



29th Annual Awards

February 11, 2021

PROGRAM

Special Guest

Gavin Newsom
Governor of California

Host

Toni Trucks

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Reverend James M. Lawson, Jr.

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President Emeritus

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Director, Producers, and Cast of Clemency

Special Guest

George Gascón
District Attorney of Los Angeles County

The Rose Elizabeth Bird

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Bryan Stevenson
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Celisse Henderson

Musical Performance

Welcome to the 29th Annual Death Penalty Focus Awards.

This past year we have seen progress made towards abolishing the death penalty. Colorado became the 22nd state to do so and Virginia appears to be heading towards abolition as well. In California, newly elected Los Angeles District Attorney George Gascón is working hard to implement his policies that would end death sentences in Los Angeles.

At the same time, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the inhumane conditions in this country's prisons. At the time of this writing, 197 people incarcerated in California prisons have died from COVID-19, several of those people were on death row. In addition, the federal government under the Trump administration executed 12 human beings following an effective moratorium for the last 17 years. We remember those lives lost.

Tonight, we are honoring activists, scholars and artists who have made invaluable contributions to abolition. The legendary Bryan Stevenson has dedicated his life to ending the death penalty and to bringing dignity and humanity to the forefront. Rabbi Sharon Brous has been a leader in the community of faith and an outspoken opponent of the death penalty. Sociologist Michael Radelet has researched the arbitrariness and unfairness of the death penalty throughout the United States and, among many other accomplishments, authored the leading article on disparity in California. The writer/director Chinonye Chukwu, producers and cast of *Clemency* have created a brilliant film that conveys the dysfunction of state killing and the excruciating pain inflicted on all human beings involved.

Thank you to DPF's long-time Director of Administration and Finance Yoko Otani-Spurlin and to the Board of Directors for their collective work on abolition. Thank you all for attending and for supporting this cause. Together we can end the death penalty!

Sarah Sanger

Chair of the Board of Directors



Welcome.

What an honor to welcome you to Death Penalty Focus' 29th Annual Awards Event. We cannot imagine a more deserving group of honorees than Bryan Stevenson, Rabbi Sharon Brous, Michael Radelet and the creative team and talent behind the remarkable film, Clemency.

What a moment to be working for abolition of the death penalty. During the lows this country faced, especially in the last months of 2020, with the outcome of the election unknown and federal executions on supercharge, Death Penalty Focus doubled down on our work to educate, mobilize and build partnerships to end this scourge of state killing.

With the bloodthirsty support of Attorney General William Barr, the Trump administration executed thirteen men and women within six months, the most consecutive civilian executions by the federal government or any state in the 244-year history of the United States. The racist nature of the death penalty could not be more perfectly illustrated than by these numbers. Six of the executed men were Black and one was Native American. And in a further shocking display of racist cruelty, the last execution - of Dustin John Higgs, a Black man - took place on the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

But now the tide is turning. More people oppose the death penalty than ever before. They are convinced by the facts of wrongful convictions, by their sense of moral duty and humanity, by the cost both in dollars and in agony to the families of both the victims and those charged.

We take heart in the election of district attorneys in California and across the country who have declared their opposition to the death penalty. We are proud that Gov. Gavin Newsom has declared a moratorium on executions in California. We are encouraged that since 2009, six states - New Mexico, Illinois, Connecticut, Maryland, New Hampshire, and Colorado - have abolished capital punishment, while the courts in Washington and Delaware have found it unconstitutional. We are encouraged by the stance of the Biden

administration and allies in Congress to end capital punishment at the federal level.

We have tried twice to win abolition in California through a ballot initiative. We lost by slim margins. We lost because the cost of getting an initiative on the ballot sapped the funds needed to win. This time we have opponents of the death penalty sitting in the governor's seat and in the state legislature. If we can convince them to put an initiative on the ballot, together, with your help, we can abolish capital punishment once and for all.

When we are successful, California will close the biggest death row in the country.

We are delighted to have you as partners in this effort and look forward to working with you during the year. We look forward to celebrating with all of you when we finally succeed in ending the brutality of the death penalty.



Sherry Frumkin and Stephen Rohde

Co-Chairs, 2021 Annual Awards Event Committee

Gavin Newsom

Gavin Newsom is the Governor of California, former Lieutenant Governor of California, and former Mayor of San Francisco.

