



INNOCENCE PROJECT OF FLORIDA, INC.
Unlock the Truth

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**Hubert Nathan Myers and Clifford Williams Exonerated
After Almost 43 Years Wrongfully Incarcerated**

Myers and Williams are First Exonerations in State of Florida Initiated by a Conviction Integrity Review Investigation, led by Fourth Judicial Circuit State Attorney's Office.

Jacksonville, FL (March 28, 2019) – Today, after almost 43 years behind bars, Hubert Nathan Myers and Clifford Williams will walk free, exonerated by new evidence of actual innocence uncovered by a Conviction Integrity Review (CIR) investigation by Fourth Judicial Circuit State Attorney Melissa Nelson's Office. The State's investigation, led by CIR Director Shelley Thibodeau concluded "that the office has lost faith in the convictions of both Defendant Myers and Defendant Williams."

Seth Miller and Krista Dolan, attorneys with the [Innocence Project of Florida](http://www.innocenceproject.org) (IPF), filed a motion to vacate Mr. Myer's conviction and sentence, while George E. "Buddy" Schulz Jr. of [Holland & Knight](http://www.hollandandknight.com) filed a nearly identical motion on behalf of Mr. Williams.

Fourth Judicial Circuit Judge Angela Cox ordered the convictions for both men vacated in a short hearing on March 28, freeing Myers and Williams from life sentences after almost 43 years wrongfully incarcerated. The exoneration of these two men marks the first exonerations in the State of Florida initiated by the conclusions of a state attorney conviction integrity investigation.

Mr. Myers said, "This is such a blessing. I am so grateful to the State Attorney's Office and the Innocence Project of Florida for getting me to this point. I lost almost forty-three years of my life that I can never get back. But I'm looking ahead and will focus on enjoying my freedom with my family."

The CIR investigation originated from a letter Mr. Myers sent to the Fourth Circuit State Attorney's Office on January 17, 2017. The Office initiated a reexamination of the case and began a comprehensive review of Mr. Myer's claim of wrongful conviction. The CIR's report noted "Every investigative step the CIR took corroborated Defendant Myers' claim of innocence."

Mr. Myers and Mr. Williams were convicted and sentenced to life in prison in 1976 for the murder of Jeanette Williams (no relation to Mr. Williams) and attempted murder of Nina Marshall. Mr. Myers was just 18 years old at the time of the conviction, and his uncle, Mr. Williams, was 34. In September 1976, mere months after their arrest, the State jointly tried Mr. Myers and Mr. Williams.

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After a two-day trial, the jury found both men guilty. Defense counsel waived opening statements, presented no significant witnesses, and entered no evidence. The only evidence the State presented was testimony from the surviving victim, Nina Marshall. No physical or scientific evidence linked the defendants to the crime, and no witnesses provided any testimony to corroborate Marshall.

The State's conviction integrity investigation into Mr. Myers' and Mr. Williams' case revealed both previously unrepresented evidence, including favorable physical evidence, and multiple alibi witnesses, as well as evidence discovered since the time of trial, including multiple confessions to the murder by another man linked to the scene by the original investigation. The CIR gathered additional evidence from a crime scene reconstruction, sound experiments, and additional witness interviews that, along with evidence available at trial, discredited the State's trial theory and only material fact witness. The CIR report concluded, "A jury presented with the evidence known by the CIR could not conclude, beyond a reasonable doubt, that either defendant committed the shooting and murder," and that there "is no credible evidence of guilt, and likewise, there is credible evidence of innocence."

IPF Executive Director Seth Miller said, "The CIR did an incredibly diligent and thorough job untangling an old, complicated case to reveal and correct a clear miscarriage of justice. The righting of this injustice for Mr. Myers and Mr. Williams is validation of Melissa Nelson's vision for the CIR and Shelley Thibodeau's persistence in finding the truth."

IPF Staff Attorney Krista Dolan said, "We are so pleased that IPF was able to play a role in collaborating with the CIR to give Nathan and Clifford a new life in freedom. We look forward to more collaborative opportunities with this and other conviction integrity units to achieve justice for the innocent."

In January 2018, Melissa Nelson's office created the first conviction integrity unit (CIU) in Florida. There are now two additional units in Florida—the 13th Judicial Circuit under State Attorney Andrew Warren, and the 9th Judicial Circuit under State Attorney Aramis Ayala.

According to Nelson's CIR report, the purpose of the division is to "review and investigate claims of actual innocence, and provide analysis and assistance to address the prevention of errors/issues which might lead to a miscarriage of justice." Additionally, the State Attorney's Office for the Fourth Judicial Circuit recognizes "When an innocent man or woman is convicted and the guilty person is not held accountable, justice as a whole suffers."

Today, the story of Mr. Myers and Mr. Williams takes a turn. After almost 43 years of wrongful conviction, these men will seek begin their lives anew, and will do so with the support of IPF and the confidence of the State Attorney of the Fourth Judicial Circuit of Florida.

The Innocence Project of Florida (IPF) represented Mr. Myers in these proceedings. Since 2003, IPF has assisted in the release from wrongful incarceration of 20 innocent individuals who have collectively served more than 440 years for the crimes of others. Located in Tallahassee, IPF's mission is to find and free the innocent in Florida prisons, help these individuals transition back into a changed society, and work to reform the criminal justice system. For more information, visit www.FloridaInnocence.org.

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