

News

BCLP'S PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MIDWEST INNOCENCE PROJECT LEADS TO RELEASE OF CHRISTOPHER DUNN IN DECADES-LONG SAGA

Aug 01, 2024

BCLP has played a pivotal role in the final push to secure Christopher Dunn's freedom after 34 years of wrongful incarceration. Following BCLP's crucial efforts in an emergency appeal, Dunn walked out of the courthouse to his freedom on July 30.

Dunn, now 52, was wrongfully convicted of murder in 1991 based on the testimony of two young witnesses who later recanted. Earlier this year, St. Louis Circuit Attorney Gabe Gore filed suit to vacate Dunn's conviction based on this evidence of actual innocence. On July 22, 2024, a St. Louis City judge overturned Dunn's conviction for first-degree murder, declared Dunn innocent, and ordered his immediate release from prison. Two days later, however, Dunn remained in prison, so the judge set a new 6 pm deadline for his release. The State still refused to release Dunn from prison. The Attorney General's Office then turned to the Missouri Supreme Court to halt the trial judge's order and keep Dunn in prison. By then, Dunn had changed into street clothes, given away his personal belongings, and was only 50 feet away from the prison doors before guards returned him to his cell.

BCLP has a longstanding partnership with the Midwest Innocence Project, and BCLP Fellows Isabel Guariglia and Jason Shumacher had worked with the Midwest Innocence Project to overturn Dunn's conviction in the trial court. That evening, Partner Jonathan Potts offered to handle Dunn's emergency appeal and lead the push for Dunn's release, filing an emergency brief in less than 24 hours. Five days later, the Missouri Supreme Court agreed that the prison had no right to hold Dunn after the trial judge's ruling. The State then transported Dunn from prison back to St. Louis, where Circuit Attorney Gabe Gore had already dismissed the original criminal charges. As a result, Dunn walked out the courthouse doors to his wife. Dunn's decades-long saga ended, reuniting Dunn with his family after three decades.

Alongside the Midwest Innocence Project, BCLP has represented wrongfully convicted individuals across the nation and championed the cause of justice. Learn more about our [Litigation](#) and [Investigations](#) team.

Jonathan Potts, Partner and Co-Leader of the firm's Consumer Fraud Team, is a class action defense attorney, business litigator, and sports litigator who represents organizations in high-stakes lawsuits throughout the United States. Potts also maintains a robust pro bono practice committed to exonerating wrongful convicted individuals, including three other men wrongfully convicted of murder before BCLP's involvement in Dunn's case.

MEET THE TEAM



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