Newsom is widely recognized for his willingness to lead – repeatedly developing, advocating, and implementing innovative and groundbreaking solutions to some of our most challenging issues. On a wide range of topics including same-sex marriage, gun safety, marijuana, the death penalty, universal health care, access to preschool, technology, criminal justice reform, and the minimum wage, Newsom stuck his neck out and did the right thing, which often led to sweeping changes when his policies were ultimately accepted, embraced, and replicated across the state and nation.

Newsom's top priorities for his administration are tackling our state's affordability crisis, creating inclusive economic growth and opportunity for every child, and standing up for California values – from civil rights, to immigration, environmental protection, access to quality schools at all levels, and justice.

Governor Newsom is married to Jennifer Siebel Newsom. They have four children: Montana, Hunter, Brooklynn, and Dutch.



Rev. James M. Lawson, Jr.

Invocation

Reverend James M. Lawson Jr. was born in Pennsylvania on September 22, 1928, and grew up in Massillon, Ohio. Early in his life Rev. Lawson was speaking out against racial injustices. By age twenty, Lawson was speaking out against the cold war and branded a communist by his hometown paper.

In 1951, Lawson was sentenced to three years in prison for refusing the Korean War draft. He was paroled after thirteen months, obtained his B.A. in 1952, and spent the next three years as a campus minister and teacher in Nagpur, India. While in India, Lawson eagerly read of the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the emerging nonviolent resistance movement back in the United States.

When he returned to the United States in 1956, he enrolled in Oberlin School of Theology in Ohio. By 1957, Lawson decided he could no longer sit on the sidelines. He began holding seminars to train volunteers in Gandhian tactics of nonviolent direct action. He taught growing numbers of black and white students how to organize sit-ins and any other form of action that would force America to confront the immorality of segregation.

Rev. Lawson first met Martin Luther King in 1957, and they soon joined forces to realize their dream of starting a non-violent mass movement. Rev. Lawson helped coordinate the Freedom Rides in 1961 and the Meredith March in 1966, and while working as a pastor at the Centenary Methodist Church in Memphis, played a major role in the sanitation workers strike of 1968. On the eve of his assassination, Martin Luther

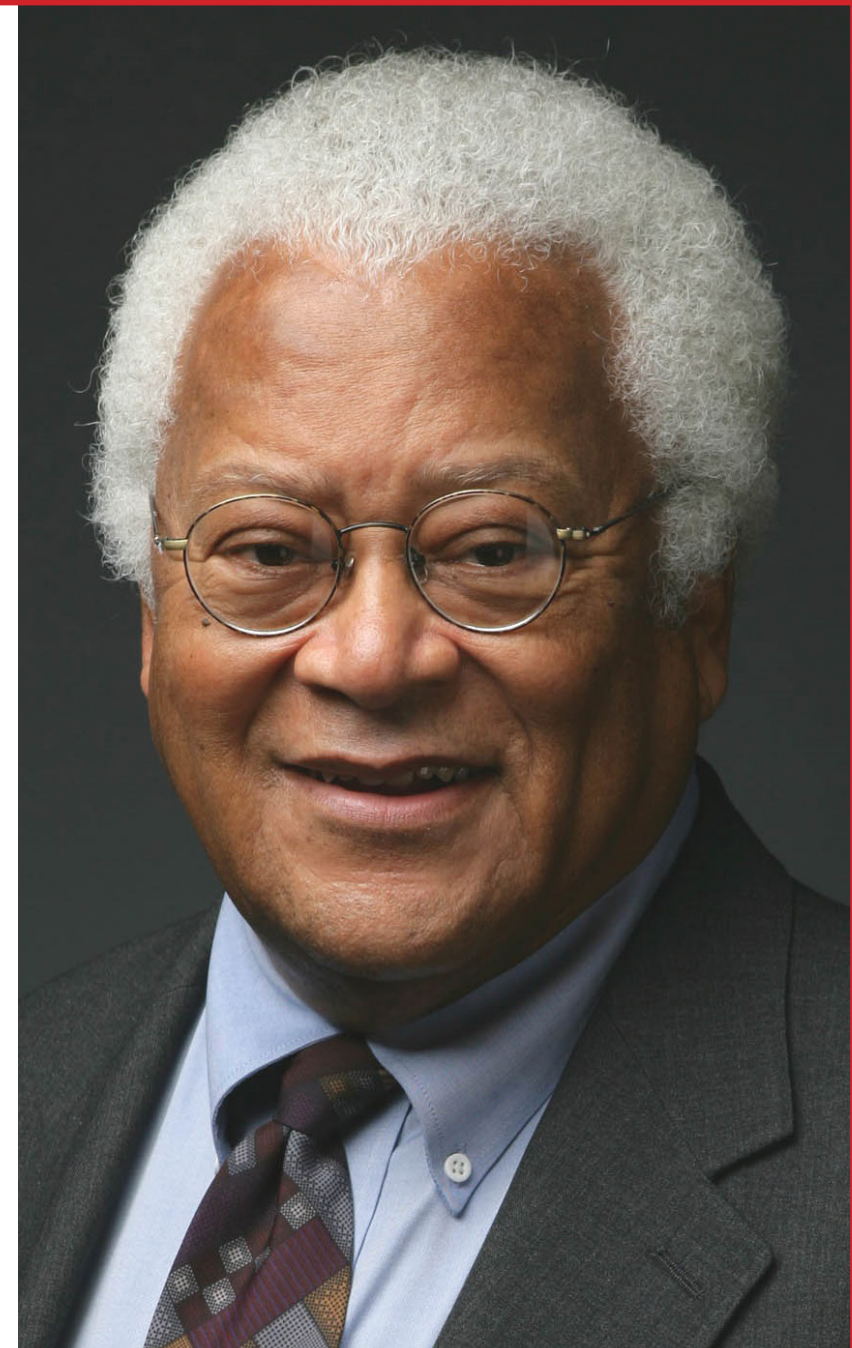
King called Lawson “the leading theorist and strategist of nonviolence in the world.”

