and he was finally exonerated. Abdal died in 2005.

9 YEARS
WEST VIRGINIA

James Richardson’s case was one of several post-conviction DNA exonerations involving Fred Zain, formerly of the West Virginia Police crime laboratory, who was investigated for misconduct. Richardson had been convicted of raping and murdering a neighbor and then setting her home on fire. In fact, he had helped rescue a girl from the fire.

17 YEARS
LOUISIANA

An hour before a brutal rape was committed, **Clyde Charles** had been caught hitchhiking by a police officer. When this same officer encountered the victim, he determined that Charles fit her description of the perpetrator. Charles was brought to the hospital where he was identified by the victim. DNA testing eventually exonerated him and implicated his brother in the crime. Charles died in 2009 at the age of 55.

They were convicted in 33 states



MCKINLEY CROMEDY • 1999

4.5 YEARS
NEW JERSEY

Almost eight months after she was raped, a woman saw **McKinley Cromedy** on the street and identified him as her attacker. None of the forensic evidence—fingerprints, hair samples and blood samples—matched Cromedy, but he was convicted. After the state’s high court granted him a new trial, DNA testing was conducted, and the results proved his innocence.



LARRY HOLDREN • 2000

15 YEARS
WEST VIRGINIA

A rape victim identified Larry Holdren as the assailant in a photo lineup one month after the crime. The defense requested DNA testing, but the relevant biological evidence had not been preserved. In 1997, the victim’s semen-stained sweatshirt was subjected to DNA testing, which showed that Holdren was innocent.



HERMAN ATKINS • 2000

11.5 YEARS
CALIFORNIA

A woman was raped and robbed at gunpoint in a shoe store. **Herman Atkins** was convicted of the crime in 1988 based on eyewitness misidentification; more than a decade later, DNA proved his innocence. In February 2006, Atkins was married on the anniversary of his exoneration. He and his wife have started a foundation to help exonerees with their immediate needs upon release.



NEIL MILLER • 2000

9.5 YEARS
MASSACHUSETTS

A woman whom **Neil Miller** had never seen before identified him from a photo book as the man who broke into her home and raped her. His conviction rested largely on her eyewitness testimony. Miller was released from prison ten years later after DNA testing vindicated him. The real perpetrator went on to commit another rape while Miller was wrongfully imprisoned.



A.B. BUTLER • 2000

16 YEARS
TEXAS

A.B. Butler was sentenced to 99 years in prison for a rape and kidnapping in Texas. Butler’s alibi was outweighed by the victim’s identification of him. When the evidence was finally submitted to DNA testing, it revealed that Butler could not have been the perpetrator of the crime.

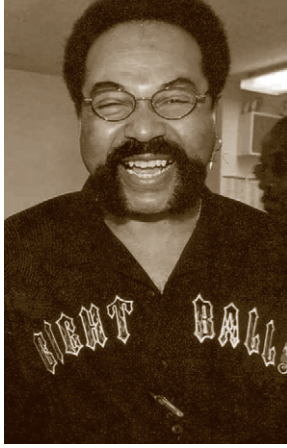
and the District of Columbia.



ARMAND VILLASANA • 2000

7 MONTHS
MISSOURI

The white victim of a rape and kidnapping in 1998 described her assailant as Latino. The photo lineup she was shown included five white men and one Latino—**Armand Villasana**. Although he was never sentenced, Villasana was incarcerated for months before DNA evidence proved his innocence and led to the dismissal of his case.



WILLIAM GREGORY • 2000

7 YEARS
KENTUCKY

William Gregory lived in the same apartment complex as a rape victim and an attempted-rape victim. Both of the victims identified him. Thanks to a selection of hairs found on a stocking cap left behind by the assailant, Gregory became the first person to be exonerated by DNA mitochondrial testing alone.



JERRY WATKINS • 2000

13.5 YEARS
INDIANA

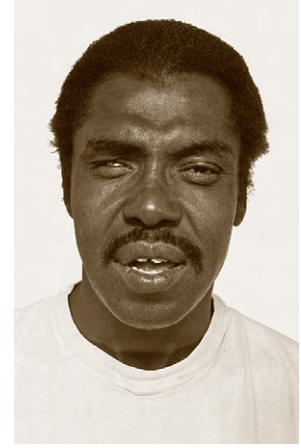
A jailhouse snitch claimed that **Jerry Watkins** confessed to the rape and murder of Watkins' sister-in-law. Three witnesses testified that the snitch admitted he was lying. Also, DNA testing suggested that Watkins was not the perpetrator. Nevertheless, Watkins served over 13 years in prison before DNA testing conclusively proved his innocence.



ERIC SARSFIELD • 2000

9.5 YEARS
MASSACHUSETTS

Eric Sarsfield was convicted of rape based largely on a less-than-certain identification by the victim who saw Sarsfield three months after the crime. Years later, DNA testing was conducted on several pieces of biological evidence. On his 37th birthday, Sarsfield learned that DNA had proven his innocence.



LARRY YOUNGBLOOD • 2000

9 YEARS
ARIZONA

No biological testing was conducted in **Larry Youngblood's** case because police had improperly stored the evidence and it had degraded. He was released on appeal but returned to prison in 1993 when the state Supreme Court reinstated his sexual assault, child molestation and kidnapping convictions. In 2000, DNA technology advances allowed degraded evidence in the case to be tested and the results exonerated Youngblood.

67% were convicted after 2000.



ROY CRINER • 2000

10 YEARS
TEXAS

Although the results excluded him, post-conviction DNA testing was not deemed sufficient by the prosecution to exonerate **Roy Criner** of aggravated sexual assault. Criner then sought DNA testing on a cigarette butt found next to the victim's body. A genetic profile emerged that matched both spermatozoa and the cigarette butt, and Criner was finally pardoned.



EARL WASHINGTON • 2000

17 YEARS
VIRGINIA

With a general IQ in the range of 69, **Earl Washington** compensated for his cognitive limitations by politely deferring to authority figures. When police questioned him about a rape and murder, he confessed to the crime as well as five others. Four of these confessions were dismissed, but Washington was sentenced to death for the fifth. Many years later, DNA testing affirmed Washington's innocence.



ANTHONY ROBINSON • 2000

10 YEARS
TEXAS

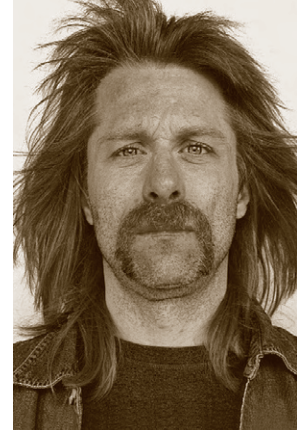
Anthony Robinson was apprehended in a University of Houston parking lot by campus police who believed that he matched the description given by a rape victim. Ten years later, out on parole, he began saving money to pay for a DNA test, which led to his eventual exoneration. Robinson graduated from the Thurgood Marshall School of Law and is now a practicing attorney in China.



CARLOS LAVERNIA • 2000

15 YEARS
TEXAS

Cuban immigrant **Carlos Lavernia** was arrested in 1984 for rape and then linked to seven other assaults in the Austin area and charged as a serial rapist. A victim in the case testified that Lavernia was the only one in the lineup who "anywhere near resembles" the police sketch. Lavernia served 15 years of a 99-year sentence before DNA testing proved his innocence.



JAMES O'DONNELL • 2000

2 YEARS
NEW YORK

Based on the description of a rapist published in the local newspaper, **James O'Donnell** was identified by a Staten Island resident. The victim identified him in a live lineup, although her friend, also at the scene of the crime, did not. Two rounds of DNA testing showed that O'Donnell could not have been the perpetrator.



WILLIE NESMITH • 2000



FRANK LEE SMITH • 2000



DAVID SHAWN POPE • 2001



LESLY JEAN • 2001



KENNETH WATERS • 2001

18 YEARS
PENNSYLVANIA

Willie Nesmith's initial trial for the rape of a Dickinson College student resulted in a hung jury. He had been identified by two witnesses who placed him near the scene of the crime. He was convicted in his second trial and served 18 years before DNA testing exonerated him.

14 YEARS
FLORIDA

After 14 years on death row, Frank Lee Smith died of cancer in January 2000, before he was exonerated of rape and murder. After his death, a blood sample from Smith obtained by the state prosecutor's office was subjected to DNA testing. The results cleared Smith and implicated another man.

15 YEARS
TEXAS

David Shawn Pope was convicted of aggravated sexual assault based, in part, on voice print analysis of messages left on the victim's answering machine, a method no longer used in courts. An anonymous call first alerted prosecutors to Pope's wrongful conviction. DNA testing subsequently matched the profile of a convicted felon, and Pope was pardoned by the governor.

9 YEARS
N. CAROLINA

In 1982, Lesly Jean, a Haitian immigrant, was convicted of first-degree sexual offense and first-degree rape. Nine years later, it was revealed that police and prosecutors had failed to disclose pertinent evidence in his case, and his conviction was overturned. DNA testing exonerated Jean in 2001. Shortly after his release, he was involved in an accident that left him paralyzed.

17.5 YEARS
MASSACHUSETTS

Two of Kenneth Waters' ex-girlfriends testified against him in a murder and robbery trial, saying that he had drunkenly confessed to the crime. One of them would later recant her testimony. Waters' sister put herself through law school in order to take over his case and prove his innocence. Once she located the biological evidence in the case, she contacted the Innocence Project who helped her secure DNA testing that proved his innocence. Waters passed away six months after his release.

**84% were convicted of sexual assault,
and 29% were convicted of murder**



DANNY BROWN • 2001

18.5 YEARS
OHIO

Danny Brown had been dating a woman for several months before she was murdered. The victim's six-year-old son, who had been in the apartment the night of the murder, testified that Brown had been there that night and had argued with his mother. When DNA testing was eventually performed, the results excluded Brown and incriminated an incarcerated felon.



JEFFREY PIERCE • 2001

14.5 YEARS
OKLAHOMA

Jeffrey Pierce's innocence was uncovered during an investigation of Joyce Gilchrist, formerly a forensic scientist at the Oklahoma City Police Laboratory, for falsifying testimony and conducting shoddy forensic analysis. Pierce's 1986 conviction for rape and robbery was overturned after DNA testing excluded him. After his release, Pierce moved to Michigan to live with his teenage twin sons who were infants when he was convicted.



ULYSSES RODRIGUEZ
CHARLES • 2001

17 YEARS
MASSACHUSETTS

Ulysses Rodriguez Charles was convicted of rape, robbery and related charges in 1984, stemming from a 1980 crime. Charles long maintained that he was targeted by a police officer with a vendetta who hid evidence in pursuit of his wrongful conviction. In 2001, he was proven innocent through DNA testing.



