



June 2018

Staff News

This month, with heavy hearts, we say farewell to Case Coordinator and Student Supervisor Anne Felix as she returns to her home in Amsterdam.

In 2013, the movie "Conviction" inspired Anne to obtain a master's degree in forensics, criminology and law in the Netherlands.

"Once I discovered innocence work, I couldn't imagine doing anything else," she says. "The United States seemed the best place to learn about wrongful convictions so I wrote to a lot of innocence organizations and IIP invited me to come."

At IIP, Anne began by evaluating applications for assistance and eventually built a role for herself as the Project's first case coordinator and student supervisor. During her three years here, she has reviewed hundreds of applications, funneled cases warranting further review to students and staff, and supervised UIS students conducting case evaluations and research while working on a couple of cases herself.

Connecting with the real people behind requests for help are what she will remember most ... "being able to look in a client's eyes and say, 'we are listening and we believe you are innocent,'" she says.

Stepping into Anne's role will be UIS graduate Christine Ferree. She, like Anne, began as a case evaluator in 2017, and has expanded her role to researching cases, assisting in the supervision of UIS students and implementing a new case intake process and database system.

How Do Wrongful Convictions Happen?

If you want understand how innocent people get convicted of heinous crimes they did not commit, watch [The Last Defense](#), a seven-part docu-series produced by Viola Davis that examines two death row cases with strong evidence of innocence.

The first four episodes focus on Darlie Routier, whose two young sons were stabbed to death in an attack that occurred in their home in the middle of the night and left her critically wounded. Twenty minutes after responding to the crime scene, the lead investigator decided that the break-in had been staged, and Darlie had killed her children and purposely wounded herself.

Darlie's 1997 conviction rests entirely on faulty blood spatter analysis and character assassination, similar to the case of Joe Bryan, featured in a two-part [New York Times article](#) – a must-read for anyone interested in wrongful convictions.

The fifth episode (airing July 10) features the case of [Julius Jones](#), an honors student on full academic scholarship at the University of Oklahoma who was convicted in 2002 of killing of a white insurance executive. Jones is African American, and the investigation and trial were racially charged. He was

prosecuted by "Cowboy Bob" Macy who sent 54 people to death row during his 21 years as District Attorney, more than any other prosecutor in the country in that period. Macy is known a decades-long pattern of misconduct. Jones' conviction rests on informant testimony, the leading cause of wrongful convictions in capital cases.