



Photo by Jennifer Linzer

## So the Innocent Might Go Free

Imagine that you — or your child — have been accused of a crime you didn't commit. You're tired, confused, scared, and alone. Your accusers say they know you did it, and they have evidence to prove it.

Despite your innocence, you're almost starting to believe you did commit the crime. After all, the police wouldn't lie to you. Maybe, you think, if I just agree I did it, this will be over and it will be straightened out later. But instead, you find yourself facing a trial and an almost certain conviction for the crime to which you just "confessed."

It's an imaginary scenario, but attorney Josh Tepfer '97 says he has heard far too many stories similar to this one. Josh is one of the founders of the Center on Wrongful Convictions of Youth (CWCY), part of the Bluhm Legal Clinic at Northwestern University School of Law in Chicago, Ill.

False confessions are one of the leading causes of wrongful convictions, and youth are particularly vulnerable, Josh explains. But why would anyone confess to a crime he or she didn't commit? Under the stress of police interrogation, Josh says, youths may become convinced that it is in their self-interest to confess; research has shown

### 1997

Ellis C. Baggs, an environmental lawyer at Hunton & Williams, finished in the top 15 during the 2009 Monopoly U.S. National Championship completed at Union Station in Washington, D.C., April 15, 2009. Baggs finished 14th out of 28 competitors.

### 1998

Brian J. Rebel accepted a Wilson Fellowship at Fermi National Accelerator Lab, Batavia, Ill., May 7, 2009. He began a tenure track position at the lab on June 8, 2009.

Megan E. Schmidt Root ran in the 2009 Freihofer's Run for Women, Albany, N.Y., May 30, 2009.

Kenneth R. Rosso accepted a position as territory sales manager for Suntech Power, a leading manufacturer of solar panels, July 2009.

Rachel S. Weiss was ordained June 7, 2009, by the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College.

### 2002

Katharine B. Simmons received the University of Michigan's Warner/Goldberg Women's Health Program Award for Excellence and Commitment to Women's Health, May 2009.

### 2003

Michael S. Heller and his team tied for first place with five other teams in the Rising Tides Competition, an open international design competition for ideas that respond to sea level rise in San Francisco Bay and beyond. The competition was hosted by the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, July 14, 2009. Heller and his team's entry was titled "100-Year Plan."

Lise-Marie Monroe accepted a position as assistant manager for guest services for Holland America/Princess-Alaska, July 2009. She will manage the details, logistics, and operations of land tours and cruise tours that go through Fairbanks, Alaska.

Gustavo Torres accepted a position at the DLA Piper law firm, Houston, Texas, April 2009.

Jancey Wickstrom has accepted a position as a therapist at Uhlich Children's Advantage Network near Chicago, working with women with eating disorders, substance abuse, and self-harm issues. She provides dialectical behavior therapy, which is a type of therapy based on mindfulness meditation.

### 2004

Shannon E. Heffernan received the Soros Justice Fellowship from the Open Society Institute of New York to study the lives of incarcerated parents in the Chicago area.

### 2005

Sarah E. Evans was awarded a highly competitive graduate research fellowship from the 2009 National Science Foundation, June 2009. She is completing a doctorate in ecology at Colorado State University-Fort Collins.

Margaret C. Hanson won a Fulbright Scholarship to Kazakhstan, June 2009.

### 2007

Sarah E. Parker was awarded a highly competitive graduate research fellowship from the 2009 National Science Foundation, June 2009. She is working toward a doctorate in organometallic chemistry at Harvard University.

Michael K. Silver began training for the Peace Corps, June 10, 2009, and was posted to a teaching position on August 28, 2009. He works in Burkina Faso in Western Africa, teaching math to secondary students in French and Moore, a native language.

### 2009

Joshua V. Burdick accepted a position with the Urban Land Conservancy, Denver, Colo., May 2009. He is focusing on research projects assessing the effectiveness of federal housing programs.

Michael P. Jugenheimer has accepted a position as a fundraiser for Marist College, Poughkeepsie, N.Y., June 22, 2009. He and Joshua Burdick were featured in the article, "College grads need to be creative to find jobs," by David Pitt, [www.Shreveporttimes.com](http://www.Shreveporttimes.com), June 16, 2009.

that youths categorically fail to consider the long-term consequences of their actions. "They feel like the only way out is to tell the police what they want to hear," Josh says.