JERRY FRANK TOWNSEND
2001

21.5 YEARS
FLORIDA

During an investigation for the rape of a pregnant woman in Miami, Jerry Frank Townsend, whose cognitive abilities are limited, confessed to this and several other crimes. When DNA results cleared him of two of the six murders he had confessed to, also implicating another man, prosecutors asked that his other convictions be dismissed.



EDUARDO VELASQUEZ • 2001

12.5 YEARS
MASSACHUSETTS

A rape victim identified Eduardo Velasquez, then known as Angel Hernandez, at night, from 10 to 12 feet away. He had been picked up by police who believed that he fit the description of the perpetrator. DNA testing was performed in 2001 and he was exonerated based on the results. Today, he lives in Puerto Rico with his wife.

**(16% were convicted
of both sexual assault and murder).**



CHARLES IRVIN FAIN • 2001

17.5 YEARS
IDAHO

Charles Irvin Fain had recently moved to the Nampa area when a young girl was raped and murdered. Police began questioning him and asked him to provide hair samples. The FBI determined that the suspect's hairs were similar to Fain's. Based on that evidence, he was convicted and sentenced to death. Mitochondrial DNA testing eventually revealed that the hairs were not Fain's, and he was exonerated.



CALVIN WASHINGTON • 2001

13 YEARS
TEXAS

Calvin Washington was convicted of capital murder in 1987. Witnesses testified that Washington admitted to burglarizing the victim, and so-called "bite marks" on the victim were linked to Washington. After serving 13 years of a life sentence, DNA test results vindicated Washington and implicated another man, who had committed suicide after admitting that he raped an elderly woman who lived next door to the victim in Washington's case.



ANTHONY MICHAEL GREEN
2001

13 YEARS
OHIO

Anthony Michael Green was found guilty of raping a cancer patient in the care of the Cleveland Clinic Hospital where he used to work. Green was convicted based, in part, on the faulty forensic work of lab technician Joseph Serowik. After DNA exonerated Green, the city conducted the "Anthony Michael Green Forensic Laboratory Audit" of the city's crime lab, which has uncovered similar problems in other cases Serowik handled.



JOHN DIXON • 2001

10 YEARS
NEW JERSEY

For fear of a harsher sentence, **John Dixon** pled guilty in 1991 to a rape, robbery and kidnapping that he did not commit. DNA testing was not commonly used in New Jersey at that time, and Dixon's request for testing was denied. An Innocence Project student located the evidence in 1996, but it wasn't tested until 2001, when it proved Dixon's innocence.



MARCELLIUS BRADFORD
2001

6.5 YEARS
ILLINOIS

Marcellius Bradford was coerced into confessing to involvement in a 1986 Chicago rape and murder. He received a plea bargain for implicating Larry Ollins. After years in prison, DNA testing of spermatozoa and hairs found on the victim's body excluded all four men who were convicted of the crime. Bradford was exonerated and initially released but remains incarcerated on unrelated charges.

Many were denied parole because, in part,



CALVIN OLLINS • 2001

13.5 YEARS
ILLINOIS

Calvin Ollins was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole for the rape and murder of a medical student. At 14 years old, Calvin Ollins implicated himself, Marcellius Bradford and Larry Ollins in the crime. He spent roughly half his life in prison before DNA testing exonerated him.



LARRY OLLINS • 2001

13.5 YEARS
ILLINOIS

Together with his cousin Calvin, **Larry Ollins** was implicated in a Chicago crime. Marcellius Bradford testified that the two had raped and murdered a woman while he and co-defendant, Omar Saunders, stood watch. The four teenagers were not old enough to be eligible for the death penalty, and all but Bradford were sentenced to life in prison. DNA testing eventually proved their innocence.



OMAR SAUNDERS • 2001

13.5 YEARS
ILLINOIS

Omar Saunders, along with Larry and Calvin Ollins and Marcellius Bradford, was convicted in connection with a Chicago rape and murder. In addition to Bradford's false confession, another witness testified that Saunders had implicated himself in the crime. In December 2001, all four men were proven innocent through DNA testing.



RICHARD ALEXANDER • 2001

5.5 YEARS
INDIANA

Richard Alexander was arrested in connection with four sexual assaults in the South Bend area. After he was in prison, a fifth assault occurred. The fifth victim also identified Alexander as the perpetrator when his photo was accidentally placed in the photo lineup — even though he was in prison when the crime occurred. DNA eventually proved Alexander's innocence and implicated two other men in the crimes.



LARRY MAYES • 2001

18.5 YEARS
INDIANA

Based solely on the victim's tentative identification of him, **Larry Mayes** was convicted of rape. Mayes had a gold tooth, like the assailant. After two inconclusive lineups, the victim identified him from a photo array. She later revealed that police had hypnotized her before showing her the photos. Mayes was the 100th person exonerated through post-conviction DNA testing.

they refused to “accept responsibility”
for crimes they did not commit.



LEONARD MCSHERRY • 2001

13 YEARS
CALIFORNIA

A six-year-old girl positively identified **Leonard McSherry** as her rapist. The girl also identified McSherry's grandparents' house as the scene of the crime. McSherry maintained his innocence and DNA testing in 2001 corroborated his claim.



MARK WEBB • 2001

10 YEARS
TEXAS

Serology test results could not exclude **Mark Webb** as the perpetrator of a kidnapping and rape, and the victim erroneously identified him as the perpetrator, leading to his conviction. In 2001, DNA testing proved his innocence and he was freed.



RICHARD DANZIGER • 2002

11 YEARS
TEXAS

Richard Danziger's roommate, **Chris Ochoa**, implicated Danziger in his confession to the rape and murder of an Austin Pizza Hut employee. They both received life sentences. Years later, another prisoner confessed to the crime. The case was reopened, and DNA tests excluded Ochoa and Danziger and incriminated the other man. Tragically, Danziger sustained brain damage from attacks he suffered while in prison.



CHRIS OCHOA • 2002

11.5 YEARS
TEXAS

In a desperate attempt to avoid the death penalty, **Chris Ochoa** confessed to a rape and murder and also implicated his roommate, **Richard Danziger**. DNA testing excluded Ochoa while he was serving a life sentence. Since his exoneration, Ochoa earned a law degree at the University of Wisconsin and has worked with the Wisconsin Innocence Project.



BRUCE GODSCHALK • 2002

14.5 YEARS
PENNSYLVANIA

Two women in the same apartment complex were raped in 1986. One of them identified **Bruce Godschalk** as the perpetrator. His conviction was fraught with misconduct, including a coerced confession, and after he was convicted, prosecutors and police mishandled evidence and claimed it was destroyed. After almost 15 years in prison, and seven years fighting for DNA testing, Godschalk was exonerated.

**76% were convicted
based at least in part**



ARVIN MCGEE • 2002

12.5 YEARS
OKLAHOMA

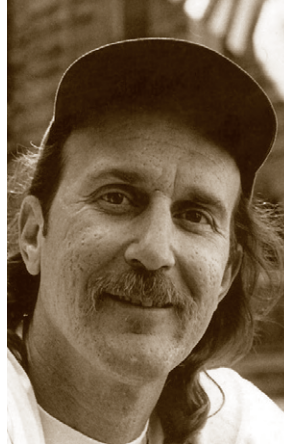
Arvin McGee was convicted of committing a 1987 rape in Tulsa. McGee's first trial ended in a mistrial, and the second ended in a hung jury. After the third trial, he was convicted and sentenced to 365 years in prison. His sentence was later reduced to 298 years. Finally, DNA proved his innocence and identified the true perpetrator.



VICTOR LARUE THOMAS
2002

15 YEARS
TEXAS

In June 2001, **Victor Larue Thomas** was freed from prison after DNA testing proved that he did not commit a 1986 robbery, kidnapping and rape of a convenience store clerk. His conviction was based largely on the victim's misidentification.



RAY KRONE • 2002

10 YEARS
ARIZONA

Ray Krone was said to be helping a Phoenix bartender close the bar on the night of her murder. Based on this information and "bite-mark" analysis (for which police asked Krone to bite into a Styrofoam cup and then compared the cup to bite marks on the victim), Krone was convicted of the crime and sentenced to death. Ten years later, DNA testing exonerated Krone, who is now a Pennsylvania resident and Director of Communications and Training for Witness to Innocence.



HECTOR GONZALEZ • 2002

5.5 YEARS
NEW YORK

Hector Gonzalez was convicted of murder in a gang-related crime in New York City. Serological testing on bloodstains on Gonzalez's pants revealed that half the population of New York City could be the source of the blood, yet based on this evidence and a witness who saw him at the scene of the crime, he was convicted. DNA testing revealed that the bloodstains came not from the victims, but from two other men whose wounds Gonzalez had been tending the night of the crime.



ALEJANDRO DOMINGUEZ
2002

4 YEARS
ILLINOIS

Alejandro Dominguez, then a 16-year-old Mexican national, was convicted and sentenced to nine years in prison for rape. His conviction was based primarily on the victim's cross-racial eyewitness identification. After he was released, Dominguez sought DNA testing at his own expense and was finally exonerated 12 years after his conviction.

on eyewitness misidentification...



CLARK MCMILLAN • 2002

22 YEARS
TENNESSEE

Clark McMillan had an obvious limp at the time that a rape victim identified him as the assailant. The victim's description of her assailant did not include a limp until she testified at trial. McMillan served 22 years of a 119-year sentence when DNA testing cleared his name.



LARRY JOHNSON • 2002

18 YEARS
MISSOURI

After Larry Johnson was convicted of a 1984 rape, he and the Innocence Project faced considerable resistance gaining access to evidence from his case for DNA testing. Even after the Innocence Project filed a civil rights lawsuit, the prosecution refused to release the evidence. In 2001, the state Supreme Court ordered the Circuit Attorney's Office to respond to the Innocence Project's motion. The DNA test results proved that Johnson could not have been the perpetrator and he was finally exonerated.



MARVIN ANDERSON • 2002

15 YEARS
VIRGINIA

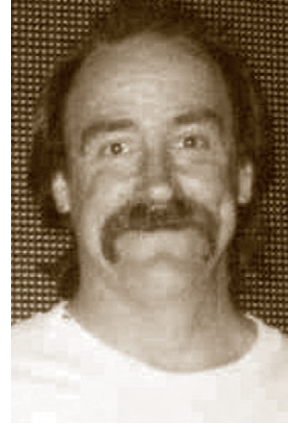
An all-white jury convicted Marvin Anderson of rape and related charges when he was 18 years old. He became a suspect in the investigation because he lived with a white woman and the victim said her attacker claimed he "had a white girl." He was exonerated through DNA testing 15 years later. Today, he owns a trucking company and lives in Hanover with his three children.



