

For Immediate Release
Oct. 16, 2018

**LOYOLA PROJECT FOR THE INNOCENT TO HOST CELEBRATION OF
CLIENTS, DONORS & VOLUNTEERS AT BOOK-SIGNING FUNDRAISER**

LOS ANGELES – The Loyola Project for the Innocent (LPI) at Loyola Law School, Los Angeles will host its inaugural Backyard Bash event from 2-5 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 20, 2018 to announce the recipient of its new Kash Register fellowship and celebrate the launch of the new book “Rectify: The Power of Restorative Justice After Wrongful Conviction,” authored by a former LPI legal director. Freed clients Obie Anthony and Register are expected to attend.

“The Backyard Bash is our chance to acknowledge the transformed lives of our clients and to thank all of the student advocates, attorneys, volunteers and others who make our work possible,” said Levenson. “When we say the LPI is a team effort, we mean it.”

The fundraiser is co-sponsored by Anthony’s Exonerated Nation, a nonprofit that provides exonerees with resources such as temporary housing, leadership training and a support network to help them return home. It will include a book talk and signing by former LPI Legal Director Lara Bazelon, whose new work draws on her years as an advocate for the wrongfully convicted.

The Backyard Bash punctuates a banner year for the LPI, which in June 2018 secured the prison release of its seventh client, Maria Mendez, who had served 11 years of a 25-years-to-life sentence. The release was the culmination of three years of research and investigation by the LPI, which worked to establish that Mendez’s conviction relied on what has been determined was false testimony.

Additionally, the LPI was recently awarded a \$430,000 grant in September 2018 from the U.S. Department of Justice - National Institute of Justice (NIJ) that will allow the investigation of a greater number of innocence cases in which there is a need for post-conviction DNA testing. The award, which begins in January 2019, also will allow the LPI to fund two additional attorney positions over the next two years to investigate claims of wrongful conviction.

About Loyola’s Project for the Innocent

The Loyola Project for the Innocent (LPI) pursues claims of actual innocence on behalf of those wrongfully convicted of crimes. Students work under the supervision of founder Laurie Levenson, David W. Burcham Professor of Ethical Advocacy; Legal Director Paula Mitchell; Program Director Adam Grant; and other supervising attorneys. Since 2011, LPI has secured the release of seven clients who collectively served more than 133 years in prison for crimes they did not commit. They include Maria Mendez (2018 release after 11 years in prison); Jaime Ponce (2017 release after 19 years in prison); Marco Contreras (2017 release after 20 years in prison); Andrew Leander Wilson (2017 release after 32 years in prison), Kash Delano Register (2013 release after 34 years in prison) and Obie Anthony (2011 release after 17 years in prison). Learn more at www.lls.edu/ProjectfortheInnocent.

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About Loyola Law School, Los Angeles

Located on an award-winning Frank Gehry-designed campus in downtown Los Angeles, Loyola Law School is home to prominent faculty, dedicated students and cutting-edge programs. The Law School strives to instill in students the knowledge they need to excel on their chosen paths. It dedicates itself to preparing students for the rigors of practice with an extensive portfolio of practical-training opportunities, an 18,000-strong alumni network and a focus on social justice. Learn more at www.lls.edu.

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Journalists are welcome to attend all or part of the LPI's Backyard Bash event but must RSVP to receive location details and arrange an interview with an LPI clients, attorneys or students. Further information is available at <http://www.lls.edu/lpicelibration>.

Media contacts:

Brian Costello
Loyola Law School, Los Angeles
Brian.Costello@lls.edu
Tel. 213-736-1444

Melissa Abraham
Loyola Law School, Los Angeles
Melissa.Abraham@lls.edu
Tel. 213-736-1445