CWCY attorneys hope to reform policies and raise awareness about how to solve the problem. For instance, Josh says video recording of all police interviews with youth is an important start. In the dozen or so states that do require such recordings, Josh says, law enforcement officials have generally been happy with the results.

CWCY also advocates a non-waivable right to counsel for juveniles. "They just don't understand Miranda rights," Josh explains.

Josh and the other CWCY attorneys take on cases of the wrongfully convicted and try to reopen their cases. Thanks to an overloaded court system, Josh says, it's not easy. "The courts don't like do-overs."

Forensic evidence such as DNA improves the odds — 240 people have been exonerated nationwide with the use of DNA evidence. "Those are the lucky few," Josh says. Cases without DNA evidence are much harder to reopen.

"It takes a lot of determination," Josh says.

## Degrees

Mary E. Bowen '81, master of fine arts in creative writing (nonfiction), University of New Orleans, May 15, 2009. Her thesis, a collection of eight stories, was accepted with distinction.

Jennifer A. Palsgrove '95, master's degree in nonprofit management, Regis University, Denver, Colo., December 2008. She is working as an independent consultant to nonprofit organizations in Chicago.

Sarah Asch '99, M.D., Temple University Medical School, Philadelphia, Pa., May 22, 2009. She began her pediatrics residency at the Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh, Pa., June 2009.

Andrew R. Choquette '00, M.B.A., Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill., spring 2009. He has accepted a position in Samsung's Global Strategy Group in Seoul, South Korea.

Molly M. Gallogly '01, Ph.D. in pharmacology, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio, June 11, 2009.

Rakhi I. Patel '01, J.D., University of California-Los Angeles School of Law, May 2009. She was editor-in-chief of the *UCLA Law Review* and winner of Richard T. Drukker Prize.

Katharine B. Simmons '02, M.D. with distinction, University of Michigan Medical School, Ann Arbor. She has entered the residency program in obstetrics and gynecology at Oregon Health and Science University in Portland, Ore.

Noe W. Montez '03, Ph.D. in theatre history, theory, and literature, Indiana University-Bloomington, May 2009. His dissertation, "Staging Post-Memories: Commemorative Argentine Theatre 1989-2003," examines Argentine theatre and its focus on the Dirty War of the '70s and '80s.

Anne L. O'Brien '03, master of arts degree in education policy, George Washington University, Washington, D.C., May 2009.

Katrina S. Pedersen '03, M.D., Southern Illinois University School of Medicine, Springfield, May 16, 2009. She was inducted into the medical honors society Alpha Omega Alpha in 2008; she began her internal medicine residency at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., June 15, 2009.

Josh says CWCY is bringing together a number of exonerated juveniles for a public event on Oct. 8. Through symposiums and panel discussions, he hopes to bring the center's work to a larger audience.

"We want to become a resource for the legal community," Josh says.

—Jacqueline Hartling Stolze

## webextra!

To see video accounts of several wrongfully convicted juveniles, visit *The Grinnell Magazine* website at [www.grinnell.edu/magazine](http://www.grinnell.edu/magazine). Click on "Extras."

Margaret L. Hainline '04, M.D., Indiana University School of Medicine, Indianapolis, May 2009. She began a pediatrics residency at St. Louis Children's Hospital, Washington University, July 2009.

Daniel L. Ofori-Addo '04, M.S. in management information systems, George Washington University, Washington, D.C., May 2009. He is manager of the monitoring and reporting unit of the United Planning Organization, Washington, D.C.

Neil C. Tomson '04, P.D. in chemistry, University of California-Berkeley, May 2009.

Marie Kiak Li Tan '05, master's in political sociology, London School of Economics and Political Science, Dec. 17, 2008. She is currently coordinating the London and U.K.-wide expansion of the *foresforsafety*® project, which empowers individuals affected by domestic violence.

Eszter G. Csicsai '07, master of arts degree in museum studies, New York University, New York, N.Y., May 2009.

Alvin S. Irby '07, M.S. in general childhood education, Bank Street College of Education, New York, N.Y., May 28, 2009.

Shoshana M. Zakem '07, A.A.S. fashion degree, Parsons School of Design, New York, N.Y., May 2008. She has accepted a position as the "stylista" at Macy's flagship store in Chicago.

Julia E. Bottles '08, master's in journalism with a concentration in broadcasting, Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, New York, N.Y., May 2009.