2024

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

GREAT·NORTH INNOCENCE PROJECT

GREAT NORTH INNOCENCE PROJECT

Litigate. Educate. Advocate. **Free the innocent.**

The Great North Innocence Project works to free the wrongfully convicted and prevent future wrongful convictions from occuring in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Since our founding in 2001, GNIP has freed 13 innocent people who spent a combined 173 years in prison for crimes they did not commit.

2024
BY THE NUMBERS

2 BILLS PASSED

2 CLIENTS FREED

17 CASES IN LITIGATION

108 CASES IN INVESTIGATION

243 REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE

1,500+ PRO BONO HOURS DONATED

1,200+ COMMUNITY MEMBERS EDUCATED

A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Justice Champions,

As I reflect on the Great North Innocence Project's work in 2024, I am deeply grateful for this community and inspired by the collective force you represent. Our benefit theme for the year, "Forces for Justice," captured what makes this work possible: people standing together, refusing to accept injustice, and committing themselves to restoring freedom.

Throughout 2024, GNIP stood alongside innocent people across Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota who were seeking to be heard and believed. Because of your support, our team was able to do the long, careful work required to challenge wrongful convictions and pursue the truth, even when the odds felt overwhelming.

Most importantly, in 2024 we freed and exonerated two innocent people: Edgar Barrientos-Quintana and Robert Bintz. Together, Edgar and Robert lost over 40 years of their lives to wrongful convictions. Your partnership made it possible for GNIP to persist until justice prevailed. Today, they are home, reclaiming the freedom that should never have been taken from them.

Our work as a force for justice extends beyond individual cases. Over the past year, GNIP advanced critical criminal legal reforms and expanded education and outreach efforts to help prevent future wrongful convictions and strengthen accountability across our region.

Thank you for standing with us as a force for justice in 2024. Together, we are restoring lives, reuniting families, and working toward a more fair and accountable criminal legal system across the Great North.

With gratitude,

Sara Jones, J.D.
Executive Director

CLIENT STORIES

In 2024, GNIP freed two innocent people from prison: Robert Bintz and Edgar Barrientos-Quintana.

ROBERT BINTZ

On **September 25, 2024, Robert (Bobby) Bintz**, alongside his brother and co-defendant David Bintz (represented by the Wisconsin Innocence Project) was **exonerated of a murder he did not commit. Investigative genetic genealogy** allowed the Great North Innocence Project to **indentify the actual perpetrator** of the 1986 sexual assault and murder for which the Bintz brothers **served 25 years of wrongful incarceration**.

CLIENT STORIES

EDGAR BARRIENTOS-QUINTANA

On **November 6, 2024, Edgar Barrientos-Quintana** was exonerated and released from prison after spending **nearly 16 years behind bars** for a crime that he did not commit.

GNIP and Conviction Review Unit (CRU) investigations found that Edgar had a **credible alibi** for the time of the shooting of which he was convicted and that **law enforcement used problematic eyewitness identification and interrogation tactics.** Ultimately, these findings led to Edgar's exoneration.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

LEGAL

The GNIP legal team **freed two wrongfully convicted people** in 2024. In addition, we reviewed **243 requests for assistance**, investigated **108 cases**, and are formally representing **17 clients**. The legal team represented many of these clients in hearings, making **crucial steps towards freedom** for innocent people.

OUTREACH

GNIP's education and outreach efforts **reached over 1,200** legal professionals, law enforcement officials, and community members in 2024. Our **Speakers Bureau** continued to educate about the **causes and consequences of wrongful convictions,** and our team continued **outreach to correctional facilities** to ensure all justice-impacted people are aware of GNIP's free legal services and how to access them.

POLICY

The Great North Innocence Project also helped to pass **two pieces of critical legislation in Minnesota** to prevent and remedy wrongful convictions, including a **ban on deception in police interrogations of juveniles** and an **amendment to the post-conviction statute of limitations for innocence claims.** Read more about both pieces of legislation on GNIP's website.

