

**IN THE SUPREME OF MARYLAND**

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**SEPTEMBER TERM, 2023**  
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**NO. 7**

**ADNAN SYED, Petitioner**

**v.**

**YOUNG LEE, AS VICTIM'S REPRESENTATIVE, ET AL., Respondents.**

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**ON WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE  
APPELLATE COURT OF MARYLAND**

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**BRIEF OF EXONEREES AS AMICI CURIAE  
IN SUPPORT OF PETITIONER**

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	<b>PAGE</b>
TABLE OF AUTHORITIES .....	ii
INTEREST OF AMICI CURIAE .....	1
ARGUMENT .....	2
I. Freedom Doesn't End an Exoneree's Suffering .....	6
II. Released But Not Fully Exonerated.....	7
CONCLUSION.....	9
CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE .....	11
CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE.....	12

**TABLE OF AUTHORITIES**

**PAGE**

**CASES**

*Gideon v. Wainwright*, 372 U.S. 335 (1963) .....2  
*Hinton v. Alabama*, 571 U.S. 263 (2014) .....4  
*Powell v. State of Ala.*, 287 U.S. 45 (1932) .....2

**BOOKS AND TREATISES**

Judge Jerome Frank & Barbara Frank, *Not Guilty* (1957).....2

**MISCELLANEOUS**

*Exonerations in the United States Before 1989*, The National Registry of Exonerations (Mar. 14, 2018), <https://www.law.umich.edu/special/exoneration/Documents/ExonerationsBefore1989.pdf> .....2

*Exonerees and Original Victims of Wrongful Conviction: Listening Session to Inform Programs and Research* at 20, National Institute of Justice (Feb. 22–24, 2016), <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/249931.pdf> .....5

*Making Up for Lost Time: What the Wrongfully Convicted Endure and How to Provide Fair Compensation* at 3, The Innocence Project (Dec. 2, 2009), [https://www.innocenceproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/innocence\\_project\\_compensation\\_report-6.pdf](https://www.innocenceproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/innocence_project_compensation_report-6.pdf).....4

Seri Irazola *et al.*, *Addressing the Impact of Wrongful Convictions on Crime Victims*, National Institute of Justice (Oct. 1, 2014), <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/addressing-impact-wrongful-convictions-crime-victims> .....6

*Study of Victim Experiences* at 43; *see also Resources for Crime Victims and Families*, Healing Justice Project (2019), <https://healingjusticeproject.org/crime-victims-and-families> ..... 5-6

Thompson, A. M., Molina, O. R., & Levett, L. M. (2011). After Exoneration: An Investigation of Stigma and Wrongfully Convicted Persons. *Albany Law Review*, 75, 1373. <https://doi.org/10.1037/e669802012-174> .....3

## INTEREST OF AMICI CURIAE<sup>1</sup>

*Amici* includes a group of wrongfully convicted individuals who spent years (for most, decades) in prison for crimes they did not commit. (Exhibit 1 Attached – listing of all *amici*). They submit this brief in support of Adnan Syed’s appeal to the Supreme Court of Maryland. Additionally, exonerees suffer beyond imagination, and this Court should consider the voices of those who have been similarly situated to that of Adnan Syed.

*Amici* understands all too well the importance of such safeguards. In 1990, *amicus* Counsel Martin Tankleff was wrongfully convicted of murder in New York state court. When he was only 17 years old, Tankleff was convicted based on a coerced confession written by a detective after hours of interrogation and sentenced to fifty years to life in prison. Tankleff spent nearly two decades behind bars before he was exculpated by newly discovered evidence. Now a free man, he is an attorney, the Peter P. Mullen Distinguished Visiting Professor of Government at Georgetown University, and an Adjunct Professor of Law at Georgetown Law Center. Tankleff is joined by more than 70 wrongfully convicted men and women, a full list of whom

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<sup>1</sup> *Amicus* states that no counsel for a party authored this brief in whole or in part, made a monetary contribution intended to fund the preparation or submission of this brief, or otherwise collaborated in its preparation, except that Petitioner’s counsel provided information regarding filing deadlines, word count, and the record and docket on appeal. Counsel for Petitioner and Respondents have consented to the participation of *amicus curiae* Exonerees in this case.

is included as an appendix to this brief. Together, they have spent over 1220 years in prison for crimes they did not commit.