EDDIE JOE LLOYD • 2002

17 YEARS
MICHIGAN

Police officers investigating the brutal murder of a 16-year-old girl interrogated Eddie Joe Lloyd while he was a patient in a mental hospital. They led him to believe that by confessing and getting arrested, he would help them expose the real perpetrator. The judge said that Lloyd would have received the death penalty if it were legal in Michigan. For over six years, Innocence Project legal clinic students worked to secure the evidence in Lloyd's case. Lloyd died two years after DNA testing proved his innocence.



JIMMY RAY BROMGARD
2002

14.5 YEARS
MONTANA

At the age of 18, Jimmy Ray Bromgard was convicted of rape and sentenced to 40 years in prison. His conviction was secured with the hesitant eyewitness identification of the eight-year-old rape victim and the fraudulent testimony of a forensic analyst (who simply invented statistics claiming that a hair at the crime scene was likely from Bromgard). DNA testing eventually proved his innocence.

**And 53% of those misidentifications
were cross-racial (most commonly a**



ALBERT JOHNSON • 2002

10 YEARS
CALIFORNIA

Albert Johnson became the prime suspect in a sexual assault case when police stopped him for speeding. He matched the description of the assailant as a black man driving a small white car. Two rape victims identified him. Johnson studied law while incarcerated and sought DNA testing. One of the rape kits had been destroyed, but the second was located and subjected to testing; Johnson was exonerated based on the results.



DOUGLAS ECHOLS • 2002

5 YEARS
GEORGIA

Douglas Echols, a former Army officer, was convicted of kidnapping a woman outside a Savannah nightclub and restraining her while his co-defendant, Samuel Scott, raped her. Echols was paroled five years later. Scott contacted the Innocence Project, which helped locate the evidence and secured DNA testing. Both Echols and Scott were vindicated.



SAMUEL SCOTT • 2002

15 YEARS
ARIZONA

Samuel Scott was convicted of rape, kidnapping, and robbery and served 15 years of a life sentence. He was released on parole in September 2001 but arrested two days later when he failed to register as a sex offender. In October 2002, his indictment was dismissed based on DNA test results.



BERNARD WEBSTER • 2002

20 YEARS
MARYLAND

Bernard Webster became the first person to be exonerated under Maryland's post-conviction DNA statute. Webster was convicted of rape after the victim and multiple eyewitnesses misidentified him as the perpetrator. He was 40 years old when DNA finally exonerated him and he walked out of prison; he was 18 when he was arrested.



DAVID BRIAN SUTHERLIN
2002

0 YEARS
MINNESOTA

In 1985, **David Brian Sutherlin** was convicted of rape, as well as two unrelated murders. He was sentenced to life in prison for the murders; a month later, he was sentenced for the unrelated rape. In 2002, Sutherlin was exonerated of the rape charge after a prosecution-initiated review led to DNA testing of the evidence in his case, which showed that another man was the perpetrator. Sutherlin, who never served time for the rape conviction while serving his life sentence for the unrelated murders, remains in prison.

**white person incorrectly
identifying a black person).**



PAULA GRAY • 2002

9 YEARS
ILLINOIS

Paula Gray was convicted of murder, rape and perjury and sentenced to 50 years in prison in the “Ford Heights Four” case. Then 17 years old, her own statements were used to secure her conviction and that of four innocent men — Kenneth Adams, Verneal Jimerson, Willie Rainge and Dennis Williams. DNA testing ultimately proved that none of the five were involved in the crime.



ANTRON MCCRAY • 2002

6 YEARS
NEW YORK

Antron McCray and four other adolescents were convicted of a brutal rape in the now infamous Central Park jogger case of 1989. Years after their convictions, DNA test results matched a convicted murderer and rapist who admitted that he alone was responsible for the attack. None of the DNA evidence matched those wrongfully convicted, and all five men were exonerated.



KEVIN RICHARDSON • 2002

5.5 YEARS
NEW YORK

Kevin Richardson, who was 14 years old at the time, was one of five teenagers convicted in the attack of a Central Park jogger in 1989. Because the victim had no memory of the assault, police focused on a group of youths who were already in police custody for other crimes perpetrated in the park that night. In 2002, all five men were proven innocent through DNA testing.



YUSEF SALAAM • 2002

5.5 YEARS
NEW YORK

Yusef Salaam was convicted of rape and assault in connection with the 1989 Central Park jogger case. He was the only one of five teenagers convicted who did not give a videotaped confession. In 2002, all five men were deemed innocent after DNA testing was conducted on several pieces of evidence, including a rape kit and hairs found on the victim.



RAYMOND SANTANA • 2002

5 YEARS
NEW YORK

Raymond Santana falsely confessed to involvement in the Central Park jogger case of 1989. He and five other teenagers, between the ages of 14 and 16 years old, were convicted of this crime. In 2002, another man who had been convicted of similar crimes confessed that he alone committed the Central Park jogger attack, and all five men were exonerated after DNA testing confirmed his admission.

**In 38% of the misidentification cases,
multiple eyewitnesses identified**



KOREY WISE • 2002

11.5 YEARS
NEW YORK

Korey Wise was one of five teenagers convicted in connection with the Central Park jogger case. He and three of his co-defendants gave videotaped confessions that differed significantly on key details of the crime. In retrospect it is clear that the young men did not know where, how, or when the attack took place. In 2002, all five men were deemed innocent after DNA testing.



DANA HOLLAND • 2003

8 YEARS
ILLINOIS

Dana Holland was imprisoned for a decade for two wrongful convictions: a rape, an armed robbery and an attempted murder. On the morning of the rape, officers traced the suspect's footprints to Holland's apartment building. The Center on Wrongful Convictions took his case and secured DNA testing, which exonerated Holland in 2003. He was retried for the armed robbery and attempted murder (for which there was no DNA evidence) and acquitted.



GENE BIBBINS • 2003

15.5 YEARS
LOUISIANA

In 1987, **Gene Bibbins** was convicted of raping a young woman in the apartment complex where he lived. He became a suspect when he was seen carrying a radio that had been stolen from the victim's apartment. He had found the radio on the premises. The victim identified him as the perpetrator after police drove him to the crime scene and illuminated his face with a flashlight. He was exonerated 15 years later, when DNA testing proved that he could not have committed the crime.



WILEY FOUNTAIN • 2003

16 YEARS
TEXAS

Wiley Fountain was convicted of aggravated sexual assault of a pregnant woman in the Dallas area who had been abducted while walking to a bus stop. Fountain was stopped by police because his clothing resembled the victim's description of what her attacker wore. Based on DNA test results, he was pardoned in March 2003.



JULIUS RUFFIN • 2003

20 YEARS
VIRGINIA

A young nurse identified **Julius Ruffin**, a maintenance worker at a medical school where she was a student, as the man who raped her several weeks earlier. After two trials resulted in hung juries, Ruffin was convicted and sentenced to life. Over two decades later, DNA testing exonerated Ruffin and linked to a convicted rapist.

the same innocent person.



DENNIS MAHER • 2003



EDDIE JAMES LOWERY • 2003



MICHAEL MERCER • 2003



PAUL KORDONOWY • 2003



DAVID JOHNS BRYSON • 2003

19 YEARS
MASSACHUSETTS

Dennis Maher, then a 23-year-old Army sergeant, was stopped and questioned by police on the night that a rape occurred in his town of Lowell. Although no biological evidence linked him, he was convicted of two rapes. The New England Innocence Project helped secure DNA testing in his case and he was proven innocent. He is now a mechanic for a waste management company, has recently married and has two young children.

9.5 YEARS
KANSAS

Investigators in the 1981 rape of an elderly woman questioned **Eddie James Lowery** on the day of the attack. They denied him a lawyer, fed him details of the case and extracted a confession. Lowery's first trial ended in a hung jury, but he was convicted in the second. After his parole in 1991, Lowery financed DNA testing in his case and was proven innocent.

10.5 YEARS
NEW YORK

Michael Mercer was misidentified in the rape of a 17-year-old girl when the victim saw Mercer in her building two months after the attack. In 2000, DNA testing was finally conducted and found a match — not to Mercer, but to a convicted rapist who could not be charged because the statute of limitations had expired.

13 YEARS
MONTANA

Paul Kordonowy was exonerated for a 1990 rape conviction after DNA testing proved his innocence. At his trial, the former head of the Montana Forensic Science Laboratory, Arnold Melnikoff, testified falsely that hairs found at the crime scene matched Kordonowy. Kordonowy remains in prison for another rape charge to which he pled guilty.

16 YEARS
OKLAHOMA

Faulty forensic testing contributed to **David Johns Bryson's** wrongful conviction of a 1982 rape and kidnapping. Bryson was sentenced to 85 years in prison. When Bryson sought to obtain the biological evidence from the crime scene for DNA testing, Joyce Gilchrist (whose work has contributed to a number of wrongful convictions), falsely reported that it had been destroyed. Bryson's attorney continued to probe for the evidence and eventually discovered that it still existed. Bryson was proven innocent.

52% were convicted based at least in part



KENNETH WYNIEMKO • 2003

8.5 YEARS
MICHIGAN

A Michigan rape victim told police that she had little opportunity to view her assailant. But they asked her to help prepare a composite sketch, which she said was about 60% accurate. Police targeted **Kenneth Wyniemko** because he resembled the sketch. He was convicted and sentenced to 40-60 years in prison. Nine years later, DNA proved his innocence. Today, Wyniemko — joined by his Cooley Innocence Project attorneys and the prosecuting attorney in his case — educates the public about wrongful convictions.



MICHAEL EVANS • 2003

26 YEARS
ILLINOIS

Michael Evans served 26 years of a 400-year sentence for the murder, rape and kidnapping of a young girl before DNA testing exonerated him. A neighborhood woman, responding to a reward offer of \$5,000 for helping identify the killer, implicated Evans. He and his co-defendant, Paul Terry, were teenagers when they were convicted.



PAUL TERRY • 2003

26 YEARS
ILLINOIS

Based on the false tip of a neighborhood woman, detectives began asking local African-American teenagers about the rape and murder of a nine-year-old girl. **Paul Terry** was identified in a line-up by the woman, who claimed to have been a witness to the struggle. Although her work timecard showed she could not have witnessed the crime, prosecutors continued their case against Terry and Michael Evans. The two served a combined total of 52 years in prison before DNA testing proved them innocent.