Rev. Lawson was the president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference for 14 years.

In 1974, Lawson moved to Los Angeles to be the pastor of Holman Methodist Church. He hosted a weekly call-in show, “Lawson Live,” where he discussed social and human rights issues affecting minority communities. He spoke out against racism, and challenged the cold war and U.S. military involvement throughout the world. Even after his retirement, Lawson was protesting with the Janitors for Justice in Los Angeles, and with gay and lesbian Methodists in Cleveland.

According to *Time Magazine* in 2003, Rev. Lawson is one of the seven “icons of the civil rights movement” who “paved the way for Barack Obama’s historic Inauguration.” Rev. Lawson has been recognized by multiple colleges and universities around the country, having received honorary degrees from over 20 colleges and universities, including California State University – Northridge and Occidental. He has taught at many schools including Vanderbilt, Harvard Divinity School, Claremont, USC, and he spearheaded California State University Northridge’s Civil Discourse and Social Change initiative and he continues to teach at both CSUN and UCLA, through its Labor Center.

He and his wife Dorothy have three sons and three grandchildren.



Toni Trucks

Host

Toni Trucks comes from a strong and varied acting background with roots in the theatre. Toni spent her early career in New York before making her television debut as the female lead on the SHOWTIME series *Barbershop*.

Toni is currently starring on the CBS drama *SEAL Team* as “Ensign Lisa Davis”. Other television credits include *NCIS: New Orleans*, *Corporate*, *Made in Jersey*, *Franklin and Bash*, and *Grimm*

Her film credits include *Twilight: Breaking Dawn Part 2* and *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*. Trucks also starred in the short films *The Shift*, *Scars*, *Scare Package* and *Good Eggs*.

An alumnus of both Interlochen Arts Academy and the University of Michigan’s Musical Theatre Program, Trucks is a Michigan Native with a vigorous family history of social justice activism.

Toni is a member of the Board of Directors of Death Penalty Focus.



AWARD DESCRIPTIONS

Abolition Award

Part of a long and noble tradition of abolitionist movements in the United States, most notably including the successful movement to abolish slavery, is the growing movement to abolish the death penalty. Both these movements have met with entrenched and fierce opposition that has only just been modulated, not overcome, with the passing of generations. The Abolition Award is given each year to an individual or group who inspires us to understand that the struggle to abolish the death penalty, however resisted, is a just and humane pursuit for which we can all take pride and from which humankind will benefit.

