



## From the Board Chair...



Donna Schneweis, KCADP Board Chair

Living witnesses of innocence have been with us this fall. These men know firsthand what it is to be innocent, convicted and sentenced to prison, some to death sentences, and then have to fight the system to get justice.

Tom Goldstein is a native Kansan and military veteran who was wrongfully incarcerated in California for twenty four years after being convicted of murder. Coerced testimony by an informant was pivotal in his case. A lucky break in another case provided the information that helped Goldstein clear his name.

Ray Krone, a military veteran, was a postal worker when arrested for murder in Arizona. Sentenced to death following the use of "bite mark" evidence, it took dogged perseverance and over 10 years to get freed.

Darryl Burton served twenty four years in Missouri prisons for murder. False testimony by a man who was a career police informant was a key factor in Burton's case along with other evidence that was not presented to the jury.

Curtis McCarty ended up on Oklahoma's death row due to prosecutorial misconduct and improper forensic procedures. Two trials, 3 different sentencing procedures all led to a death sentence. DNA testing ulti-

mately cleared his name after twenty-one years on death row.

Reggie Griffin lived the hell of Missouri's prisons for thirty years, including time on death row for a murder he did not commit. Withheld evidence and jailhouse informants were critical in his wrongful conviction.

Kirk Bloodsworth was a police officer in the military. He ended up on Maryland's death row after being convicted of sexual assault and murder of a nine year old girl. A retrial resulted in consecutive life terms. He was the first person to be exonerated from death row by DNA.

Eddie Lowery was serving at Fort Riley when he was arrested in the rape of an elderly woman. He was convicted, sent to prison, and served his time. He had to register as a sex offender on release. Through his own efforts and that of his attorney, he was able to secure DNA testing which proved his innocence and showed that Kansas had made a huge mistake in his case.

These men are living witnesses that fundamental errors occur in the criminal justice system. They are compelling evidence why we run the risk of fatal error when we sentence someone to death. This year alone, six more men who were sentenced to death have been released nationally.

So, when you have a fellow Kansan tell you the death penalty makes sense, ask them if they are willing to run the risk of error.

**Let them know how many years these men served when they were exonerated DESPITE the system.**

## Write a Letter to Your Legislators...

One of the quickest and easiest ways that individuals can help repeal the death penalty is to write a handwritten letter to their state legislators, urging them to vote for repeal.

You can help make that happen! Do you belong to a faith community, civic group, or community organization? Pick a date between now and February to gather together and write letters. It only takes a few moments to put pen to paper, but your letters make a huge difference! Some suggestions for putting together a letter writing program include setting up a table in the lobby at your church one weekend, spending a few minutes at the end of a group meeting writing letters, or inviting some friends over for a letter writing party! KCADP has "Letter Writing Kits" that make it easy.

Contact your local KCADP office for more information and supplies!



## How else can you help...

We are getting closer every day to the day when Kansas will end the death penalty. Increasing numbers of Kansas legislators know that capital punishment does not work and is just another failed public policy. We want to make Kansas a leader this year as a leader and to do that we need your help! So I am asking you to contribute to our efforts because with any luck, this may be your last chance to help!

Last year abolition bills were introduced in both chambers, but we were not able to move the bill out of committee. We intend to make things move this year!

As you know, Rep. Steven Becker, R-Buhler, is our House champion and a passionate advocate for repeal who is a retired Judge who has hands-on experience with the criminal justice system. The support we have found and continue to find, demonstrates that abolition of the death penalty is not a partisan issue. Governor Brownback has voiced reservations about the death penalty/ We hope to gain his full support for replacing the death penalty with life in prison without parole in 2015.!

KCADP provides outreach and education all across Kansas and will be actively pushing repeal in 2015. In light of that fact, could you donate now to keep the momentum going? A lot of work will be involved in getting to 21 in the Senate for repeal and 63 in the House. Please make a tax-deductible donation to KCADP by donating on our website at [www.ksabolition.org](http://www.ksabolition.org) (click on "Donate.")

Thank you for your help. Let's do it!