PARTNERS

$20,000+ Anonymous Foundation

$5,000- $19,999

Anthony Ostlund
Carlson Caspers
Delta Air Lines
Eugene & Bonnie Nugent Foundation
Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP
Fredrikson & Byron Foundation
Fredrikson & Byron, P.A.
Gustafson Gluek PLLC
Hopeman Law LLC
Horton, Inc.
Kelley Wolter & Scott, P.A.
McNeely Foundation
Taft Stettinius & Hollister LLP
Thom Family Foundation
Thomson Reuters

$1,000 - $4,999

Blattner Company
Briol & Benson, PLLC
Dorsey & Whitney LLP
Larson.King.LLP
Lathrop GPM
Maslon LLP
Minnesota Vikings
Nilan Johnson Lewis P.A.
Old National Bank
Robins Kaplan, LLP
The Dorsey & Whitney Foundation
The Law Office of Kevin Riach
United Health Group Inc.
Up North Retreats
WayPoint, Inc.
Xcel Energy

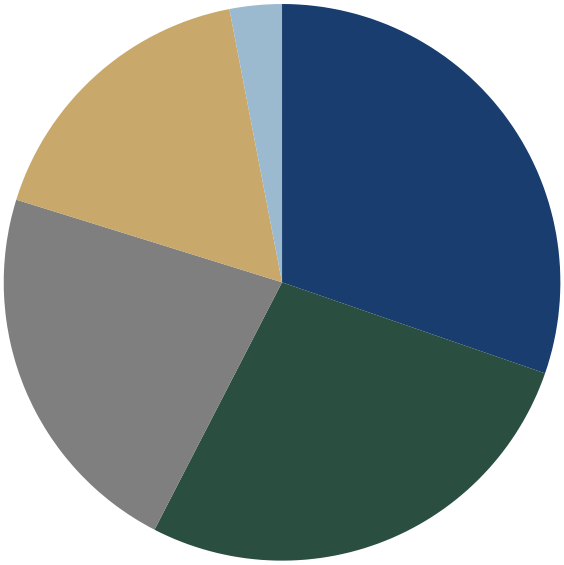
Pro Bono Partners

BANC
Carlson Caspers
Chestnut Cambronne
Faegre Drinker
Fish & Richardson
Fredrikson & Byron, P.A.

Board Members

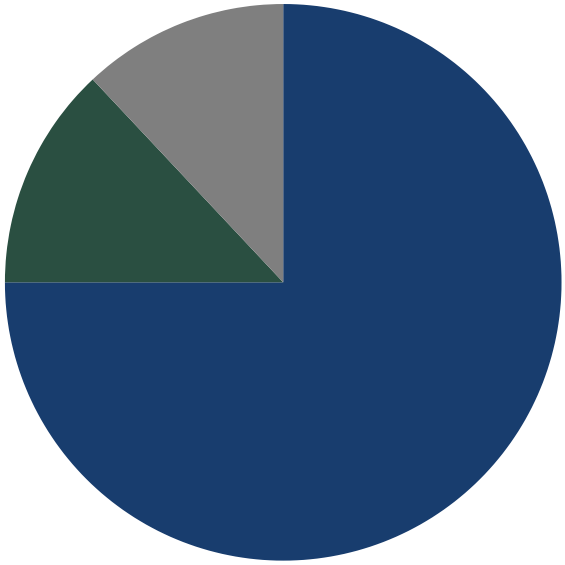
Rachel Bond
Joanna Curry
Tara Duginske
Beth Forsythe
Jazz Hampton
John Hart
Lousene Hoppe
John Kingrey
J.R. LaPlante
Catherine Lipinsky
Adam Martin
Tatewin Means
Kevin Riach
Susan Roe
Ben Vickers
James Volling
Tim Walsh
DeLinda Washington

FINANCIALS



Revenue
$1,187,613

Foundations	30%
Government	27%
Individual Contributions	22%
Events	17%
Corporate & Organization	3%



Expenses
$1,236,199

Programs	75%
Administration	13%
Fundraising	12%

For more information please contact:

Sara Jones, Executive Director
sjones@gn-ip.org

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR DONORS AND PARTNERS

Your support makes it possible for the Great North Innocence Project to free the innocent and prevent future wrongful convictions in our Great North region.

info@gn-ip.org

www.greatnorthinnocenceproject.org

229 19th Ave South, Suite 285
Minneapolis, MN 55455

612.624.4779

GREAT NORTH INNOCENCE PROJECT