The Rose Elizabeth Bird Commitment to Justice Award

The Rose Elizabeth Bird Commitment to Justice Award is meant to recognize those individuals who strive to uphold the ideals that Chief Justice Bird demonstrated throughout her career. As a public defender, she worked tirelessly on behalf of those without the means to defend themselves. As Chief Justice of the State Supreme Court, she championed a rational, independent judiciary, free from politics and willing to provide an ear to those otherwise unable to be heard. The recipient of this award shares with Chief Justice Bird an unwavering dedication to the fair and equal treatment of all citizens, regardless of their position in society.

Justice in the Arts Award

The Arts play a critical role in examining, clarifying and illuminating the complex issues of crime and punishment while reminding us of the fallibility of the human condition. DPF's Justice in the Arts Award goes to those special people who help enlarge society's understanding of human behavior, deepen its appreciation for human dignity, strengthen its dedication to human rights, and inspire our passion for justice through various modes of written, aural and visual communication.

The Human Rights Award

The Human Rights Award, established in 2006 by the Board of Directors of Death Penalty Focus in honor of Mike Farrell, honors courageous and inspirational leaders who, in the spirit of Mike's vision and activism, strive for freedom, justice and peace throughout the world. The Human Rights Award will be presented at DPF's annual Awards Dinner in those years when an exceptional individual or organization has been identified whose contributions in advancing respect for human dignity, social justice, abolition of the death penalty and fundamental human rights reflect Mike's extraordinary accomplishments and ideals.

Representative Karen Bass

Presenter

Congressmember Karen Bass was re-elected to her sixth term representing the 37th Congressional District in November 2020. Congressmember Bass serves on the House Committee on Foreign Affairs where she is the Chair of the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights and International Organizations. She also chairs the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime and Terrorism, where she is active in working to craft sound criminal justice reform policies. Upon arriving in Congress, Chairwoman Bass founded the bipartisan Congressional Caucus on Foster Youth.

Congressmember Bass served as the Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus in 2019 and 2020. During her tenure, the Congressional Black Caucus worked with the Congressional Hispanic, Asian Pacific Islander, and Native American Caucuses to demand a targeted response to the COVID-19 pandemic and initiate a national needs assessment for communities of color. She also introduced the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act - the most transformative piece of policing legislation to ever pass in a chamber of Congress.

Prior to her election to Congress, Chairwoman Bass served in the California State Assembly, where in 2008, she made history by becoming the first-ever African-American woman in U.S. history to serve as Speaker of any state legislature. Under her leadership, the State Assembly came together to address the financial emergency with legislation to help Californians affected by the economic crisis. For her action, she was one of four legislative leaders awarded the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award in 2010.

In the early 1990s, she convened a small group of community organizers, both African-American and Latino, and founded Community Coalition, an organization to transform the social and economic conditions in South Los Angeles that foster addiction, crime, violence and poverty by building a community institution that involves thousands in creating, influencing and changing public policy. She worked as a Physician Assistant and as a clinical instructor at the USC Keck School of Medicine Physician Assistant Program.

Congressmember Bass grew up in the Venice/Fairfax area of Los Angeles, which is the same area she represents today in Congress. She is a graduate of Cal State Dominguez Hills, the University of Southern California's School of Medicine Physician Assistant Program, and the USC Masters Program in Social Work.



Rabbi Sharon Brous

Human Rights Award

Rabbi Sharon Brous is the senior and founding rabbi of IKAR (www.ikar-la.org) which launched in 2004 with the goal of reinvigorating Jewish tradition and practice and inspiring people of faith to reclaim a moral and prophetic voice. IKAR, one of the fastest growing and most influential Jewish congregations in the country, is credited with sparking a rethinking of religious life in a time of unprecedented disaffection and declining affiliation. Brous's TED talk, "Reclaiming Religion," has been viewed by more than one million people and translated into 14 languages. In 2013, she blessed President Obama and Vice President Biden at the Inaugural National Prayer Service, and in 2017, she spoke at the Women's March in Washington, DC. Brous was named #1 on the Newsweek/The Daily Beast list of the most influential Rabbis in America, and has been recognized numerous times by The Forward and the Jerusalem Post as one of the fifty most influential Jews.