### ARGUMENT

Petitioner Adnan Syed’s liberty and right to remain free is imperative, but liberty does not cure the stigma of conviction or give crime victims and their families, and exonerees and their families, a substitute for truth. Those who are wrongfully convicted and exonerated suffer great difficulties after release. The group of *amici* have each walked different paths; however, none of them have walked out of prison without some form of trauma or suffering.

Wrongful convictions have long plagued the criminal justice system.<sup>2</sup> The National Registry of Exonerations estimates that, in just the past three decades, at

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<sup>2</sup> Though efforts to track wrongful convictions and exonerations have increased in recent years, this is not a new problem. *See* Jerome Frank & Barbara Frank, *Not Guilty* (1957) (recounting stories of wrongful convictions dating back to 1918). The National Registry of Exonerations recently undertook efforts to identify exonerations prior to 1989, compiling a database of 369 such cases from 1820 through 1988. *See Exonerations in the United States Before 1989*, National Registry of Exonerations (Mar. 14, 2018), <https://www.law.umich.edu/special/exoneration/Documents/ExonerationsBefore1989.pdf> Those cases include the famous “Scottsboro Boys,” *see Powell v. State of Ala.*, 287 U.S. 45 (1932), as well as Clarence Gideon, of *Gideon v. Wainwright*, 372 U.S. 335 (1963). *Exonerations in the United States Before 1989* at 2.

least 3352 men and women have been wrongfully convicted of crimes they did not commit.<sup>3</sup> Last year alone, 239 wrongful convictions were discovered.<sup>4</sup>

While justice was eventually done for those who have been exonerated, the process was long and hard-fought. Since 1989, wrongfully convicted men and women have spent over 29,950 years in prison before being able to establish their innocence.<sup>5</sup>

Once released, the horrors of wrongful conviction do not end, with exonerees facing issues such as financial instability, housing, transportation, health services, a criminal record, stigmatization, and more (Thompson, Molina, & Levett, 2011) . In order to help exonerees adjust and reintegrate back into society, it is necessary that they be supported. That is because these wrongfully convicted individuals lost years,

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<sup>3</sup> See, <https://www.law.umich.edu/special/exoneration/Pages/about.aspx> (Last visited 8-13-2023)

<sup>4</sup>See, <https://www.law.umich.edu/special/exoneration/Pages/detaillist.aspx?View={faf6eddb-5a68-4f8f-8a52-c61f5bf9ea7}&SortField=Exonerated&SortDir=Asc&FilterField1=Exonerated&FilterValue1=8%5F2022> . (Last visited 8-13-2023)

<sup>5</sup> See <https://www.law.umich.edu/special/exoneration/Pages/about.aspx> (Last visited 8-13-2023)

often decades, of their lives to incarceration.<sup>6</sup> Children, spouses, and families were left behind. Jobs and educational opportunities were sacrificed. Family stability and positive social connections disappeared. And, while exonerees eventually regained their freedom, their efforts to reestablish meaningful and productive lives after many years in prison have often proved challenging.<sup>7</sup>

The experiences of *amici* illustrate these difficulties. *Amicus* Leslie Vass’s wrongful conviction remained on his record for twelve years following his exoneration and release, making it difficult for him to find a job.

*Amicus* Shabaka Shakur lost something he can never get back—a chance to say goodbye to his mother, who passed away while he was still incarcerated and

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<sup>6</sup> The case of Anthony Ray Hinton is illustrative. Hinton was convicted of murder in 1986. He immediately challenged his conviction, but he was not set free until April 3, 2015, after spending almost three decades on Alabama’s death row. In 2014, the United States Supreme Court ruled unanimously that Hinton’s right to a fair trial had been violated, noting that as early as 2002, at a post-conviction hearing, Hinton presented testimony that discredited the state’s theory of guilt. *Hinton v. Alabama*, 571 U.S. 263, 270 (2014) (“All three experts examined the physical evidence and testified [at the 2002 hearing] that they could not conclude that any of the six bullets had been fired from the Hinton revolver. The State did not submit rebuttal evidence during the post-conviction hearing.”). Yet it still took another *thirteen years* before he was freed.

