



The Public Record

At any given time, the researchers at the Registry are tracking around 600 cases that have the potential to become exonerations. For example, we might have learned that a defendant received a new trial, but there is still uncertainty about how the case will be resolved.

We place these cases in a “Standby” folder and mark a date in the future to check with attorneys or the courts to determine how the cases were resolved.. It can be a chore to track down approximately 30 cases a week, but the process works and often produces surprising results.

A few weeks ago, we were trying to figure out the status of a case from New Haven, Connecticut. Known mostly as the home of Yale University, the city also has a disproportionate cluster of wrongful convictions.

We tracked down the attorney, who said that case was still moving forward. But he also mentioned another client, [Maceo Streater](#), who had received an absolute pardon for murder in 2022. The attorney asked us to consider including the case in the Registry. After researching the court documents, we concluded that Streater’s case met our criteria for inclusion and had some of the hallmarks of a wrongful conviction. There was evidence of witness tampering and perjury.

There was no media coverage of Streater’s wrongful conviction. Our summary of the case is **the** public record of what happened.

One final note. Like so many exonerees, Streater is giving back to his community. He was elected to the New Haven City Council in January 2023.



Maceo "Troy" Streater, center, with his campaign supporters. He was elected to the New Haven City Council in January 2023. (Photo: New Haven Independent)

We published 23 other exonerations in October.

In 1975, [Glynn Simmons](#) was sentenced to death for a murder during a robbery in Edmond, Oklahoma. His sentence was later commuted to life without parole, and Simmons was exonerated in 2023 based on evidence that the prosecution had failed to disclose that the only eyewitness who identified him had testified falsely at his trial as well as additional alibi evidence that Simmons was in Louisiana at the time of the crime.

In 1996, [Gerardo Cabanillas](#) was sentenced to 87 years to life in prison for two separate carjackings and a rape. He was exonerated in 2023 after DNA testing excluded him from the biological evidence and identified DNA profiles of two other men.

In 1998, [Bernard Williams](#) was sentenced to 80 years in prison for a shooting that killed one person and injured three others in Chicago, Illinois. He was granted a new trial and acquitted in 2023, after the only witness who identified him recanted and other evidence showed that

detectives fabricated his confession.

In 2022, [Joshua Johnson](#), a member of the U.S. Secret Service uniformed police, was sentenced to 3 1/2 years in prison for the sexual assault of another federal agent. He was granted a new trial and acquitted in 2023 after two witnesses recanted their testimony that the complainant had told them she was raped.

[Jesse Johnson](#), of Salem, Oregon, received the death penalty in 2004 for a murder in 1998. He was exonerated in 2023, after an appellate court ruled that the potential testimony of a new witness, whom his trial attorneys had failed to locate, could have led to a different verdict.

In 1991, [Francisco Benitez](#) was sentenced to life in prison without parole for the murders of two 14-year-old boys in Chicago, Illinois. In 2023, he was granted a new trial and the case was dismissed based on testimony from two new witnesses that Benitez did not commit the crime as well as evidence that the detectives had engaged in misconduct to elicit a false confession.

In 1988, [Dwayne Brooks](#) was sentenced to life in prison for a murder in Cleveland, Ohio. He was exonerated in 2023, after a court ruled that the state had failed to disclose police records that would have impeached the testimony and undermined the credibility of two witnesses.

[Shanta Renchie](#), of Houston, Texas, pled guilty to a drug offense in 2017. She was exonerated in 2023 after the officer involved in her arrest was tied to misconduct in other cases.

[Carlton Lewis](#) was convicted in 1992 of murder in the death of a woman in Syracuse, New York. He was exonerated in 2023 after DNA testing eliminated Lewis as a contributor to genetic material found on the victim and left at the crime scene.

In 2001, [John Thompson](#) was sentenced to life in prison after he was convicted of sexually molesting his seven-year-old son in Cleveland, Ohio. He was exonerated in 2023 after his son recanted and said he had been molested by a cousin who threatened to harm him unless he accused someone else.

In 2002, [Sedrick Moore](#) was sentenced to 50 years in prison for a rape in Moultrie, Georgia. He was exonerated in 2023 by evidence showing that a co-defendant falsely accused him of taking part in the crime, and that the forensic analysis presented at trial that tied him to the crime was wrong.

[Andre Dillard](#), of Houston, Texas, pled guilty to a drug offense in 2011. He was exonerated in 2023 after the officer involved in his arrest was tied to misconduct in other cases.

In 2001, [Joseph Watkins](#) was convicted of murder in Rome, Georgia. He was exonerated in 2023 after producers with the podcast, *Undisclosed*, learned that a juror had conducted her own testing that she said cast doubt on Watkins's alibi.

In 1993, 15-year-old [Joanna Moore](#) was convicted of murdering her four-year-old stepsister by smothering her. Moore was granted a new trial and acquitted in 1994 based on new medical evidence that the death was caused by an asthma attack.

In 2019, [Angel Bumpass](#) was sentenced to life in prison for a murder and robbery in Chattanooga, Tennessee in 2009, when she was 13 years old. Bumpass was granted a new trial and the charges were dismissed in 2023 after she passed two polygraph examinations during which she denied involvement in the crime.

In 2002, [Paul Scrimo](#) was sentenced to 25 years in prison for a murder in Farmingdale, New York. He was acquitted at a retrial in 2023, after a federal appellate court had ruled that the trial judge improperly prevented Scrimo's attorney from presenting evidence supporting an alternate theory of the crime.

In 1988, [Perry Lott](#) was sentenced to 300 years in prison for raping a woman in Ada, Oklahoma. He was exonerated in 2023 after DNA testing excluded him as the rapist and revealed an unknown male DNA profile.

With your support, the National Registry of Exonerations can protect the innocent by preventing false convictions.

We find the stories. We painstakingly search for every false conviction in the United States that is overturned and meets our criteria for exoneration. We gather the information, study the cases, and code the data, fueling the most comprehensive public database of exonerations that exists.

We tell the stories. One by one, we write and share the human stories behind each individual exoneration. We bear witness to these incredible injustices to ensure that they are remembered.

And we count the stories. Thousands of exonerees. Tens of thousands of years lost to wrongful incarceration. Untold costs paid by our communities. This independent collection of data allows us to understand how false convictions occur and prevent them from happening in the future.

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