Brous, who graduated from Columbia University and was ordained by the Jewish Theological Seminary, is an Auburn Senior Fellow, sits on the faculty of the Shalom Hartman Institute-North America and REBOOT, and serves on the International Council of the New Israel Fund.



Aloe Blacc

Musical Performance

In the years since Aloe Blacc's last album, *Lift Your Spirit*, the global superstar spent time working on an even dearer project: his family. *All Love Everything*, his most recent album, is the singer-songwriter's first collection of material written as a father, a journey that's expanded Blacc's already heartfelt artistic palette. "Becoming a father made me want to share those experiences in music," he says, admitting it's a challenge to translate such a powerful thing into lyrics and melody. But the listeners who have followed Blacc over the course of his career know that his facility with language and sound is deep -- if anyone was up to the task, it's him.

Raised by Panamanian immigrants in Southern California, Blacc grew up around the sounds of salsa, merengue, and cumbia. He initially developed his own taste by throwing himself into hip-hop before trying out his soulful voice to other ends. Across three albums, his sound evolved and grew, finding a pocket that reflects the long and beautiful history of American soul with timeless, descriptive songwriting that speaks to the broad range of human experience, from platonic love to love for humanity, from politics to aspiration. Versatile and compassionate, his songwriting is classic in a way that makes categorization irrelevant; indeed, Blacc's lyrics have been paired with dance music and country -- always to stirring effect. Aloe Blacc isn't defined by genre.

"Rather than a genre, my music follows a theme I call A.I.M.: affirmation, inspiration, and motivation," he explains. Beloved hits like "I Need a Dollar," "The Man," and "Wake Me Up," with Avicii, may not fall under the same musical umbrella, but they're united by how they make the listener feel. That's Blacc's wheelhouse, the place where he excels. "After so many opportunities to talk about my music and not feel comfortable saying, 'I'm a pop artist' or 'I'm a folk artist,' I had this realization. My songwriting genre is thematic."

All Love Everything is a generous addition to the A.I.M. catalog. It fulfills Blacc's ambition to express the richness of familial love on songs like "Glory Days" and "Family," while also making room for anthems about perseverance and support like "My Way" and "Corner." Working with producers Jonas Jeberg, Jugglerz, Jon Levine, and Matt Prime, Blacc has crafted his most open-hearted album to date. Generous and warm, *All Love Everything* draws on soul, folk, and contemporary pop, reminding listeners that there's no pigeonholing the human experience.



Sister Helen Prejean

Presenter

Sister Helen Prejean is known around the world for her tireless work against the death penalty. She has been instrumental in sparking national dialogue on capital punishment and in shaping the Catholic Church's vigorous opposition to all executions.

Born on April 21, 1939, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, she joined the Sisters of St. Joseph in 1957. After studies in the USA and Canada, she spent the following years teaching high school, and serving as the Religious Education Director at St. Frances Cabrini Parish in New Orleans and the Formation Director for her religious community.

In 1982, she moved into the St. Thomas Housing Project in New Orleans in order to live and work with the poor. While there, Sister Helen began corresponding with Patrick Sonnier, who had been sentenced to death for the murder of two teenagers. Two years later, when Patrick Sonnier was put to death in the electric chair, Sister Helen was there to witness his execution. In the following months, she became spiritual advisor to another death row inmate, Robert Lee Willie, who was to meet the same fate as Sonnier.

After witnessing these executions, Sister Helen realized that this lethal ritual would remain unchallenged unless its secrecy was stripped away, and so she sat down and wrote a book, *Dead Man Walking: An Eyewitness Account of the Death Penalty in the United States*. *Dead Man Walking* hit the shelves when national support for the death penalty was over 80% and, in Sister Helen's native Louisiana, closer to 90%. The book ignited a national debate on capital punishment and it inspired an Academy Award winning movie, a play and an opera. Sister Helen also embarked on a speaking tour that continues to this day.

Sister Helen works with people of all faiths and those who follow no established faith, but her voice has had a special resonance with her fellow Catholics. Over the decades, Sister Helen has made personal approaches to two popes, John Paul II and Pope Francis, urging them to establish the Catholic Church's position as unequivocally opposed to capital punishment under any circumstances. After Sister Helen's urging, under John Paul II the catechism was revised to strengthen the church's opposition to executions, although it allowed for a very few exceptions. Not long after meeting with Sister Helen in August of 2018, Pope Francis announced new language of the Catholic Catechism which declares that the death penalty is inadmissible because it is an attack on the inviolability and dignity of the person, with no exceptions.