<sup>7</sup> See, e.g., *Making Up for Lost Time: What the Wrongfully Convicted Endure and How to Provide Fair Compensation* at 3, The Innocence Project (Dec. 2, 2009), [https://www.innocenceproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/innocence\\_project\\_compensation\\_report-6.pdf](https://www.innocenceproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/innocence_project_compensation_report-6.pdf) (citing research showing that many wrongfully convicted individuals “suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, institutionalization and depression,” experience significant health problems, and have difficulties securing employment and reintegrating to society).

never got to see her son clear his name. By the time Shakur returned home, his father was suffering from dementia and could not even recognize him.

*Amicus* Christopher Tapp never had the chance to say goodbye to his father, who passed away while he was incarcerated.

Defendants are not the only ones harmed by wrongful convictions. Exoneree families, crime victims, and their families experience tremendous pain, fear, and confusion when this wrong is revealed and they learn the true perpetrator remains at large. Gone is the peace and finality that a proper conviction may provide.<sup>8</sup> Renewed legal proceedings may lead to re-victimization and re-traumatization.<sup>9</sup> In a recent study, “more than half of [victims] described the impact of the wrongful conviction as being comparable to—or worse than—that of their original

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<sup>8</sup> See *Study of Victim Experiences* at 43; see also *Resources for Crime Victims and Families*, Healing Justice Project (2019), <https://healingjusticeproject.org/crime-victims-and-families> (“Post-conviction exonerations cause immense pain and confusion to the victims and survivors of the original crime and to their families. The legal proceedings in these cases reopen deep wounds and can lead to re-victimization and re-traumatization.”).

<sup>9</sup> See, e.g., *Exonerees and Original Victims of Wrongful Conviction: Listening Session to Inform Programs and Research* at 20, National Institute of Justice (Feb. 22–24, 2016), <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/249931.pdf>.



victimization.”<sup>10</sup> With wrongful convictions, “a victim’s sense of safety and closure disappears . . . as they realize that the real perpetrator may still be free.”<sup>11</sup>

At a systemic level, wrongful convictions erode society’s trust in the criminal justice system to bring fair and final resolution in criminal matters. In addition to the obvious dissolution of trust on the part of wrongfully convicted individuals, a study found that “[v]ictims may direct their anger and outrage towards the criminal justice system as they lose their preconceived notions of truth and justice,”<sup>12</sup> which in turn sows distrust of the courts and the criminal process.

### **I. Freedom Doesn’t End an Exoneree’s and Their Families Suffering**

Following their release, exonerees and wrongfully convicted persons face a number of obstacles and difficulties, as do their families. Specifically, they face discrimination and stigma from their communities, employers, and sometimes even their families. They face barriers to employment, re-entry services, housing, and even things as simple as obtaining a driver's license, birth certificate, and social security card. Things that are essential to beginning a life after a wrongful conviction often require significant energy, dedication, and time.

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<sup>10</sup> Seri Irazola *et al.*, *Addressing the Impact of Wrongful Convictions on Crime Victims*, National Institute of Justice (Oct. 1, 2014), <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/addressing-impact-wrongful-convictions-crime-victims>.

<sup>11</sup> *See Study of Victim Experiences* at 12.

<sup>12</sup> *Id.*

In addition to all of those obstacles, wrongfully convicted persons additionally face serious mental health issues both while incarcerated and post-release. One of the most common and lasting issues exonerees experience is PTSD - this leads to lasting mental health issues that extend beyond just the individual exoneree to their entire families and loved ones.

## **II. Released But Not Fully Exonerated**

There is a special category of people who bear additional problems when they are released but not fully exonerated. Many people, such as Derrick Hamilton<sup>13</sup>, Sundhe Moses (exonerated while on parole)<sup>14</sup>, Shabaka Shakur (released after

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<sup>13</sup> *See*, <https://www.law.umich.edu/special/exoneration/Pages/casedetail.aspx?caseid=4601> (Last visited 8-13-2023)

<sup>14</sup> *See*, <https://www.law.umich.edu/special/exoneration/Pages/casedetail.aspx?caseid=5282> (Last visited 8-13-2023)

hearing)<sup>15</sup>, David Ranta<sup>16</sup>, Alvena Jennette<sup>17</sup>, Jon Adrian Velazquez<sup>18</sup>, Johnny Hincapie (released after a hearing)<sup>19</sup>, Vincent Ellerbe<sup>20</sup> (exonerated while on parole), Gerard Domond<sup>21</sup> (exonerated while on parole), and many others have either been fully exonerated **after** release or are still fighting for their full exoneration. These people suffer the additional stigma of having a criminal conviction lodged against them until their full exoneration.

