



May 2019

Opposing Bills that Threaten Prevention of Wrongful Convictions

Our policy work in the Illinois legislature includes supporting bills that further IIP's mission and ultimately protect the innocent. IIP also serves as a "watchdog" for legislation that threatens the prevention of wrongful convictions. We either oppose these bills outright or engage in discussions about how the legislation might be re-formulated.

During this spring's legislative session our policy team either opposed or worked to modify the following bills:

1. [HB 2763](#) would reverse an eyewitness identification best practice for the administration of lineups by making optional the use of a "blind" administrator – one who does not know who the suspect is.
2. [SB 1929](#) would reduce the documents that prosecutors must disclose when requested via the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), cutting back access to information that could potentially help an innocent person who has been wrongfully accused of a crime.
3. [HB 1447](#) would make it easier for the Illinois State Police crime lab to use up an entire piece of evidence when conducting DNA testing, destroying any chance to DNA test that evidence again as testing techniques advance.

Your support gives voice to the innocent among lawmakers. Thank you

Best Wishes to Our 2019 Graduates - We Miss You Already

Each spring we must say goodbye to our graduating University of Illinois Springfield (UIS) students. These five undergraduates spent a year or more engaged in the heart of innocence work, researching requests for assistance, translating applicant communications to English, presenting cases to Project attorneys, searching for evidence and many other tasks to support IIP staff.



Sonia Hernandez, from Chicago, interned with IIP. She graduated with a double major in Legal Studies and Political Science. After taking the UIS course *Conviction of the Innocent*, "the idea of being wrongfully convicted became real." Sonia will attend the College of Law at Northern Illinois University to "plant my small seed for long-lasting change in the name of justice."



Shaina Humphrey, from Waukegan, Illinois, interned with IIP. She graduated with a major in Legal Studies and minor in Political Science. Shaina looked at her work with IIP as a once-in-a-lifetime chance to change a life. "Knowing that I could put in effort, work and time toward helping someone who is innocent of a crime they were accused of committing is an achievement unlike any other I could accomplish at UIS." Shaina will continue working with IIP as a volunteer this summer and will start law school in 2020.



Brandon Klages, from Algonquin, Illinois, was an IIP student staff member. He graduated with a major in Legal Studies and double minor in Political Science and Psychology. Beginning as a volunteer in 2016, Brandon spent three years "fighting for change, justice and – above all else – those who can no longer fight for themselves." Brandon will attend Boston University School of Law school in the fall.



Payton Raso, from Iowa City, Iowa, was an IIP student staff member. He graduated with a double major in Political Science and History. He played a key role in the Project's policy initiatives and says "the most valuable thing that I will take away from my experience at IIP is that each aspect of the law is more complex than it seems." Payton plans to explore those legal complexities when he attends the University of Iowa College of Law in the fall.



Trevor Wilson, from Springfield, Illinois, joined IIP after taking the UIS *Conviction of the Innocent* class. He graduated with a major in Legal Studies and is taking a year off before starting law school in 2020. Trevor will continue working with IIP over the summer as a volunteer case evaluator.