Today, although capital punishment is still on the books in 30 states in the USA, it has fallen into disuse in most of those states. Prosecutors and juries alike are turning away from death sentences, with the death penalty becoming increasingly a geographical freak. Sister Helen continues her work, dividing her time between educating the public, campaigning against the death penalty, counseling individual death row prisoners, and working with murder victims' family members. Sister Helen's second book, *The Death of Innocents: An Eyewitness Account of Wrongful Executions*, was published in 2004; and her third book, *River of Fire: My Spiritual Journey*, in 2019.



Photo by Scott Langley

Michael L. Radelet

Abolition Award

Michael L. Radelet is Professor, Department of Sociology, University of Colorado-Boulder. He completed his Ph.D. at Purdue in 1977 and post-doctoral training (in Psychiatry) at the University of Wisconsin Medical School, and then spent 22 years at the University of Florida before moving to Boulder in 2001. From 1996-2001 he served as Chair, Department of Sociology, University of Florida, and from 2004-2009 was the Chair of the Sociology Department in Boulder. He has written or edited eight books and some 100 scholarly papers focusing on such problems as erroneous convictions, racial bias, and ethical issues faced by health care personnel who are involved in capital cases and executions. His work on erroneous convictions (with Hugo Adam Bedau) is widely credited with introducing the “innocence argument” into contemporary death penalty debates, and the Bedau-Radelet list of erroneous death sentences (now numbering 174 cases) is housed on the DPIC web site. In 2002, at the request of Illinois Governor George Ryan, he and Northeastern University criminologist Glenn Pierce completed a study of racial bias in the death penalty in Illinois that Governor George Ryan used in his decision in 2003 to commute 167 death sentences. Pierce and Radelet also authored a study of disparities in death sentencing in California (Santa Clara Law Review, 2006), and they are beginning an effort to update that work. His most recent book, *THE HISTORY OF THE DEATH PENALTY IN COLORADO*, proved to be useful to several legislators in their successful effort to abolish the death penalty in Colorado in 2020.

Radelet has testified in 75 death penalty cases, before committees of both the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, and in legislatures in seven states. He has worked with scores of death row inmates and gone through “last visits” with 50, and also works closely with families of homicide victims in Colorado.



Photo by Phil Cherner

Gary Tyler

Presenter

Gary Tyler was sentenced to death and spent 41 years in prison for a crime he did not commit.

Gary grew up in Louisiana during a time of racial backlash. One day, as his school bus passed by demonstrators throwing rocks, a shot was fired, killing a 13-year-old named Timothy Weber. The police questioned all of the black students on the bus, and, though witnesses say Gary was beaten, he refused to confess. Based on virtually no evidence—a gun prosecutors claimed was the murder weapon mysteriously appeared and disappeared during the trial—he was arrested and charged as an adult with first-degree murder. He was then found guilty by an all-white jury and sentenced to death in 1975. He was the youngest inmate on death row.

In 1976, the U.S. Supreme Court found Louisiana's death penalty law unconstitutional and ordered the state to commute its death sentences to life without parole. Gary's sentence was commuted to a life without parole, and he was transferred to the general prison population, where he led several rehabilitation initiatives over the next four decades.

In 2012, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that it was unconstitutional to sentence minors to life without parole and applied its decision retroactively. Offered a plea-bargain by prosecutors in order to avoid another trial, Gary agreed to plead "guilty" to manslaughter in exchange for his freedom, and subsequently was sentenced to 21 years. Having already served 41 years, Gary was released from prison in April 2016, and has since moved to California where he now continues his work by advocating against the death penalty and policies that support mass incarceration.



Wrongly Convicted

Obie Anthony – [Perjury or False Accusation, Official Misconduct, Inadequate Legal Defense]

Obie Anthony was 19 years old when he was convicted of murder and attempted robbery in 1995. There was no physical evidence connecting Anthony to the murder. Prosecutors relied on the testimony of a convicted killer and pimp who ran a house of prostitution near the scene of the crime, and who claimed to have seen the shooter.

