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TODD SPITZER



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Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer, The Innocence Center Successfully Argued to Have Guy Miles' 1998 Robbery Conviction Dismissed After OCDA Conviction Integrity Unit Review

SANTA ANA, Calif. – The Orange County District Attorney's Office has lost confidence in a conviction of a man in connection with a 1998 robbery of a Fidelity Financial Services office in Fullerton and successfully argued in conjunction with The Innocence Center to have the conviction dismissed.

The wrongful conviction of an innocent person should be every prosecutor's greatest concern. A prosecutor's highest priority should be ensuring innocent people are never prosecuted.

Immediately after taking office in 2019, Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer began a Conviction Integrity Unit to review any claims of wrongful conviction and/or factual innocence.

The Conviction Integrity Unit ("CIU") of the OCDA investigates claims of factual innocence and/or wrongful conviction – including alleged violations of the Sixth and Fourteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution – presented by defendants who were convicted in the County of Orange, California.

Guy Miles was originally convicted in 1999 of two counts of robbery and one count of possessing a firearm in connection with a 1998 robbery of a Fullerton loan office based in part on the testimony of two eyewitnesses who implicated Miles. He was sentenced to a "three strikes sentence" of 75 years to life.

At trial, Miles presented an alibi defense that included testimony from his father, mother, 12-year-old son, a Las Vegas neighbor, and the Las Vegas manager for his apartment who all testified that Miles could not have participated in the Fullerton robbery because he returned to Las Vegas from Carson on the early morning of June 29, 1998 – the day of the robbery – after picking up his son from his parents’ home the night before and they remained in Las Vegas all day.

Miles filed a habeas petition in 2010, with the assistance of attorneys from The Innocence Center, on the basis of third-party culpability, false eyewitness testimony, and actual innocence. The petition included declarations from three of his co-defendants, confessing to the robbery without any involvement by Miles. The Orange County Superior Court denied the petition.

Miles then petitioned the appellate court for habeas relief, which resulted in an evidentiary hearing in 2013 and 2016. Miles and two of his co-defendants testified again that he had no involvement in the robbery. All three counts were vacated by Court of Appeal pursuant to Penal Code 1473, subdivision (b)(3)(A), due to new exculpatory evidence that likely would have altered the verdict, but without an affirmative finding of factual innocence. The evidence was based on confessions of three prison inmates made after the statute of limitations had expired.

Following the reversal, Miles faced the possibility of a retrial and another life sentence. The OCDA offered Miles a plea deal and he accepted it. He was released with credit time served after spending more than 18 years in custody.

The Victim Compensation Board of California later awarded Miles \$965,300 “for the injury he sustained by having been wrongfully imprisoned for 6,895 days as a result of his erroneous convictions.” The California Attorney General concurred.

The new CIU review, based on the totality of the evidence, and in conjunction with The Innocence Center, requested that Miles’ guilty plea to two counts of second-degree robbery with a sentencing enhancement for being a felon in possession of a firearm be set aside and his conviction be vacated.

“Justice exists only when the quest for truth never ends,” said Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer. “We have an absolute obligation to continue to seek the truth and ensure that we can continue to have confidence in our convictions. A prosecutor wields immense power over the freedom of individuals and the very trajectory of someone’s life and that responsibility is one that does not diminish and fade over time. While the conviction of Guy Miles did not occur on my watch, I am proud to say that the decision to move to have it dismissed did. As the elected District Attorney of Orange County, I will never stop searching for the truth, and when that truth demonstrates that the system has failed, then I will continue to take the steps to correct it and ensure justice is done.”

"I always knew the truth," said Guy Miles. "I just needed the system to catch up to it. Today it finally did. I'm grateful to everyone who fought for me, and I'm grateful that the truth matters, even after all these years. But I think about my dad every day, and I wish more than anything he could have been here for this."

"I'm thrilled the OCDA's Conviction Integrity Unit decided to dig deeper into Guy's case and do the right thing," said Audrey McGinn, Senior Staff Attorney of The Innocence Center. "Although Guy came home in 2018, he still lived under the shadow of this wrongful conviction. All the while, the hallmark of this case stared back at us: a flawed eyewitness identification procedure that never should have led to a conviction."

A defendant or attorney seeking to have a conviction reviewed should complete the Conviction Integrity Intake Form and submit it to the OCDA. Information about the Orange County District Attorney’s Conviction Integrity as well as CIU Intake Forms are available here: [Conviction Integrity Unit - Orange County District Attorney](#)

About [The Innocence Center](#)

The Innocence Center is a San Diego-based nonprofit law firm dedicated to exonerating the wrongfully convicted and reforming the criminal justice system. Since its founding, TIC has secured the release of 43 people, representing more than 600 combined years of wrongful incarceration.

