



**OKLAHOMA INNOCENCE CLINIC**  
**OKLAHOMA CITY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW**  
**2012 ANNUAL REPORT**  
**FOR THE PERIOD 7/1/11 – 6/30/12**

**FACILITIES**

Through a grant from a family foundation, a 1888 square foot building on campus was renovated and equipped to house the Oklahoma Innocence Project. This building is about one-quarter mile from the School of Law, and it has convenient parking.

**PERSONNEL**

Legal Director. Tiffany Murphy was appointed clinical professor of law and Legal Director of OIP effective 7/1/11. A graduate of University of Michigan School of Law, Professor Murphy brought with her more than 10 years of legal experience dealing with post-conviction review of criminal convictions, including service for three years as the founding director of the innocence clinic supported by the Midwest Innocence Project in Kansas City, MO. The MIP clinic operated at University of Missouri – Kansas City and University of Missouri – Columbia.

Executive Director. Dean Emeritus Lawrence K. Hellman was appointed Executive Director of OIP. His responsibilities consist primarily of fund-raising and public relations.

Legal Assistant. Effective September 1, 2011, Joyce Mayer was appointed as a legal assistant. Her responsibilities include records management, case intake, and clinic support.

Project Fellow. A position of Project Fellow was established effective January 2012. Through June 2012, this position was filled on a part time basis by Christina Green. Ms. Green was a student in the clinic during the Fall 2011 semester. She received her J.D. degree from OCU in December 2011. Effective August 1, 2012, Ms. Green will be employed as a Project Fellow full-time. The Fellow's responsibilities are initial case review, case investigation, and litigation. Continuation of this full-time position past October 2012 is contingent on approval of a pending grant application that has been filed with the United States Department of Justice.

Planned Expansion of Staff

The next staff additions will be (1) one or two staff attorneys, (2) a paralegal, and (3) an investigator. Funding for all of these positions is not presently in hand. A grant request is pending with the United States Department of Justice which, if approved, would enable OIP to move forward to create some of these positions.

**CASE VOLUME AND MANAGEMENT**

Since beginning to accept requests for assistance on August 1, 2011, the clinic has received 590 requests. 294 of these requests have been closed following a preliminary review by Professor Murphy or the Project Fellow. These closed cases are subject to being reopened if further evidence or information warrants. Of the remaining 296 cases, 57 cases have been reviewed sufficiently to determine that a viable claim of innocence exists, and 18 of these cases have been assigned to students for detailed investigation. 67 additional cases are in the first stage of review, while 172 cases are in various stages of document gathering and remain in the queue awaiting an initial review.

**PROJECT ACTIVITIES**

Case Review.

Total Intake 8/1/11 – 7/31/12	590
Closed Cases	294
Awaiting Initial Review	172
Undergoing Initial Review	67
Initial Review Established Viable Claim of Innocence	57
Under Detailed Investigation by Clinic Students	18 <sup>1</sup>

Clinical Instruction.

A total of 14 students enrolled in the clinic and received academic credit during the 2011-2012 academic year. Several of these students remain involved on a volunteer basis and continue to work on the cases they were assigned during their Clinic semester.

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<sup>1</sup> These 18 cases are included in the 57 cases that have been determined to have a viable claim of innocence.

Classroom Instruction.

Professor Murphy and Adjunct Professor Andrea Miller each taught one section of the Wrongful Convictions course, which is a pre-requisite for enrolling in the Clinic. Together, they taught 36 students.

Building Partnerships.

A significant accomplishment of OIP's first year was the establishment of a Memorandum of Understanding among OIP, the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation, and the Forensic Science Institute at the University of Central Oklahoma. Under the MOU, the OSBI and the FSI will provide investigative and forensic assistance in case development.

Dean Hellman is a member of the Oklahoma Justice Commission, created by the Oklahoma Bar Association to make recommendations for changes in the Oklahoma criminal justice system to reduce the likelihood of future wrongful convictions. Working with Professor Murphy and staff at the New York Innocence Project, he has supplied information and proposals that are under consideration by the Commission.

Public Relations.

Professor Murphy made several media appearances during OIP's first year. She and the clinical students were interviewed by an Oklahoma NPR affiliate station, Fox News Tulsa, and The Oklahoman. She also made presentations at OCU's Supreme Court Update during the federal court training, a presentation on wrongful convictions at OCU's Homecoming and at the Midwest Clinical Conference, and she assisted Executive Director Hellman's presentation to the Twentieth Century Club of Oklahoma City.

Executive Director Lawrence Hellman made presentations about OIP to the Downtown Rotary Club of Oklahoma City; the Rotary Club of Paul's Valley, Oklahoma; Griffith University School of Law, Dublin, Ireland; the Twentieth Century Club of Oklahoma City, the Oklahoma County Bar Association Auxiliary, and the Kay County Bar Association.