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<sup>15</sup> *See*,  
<https://www.law.umich.edu/special/exoneration/Pages/casedetail.aspx?caseid=4701> (Last visited 8-13-2023)

<sup>16</sup> *See*,  
<https://www.law.umich.edu/special/exoneration/Pages/casedetail.aspx?caseid=4127> (Last visited 8-13-2023)

<sup>17</sup> *See*,  
<https://www.law.umich.edu/special/exoneration/Pages/casedetail.aspx?caseid=4426> (Last visited 8-13-2023)

<sup>18</sup> Jon Adrian Velazquez was granted clemency by Governor Cuomo and is still fighting for his exoneration. He recently met with President Biden to discuss how the criminal justice system is failing. (See, <https://justiceineducation.columbia.edu/biden-discusses-criminal-legal-reform-with-jj-velasquez/> (Last visited 8-13-2023))

<sup>19</sup> *See*,  
<https://www.law.umich.edu/special/exoneration/Pages/casedetail.aspx?caseid=5094> (Last visited 8-13-2023)

<sup>20</sup> *See*,  
<https://www.law.umich.edu/special/exoneration/Pages/casedetail.aspx?caseid=6351> (Last visited 8-13-2023)

<sup>21</sup> *See*,  
<https://www.law.umich.edu/special/exoneration/Pages/casedetail.aspx?caseid=5859> (Last visited 8-13-2023)

For John Huffington, the stigma of being a convicted murderer after he took an *Alford* plea, was devastating:

“...the Alford plea still has lingering effects, you know, there’s a conviction on my record... you know? When I went to get an apartment, I gotta pass a background check.”

On November 9, 2017, fearing going back into prison, Mr. Huffington accepted an *Alford* plea. The plea allowed him to maintain his innocence and he was given time served and freed. On January 13, 2023, Gov. Hogan granted Mr. Huffington a full pardon, which acknowledged that his convictions were unjust, and that he was innocent. He fought for almost 42 years for his exoneration.

If there is one fact, above all, to convey to this court, it is:

**All exonerees and their loved ones are also victims.**

### **CONCLUSION**

Exonerees suffer enough upon release – Adnan Syed should not be exposed to any further suffering by being denied the opportunity to move forward and live his life and not have to continue fighting in Court. For these reasons, and those set out in the briefs of Petitioner, *Amici* respectfully requests that this Court reverse the decision of the Appellate Court and leave in place the vacatur of Petitioner’s convictions and the dismissal of his charges.

AFFIRMED UNDER THE PENALTY OF PERJURY AND RESPECTFULLY  
SUBMITTED this 15<sup>th</sup> day of August 2023.

By: *Martin Tankleff*

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<sup>22</sup> Not an attorney but assisted in the research and writing for this brief.

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I, Andrew V. Jezic, certify that on August 28, 2023, a true and accurate copy of the foregoing Brief of Amicus Curiae Exonerees and Those Seeking Exoneration was served on the other parties and the Supreme Court, by notice of electronic filing generated by this Court’s electronic filing system.

*s/ Andrew V. Jezic*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Andrew V. Jezic

**CERTIFICATE OF WORD COUNT AND COMPLIANCE**

(1) This brief contains 1,845 words, excluding the parts of the brief exempted from the word count by 8-503.

(2) This brief complies with the font, spacing, and type-size requirements stated in Rule 8-112.