LONNIE ERBY • 2003

17 YEARS
MISSOURI

Lonnie Erby was convicted of several St. Louis kidnappings and rapes and sentenced to 115 years in prison. Although no biological evidence linked him to the crimes and he had strong alibis for each of them, he was convicted based on misidentification by several of the victims. The Innocence Project took Erby's case in 1995 and spent seven years fighting for DNA testing on evidence in the case. Finally, in 2003, DNA test results proved his innocence.



STEVEN AVERY • 2003

17.5 YEARS
WISCONSIN

Sixteen witnesses corroborated **Steven Avery's** alibi that he had spent the day shopping with his family when a brutal sexual assault occurred. Nevertheless, based on the eyewitness misidentification of a single witness and hair analysis, Avery was convicted. DNA testing secured by the Wisconsin Innocence Project proved that Avery was innocent — and matched a man who was in prison for sexual assaults committed after the one for which Avery was wrongfully convicted.

on improper or unvalidated forensic science.



CALVIN WILLIS • 2003

21.5 YEARS
LOUISIANA

Calvin Willis was convicted of raping a seven-year-old girl while two other young girls were also in the Shreveport home. The children provided conflicting descriptions of the attacker, and their memories of the attack changed over time. Willis, who was well known in the neighborhood and denied having anything to do with the crime, was finally exonerated based on DNA testing on several pieces of evidence. The real perpetrator was never found.



CALVIN LEE SCOTT • 2003

20 YEARS
OKLAHOMA

Microscopic hair analysis — a science that is limited at best — was used to convict **Calvin Lee Scott** of a 1982 rape. Two decades later, DNA testing excluded Scott and matched to a convicted rapist who could not be charged due to the statute of limitations.



NICHOLAS YARRIS • 2003

21.5 YEARS
PENNSYLVANIA

Sentenced to death in 1982 for a rape, murder, and kidnapping, **Nicholas Yarris** first sought DNA testing in his case in 1989. DNA tests on evidence from his case were conducted throughout the 1990s and were inconclusive. In 2003, a private lab conducted one last round of DNA tests on several items of evidence — and the results proved that Yarris was innocent. He is now living in England with his wife and young daughter.



STEPHAN COWANS • 2004

5.5 YEARS
MASSACHUSETTS

The victim and multiple witnesses misidentified **Stephan Cowans** as the man who shot a Boston police officer, and he was convicted. Several items of evidence were later subjected to DNA testing, and they all showed that Cowans was innocent. Subsequently, officials reexamined a fingerprint from the crime scene that an expert had testified came from Cowans — and the new analysis revealed that fingerprint did not belong to Cowans. Several years after his exoneration, Cowans was shot to death in his home.



DARRYL HUNT • 2004

18.5 YEARS
N. CAROLINA

Darryl Hunt was convicted of a 1984 rape and murder despite a lack of evidence against him. The main prosecution witness was a former Ku Klux Klansman. In 1994, DNA testing excluded him, yet state and federal courts turned down his request for a new trial. But when a final round of DNA testing identified the real perpetrator, Hunt was finally exonerated. He now runs the Darryl Hunt Project for Freedom and Justice, which assists innocent prisoners and helps people successfully reenter society after incarceration.

**21% were convicted based at least
in part on faulty microscopic hair analysis.**



ANTHONY POWELL • 2004

12 YEARS
MASSACHUSETTS

A man who raped a teenager in 1991 demanded that she meet him at the local skating rink the night after the attack with \$100. **Anthony Powell** happened to be at the rink that night and the young woman misidentified him as her attacker. He was convicted of rape and kidnapping and sentenced to 12-20 years in prison. When DNA testing was finally conducted, the judge quickly acknowledged that the results proved Powell's innocence, and he was freed.



JOSIAH SUTTON • 2004

4.5 YEARS
TEXAS

At **Josiah Sutton's** rape trial in 1999, a Houston Police Department crime lab employee testified that DNA from the crime was an exact match to Sutton. Knowing this couldn't be true, Sutton fought, unsuccessfully, to have independent DNA testing conducted during his trial. In 2003, an independent audit of the crime lab uncovered extensive problems. DNA tests proved that Sutton was innocent, and he was exonerated. Since his release, he has advocated for legislative reform in Texas.



LAFONSO ROLLINS • 2004

10 YEARS
ILLINOIS

Lafonso Rollins was a 17-year-old special education student in the ninth grade when he was arrested for robbery and rape on the basis of a composite sketch. Rollins, whose cognitive abilities are limited, confessed to the robberies and four rapes. Years later, DNA testing proved that he was innocent and that an unknown male had committed the crimes. During the years Rollins was wrongfully imprisoned, his mother, father, sister and grandparents had died.



RYAN MATTHEWS • 2004

5 YEARS
LOUISIANA

Ryan Matthews was arrested for murder soon after his 17th birthday. His friend, Travis Hayes, falsely confessed to the crime and implicated Matthews, who was convicted and sentenced to death. The Louisiana Crisis Assistance Center helped Matthews win post-conviction DNA testing that excluded him. After almost five years on death row, he was released.



WILTON DEDGE • 2004

22 YEARS
FLORIDA

The prosecution at **Wilton Dedge's** rape trial relied on eyewitness misidentification, snitch testimony, hair comparison and dog sniffing to secure his conviction in 1982. The conviction was reversed in 1983, but then reinstated in 1984. Three years after post conviction DNA testing excluded him in 2001, he was finally released. Dedge lives in Florida, where he owns and manages a bar.

Five involved improper use of DNA.



ARTHUR LEE WHITFIELD
2004

22.5 YEARS
VIRGINIA

Arthur Lee Whitfield was convicted of two rapes and sentenced to 63 years in prison. More than two decades later, when he sought DNA testing that could prove his innocence, he was told the evidence was lost forever and could not be tested. But samples of evidence were found in the old notebooks of a former lab analyst who, against lab protocol, saved evidence samples in hundreds of cases — which have already led to several exonerations. DNA testing on the evidence exonerated Whitfield in 2004.



BARRY LAUGHMAN • 2004

16 YEARS
PENNSYLVANIA

When police lied to **Barry Laughman** and told him that his fingerprints were found a murder scene, he confessed to the crime. Laughman's IQ had been measured at 70, and he was said to be functioning at the level of a 10-year-old child. Despite serious discrepancies between his confession and the actual crime (including the date), he was convicted of rape, murder and other charges in 1988 and sentenced to life in prison. Years later, DNA testing of the evidence proved his innocence.



CLARENCE HARRISON • 2004

17.5 YEARS
GEORGIA

Poor preservation of evidence almost prevented **Clarence Harrison** from proving his innocence in a 1986 rape case. After he was convicted, he pursued DNA testing but was told the remaining evidence had been destroyed in the early 1990s. By 2003, the Georgia Innocence Project had helped locate one last preserved slide, and it proved Harrison's innocence. Just 18 days after his release from prison, Harrison married his longtime girlfriend.



DAVID ALLEN JONES • 2004

9 YEARS
CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles police investigating several murders interrogated **David Allen Jones**, who has the mental ability of an eight-year-old, for over two days. After detectives "reminded" Jones that he had already admitted to the crimes, he falsely confessed and was convicted. Nine years later, DNA testing proved Jones's innocence — and matched a convicted serial murderer.



BRUCE DALLAS GOODMAN
2004

19 YEARS
UTAH

Convicted of the rape and murder of his live-in girlfriend based largely on inconclusive forensics, **Bruce Dallas Goodman** maintained his innocence. He ultimately sought the help of the Rocky Mountain Innocence Center, and DNA testing exonerated him.

27% were convicted

based at least in part



DONALD WAYNE GOOD
2004

13.5 YEARS
TEXAS

Donald Wayne Good was convicted of rape, based only on the victim's eyewitness identification. He continued to fight to prove his innocence for years after he was paroled. DNA testing finally led to his exoneration in December 2004.



DENNIS BROWN • 2005

19 YEARS
LOUISIANA

At age 17, Dennis Brown was accused of rape and confessed to the crime when a detective threatened him. The victim said her attacker's face was almost completely covered, yet she identified Brown. The Innocence Project New Orleans requested DNA testing in Brown's case, which proved his innocence. He had spent over half of his life in prison.



DONTE BOOKER • 2005

15 YEARS
OHIO

After he was paroled, Donte Booker sought post-conviction DNA testing in the 1986 rape case for which he had been convicted. He refused opportunities for an earlier parole because he would not admit to a crime he didn't commit. In 2005, DNA testing excluded him, and his conviction was overturned.



PETER ROSE • 2005

8 YEARS
CALIFORNIA

A young rape victim initially reported that she was raped by a stranger, until her aunt, an estranged acquaintance of Peter Rose, suggested that he had committed the crime. Under interrogation, police repeatedly pressured the girl to name him, despite her misgivings. He was convicted and sentenced to 27 years. With the help of the Northern California Innocence Project, Rose's innocence was established through DNA testing.



MICHAEL ANTHONY WILLIAMS
2005

23.5 YEARS
LOUISIANA

Just 16 years old at the time of his conviction, Michael Anthony Williams served nearly 24 years of a life sentence for aggravated rape. The victim, who was his tutor, misidentified Williams, and he was convicted. More than two decades later, DNA testing proved that he could not have committed the crime. Upon his release, the Louisiana Department of Corrections issued him a check for \$10. Williams works as a security officer in Baton Rouge.

on false confessions, admissions
or guilty pleas.



BRANDON MOON • 2005



ANTHONY WOODS • 2005



THOMAS DOSWELL • 2005



LUIS DIAZ • 2005



LEO WATERS • 2005

17 YEARS
TEXAS

Brandon Moon was convicted of three counts of aggravated sexual assault for a string of crimes in the El Paso area where he was a college student. Moon was arrested and convicted in 1988, based largely on eyewitness misidentification and faulty forensic analysis. DNA testing proved his innocence 17 years later. Moon has since moved to Missouri. He is an advocate for criminal justice reform.

18 YEARS
MISSOURI

When **Anthony Woods** was paroled after 18 years in prison for raping a teenager, he immediately called his original public defender and obtained an order for DNA testing in his case. In prison, he had twice failed to complete the sex offender program because he refused to accept responsibility for the crime. DNA results cleared his name three years after his release.

18.5 YEARS
PENNSYLVANIA

When a rape victim was shown a photo array of possible suspects, only one — **Thomas Doswell's** — was marked with the letter 'R', which officers said meant that Doswell had been charged with rape. Although Doswell challenged the identification at his trial, he was convicted. Nearly two decades later, in March 2005, DNA testing proved his innocence. He is now part of a band that opened for B.B. King during his 2006 tour.

