



Parties Seek to Overturn Adnan Syed's Conviction

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A nearly year-long investigation has revealed *Brady* violations, and new information concerning alternate suspects in the case of Adnan Syed. Today, the Innocence Project Clinic at the University of Baltimore School of Law responded to the State's motion to vacate Adnan Syed's conviction. The Innocence Project Clinic, a collaboration between the Maryland Office of the Public Defender and the law school, represents Mr. Syed in his post-conviction proceedings.

The motion was brought by the State's Attorney pursuant to Crim. Proc. § 8-301.1 (2019 HB 874) "in the interest of justice" based on *Brady* material that was never disclosed to Mr. Syed's attorneys and that points to two other suspects who had a motive, one of whom also threatened to kill the victim. The State also acknowledged concerns that Mr. Syed's conviction was based primarily on one witness's unreliable and inconsistent testimony that was corroborated by inaccurate and misleading forensic evidence.

The response filed on behalf of Mr. Syed today supported the motion, noting the information and evidence pointing to Mr. Syed's innocence and highlighting other cases that have been vacated due to similar *Brady* violations, both under the Maryland law and in other jurisdictions.

"Given the stunning lack of reliable evidence implicating Mr. Syed, coupled with increasing evidence pointing to other suspects, this unjust conviction cannot stand," said Assistant Public Defender Erica Suter, Mr. Syed's attorney and, Director of the Innocence Project Clinic. "Mr. Syed is grateful that this information has finally seen the light of day and looks forward to his day in court."

According to Maryland Public Defender Natasha Dartigue, "The fact that information about motives and threats of alternate suspects were kept from defense counsel for more than 20 years should shock the conscience. Sadly, we at OPD see *Brady* violations all the time, in cases across the state. This is a true example of how justice delayed is justice denied. An innocent man spends decades wrongly incarcerated, while any information or evidence that could help identify the actual perpetrator becomes increasingly difficult to pursue. The revelation of further *Brady* violations highlights both the need for timely, complete State disclosures and the increased scrutiny of non-disclosures in the pretrial stages of a case. "

Ronald Weich, Dean of the University of Baltimore School of Law, praised his school's Innocence Project Clinic: "We are proud of the work of Professor Suter, and the collaboration between our law school and the Office of the Public Defender. This unique partnership has

benefited our students and clients over many years, and strengthened the integrity of the criminal justice system.”

The Innocence Project Clinic was established in 2008 as a joint project of the University of Baltimore School of Law and the Maryland Office of the Public Defender, and is affiliated with the Mid-Atlantic Innocence Project. The clinic secures the exoneration and release of individuals who have been wrongfully convicted and works to minimize the likelihood of future wrongful convictions by advocating for related systemic reforms.

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