*/s/ Andrew V. Jezic*

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Andrew v. Jezic

**EXHIBIT 1**



**APPENDIX: LIST OF WRONGFULLY  
CONVICTED *AMICI CURIAE***

1. In 2006, Clemente Aguirre-Jarquin was wrongfully convicted of murder in Florida state court. He spent nearly fifteen years in prison, before being released in 2018.
2. In 1995, Roberto Almodovar was wrongfully convicted of murder in Illinois state court. He spent more than 22 years in prison, before being released in 2017.
3. In 2010 Eric Anderson was wrongfully convicted of robbery in Michigan state court. He spent more than nine years in prison, before being released in 2019.
4. In 1995, Obie Anthony Was wrongfully convicted of murder in California state Court. He spent sixteen years in prison, before being released in 2011
5. In 1997, Jonathan Bar was wrongfully convicted of murder in Illinois state court. He spent more than fourteen years in prison before being released in 2011.
6. In 1992, Fernando Bermudez was wrongfully convicted of murder in New York state court. He spent eighteen years in prison, before being released in 2009.
7. In 1997, Kenneth Bond was wrongfully convicted of first-degree assault, assault, and handgun violations in Maryland state court. He spent nearly 28 years in prison, before being released in 2023.<sup>1</sup>
8. In 1996, Ted Bradford was wrongfully convicted of sexual assault in Washington state court. He spent more than 14 years in prison, before being released in 2010.
9. In 2007, Adam Braseel was wrongfully convicted of murder in Tennessee. He spent nine years in prison, before being released in 2016.
10. In 1970, Barney Brown was wrongfully convicted of rape and robbery in Florida state Court. He spent 38 years in prison, before being released in 2008.
11. In 1996, Kristine Bunch was wrongfully convicted of murder in Indiana state court. She spent more than seventeen years in prison, before being released in 2012.
12. In 2000, Philip Scott Cannon was wrongfully convicted of Murder in Oregon state court. He spent more than nine years in prison, before being released in 2009.

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<sup>1</sup> Kenneth Bond was released under a sentence modification for juveniles, however, he case is still pending before the CIU and his fight for full exoneration continues.

13. In 1998, Arthur Carmona was wrongfully convicted of robbery in California state court. He spent over two years in prison before being released in 2000.<sup>2</sup>
14. In 1999 Michael Clancy was wrongfully convicted of Murder in New York State court. He spent more than twenty years in prison, before being released in 2009.
15. In 2014, Emily Cohen was wrongfully convicted of theft in Colorado state Court. She spent more two years in prison, before being released in 2016.<sup>3</sup>
16. In 1985, Ronald Cotton was wrongfully convicted of sexual assault in North Carolina state court. He spent eleven years in prison, before being released in 1995.
17. In 1990, Jeffrey Deskovic was wrongfully convicted of murder in New York state court. He spent sixteen years in prison, before being released in 2006.
18. In 1987, Doug DiLosa was wrongfully convicted of murder in Louisiana State court. He spent more than sixteen years in prison, before being released in 2003.
19. In 1984, Luis Diaz was wrongfully convicted of sexual assault in California state court. He spent nine years in prison, before being released in 1993.
20. In 1997, Anthony DiPippo was wrongfully convicted of murder in New York state court. He spent twenty years in prison, before being released in 2016.
21. In 1992, Valentino Dixon was wrongfully convicted of murder in New York state court. He spent twenty-seven years in prison, before being released in 2018.
22. In 1989 Gerard Domond was wrongfully convicted of murder in New York State court. He spent more than twenty-seven years in prison before being released in 2016.
23. In 1985, Robert DuBoise was wrongfully convicted of murder in Florida state court. He spent thirty-five years in prison, before being released in 2020.
24. In 1980, Cornelius Dupree was wrongfully convicted of robbery in Texas state Court. He spent over 30 years in prison, before being released in 2011.
25. In 1996, Audrey Edmunds was wrongfully convicted of murder in Wisconsin state court. She spent twelve years in prison, before being released in 2008.

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<sup>2</sup> Arthur's mother, Ronnie Sandoval asked to have her son's name added to this list.

<sup>3</sup> See, *People v. Cohen*, 440 P.3d 1256 (2019)

26. In 1996, Vincent Ellerbe was wrongfully convicted of murder in New York State court. He spent more than twenty-five years in prison, before being released in 2022.<sup>4</sup>
27. In 1988 Anthony Faison was wrongfully convicted of murder in New York State court. He spent more than thirteen years in prison, before being released in 2001.<sup>5</sup>
28. In 2002, Brian Ferguson was wrongfully convicted of murder in West Virginia state court. He spent eleven years in prison, before being released in 2013.
29. In 1991, Dean Gillispie was wrongfully convicted of sexual assault in Ohio state court. He spent twenty years in prison, before being released in 2011.
30. In 1980, Kevin Green was wrongfully convicted of murder in California state court. He spent sixteen years in prison, before being released in 1996.
31. In 1985 Cyris Greene was wrongfully convicted of murder in New York state court. He spent more than 20 years in prison, before being released in 2006.
32. In 1992, Derrick Hamilton was wrongfully convicted of murder in New York state court. He spent more than twenty years in prison, before being released in 2011.
33. In 2003, Kevin Harrington was wrongfully convicted of murder in Michigan state court. He spent more than 17 years in prison, before being released in 2020.
34. In 2002, Termain Hicks was wrongfully convicted of sexual assault in Philadelphia state court. He spent more than 18 years in prison, before being released in 2020
35. In 1991, Johnny Hincapie was wrongfully convicted of murder in New York state court. He spent twenty-four years in prison, before being released in 2015.
36. In 1990 Jimmie Gardner was wrongfully convicted of sexual assault in West Virginia state court. He spent more than twenty-six years in prison, before being released in 2016.

