

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

St. Louis City Circuit Attorney Files Motion For New Trial In Support of MIP Client Lamar Johnson

St. Louis, Mo. (July 23, 2019) –St. Louis Circuit Attorney Kim Gardner has filed a [motion for a new trial](#) for Lamar Johnson, a long-time [Midwest Innocence Project](#) (MIP) client. The Circuit Attorney’s motion was filed on recommendation of the St. Louis City’s Conviction Integrity Unit (“CIU”), which outlined its findings and recommendations in a [45 page report](#).

Johnson was convicted in 1995 of the murder of Marcus Boyd. The CIU began its review of Johnson’s case in 2018, discovering errors so prejudicial it was compelled to correct them. These errors included:

- (1) the failure to disclose more than \$4,000 in payments to the sole eyewitness;
- (2) the failure to disclose the complete criminal, mental health, and informant history of the State’s jailhouse informant;
- (3) the falsification of witness narratives during the law enforcement investigation used to provide a motive that did not exist;
- (4) the failure to conduct a thorough and competent investigation into the facts of the case;
- (5) improper and unconstitutional police investigation tactics; and
- (6) the presentation of false and misleading evidence to the jury and prosecutorial misconduct that further prejudiced Johnson and rendered the result of the trial fundamentally unfair.

The MIP praises Circuit Attorney Gardner and the CIU for their work to correct an injustice. “We don’t expect prosecutors or law enforcement officers to be perfect—but we should expect that once overwhelming evidence of innocence and government misconduct come to light, that prosecutors fulfill their duty to administer justice by correcting those injustices,” said Lindsay Runnels, an attorney representing Johnson. “Lamar Johnson is innocent and Circuit Attorney Gardner’s motion acknowledges her duty to correct the conviction of an innocent man. This is an important step in making his case right and we are thankful that the Circuit Attorney has moved for a new trial.” Mr. Johnson is represented by Runnels and MIP attorneys Tricia Bushnell and Rachel Wester. Johnson’s attorneys filed a [motion to join](#) the Circuit Attorney’s filing.

“The evidence of Lamar Johnson’s innocence is overwhelming. It was always overwhelming. It was overwhelming at the time of trial, but misconduct by law enforcement and the Circuit Attorney’s office kept it from coming to light. After more than twenty years, the system is finally being held accountable for its failures in Lamar Johnson’s case and Kim Gardner is doing what ministers of justice were obligated but failed to do for decades—to correct a manifest injustice,” said Tricia Bushnell, Executive Director of the Midwest Innocence Project and an attorney for Johnson.

MIP first began investigating Johnson’s case in 2008. His investigation and litigation team has included MIP attorneys Tiffany Murphy, Laura O’Sullivan, Tricia Bushnell, and Rachel Wester, as well as Lindsay Runnels of the law firm of Morgan Pilate, investigators Dan Grothaus, Nadia Pflaum, Quinn O’Brien, and Blair Johnson, and paralegals Matthew Peters and Leigh Ann Carroll, and dozens of law students from UMKC School of Law and the University of Missouri, including most recently Amy Pottberg, Heather Cribbs, Lucia Callicotte, Kylie Mank, and Brody Sabor.

About the Midwest Innocence Project

The Midwest Innocence Project is a not-for-profit corporation dedicated to the investigation, litigation and exoneration of wrongfully convicted men and women in Missouri, Kansas, Arkansas, Iowa and Nebraska. The Midwest Innocence Project was founded at the University of Missouri – Kansas City (UMKC) School of Law in 2000 as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation and operates today as an independent organization in partnership with the University of Missouri and the University of Kansas Schools of Law, the Iowa State Public Defender Wrongful Conviction Division, and local legal communities. The MIP is independent of the Innocence Project in New York, NY, and is a member of the Innocence Network, which consists of 69 similar independent organizations around the United States and the world in coordinating legal work and education efforts. For more information or to donate, please visit www.themip.org.

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