



2026 Winter Newsletter

February

Why it Matters

Exonerees deserve more than freedom. They deserve support, accountability, and a justice system committed to learning from its failures. **Every wrongful conviction** impacts not only one life, but families and communities. Our work is rooted in ensuring that freedom leads to rebuilding, and that truth leads to lasting reform.

Our Focus

This season, we advanced post-exoneration support through **national partnerships**, strengthened policy reform efforts by training law enforcement and participating in system-level reviews, and stood in visible advocacy for those still fighting for justice. From Illinois to Washington, DC, our work remains grounded in lived experience and practical action.

Looking Ahead

In this issue, you will see how **collaboration, leadership, and solidarity are driving meaningful change**. From Andre Brown's return home to continued support for Quincy Cross, our commitment remains clear: justice requires accountability, transparency, and sustained support. Thank you for being part of this work.

Kenneth Nixon,
Executive Director





Post-Exoneration Support



Investing in Healing, Leadership, and Community

Chicago Beyond National Justice Convening

The Organization of Exonerees attended Chicago Beyond's National Justice Convening, joining leaders from across the country committed to advancing justice and community-driven change. Chicago Beyond has been a key supporter of our **mental health awareness programs**, and the convening strengthened a partnership rooted in care, equity, and impact. We are grateful for their dedication to ensuring exonerees receive the support needed to heal and successfully reintegrate after a wrongful conviction.

Pruno Fund Communication Workshop

Eric Anderson and Lavone Hill participated in the **Pruno Fund Communication Workshop** in Chicago, strengthening their storytelling and strategic messaging skills as directly impacted leaders. The experience combined intensive learning with meaningful connection, including a shared cooking class that created space for creativity and community. The workshop reflected the importance of **healing, culture, and collaboration** in sustaining long-term advocacy.

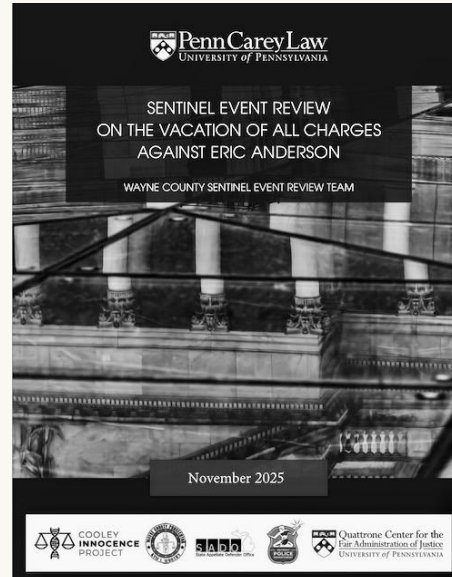
Freedom is only the first step. Support makes rebuilding possible.

The Organization of Exonerees attended the **Innocence Network Midwest Regional Summit** in Cincinnati, joining advocates, attorneys, and exonerees from across the region. The summit strengthened collaboration around reentry, healing, and community education while reinforcing a shared commitment to accountability and justice.

Policy Reform

Wrongful Conviction Avoidance and Awareness Trainings

During the winter of 2025, the Organization of Exonerees conducted **Wrongful Conviction Avoidance and Awareness trainings** across Illinois in partnership with police departments and cadet programs, facilitated by the Illinois Innocence Project. Co-facilitated by exonerees Eric Anderson, Marvin Cotton, Kevin Harrington, and Kenneth Nixon, the sessions combined lived experience with best practices in ethical policing. Participants examined how bias, tunnel vision, official misconduct, and systemic pressure contribute to wrongful convictions, while exploring practical tools to strengthen investigations, promote accountability, and protect public trust.



*Advancing laws that prevent
wrongful convictions*

The Sentinel Event Review of Eric Anderson, conducted by the Quattrone Center for the Fair Administration of Justice, examined the systemic failures that led to his wrongful conviction. By bringing stakeholders together to **review investigative and institutional practices**, the process highlighted the importance of transparency, accountability, and cross-system learning. The review demonstrates how sentinel event processes can help prevent future wrongful convictions and strengthen the integrity of the justice system.