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<sup>4</sup> Ellerbe was wrongfully convicted along with James Irons and Thomas Malik. (See, <https://www.law.umich.edu/special/exoneration/Pages/casedetail.aspx?caseid=6351> – last visited on 5-29-2023)

<sup>5</sup> Faison was wrongfully convicted along with Charles Shepherd. (See, <https://www.law.umich.edu/special/exoneration/Pages/casedetail.aspx?caseid=3210> – last visited 8-13-2023)

37. In 2009, Noura Grace Jackson was wrongfully convicted of murder in Tennessee state court. She spent eleven years in prison, before being released in 2016.
38. In 1998, Alveena Jeanette, was wrongfully convicted of murder in New York State court. He spent more than 18 years in prison before being released in 2014.<sup>6</sup>
39. In 1997, Lorenzo Johnson was wrongfully convicted of murder in Pennsylvania state court. He spent twenty-two years in prison, before being released in 2017.<sup>7</sup>
40. In 1996, Robert Jones was wrongfully convicted of murder, rape, kidnapping and several armed robberies in Louisiana state court. He spent more than 23 years in prison before being released in 2015.
41. In 1986, Gloria Killian was wrongfully convicted of murder in California state court. She spent over seventeen years in prison, before being released in 2002<sup>8</sup>.
42. In 1997 willie Knighten was wrongfully convicted of murder in Ohio state court. He spent over 25 years in prison, before being released in 2022.
43. In 2009, Amanda Knox was wrongfully convicted of murder in Italy. She spent almost four years in prison, before being released in 2011.
44. In 1990, Virginia “Ginny” Lefever was wrongfully convicted of murder in Ohio state court. She spent more than 21 years in prison, before being released in 2011.
45. In 1995, Scott Lewis was wrongfully convicted of murder in Connecticut state court. He spent nearly twenty years in prison, before being released in 2014.
46. In 2005, Kimberly Long was wrongfully convicted of murder in California state court. She spent more than eleven years in prison, before being released in 2016.
47. In 1982, Eddie Lowery was wrongfully convicted of sexual assault in Kansas state court. He spent ten years in prison, before being released in 1991.
48. In 1996, Thomas Malik was wrongfully convicted of murder in New York State court. He spent more than twenty-five years in prison, before being released in 2022.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.law.umich.edu/special/exoneration/Pages/casedetail.aspx?caseid=4426>

<sup>7</sup> Lorenzo Johnson is still fighting for a full exoneration.

<sup>8</sup> Gloria passed away in 2023. In a prior amicus she authorized the undersigned counsel to use her name in any future exoneree amicus briefs.

<sup>9</sup> Malik was wrongfully convicted along with Vincent Ellerbe and James Irons (See, <https://www.law.umich.edu/special/exoneration/Pages/casedetail.aspx?caseid=6350> – last