25 YEARS
FLORIDA

Luis Diaz was convicted in 1980 as the "Bird Road Rapist." One of the victims identified Diaz when she saw him at the gas station where she worked. Diaz, a married father of three, was roughly 70 pounds lighter and 7 inches shorter than her initial description. With the help of Diaz's son and the Florida Innocence Initiative, he was finally released on the basis of exculpatory DNA test results.

21 YEARS
N. CAROLINA

A woman who had been raped in 1981 while selling a waterbed out of her home identified **Leo Waters** as the assailant. She was hypnotized in an attempt to bolster her memory. In 2003, DNA testing showed that he could not have been the rapist, and two years later he was pardoned.

And 53% of those who falsely confessed were 17 years old or younger,



GEORGE RODRIGUEZ • 2005

17 YEARS
TEXAS

George Rodriguez was at work when a 14-year-old girl was raped by two Latino men, one of whom had called the other “George.” The victim identified Rodriguez in a photo array and he was arrested. Based in part on inaccurate forensic analysis, he was convicted and sentenced to 60 years in prison. Years later, results of mitochondrial DNA testing did not match Rodriguez, but did match another man.



ROBERT CLARK • 2005

23.5 YEARS
GEORGIA

The perpetrator of a brutal 1981 rape and robbery stole the victim’s car. He loaned it to his friend, **Robert Clark**, who the victim then saw driving it. Clark gave the man’s name to detectives, but the man was never charged. Decades later, DNA testing revealed Clark’s innocence and implicated the man who loaned him the car, who was already serving time on other convictions. Clark is pursuing a career as a building inspector and is engaged to be married.



CLARENCE ELKINS • 2005

6.5 YEARS
OHIO

Clarence Elkins was convicted of the rape and murder of his mother-in-law and the rape of his six-year-old niece in 1999. While he was in prison, Elkins’ wife worked with a private investigator to find the real perpetrator. They learned that a convicted rapist, who had lived near the crime scene, had been transferred to Elkins’ cell block. Elkins retrieved one of the man’s cigarette butts from the prison yard in order to obtain his genetic profile. DNA testing cleared Elkins and matched the man Elkins and his wife suspected.



JOHN KOGUT • 2005

17 YEARS
NEW YORK

Through hair comparison, snitch testimony and **John Kogut’s** false confession—produced after 18 hours of interrogation—Kogut was convicted of the rape and murder of a 16-year-old girl. John Restivo and Dennis Halstead were also convicted on the pretense that the three men acted together. Several rounds of DNA testing over 10 years excluded all three men. After a retrial, Kogut was finally exonerated.



PHILLIP LEON THURMAN
2005

19 YEARS
VIRGINIA

Phillip Leon Thurman was convicted of a 1984 rape, abduction and assault based on eyewitness identification and serology on crime scene evidence. After he was released on parole in 2004, he was required to register as a sex offender, but he continued fighting to prove his innocence. A key piece of biological evidence had been saved by a lab analyst, whose work proved instrumental in the exonerations of several other Virginia prisoners. Thurman’s evidence was subjected to DNA testing, and he was exonerated.

**or they had a developmental disability
and/or a mental illness.**



WILLIE DAVIDSON • 2005

12 YEARS
VIRGINIA

Willie Davidson served 12 years for the 1980 rape of an elderly female acquaintance of his who testified that he had been like a grandson to her. Davidson and his family said that he was at home sleeping when the crime occurred. Years after he was released from prison, he was proven innocent through DNA testing of evidence that a lab analyst had saved in her notebooks.



ENTRE NAX KARAGE • 2005

6.5 YEARS
TEXAS

Entre Nax Karage was convicted of murdering his girlfriend in 1997. Post-conviction DNA testing proved that he was innocent. The profile obtained from spermatozoa found on the victim matched another man who was previously convicted of a similar crime.



KEITH E. TURNER • 2005

4 YEARS
TEXAS

Post-conviction DNA testing proved that **Keith E. Turner** was not the perpetrator of a 1982 rape of a Dallas woman. Turner had been misidentified both visually and by his voice. He and the victim worked for different branches of the same company and came into contact when Turner was transferred.



DENNIS HALSTEAD • 2005

16 YEARS
NEW YORK

Investigators in the murder of a 16-year-old girl focused, in part, on **Dennis Halstead** who was believed to be associated with another young woman who had disappeared. Together with John Kogut and John Restivo, Halstead was convicted of rape and murder in 1987. After several rounds of exculpatory DNA testing, all three men were released in 2003 and exonerated in 2005.



JOHN RESTIVO • 2005

16 YEARS
NEW YORK

Together with defendants John Kogut and Dennis Halstead, **John Restivo** was convicted of the rape and murder of a 16-year-old girl on Long Island. DNA testing proved the innocence of all three men in 2003, and they were fully exonerated in 2005. The real perpetrator was never found. Today, Restivo lives in Florida with his girlfriend.

Nineteen pled guilty to crimes



ALAN CROTZER • 2006

24.5 YEARS
FLORIDA

Three men broke into a Tampa home in 1982 and kidnapped and raped an adult woman and a 12-year-old girl, leaving them tied to a tree after the attack. One of the victims identified **Alan Crotzer**, who maintained that he had no knowledge of the crime. In 2003, he secured DNA testing and was exonerated in 2006.



EUGENE HENTON • 2006

1.5 YEARS
TEXAS

In exchange for a guilty plea, **Eugene Henton** received a sentence of four years in prison for a 1984 sexual assault that he did not commit. He was paroled a year and a half later; however, he returned to prison in 1995 on unrelated charges. He continued to fight the 1984 wrongful conviction from prison with the help of the Dallas County Public Defender's Office who helped secure DNA testing. Henton was exonerated in 2006 and released in 2007.



ARTHUR MUMPHREY • 2006

17.5 YEARS
TEXAS

Based on the testimony of a co-defendant, **Arthur Mumphrey** was convicted of sexual assault and sentenced to 35 years in prison. In exchange for testifying against Mumphrey, his co-defendant received a reduced sentence of 15 years. Eventually, DNA tests confirmed the co-defendant's guilt and Mumphrey's innocence.



DREW WHITLEY • 2006

16.5 YEARS
PENNSYLVANIA

If not for 39 tiny hairs stuck to a nylon mask, **Drew Whitley** would still be in prison. The actual perpetrator, who shot and killed a McDonald's night manager in 1988, had worn a nylon mask that he shed at the scene. Over a decade after Whitley initially filed for DNA testing on the hairs and was told they could not be located, he learned that the 39 hairs still existed and that he was excluded as the source.

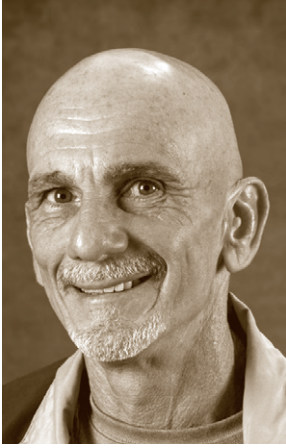


DOUGLAS WARNEY • 2006

9 YEARS
NEW YORK

Despite a lack of physical evidence, **Douglas Warney** was convicted of murder in 1997. Warney confessed to the crime, but his confession revealed that he did not know several key facts. DNA testing exonerated him and matched a convicted murderer already serving a life sentence in New York. Warney, who became gravely ill while he was in prison, is cared for by his loved ones in Rochester.

they did not commit.



ORLANDO BOQUETE • 2006

13 YEARS
FLORIDA

Orlando Boquete, a Cuban immigrant, was identified by a rape victim from the back of a police car parked 20 feet away, in the middle of the night. He was convicted, and two years into his sentence he escaped and lived as a fugitive for a decade. He was eventually recaptured and served another 10 years. For a total of 23 years he lived as a fugitive or a prisoner before DNA testing established his innocence. Today, he lives in the Florida Keys near many of his relatives.



WILLIE JACKSON • 2006

17 YEARS
LOUISIANA

Based on the victim's misidentification, **Willie Jackson** was convicted and sentenced to 40 years for rape. Post-conviction DNA testing exonerated Jackson and implicated his brother in the rape. At the time of his release, his brother was serving a life sentence for a rape committed nine years after Jackson's conviction.



LARRY PETERSON • 2006

16.5 YEARS
NEW JERSEY

Three witnesses claimed that **Larry Peterson** confessed to a rape and murder, and he was convicted despite his repeated assertions of innocence. In 2003, DNA tests established his innocence but prosecutors refused to drop charges until two of the witnesses changed their previous stories. Finally, in 2006, he was exonerated. He is fighting to have his record expunged.



ALAN NEWTON • 2006

21 YEARS
NEW YORK

Alan Newton of New York attended his mother's funeral in shackles. She died shortly after his rape conviction in 1985. He began requesting DNA testing in 1994, but the rape kit could not be located until 2005. Once it was located, DNA testing proved his innocence. Newton has since earned a degree in business administration at Medgar Evers College and is pursuing a career in law.



JAMES TILLMAN • 2006

16.5 YEARS
CONNECTICUT

James Tillman's conviction in 1989 was based almost entirely on a cross-racial eyewitness misidentification. Soon after his conviction, Tillman requested DNA testing, but it was not as sophisticated at that time and the results were inconclusive. In 2005, another round of testing showed conclusively that Tillman was innocent, and he was exonerated the following year.

**19% were convicted based
at least in part**



JOHNNY BRISCOE • 2006

23 YEARS
MISSOURI

In 1982, a Missouri man told the woman he raped that his name was **Johnny Briscoe**. The victim would later identify Briscoe in a photo lineup and a live lineup. Briscoe was the only man in the live lineup wearing an orange jumpsuit. In 2006, DNA testing excluded Briscoe and matched a man who was known to Briscoe and may have used his name in the crime.



SCOTT FAPPIANO • 2006

21 YEARS
NEW YORK

Scott Fappiano became implicated in a rape case when the victim, a police officer's wife, identified him. At his second trial in 1985, he was convicted. By chance, a piece of evidence in his case was discovered in 2005 — not at the NYPD storage facilities, but at LifeCodes, a private DNA laboratory. Testing confirmed Fappiano's innocence and he was released. In 2009, Fappiano married his high school sweetheart.



ALLEN COCO • 2006

9 YEARS
LOUISIANA

After a victim was raped and burglarized in 1995, she misidentified **Allen Coco** as her attacker. During the attack, she had stabbed the man in the buttocks, but Coco had no stab wound. Still, he was convicted and sentenced to life in prison without probation or parole. The Innocence Project New Orleans helped him secure DNA testing in 2005 and he was exonerated the following year. Sadly, Coco died shortly after his release.