The Organization of Exonerees traveled to Washington, DC, to participate in **Congressional Black Caucus meetings** and engage in conversations at the intersection of racial justice, public policy, and wrongful convictions. Through this engagement, we connected with lawmakers, advocates, and community leaders to elevate Exonerees' voices and highlight the lasting impact of wrongful convictions on individuals, families, and communities. This experience strengthened our commitment to national advocacy and reinforced the importance of policy-driven solutions that prevent injustice and support those harmed by it.



Advocacy & Narrative Change



Changing public understanding through exoneree voices

Support for Quincy Cross

The Organization of Exonerees has stood in consistent support of Quincy Cross, whose case highlights serious police and prosecutorial misconduct that contributed to his wrongful conviction. In November 2025, we traveled to Mayfield, Kentucky, to attend his evidentiary hearing as a visible sign of solidarity and belief in his innocence. Our presence in the courtroom reflected our commitment to ensuring Quincy's case is seen, heard, and taken seriously.

Beyond the courtroom, we have remained in close communication with Quincy's loved ones, offering peer support and connection during an incredibly painful and uncertain process. Quincy is represented by the Kentucky Innocence Project, whose tireless legal advocacy continues to advance his pursuit of justice. We remain dedicated to standing with Quincy throughout this fight and to amplifying the urgent need for accountability, transparency, and truth within the justice system.

Detroit Branch of the NAACP

We are deeply grateful to the Detroit Branch of the NAACP, one of our strongest supporters since our inception. Their advocacy and solidarity have helped uplift exonerees and amplify our mission at every stage of growth. We appreciate their continued partnership in advancing transparency, justice, equity, and accountability.

In Focus... Andre Brown, new App

On December 1, 2025, **Andre Brown** was granted resentencing to time served, allowing him to return home after years of wrongful incarceration. Andre previously spoke at our October gala while still imprisoned, underscoring the human cost of wrongful convictions. While not yet fully exonerated, this marks an important step forward as he continues to pursue justice and clear his name. We stand firmly with **Andre in his ongoing fight** for accountability and truth.

Freedom is a milestone, but justice requires the truth.

MacWilliams-Wolf Wealth Management

We are grateful for the continued support of the MacWilliams-Wolf Wealth Management Team of Raymond James. Their generosity and belief in our mission have helped sustain our work and uplift the voices of those impacted by wrongful conviction. We appreciate their partnership and commitment to justice and community impact.

Launching a First-of-Its-Kind Reentry App

The Organization of Exonerees is proud to help launch a **first-of-its-kind reentry app** called, “**Exoneree App**” designed specifically for people returning home after wrongful conviction. Built with exoneree input, the app provides step-by-step guidance for housing, employment, mental health, and financial stability.

“This app is about dignity and direction,” said Kenneth Nixon, Co-Founder and President of OOE. “**We’re putting real tools in people’s hands so they can rebuild with clarity and confidence.**”

Through innovation and peer-led support, OOE continues to lead nationally in exoneree-centered reentry solutions.





Look who joined us in Supporting, Advocating, and Rebuilding!

We are honored to share that the **Ethel and James Flinn Foundation** has awarded the Organization of Exonerees \$75,000 to support our initiative, *Freedom Is Not Enough: Healing the Trauma of Wrongful Conviction*. This grant represents more than funding. It is recognition that the trauma of wrongful conviction does not end at the prison gates. **Our community deserves care, restoration, and the resources to truly come home.**

Freedom is just the beginning.

Exonerees deserve more than release! They deserve support, stability, and a real chance to thrive. Your action today helps make that possible.



General Support

Help exonerees rebuild.
Give to the Freedom Fund →



Monthly Impact Crew

Sustain this work monthly.
Join the Crew →



Sponsor Our Annual National Gala

Power our largest event.
Sponsor the Gala →

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