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Happy New Year from the Registry

December is typically a busy time at the Registry. Exonerations can happen in any month, of course, but the closing of the year seems to bring more speed to resolving cases and dismissing charges against defendants. For many of these wrongfully convicted men and women, it's the first time in years that they can spend holidays with their loved ones and begin to rebuild their lives.

Last month was busy, even by December standards. We published 41 individual exonerations and added two cases to our Groups Registry. Several of these exonerations are on both registries, highlighting the damage of systemic misconduct by police and prosecutors. We also published several high-profile exonerations, cases that were front-page news, but equally important are the cases that don't receive a lot of attention. Often, these wrongful convictions would remain unknown but for our research.

We wish everybody a Happy New Year. We have some important and exciting projects planned for the coming year. As always, our focus remains on using data and story-telling to inform the public on exonerations and the people impacted by these injustices.

Two Cases Added to Groups Registry

We added two cases in December to our Groups Registry. [The first, from Minnesota](#), includes 32 defendants whose convictions were vacated based on false testimony given by a police officer in a search-warrant application. [The second, from New York](#), involves wide-ranging misconduct by police officers in a Manhattan precinct that led to dismissals against nearly 100 defendants.

41 Exonerations Posted in December

The Registry published 41 individual exonerations in December. Browse our [recently posted](#) exonerations, including:

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1978, [Kevin Strickland](#) was exonerated on November 23, 2021 after a judge ruled that new evidence, including the recantation of the only eyewitness, undermined confidence in the convictions.

[Anthony Miller](#), of Rochester, New York, was convicted of armed robbery in 2014. Miller claimed his trial attorney failed to present cell phone records that would have supported his alibi. He was exonerated in 2020, after an appellate court said the police improperly stopped him for questioning and that the verdict was against the weight of the evidence.

More than fifty-five years after they were convicted of murder in the shooting of Malcolm X, [Muhammad Aziz](#) and [Khalil Islam](#) were exonerated in November 2021 after a reinvestigation into their convictions found that the prosecutors, the New York Police Department and the FBI didn't disclose evidence that contradicted witness testimony and the state's theory of the crime.

In November 2021, [George Almond](#) was exonerated of a drug conviction in Chicago, Illinois. It was his second exoneration after being framed by corrupt police officers in 2006 and in 2008.

[Darnell Harris](#) was sentenced to 30 months in prison in 2008 after he pled guilty to possessing cocaine in Chicago, Illinois. He was exonerated in 2021 based on evidence that he was framed by corrupt Chicago police officers.

In 2005, [Willie Robinson](#) was framed for drug possession by corrupt Chicago police. He pled guilty and was sent to prison for a year. He was exonerated in 2021 based on evidence that the officers planted the drugs on him.

In 2006, [Maurice Harris](#) was

arrested in 2018. He was exonerated in 2021, after body camera footage appeared to show one of the arresting officers planting drugs in the car in which Serrano was a passenger.

[Miguel Hernandez](#), of Los Angeles, California, was sentenced to a year and four months in prison for gun possession in 1996. He was exonerated in 1999 after one of the arresting officers said that he and his partner planted the weapon on Hernandez.

[Blanco Sahagun](#) and [Carlos Carranza](#), both of Los Angeles, were each sentenced to a year in jail after pleading guilty in 1997 to drug possession. They were exonerated in 2000 after the arresting officer said he and his partner planted drugs on Carranza, and Sahagun said she was framed because she refused to become a police informant.

[Derrick Allen](#), of Durham, North Carolina, pled guilty in 1999 to murder and a sexual offense in the death of a toddler. He received a new trial in 2010, in part based on misleading forensic evidence created by a state crime laboratory, and the case was dismissed in 2016.

In 1992, [Troy Coulston](#) was sentenced to life in prison without parole for a murder in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He was exonerated in 2021 based on the prosecution's failure to disclose evidence that undermined the credibility of its key witness.

In 2008, [Dontaneous Salley](#) was sentenced to one year in prison for aggravated unlawful use of a weapon in Chicago, Illinois. After an appeals court declared the gun law unconstitutional, Salley obtained a certificate of innocence in 2020 and was awarded \$30,000 in state compensation.

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was exonerated in 2021 based on evidence he was framed by corrupt police officers.

[Darnell Howard](#) pled guilty to possession of cocaine and heroin in 2007 and was sentenced to six years in prison. He was exonerated in 2021 based on evidence that corrupt police officers framed him for a crime he did not commit.

In 2007, [Henry Richardson](#) was sentenced to five years in prison for possession of a firearm in Chicago. In 2020, after an appeals court ruled the charge was unconstitutional, Richardson was granted a certificate of innocence and awarded \$40,000 in compensation.

In 1982, [Anthony Broadwater](#) was sentenced to 8 1/3 to 25 years in prison for rape in Syracuse, New York. He was exonerated in 2021 based on details disclosed in the memoir of the victim—best-selling author Alice Sebold—about how the prosecutor persuaded her to identify Broadwater after Sebold identified another man in a lineup.