JAMES OCHOA • 2006

10 MONTHS
CALIFORNIA

Ten months after he was convicted of carjacking and armed robbery, **James Ochoa's** conviction was vacated and he was exonerated. Though Ochoa had already been excluded from the DNA evidence at the time of trial, prosecutors were convinced of his guilt. A routine run of the DNA profile from the crime scene evidence through the national DNA database matched another man.



JEFFREY DESKOVIC • 2006

15.5 YEARS
NEW YORK

Based on a false confession extracted from him at the age of 16, **Jeffrey Deskovic** was convicted of the rape and murder of his 15-year-old classmate—even though DNA testing excluded him. He was released years later when more sophisticated DNA testing was conducted and run through New York State's DNA database, providing a match to a convicted felon. Since his release, Deskovic has graduated from Mercy College and speaks publicly about criminal justice reform.

on testimony from snitches or informants.



MARLON PENDLETON • 2006

10 YEARS
ILLINOIS

Marlon Pendleton was convicted in 1996 for a 1992 rape. Pamela Fish, a laboratory analyst who has allegedly provided false testimony in at least seven other cases that resulted in DNA exonerations, testified at his trial that the biological evidence was insufficient for DNA testing. In 2006, DNA testing was conducted and Pendleton was proven innocent.



BILLY JAMES SMITH • 2006

19 YEARS
TEXAS

Billy James Smith attempted to secure DNA testing to overturn his rape conviction for over four years. His initial attempts were denied because the victim's boyfriend could have been a source of semen in the rape kit—even though the victim had earlier said that she did not have sex prior to the crime. After numerous appeals, DNA testing was finally granted, and Smith was proven innocent.



BILLY WAYNE MILLER • 2006

22 YEARS
TEXAS

Billy Wayne Miller was officially exonerated in December 2006 after DNA testing proved he did not commit a 1984 Dallas County rape. The victim had accepted a ride home from a man in a Chevy who raped her several times. The police identified Miller as the son of a registered owner of a Chevy with a license plate similar to the one the victim remembered.



GREGORY WALLIS • 2007

17 YEARS
TEXAS

An initial round of DNA testing showed that 1 in 452 people had the same portion of the DNA profile shared by both **Gregory Wallis** and the perpetrator of a 1988 rape. Rather than take a deal that would release him from prison if he would agree to be a life-time registered sex offender, Wallis pushed for more testing. Subsequent testing of the rape kit and cigarette butts conclusively eliminated Wallis as the perpetrator, and he was exonerated in 2007.



LARRY FULLER • 2007

25 YEARS
TEXAS

Larry Fuller was the 10th Dallas County man proven innocent through DNA testing in just five years. The victim was raped in her home before sunrise and in dim lighting. She identified Fuller after seeing his photo in two photo lineups. Today, Fuller cares for his elderly father and is pursuing a career as a visual artist.

60% were compensated (either through state compensation laws or civil lawsuits)



TRAVIS HAYES • 2007



WILLIE "PETE" WILLIAMS
2007



ROY BROWN • 2007



JAMES WALLER • 2007



ANTONIO BEAVER • 2007

8 YEARS
LOUISIANA

Travis Hayes' co-defendant, Ryan Matthews, was exonerated from death row in 2004. Attorneys at the Innocence Project New Orleans fought for two and a half more years to win Hayes' exoneration for a murder that neither man committed. DNA testing in 2004 cleared Hayes and Matthews and implicated another man, and three years later prosecutors announced that they would not retry Hayes.

21.5 YEARS
GEORGIA

Months after **Willie "Pete" Williams** was arrested based on the misidentification of two Atlanta rape victims, a series of similar rapes occurred. A second man pled guilty and was convicted. But Williams and his attorneys did not learn of the crimes until the appeals process. Working with the Georgia Innocence Project, Williams secured DNA testing. The second man matched the genetic profile in both rape kits and Williams was eliminated.

15 YEARS
NEW YORK

Roy Brown cracked his own case from prison. Five days after Brown mailed a letter to Barry Bench, the man that he suspected to be the killer, Bench committed suicide by stepping in front of an Amtrak train. Bench's daughter provided the DNA sample that implicated Brown. Brown, who suffered from liver disease, received a transplant since his release and has made a full recovery.

10 YEARS
TEXAS

In addition to ten years of wrongful incarceration, **James Waller** spent 13 years on parole for allegedly raping a young boy who lived in his apartment development. As a condition of his parole, he was not allowed to have any contact with children. Even while volunteering through his church group to serve food to homeless people, Waller had to ask another volunteer to serve the children. He was finally vindicated in March 2007 when, as the result of exculpatory DNA testing, the Texas Governor officially pardoned him.

10 YEARS
MISSOURI

Antonio Beaver was convicted of first-degree robbery in a St. Louis carjacking case and sentenced to 18 years in prison. Beaver's conviction was based on the victim's identification of him in a live lineup in which he was one of only four lineup members. She had described the assailant as having a gap in his teeth and Beaver was the only one with any dental irregularities. DNA testing conducted on blood left by the perpetrator on a car door cleared Beaver of the crime after ten years behind bars.

**for their wrongful convictions,
usually years after their release...**



ANTHONY CAPOZZI • 2007



ANDREW GOSSETT • 2007



JERRY MILLER • 2007



CODY DAVIS • 2007



CURTIS MCCARTY • 2007

20 YEARS
NEW YORK

Biological evidence stored for two decades in a hospital drawer was the key to the 2007 exoneration of **Anthony Capozzi**, a Buffalo man who spent 20 years in prison for two rapes he didn't commit. Capozzi was convicted by a jury of two rapes and acquitted of the third although all three victims identified him in court as the attacker. DNA tests in March 2007 showed that another man, currently awaiting trial on three murders, actually committed the 1985 attacks, known as the Delaware Park rapes.

7 YEARS
TEXAS

On the night of a kidnapping and rape in Garland, Texas, a police officer on duty noticed **Andrew Gossett** in the vicinity of the crime scene. Consistent with the victim's description of the perpetrator, Gossett was wearing a plaid shirt. Gossett was brought in the following day for a lineup and the victim identified him. He served seven years for the sexual assault before DNA evidence exonerated him.

24.5 YEARS
ILLINOIS

Jerry Miller was convicted of raping a woman in a parking garage. After the attack, the rapist attempted to drive the victim's car out of the garage with her in the trunk. Two parking attendants began questioning the assailant, and he fled. A police officer, who thought that Miller resembled the composite sketch, put him in a lineup and Miller was erroneously identified. He was convicted and served 24.5 years before DNA testing proved his innocence.

5 MONTHS
FLORIDA

Cody Davis was misidentified by two of three eyewitnesses as the perpetrator of a robbery at a bar in West Palm Beach. The third eyewitness remembered a tattoo on the robber's hand that Davis did not have. After Davis' conviction in 2006, DNA testing on a ski mask found at the crime scene exonerated him and implicated another man who subsequently confessed.

21 YEARS
OKLAHOMA

Multiple rounds of DNA testing showed that **Curtis McCarty** did not commit a 1982 murder for which he was sentenced to death. McCarty's wrongful conviction was secured by Oklahoma City District Attorney Robert H. Macy, who has sent more people to death row than any other prosecutor in the country, and fabricated testimony from Joyce Gilchrist, a forensic scientist who lied about test results. The Innocence Project represented McCarty.

The amounts of compensation ranged



HAROLD BUNTIN • 2007

13 YEARS
INDIANA

DNA testing proved **Harold Buntin's** innocence in 2005, but he endured an additional two years of wrongful incarceration because of a filing error. He became a suspect in a 1984 rape when the rape victim saw Buntin in a grocery store nearly four months after the attack and identified him to police as her attacker. Buntin was not released until April 2007 when court officials discovered a judge's order to exonerate him had been inappropriately placed in storage.



JAMES CURTIS GILES • 2007

10 YEARS
TEXAS

Police received a tip that one of the three men who committed a 1982 Dallas gang rape was named **James Giles**. However, the Giles they pursued was a man 10 years older and considerably taller than the victim's original description of the perpetrator. After many years in prison and on parole as a registered sex offender, DNA testing exonerated James Curtis Giles. Other evidence, which was available before the 1983 trial, implicated James Earl Giles, now deceased, as the assailant.



BYRON HALSEY • 2007

19 YEARS
NEW JERSEY

Byron Halsey's girlfriend's two children were raped and murdered in 1985. Halsey was taken into police custody and interrogated for 30 hours. His responses to questioning revealed that he did not know any of the key facts of the crime, but he signed a confession that led to his wrongful conviction. Post-conviction DNA testing performed at the request of the Innocence Project eliminated Halsey and pointed to Clifton Hall, a neighbor at the time and one of the state's witnesses.



DWAYNE ALLEN DAIL • 2007

18 YEARS
N. CAROLINA

Dwayne Dail was wrongfully convicted based on the victim's identification and a hair comparison analysis. The North Carolina Center on Actual Innocence worked with authorities to conduct a thorough search for the DNA evidence and secured the post-conviction DNA testing that proved Dail's innocence. Dail was finally able to reunite with his son, whose childhood passed while he was incarcerated.



MARCUS LYONS • 2007

2.5 YEARS
ILLINOIS

Marcus Lyons was misidentified as the perpetrator of a rape when police showed the victim a photo array that included Lyons' employee ID photo. All the other photos were mugshots, so Lyons' photo stood out. He tried to appeal the wrongful conviction, but his lawyer never filed the appeal. Lyons' new attorney requested DNA testing on his behalf and the results proved his innocence.

from \$11,200 to \$12.25 million.



LARRY BOSTIC • 2007

3-18 YEARS
FLORIDA

DNA testing conducted in 2007 proved **Larry Bostic's** innocence of the rape and robbery of a Fort Lauderdale woman in 1988. Bostic pled guilty to avoid a possible life sentence if convicted at trial. He was sentenced to eight years in prison and released on parole after three years. He was sent back to prison for an unrelated crime. Meanwhile, Bostic fought to prove his innocence of the rape, filing the handwritten motion for DNA testing that led to his exoneration.



CHAD HEINS • 2007

11 YEARS
FLORIDA

Early one morning in 1994, **Chad Heins** awoke to find three fires burning in the apartment that he shared with his brother and sister-in-law. After extinguishing the fires, he discovered that his sister-in-law had been murdered. Heins was charged and convicted based on the testimony of two jailhouse snitches who claimed he confessed. While Heins was serving a life sentence, the Innocence Project assisted him in securing DNA testing, which exonerated him.



