**Judge Overturns Conviction and Vacates Life Sentence of Northern California Innocence Project Client**

In a case representing a record third exoneration in one year, NCIP lawyers assist in getting a Los Angeles man's murder and attempted robbery convictions set aside by uncovering new
evidence of innocence

LOS ANGELES and SANTA CLARA, CA - September 30, 2011 - A Los Angeles County superior court judge today threw out the 1995 murder and attempted robbery convictions of Northern California Innocence Project (NCIP) client Obie Anthony.

Judge Kelvin Filer granted the habeas petition on the basis of the cumulative harm of prosecutorial misconduct, specifically the trial prosecutor's failure to correct the false testimony of its key witness, and the prosecution's failure to disclose exculpatory evidence to the defense, specifically the fact that the prosecution's key witness received a "sweetheart deal" in exchange for his testimony against Mr. Anthony.

In overturning the conviction, Judge Filer said that the prosecution's chief witness, around whom the entire case for trial was built, "will say almost anything to avoid consequences to himself... in an earlier proceeding, he lied about the death of his own mother."

Judge Filer issued the order after lawyers from NCIP at Santa Clara University School of Law, who have represented Anthony for three years, along with lawyers from Loyola Law School's Project for the Innocent, presented evidence of his innocence during an 11-day evidentiary hearing.

NCIP legal director Linda Starr, Obie Anthony, and NCIP supervising attorney Paige Kaneb at the evidentiary hearing September 2011.

During the hearing NCIP and Loyola lawyers demonstrated the prosecution's key witness, John Jones, had lied repeatedly at trial, and that the prosecution knew of his lies and failed to correct them for the jury. They also presented evidence that the prosecution suppressed evidence that impeached its witnesses, that Anthony is actually innocent, and that Anthony's defense attorney at trial failed to investigate and present information that suggested Jones was the actual killer and Anthony was innocent.

Jones testified at the hearing that to make his identifications of Anthony, he had relied on descriptions from others, along with suggestions from the detectives and false information they had given him.

Anthony's team of lawyers was comprised of NCIP lawyers Paige Kaneb, Linda Starr and Seth Flagsberg, Loyola Law School's Project for the Innocent lawyers Adam Grant and Laurie Levenson,and Federal Public Defender Investigator Deborah Crawford. Law students from Santa Clara University School of Law and Loyola Law School also assisted.

"This conviction should have never happened," said NCIP Legal Director Linda Starr. "Police purposely ignored and hid evidence that did not support their theory, and manipulated the witnesses to create evidence to support their misguided tunnel vision. The prosecution falsely denied that they granted their star witness a deal for his cooperation and failed to correct his lies at trial. And Mr. Anthony's own attorney failed to investigate the case. For their failures, Mr. Anthony has spent 17 years in prison for a murder that he did not commit - and the actual murderer has remained free. This cannot be considered justice."

"Obie Anthony is an innocent man who has survived this ordeal with grace and courage," said NCIP attorney Paige Kaneb. "Even now, Mr. Anthony is not angry. Instead, he just wants to start his life as a free man, go to college, and then devote his time to helping others."

Background

On August 1, 1995, Obie Anthony was convicted of attempted robbery and the murder of Felipe Gonzales near a house ofprostitution on March 27, 1994. The conviction was primarily based on the testimony of one witness, John Jones, who operated the house of prostitution, had a prior manslaughter conviction, and was known to carry and use firearms.

Police had no leads on the crime until one month later, when Elliot Santana falsely claimed to have been carjacked at gunpoint by three men, and identified Anthony and two friends, Reggie Cole and Michael Miller, as those men. Police proceeded to put their photos in photographic lineups and showed them to witnesses in the Gonzales murder. Jones was the only person to positively identify Anthony in connection with the Gonzales murder.

At trial, the prosecution's case rested entirely on eyewitness testimony. The fingerprints lifted from the scene did not match Anthony, nor did the shoeprints.  Detectives found no murder weapon or clothing that matched the descriptions provided by witnesses.  In fact, no physical evidence ever connected Anthony to the crime.  Furthermore, Anthony presented numerous alibi witnesses who testified that he was at home on the night of the murder.  Despite this, Anthony was convicted and received a prison sentence of life without the possibility of parole.

The court ordered Anthony released on his own recognizance, pending the completion of release paperwork.