49. In 1986, David McCallum was wrongfully convicted of murder in New York State court. He spent 29 years in prison, before being released in 2014.
50. In 1998, Susan Mellen was wrongfully convicted of murder in California state court. She spent seventeen years in prison, before being released in 2014.
51. In 1982, Jerry Miller was wrongfully convicted of sexual assault in Illinois state court. He spent twenty-five years in prison before being released in 2007.
52. In 1992, Beverly Monroe was wrongfully convicted of Murder in Virginia state court. She spent eleven years in prison, before being released in 2003.
53. In 1987, Michael Morton was wrongfully convicted of murder in Texas state court. He spent twenty-four years in prison, before being released in 2011.
54. In 1988, Brandon Moon was wrongfully convicted of three counts of aggravated sexual assault in Texas state court. He spent seventeen years in prison, before being released in 2005.
55. In 1997 Sundhe Moses was wrongfully convicted of murder in New York State court. He spent more than 16 years in prison, before being released in 2013.
56. In 1995 Michelle Murphy was wrongfully convicted of murder in Oklahoma state court. She spent more than nineteen years in prison, before being released in 2014.
57. In 2005, Kenneth Nixon was wrongfully convicted of Two counts of Felony Murder, Four counts of Attempted Murder and one count of Arson in Wayne County Circuit Court in Detroit, Michigan. He spent nearly 16 years in prison before being released in 2021.
58. In 1995, Michael L. Piaskowski was wrongfully convicted of murder in Wisconsin state court. He spent nearly six years in prison, before being released in 2001.
59. Jenny Reach (formerly Jennifer Wilcox) was wrongfully convicted of child sex abuse in Ohio state court. She spent over 12 years in prison, before being released in 1997
60. In 1996, John Restivo was wrongfully convicted of Murder in New York State Court. He spent almost 19 years in prison, before being released in 2005.<sup>10</sup>

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visited 8-13-2023)

<sup>10</sup> Restivo was wrongfully convicted along with Dennis Halstead and John Kogut. (See, <https://www.law.umich.edu/special/exoneration/Pages/casedetail.aspx?caseid=3573> - (last visited 8-13-2023))

61. In 1996, Rodney Roberts was wrongfully convicted of kidnapping. He spent eighteen years in, before being released in 2014.
62. In 1990, Yusef Salaam and several co-defendants, were wrongfully convicted of sexual assault in New York State Court. He spent more than more than 7 years in prison before being released in 2007.<sup>11</sup>
63. In 1998, Matt Sopron was wrongfully convicted of murder in Illinois state court. He spent more than 20 years in prison before being released in 2018.<sup>12</sup>
64. In 1989, Shabaka Shakur, formerly Louis Holmes, was wrongfully convicted of murder in New York state court. He spent nearly twenty-eight years in prison, before being released in 2015.
65. In 1988 Charles Shepherd was wrongfully convicted of murder in New York State court. He spent more than thirteen years in prison, before being released in 2001.<sup>13</sup>
66. In 1990, Sabrina Butler Smith was convicted of murder in Mississippi state court. She spent more than six years on death row, before being released in 1995.
67. In 2000, Jason Strong was wrongfully convicted of murder in Illinois state court. He spent fifteen years in prison, before being released in 2015.
68. In 1990, Martin Tankleff was wrongfully convicted of murder in New York state court. He spent seventeen years in prison, before being released in 2007.
69. In 1998, Christopher Tapp was wrongfully convicted of murder in Idaho state court. He spent twenty years in prison, before being released in 2017.
70. In 1975, Leslie Vass was wrongfully convicted of robbery in Maryland state court. He spent ten years in prison, before being released in 1984.

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<sup>11</sup> Salaam was wrongfully convicted along with Raymond Santana, Khorey Wise, Kevin Richardson, and Kevin McCray.

<https://www.law.umich.edu/special/exoneration/Pages/casedetail.aspx?caseid=3604> (last visited 8-15-2023).

<sup>12</sup> Sopron was convicted with other co-defendants, were also exonerated (See, <https://www.law.umich.edu/special/exoneration/Pages/casedetail.aspx?caseid=5474>)

<sup>13</sup> Shepard was wrongfully convicted along with Anthony Faison. (See, <https://www.law.umich.edu/special/exoneration/Pages/casedetail.aspx?caseid=3630> – last visited 8-13-2023)

71. In 1998, Anna Vasquez was wrongfully convicted of child sex abuse in Texas state court. She spent more than 18 years in prison, before being released in 2016.<sup>14</sup>
72. In 1982, Michael VonAllmen was wrongfully convicted of sexual assault in Kentucky state court. He spent nearly twelve years in prison, before being released in 1994.

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<sup>14</sup> Vasquez was wrongfully convicted along with Elizabeth Ramirez, Kristie Mayhugh and Cassandra Rivera. (*See*, <https://www.law.umich.edu/special/exoneration/Pages/casedetail.aspx?caseid=5051> – last visited 8-13-2023)