When he was exonerated and released in 2011 Obie didn't even have identification – no social security card or birth certificate. After seventeen years in prison, he didn't know what to write on his resume, how to land a job, or even how to use a cell phone. He had to learn on his own how to establish his life again.

That's when he dedicated himself to supporting other exonerees to meet their basic needs after release. In 2016, Obie founded Exonerated Nation, and is committed to transforming the experiences of exonerees after release, and building a community that can provide safety, stability, and healing to wrongfully convicted Californians.

Obie is a proud recipient of the 2017 Rockwood Leadership Institute Returning Citizens Fellowship and a regular speaker at Loyola Project for the Innocent, the Innocence Project, and other community dialogues about exoneration and incarceration.

Uriah Courtney – [Mistaken Witness ID]

Uriah's conviction was vacated on June 24, 2013. He was released on May 6, 2013.

On November 24, 2004, a man grabbed a young girl walked along Buena Vista Road and sexually assaulted her. The victim fought and escaped, then called the police. At home, the victim placed her clothing in a plastic bag for detectives. She thought that her attacker was probably the man she saw staring at her from the old, light-colored truck. The victim described him as a white male with facial hair, between 5 feet 8 inches and 5 feet 10 inches tall, 150 to 160 pounds, in his 20s.

Initially, police had no leads on the attacker. She tried to assist a sketch artist in rendering a composite sketch, but she did not know enough details to complete it. One other eyewitness

helped with the sketch. Later, someone saw a light-colored truck with a fake wooden camper on it and reported the truck to police. The truck belonged to Uriah Courtney's stepfather. Uriah, a resident of San Diego's North Park neighborhood, was a white male, 5 feet 10 inches tall, 160 pounds, in his 20s, and he had a goatee.

When shown a picture of the truck, the victim said she was 80% sure it was the truck she had seen at the time of the crime. She stated she was more confident in her identification of the truck rather than of Uriah. She rated her confidence level at 60%. The eyewitness also identified Uriah from the six-pack lineup. Despite her uncertainties, the victim testified at trial she was sure of her identification of both the truck and of Uriah. A jury rendered a guilty verdict and the court sentenced Uriah to life in prison for kidnapping and rape.

With the cooperation of the San Diego District Attorney's Office, the victim's clothing was re-submitted for DNA testing. The testing revealed a male profile, not Uriah's, on both the shirt and the skirt. That male profile was run through the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS), a national databank containing convicted offender profiles, and a match was obtained. The DNA matched a man who lived three miles from the crime scene and had a striking resemblance to Uriah.

Jane Dorotik – [Unreliable Evidence]

On Feb. 13, 2000, Jane Dorotik's husband, Robert Dorotik, went jogging in Valley Center and never returned home. Jane reported her husband missing, and after an all-night search and rescue effort, his body was discovered along his jogging route early the next morning. Jane was arrested 72 hours later and charged with his murder based on purported bloodstains observed in the bedroom of their home. Her murder conviction was overturned by San Diego Superior Court Judge Harry M. Elias. The conviction was thrown out after the San Diego District Attorney's Office conceded that there was new evidence, including forensic evidence, demonstrating that Ms. Dorotik should never have been convicted. The evidence that had been presented at her trial was completely unreliable and did not support the conviction.

Wrongly Convicted

Arturo Jimenez – [Ineffective Assistance of Counsel]

Arturo Jimenez was just 18 years old when he was convicted of murder. His conviction was based on single eyewitness identification by a young woman in the backseat of a car who saw the shooter for only a moment. Through the investigative work of pro bono attorney Ellen Eggers, this single witness revealed that her identification was the product of police pressure. In addition, the real shooter, who is now deceased, confessed to multiple people that he had committed the very murder that convicted and wrongfully incarcerated Jimenez for 25 years.

In 1994, a 14-year-old victim was shot during an altercation between a group of people at a gas station. Arturo Jimenez, who has always maintained that he was nearby when he heard the shots, drove his blue Blazer to see if anyone needed help, and when he got to the gas station, people jumped in his car through the open back window and told him to leave. He saw a young woman on the ground cradling the victim and called out to her to take him to the hospital as he drove away. That woman turned out to be the victim's friend who was standing right next to him when he was shot. She told police that the driver of the Blazer was not the shooter, that he had called out to her, and that he may never have gotten out of the Blazer.