JOHN JEROME WHITE • 2007

10-22.5 YRS.
GEORGIA

John Jerome White was wrongfully convicted in 1980 of rape and released on parole in 1990 as a sex offender. Unrelated charges sent him back to prison. His parole in the rape case was revoked, and his life sentence was reinstated. The Georgia Innocence Project secured DNA testing and the results proved that White did not commit the rape.



RICKIE JOHNSON • 2008

25 YEARS
LOUISIANA

Rickie Johnson spent a quarter century in Louisiana's infamous Angola prison for a rape he didn't commit. A suggestive identification procedure led the victim to identify Johnson from a three-photo lineup. Johnson enlisted the help of the Innocence Project to secure DNA testing and prove his innocence. On the first anniversary of his exoneration, Johnson opened his own business, RJ Leather, which is based in Leesville.



RONALD TAYLOR • 2008

12 YEARS
TEXAS

At **Ronald Taylor's** trial for sexual assault, a Houston Police Department Crime Lab analyst testified that no biological evidence was left by the perpetrator. Over a decade later, DNA testing requested by the Innocence Project identified a stain on the victim's bed sheet – in the exact spot the analyst had claimed to test. The DNA test results revealed the identity of the real perpetrator, who was already incarcerated for sex crimes. Taylor married his longtime fiancée soon after his release.

Those who were



KENNEDY BREWER • 2008



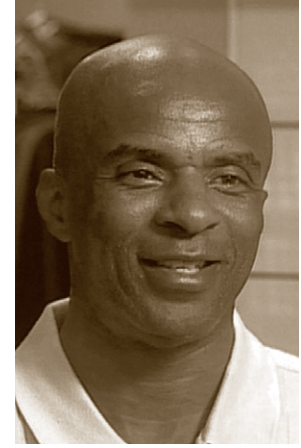
CHARLES CHATMAN • 2008



NATHANIEL HATCHETT • 2008



DEAN CAGE • 2008



THOMAS MCGOWAN • 2008

7 YEARS
MISSISSIPPI

Post-conviction DNA test results from 2001 proved **Kennedy Brewer** didn't rape and murder his girlfriend's three-year-old daughter, but prosecutors kept him incarcerated awaiting trial for years before an Innocence Project investigation identified the real perpetrator of the 1992 crime. Brewer ultimately served seven years on death row and eight years in jail awaiting trial.

26.5 YEARS
TEXAS

Charles Chatman lived near a woman who was raped in Dallas County in 1981. The two didn't know each other, but she identified him as her assailant from a photo lineup. Chatman was wrongfully convicted and sentenced to 99 years in prison. He was denied parole three times because he refused to admit guilt. With the help of the Innocence Project of Texas and Judge John Creuzot, who championed his case, Chatman proved his innocence through DNA testing.

10 YEARS
MICHIGAN

Nathaniel Hatchett became a suspect in a rape and robbery because he was driving the stolen car of the rape victim. He and some friends had found the abandoned car but knew nothing about the crime; nevertheless, the 17-year-old Hatchett confessed believing that he would be released if he cooperated with police. Pre-trial DNA testing excluded him as the perpetrator, but because of prosecutorial misconduct, Hatchett was convicted anyway. The Cooley Innocence Project helped vindicate Hatchett through DNA testing.

11.5 YEARS
ILLINOIS

Chicago police received an anonymous tip that **Dean Cage** resembled the composite sketch of a rapist. Police took the 15-year-old victim to Cage's workplace and she identified him. Cage maintained his innocence and with the help of the Innocence Project, he was eventually exonerated through DNA testing. He has since reunited with his fiancée, who stood by him during his years of wrongful incarceration.

23 YEARS
TEXAS

An improper eyewitness identification procedure contributed to **Thomas McGowan's** wrongful conviction of aggravated sexual assault and burglary. With the assistance of the Innocence Project, DNA testing proved McGowan's innocence and identified the real perpetrator. Since his exoneration, McGowan has met with both the rape survivor and the original investigating officer on his case, and the three of them now speak publicly about the need to reform eyewitness identification procedures.

compensated waited, on average,
over three years to receive it.



MICHAEL BLAIR • 2008

13.5 YEARS
TEXAS

Michael Blair was wrongfully convicted and sentenced to death in the high-profile murder of seven-year-old Ashley Estelle in Plano. Post-conviction DNA testing showed that hairs found in Blair's car did not belong to the victim and that tissue under the victim's fingernails did not belong to Blair. Prosecutors dropped the charges against him. Blair's exoneration moved him off death row, but he is currently serving three life terms in prison for unrelated crimes. The real perpetrator has evaded justice.



ROBERT MCCLENDON • 2008

17 YEARS
OHIO

When a 10-year-old girl was abducted from her backyard in Columbus and raped in 1990, she believed that **Robert McClendon**, her biological father, was the perpetrator. The victim had only seen McClendon once before in her life. McClendon's requests for DNA testing went ignored for years until the Columbus Dispatch newspaper and the Ohio Innocence Project secured DNA testing. The results proved his innocence.



PATRICK WALLER • 2008

15.5 YEARS
TEXAS

In 1992, four people were abducted and robbed and one victim was raped. Three of the victims and a Dallas police officer misidentified **Patrick Waller** as the perpetrator. Although a second man was involved in the crimes, only Waller was charged and convicted. Waller's case was reviewed years later by the Dallas District Attorney's Office Conviction Integrity Unit. DNA testing cleared Waller and implicated another man, who confessed and revealed the identity of his accomplice.



ARTHUR JOHNSON • 2008

15.5 YEARS
MISSISSIPPI

Arthur Johnson was convicted entirely on the basis of the rape victim's identification. In 2005, the Innocence Project New Orleans sought DNA testing in Johnson's case. The DNA test results confirmed Johnson's innocence, but the prosecutors insisted that the eyewitness identification was accurate and planned to re-try him. Fortunately, a DNA database hit implicated a known sex offender and Johnson was finally exonerated.



STEVEN PHILLIPS • 2008

24 YEARS
TEXAS

During a six-week crime spree in 1982, an armed perpetrator broke into Dallas health clubs and other facilities and sexually threatened groups of women. As police focused on **Steven Phillips** as a suspect, they ignored evidence implicating another man, Sidney Alvin Goodyear. Phillips was wrongfully convicted of 11 crimes; only one involved DNA evidence. DNA testing on this evidence excluded Phillips' and implicated Goodyear. Prosecutors determined that Goodyear committed all 11 crimes and Phillips was exonerated.

The true perpetrator was identified



JOSEPH WHITE • 2008

19 YEARS
NEBRASKA

Four years after an elderly woman was raped and murdered in Beatrice, three men and three women were wrongfully convicted of the crime. Five of the six falsely confessed and/or pled guilty. **Joseph White**, who allegedly raped the victim, refused to confess and was found guilty of first-degree murder. In late 2007, DNA testing proved that he and his five co-defendants had nothing to do with the crime, and White was soon exonerated.



WILLIAM DILLON • 2008

26 YEARS
FLORIDA

Days after a brutal murder at Canova Beach, police questioned beachgoers in the area including **William Dillon**. An “expert” with a scent-tracking dog linked Dillon to the scene. Prosecutors bolstered their case with the questionable eyewitness identification of a legally blind man and the testimony of two informants including a jailhouse snitch and Dillon’s ex-girlfriend. Years later, the Innocence Project of Florida helped Dillon clear his name through DNA testing.



STEVEN BARNES • 2009

19.5 YEARS
NEW YORK

Steven Barnes was questioned by police for over 12 hours about the murder of 16-year-old Kimberly Simon in 1985. Two years later, Barnes was charged based on faulty forensic evidence that hair, soil samples and fabric print patterns linked him to the crime. Based on scant evidence, he was convicted. Barnes became one of the Innocence Project’s first clients, but initial rounds of DNA testing were inconclusive. Years later, the Innocence Project secured DNA testing that finally proved Barnes’ innocence.



RICARDO RACHELL • 2009

5.5 YEARS
TEXAS

Although DNA testing was available at **Ricardo Rachell’s** trial, it was not performed. Instead, prosecutors relied on the identification of the young rape victim and his friend. Rachell was recognizable for having a distinct facial deformity. While incarcerated, Rachell attempted to notify authorities that a string of similar sexual assaults were still occurring in his old neighborhood. Five years later, DNA testing proved Rachell’s innocence and implicated a man who was serving time for committing similar crimes.



KATHY GONZALEZ • 2009

5 YEARS
NEBRASKA

Kathy Gonzalez was wrongfully convicted in the so-called Beatrice Six case. Gonzalez and four of her co-defendants pled guilty to involvement in the crime. The real perpetrator, Bruce Allen Smith, was eliminated as a suspect at the time because a forensic technician erroneously reported that testing excluded him. Years later, DNA testing implicated Smith and exonerated Gonzalez and her five co-defendants.

in 42% of the exoneration cases.



JAMES DEAN • 2009



DEBRA SHELDEN • 2009



THOMAS WINSLOW • 2009



ADA JOANN TAYLOR • 2009



JOSEPH FEARS, JR. • 2009

5 YEARS NEBRASKA

James Dean falsely confessed to being involved in the 1985 murder of an elderly woman. Dean said that most of his recollection of the crime came from dreams. Post-conviction DNA testing implicated the real perpetrator, who acted alone. Soon after, Dean and his co-defendants became the first people exonerated through DNA testing in Nebraska history.

5 YEARS NEBRASKA

In exchange for a lighter sentence, **Debra Sheldon**, a relative of murder victim Helen Wilson, pled guilty to involvement in the crime. Sheldon testified that she tried to intervene but was struck down. She was wrongfully convicted of second-degree murder. Sheldon was paroled in 1995 and exonerated in 2009 after DNA testing implicated another man, now deceased, and cleared her and her co-defendants.

18.5 YEARS NEBRASKA

A car similar to the one driven by **Thomas Winslow** was apparently seen near the home of Helen Wilson on the night that she was raped and murdered. Four years later, Winslow was incarcerated on an unrelated incident and questioned by police about the Wilson murder. Winslow was wrongfully convicted along with two other men and three women. DNA testing established that only one man, since deceased, had committed the crime and Winslow and his co-defendants were exonerated.

19 YEARS NEBRASKA

Ada JoAnn Taylor agreed with prosecutors to plead guilty to involvement in a 1985 rape and murder case. She falsely testified that she held a pillow over the elderly victim's face while her co-defendants raped the victim. DNA testing later implicated the real perpetrator, who had been a leading suspect in the original investigation. Taylor and her five co-defendants were exonerated.