[Maurice Bradford](#), of Cleveland Ohio, was convicted in 2016 of two weapons crimes in 2016 said to be connected to gang violence. His conviction was vacated for insufficient evidence in 2018, and a judge declared Bradford a wrongfully imprisoned person in 2021.

[Robert Williams](#) was convicted in 2017 in Kankakee County, Illinois, of assault and unlawful use of a weapon. After his conviction was vacated by an appellate court for insufficient evidence in 2020, Williams received a certificate of innocence in 2021.

[Adam Braseel](#) was sentenced to life in prison in 2007 for a murder and assault in Grundy County, Tennessee. Gov. Bill Lee

sentenced to one year in prison for aggravated unlawful use of a weapon in Chicago, Illinois. After an appeals court declared the gun law unconstitutional, Townsend obtained a certificate of innocence in 2020 and was awarded \$30,000 in state compensation.

In 2016, [Adam Smith](#) was sentenced to 10 years in prison for leaving a threatening message to a judge in Macon County, Illinois. His conviction was reversed by an appeals court which ruled the language was not a "true threat." Smith was granted a certificate of innocence in 2020.

In 2004, [Vashaun Williams](#) was sentenced to three years in prison for aggravated unlawful use of a weapon in Chicago, Illinois. After an appeals court declared the gun law unconstitutional, Williams obtained a certificate of innocence in 2020 and was awarded \$50,000 in state compensation.

In 2003, [Kevin Lundy](#) was sentenced to one year in prison for aggravated unlawful use of a weapon in Chicago, Illinois. After an appeals court declared the gun law unconstitutional, Lundy obtained a certificate of innocence in 2020 and was awarded \$25,000 in state compensation.

[Lavell Taylor](#) was sentenced to 35 years in prison in 1998 for murder in Chicago. He was granted a new trial and acquitted based on testimony that he was not involved in the crime.

In 2000, [John Tate](#) was sentenced to three years in prison for aggravated unlawful use of a weapon in Chicago, Illinois. After an appeals court declared the gun law unconstitutional, Tate obtained a certificate of innocence in 2020 and was awarded \$20,000 in state

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closely resembled Braseel.

[Juan Suarez](#), of Los Angeles, California, was sentenced to four years in prison after pleading guilty to drug possession in 1997. He was exonerated in 2000 after one of the arresting officers admitted that he and his partner planted drugs on Suarez.

[Ivan Oliver](#) and [Rafael Zambrano](#), both of Los Angeles, California, pled guilty to illegal weapon possession in 1996. They were exonerated after an investigation into misconduct at the Los Angeles Police Department's Rampart division revealed that the arresting officers had lied and the men had not possessed weapons at the time of their arrests.

[Daniel Tapia](#), of Los Angeles, California, received probation after pleading guilty to drug charges in 1998. He was exonerated in 2000 after one of the officers involved in his arrest said that the other officer planted the drugs on Tapia and coerced him to say the drugs were his.

[Carlos Romero](#) was sentenced to a year in jail for drug possession in 1997. He was exonerated in 1999 after one of the arresting officers said he had testified falsely at a preliminary hearing and that Romero had not been in possession of drugs at the time of his arrest.

[Ruben Rojas](#), of Los Angeles, California, was sentenced to six years in prison after pleading guilty to drug possession in 1997. He was exonerated in 2000 after one of the officers involved in his arrest said he and his partner planted drugs on Rojas.

[Jose Lara](#), of Los Angeles, California, was given probation in 1997 after pleading guilty to weapons possession. He was

In 2006, [Perry Hampton](#) was sentenced to a year in prison for illegal possession of a firearm. In 2019, after an appeals court ruled the charge was unconstitutional, Perry was granted a certificate of innocence and awarded \$40,000 in compensation.

In 2005, [Daniel Alberto Ochoa](#) was sentenced to 90 years in prison for a 2002 murder in Chicago, Illinois. He was granted a new trial and the charges were dismissed based on evidence that he falsely confessed after being physically abused by police.

In 2008, [Jean Cantave](#) was sentenced to 20 years in prison for a rape in Queens, New York. He was granted a new trial and acquitted in 2012 based on evidence that no rape occurred. Separately, [Cantave](#) was sentenced to one year in prison in 2007 for assault in Queens, New York. He was granted a new trial and the charge was dismissed in 2014 because a judge erroneously barred evidence supporting Cantave's self-defense claim.

[James Lucien](#) was sentenced to life in prison without parole for a 1994 murder in Boston, Massachusetts. He was exonerated in 2021 based on evidence that detectives testified falsely, as well as physical evidence pointing to another suspect.

[Kendall Gordon](#) was sentenced to life in prison without parole for a 2009 murder in New Orleans, Louisiana. He was exonerated in 2021 by DNA testing that excluded him as a participant in the crime.

[Joseph Jones](#), of Los Angeles, California, was sentenced to eight years in prison in 1998 after pleading guilty to sale of cocaine. He was exonerated in 1999 after one of the arresting officers said that

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the weapon on Lara.

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