25 YEARS OHIO

Joseph Fears was convicted of rape in 1984. Years later, his conviction was reviewed by the Ohio Innocence Project and the Columbus Dispatch. Biological evidence in the case was finally located after repeated searches, and DNA testing proved his innocence.

In 58% of the exoneration cases,
the true perpetrator



MIGUEL ROMAN • 2009

18.5 YEARS
CONNECTICUT

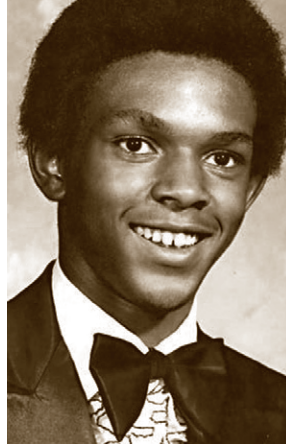
In 1988, **Miguel Roman** was charged with murdering a pregnant woman. His interrogation and trial were mostly in English, a language he barely spoke. DNA evidence eliminated him as a suspect before the trial, yet he was convicted and sentenced to 60 years in prison. In 2008, with the help of the Connecticut Innocence Project, DNA testing showed that a registered sex offender committed the crime.



VICTOR BURNETTE • 2009

8 YEARS
VIRGINIA

After **Victor Burnette's** release on parole in 1987, he contacted a state forensic lab to obtain DNA testing, but he was told that all the evidence had been destroyed. Years later, evidence from dozens of cases was uncovered in the files of the forensic analyst who testified at Burnette's rape trial. DNA testing cleared Burnette, making him one of six people to be exonerated based on DNA testing of evidence found in the analyst's files.



TIMOTHY COLE • 2009

13 YEARS
TEXAS

Timothy Cole died in prison of heart complications caused by asthma in 1999 while serving a 25-year sentence for rape. He was wrongfully convicted based on the victim's mistaken identification. Several years after the rape, Jerry Wayne Johnson wrote to police and prosecutors to confess to the crime. His confession was unacknowledged until 2009 when DNA testing cleared Cole and implicated Johnson as the perpetrator. The victim, Michele Mallin, joined Cole's family in seeking his posthumous exoneration.



JOHNNIE LINDSEY • 2009

27 YEARS
TEXAS

The victim of a 1981 Dallas rape identified **Johnnie Lindsey** as her attacker from a six-photo lineup that police mailed to her. She described her attacker as shirtless, and Lindsey and only one other man in the lineup were pictured shirtless. Despite presenting a strong alibi that he was at work the day the crime occurred, Lindsey was wrongfully convicted and sentenced to life in prison. The Innocence Project of Texas helped Lindsey prove his innocence through DNA testing.



CHAUNTE OTT • 2009

12.5 YEARS
WISCONSIN

Two informants, who were themselves suspects in a 1995 murder, testified against **Chaunte Ott** and contributed to his wrongful conviction. DNA testing obtained with the assistance of the Wisconsin Innocence Project excluded Ott and revealed that the real perpetrator committed two other sexual assaults and murders while Ott was incarcerated.

was never identified.



ROBERT LEE STINSON • 2009

23 YEARS
WISCONSIN

Robert Lee Stinson was arrested for the murder of his 62-year-old neighbor when police noticed that his missing tooth resembled the dentition of a bite mark on the victim's body. Based largely on the testimony of two forensic dentists, Stinson was sentenced to life in prison. Years later, DNA testing of the saliva excluded Stinson, and he was fully exonerated with the help of the Wisconsin Innocence Project. He spent over half his life in prison.



JOSEPH ABBITT • 2009

14 YEARS
N. CAROLINA

Joseph Abbitt was wrongfully convicted for the rapes of two teenage sisters at knifepoint. Abbitt, a former neighbor and an occasional visitor to the victims' home, was identified as the attacker in a photo lineup. Preliminary DNA testing did not match him; nevertheless, Abbitt was sentenced to two life sentences plus an additional 110 years. Abbitt was assisted by the North Carolina Center on Actual Innocence in proving his innocence through DNA testing.



LAWRENCE MCKINNEY • 2009

31 YEARS
TENNESSEE

A neighbor misidentified **Lawrence McKinney** as one of two men who sexually assaulted her, and he was wrongfully convicted of the rape in 1978. A rape kit was collected, but DNA testing was not available at the time. DNA testing conducted on the rape kit proved his innocence three decades later.



JAMES LEE WOODARD • 2009

27 YEARS
TEXAS

James Lee Woodard was wrongfully convicted for the murder of his girlfriend. The prosecution withheld key evidence, so the jury never learned that the victim was seen with three other men the night she died (including two who were later convicted of sexual assault crimes). Over a quarter-century later, Woodard was finally exonerated by DNA testing with the help of the Innocence Project of Texas.



KENNETH IRELAND • 2009

19.5 YEARS
CONNECTICUT

Kenneth Ireland was only 20 years old when he was charged with the sexual assault and murder of a mother of four. Two witnesses implicated Ireland and two other men in the crimes, but only Ireland was charged. Ireland denied the claims. Despite the lack of evidence against him, he was convicted and sentenced to 50 years in prison. The Connecticut Innocence Project helped secure DNA testing that proved his innocence.

If the true perpetrator had been originally convicted, instead of an



JERRY LEE EVANS • 2009

22 YEARS
TEXAS

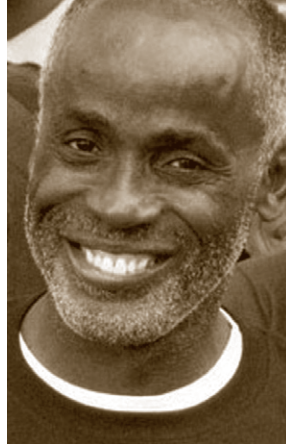
In 1986, two college students were abducted at knifepoint and one of them was raped. **Jerry Lee Evans** was said to match the attacker's physical description and to have a similar speech impediment. Police encouraged the rape victim to select Evans from a photo lineup, and he was subsequently convicted and sentenced to life in prison. After over 20 years of wrongful imprisonment, DNA testing proved Evans' innocence.



MICHAEL MARSHALL • 2009

1.5 YEARS
GEORGIA

Police officers investigating an armed robbery thought that **Michael Marshall**, a homeless man discovered sleeping in an apartment hallway, resembled the composite sketch of the perpetrator. Marshall pled guilty in exchange for a four-year sentence and served nearly two years before the Georgia Innocence Project helped prove his innocence through DNA testing. The real perpetrator has been identified through a DNA database hit.



JAMES BAIN • 2009

35 YEARS
FLORIDA

James Bain spent more years in prison for a crime he didn't commit than any other person exonerated through DNA testing in the United States. He was wrongfully convicted of the 1974 rape of a young boy based on an eyewitness misidentification. He requested DNA testing from the state for years, but he was repeatedly denied. At the age of 54, Bain was finally proven innocent with the help of the Innocence Project of Florida.



DONALD EUGENE GATES • 2009

27 YEARS
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

An FBI forensic analyst testified at **Donald Eugene Gates'** murder trial that hairs found at the crime scene were "microscopically indistinguishable" from Gates' hairs. The exaggerated testimony helped secure Gates wrongful conviction. Years later, the analyst was discredited, but Gates continued to be wrongfully imprisoned. The Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia helped him prove his innocence through DNA testing. Gates was freed and officially exonerated in the final weeks of 2009.



FREDDIE PEACOCK • 2010

5.5 YEARS
NEW YORK

When a Rochester neighbor of Peacock's was raped, she misidentified Peacock as the assailant. He was arrested and interrogated, and police claimed that he confessed. Peacock told police that he had a history of mental illness and had been hospitalized several times. He was wrongfully convicted in 1976 and spent over five years in prison. Twenty-eight years after he was paroled, Peacock became the 250th person exonerated through DNA testing.

**innocent person, at least 72 violent crimes
could have been prevented.**



THE QUESTION NOBODY CAN ANSWER

We may never know how many innocent people are in prison.¹ Instead, we ask how many more will have to be exonerated through the hard science of DNA before every jurisdiction in the country enacts reforms that can prevent this injustice in the first place.

The individuals in this booklet are the first 250 proven innocent through DNA testing—and there will surely be many more, as the Innocence Project and other organizations in the Innocence Network continue exonerating people nationwide.

We do know that those who are exonerated by DNA are a subset within a subset—a fraction of cases that have evidence that still exists and can yield DNA results, within the tiny fraction of cases that even have DNA evidence as part of the crime.

Very few cases involve physical evidence that could be subjected to DNA testing (for example, it is estimated that, even among murders, only 10% of cases have such evidence).

The Innocence Project receives more than 3,000 letters per year from prisoners nationwide and, combined, organizations in the Innocence Network receive many more. At any given time, the Innocence Project is actively evaluating 6,000 to 8,000 cases. Approximately 22% of DNA cases that are ultimately closed by the Innocence Project are closed because the evidence has been lost or destroyed.

By the time they write to the Innocence Project or another organization, innocent prisoners have lost multiple appeals and have spent years incarcerated for crimes they did not commit. Many of them have concluded, understandably, that the truth will never come to light, so they do not seek help.

¹ Recent research sheds some light on that number, however. Professor Samuel Gross of the University of Michigan has calculated that 2.3% of all prisoners sentenced to death between 1973 and 1989 were exonerated and freed; the total number who were actually innocent is almost certainly higher. Professor Michael Risinger of Seton Hall Law School estimates that between 3.3% and 5% of defendants sentenced to death for murders involving rape between 1982 and 1989 were innocent. And an initial review of 29 rape convictions with untested DNA from the files of the Virginia Department of Forensic Science found two false convictions, or 7%. There are over two million inmates in American jails and prisons. If as few as 1% are innocent, that would mean we are keeping more than 20,000 innocent men and women behind bars – and the true number may be much higher.

The Innocence Project was founded in 1992 by Barry C. Scheck and Peter J. Neufeld at the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law at Yeshiva University to assist prisoners who could be proven innocent through DNA testing. To date, 250 people in the United States have been exonerated by DNA testing, including 17 who served time on death row. These people served an average of 13 years in prison before exoneration and release. The Innocence Project's full-time staff attorneys and Cardozo clinic students provided direct representation or critical assistance in most of these cases. The Innocence Project's groundbreaking use of DNA technology to free innocent people has provided irrefutable proof that wrongful convictions are not isolated or rare events but instead arise from systemic defects. Now an independent nonprofit organization closely affiliated with Cardozo School of Law at Yeshiva University, the Innocence Project's mission is nothing less than to free the staggering numbers of innocent people who remain incarcerated and to bring substantive reform to the system responsible for their unjust imprisonment.

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