Jimenez's parents, who never doubted their son's innocence, took out a second mortgage on their home to pay for his defense. Unfortunately, his trial attorney, who has since been disbarred, failed to present the jury with any of the exonerating information that was in the police reports and failed to do the investigation that has revealed further evidence of Jimenez's innocence.

Bruce Lisker – [Misleading Forensic Evidence, Perjury or False Accusation, Official Misconduct, Inadequate Legal Defense]

When Bruce Lisker was 17 years old, in 1983, he came home to find his mother murdered. Bruce was arrested for the crime based on incorrect testimony from the detective on the case. Bruce was then convicted of second-degree murder in 1985, in part because of false information provided by a jailhouse snitch in the L.A. County Jail. He was sentenced to 16 years to life in prison and served 26 and a half years for a crime he did not commit. Throughout his imprisonment, Bruce maintained his innocence, and through the efforts of private investigators,

attorneys, an LAPD officer who believed him, and an investigative series of articles in the LA Times, his conviction was vacated in August 2009 by a U.S. District Court judge, who found he had been convicted on false evidence and ineffective assistance of counsel. Prosecutors moved to dismiss the charges, and Bruce was a free man a month later.

Suzy Mellen – [Perjury or False Accusation, Official Misconduct, Inadequate Legal Defense]

In 1997, Susan Mellen, a mother of three, was falsely accused of committing the gruesome murder of Rick Daly.

At the time, Susan was living with her boyfriend, Tom, and her two youngest children, Jessica (9) and Donnie (7). She was a gentle and doting mother, who succumbed to pressure to use methamphetamine in her early 30's. She continued to use intermittently for the next 10 years.

In 1996, after her relationship with the kids' father ended, Susan dated Rick Daly briefly. Rick was good to her and her children; however, the relationship ended when Rick went to jail. Susan met Tom in January 1997 and they had been dating for several months when Susan needed to move out of her mother's house. Susan and her kids ultimately moved in with Tom in his Redondo Beach apartment.

In July, Tom received notice that he was being evicted from the apartment, so Susan and Tom found a place a house in Gardena. They picked up the keys on Sunday, July 20. Tom worked the next day, so Susan, her daughter Jessica and Tom's father, Jim packed boxes and moved many of the smaller items in Susan's car and Jim's truck on the evening of July 21. Susan was with Jessica all day and with Jim all evening.

Several miles away, three male Lawndale gang members were present in an abandoned house when one or more of them savagely attacked Rick Daly.

Bill Richards – [False or Misleading Forensic Evidence]

Bill Richards came home from work in San Bernardino County in August 1993 and discovered the body of his wife, Pamela, who had been murdered. One month later, Bill was arrested and charged with the crime. After three mistrials, two because of hung juries, one because of

Wrongly Convicted

problematic jury selection, Bill was found guilty in his fourth trial in 1997, and sentenced to 25 years to life in prison. Some of the most “damning” evidence presented at his trial was testimony from a dentist that a bite mark on Pamela’s hand matched Bill’s teeth, a forensic method that has since been proven extremely unreliable. After Bill’s conviction was initially upheld in 2001, the California Innocence Project investigated the case, and a state petition for a writ of habeas corpus was filed, noting that DNA tests the murder weapons found at the scene of the crime could not be a match for Bill. In addition, the bite mark evidence was not reliable because it was determined that the autopsy photograph was distorted, and the dentist who originally testified about the bite mark recanted his testimony, saying the bite mark could not have matched Bill’s teeth. A San Bernardino County Superior Court judge vacated Bill’s conviction in 2009, but the prosecution appealed, and in 2012, the California Supreme Court reversed the ruling on the grounds that the dentist’s testimony didn’t meet the state’s legal definition of “false evidence,” thereby precluding Bill from mounting a post-conviction challenge. The California legislature then enacted the “Bill Richards Bill,” which amended the criminal code to include the definition of “false evidence” as the “opinions of experts that have either been repudiated by the expert who originally provided the opinion at a hearing or trial or that have been undermined by later scientific research or technological advances.” A new writ of habeas corpus was filed, and in May 2016, the California Supreme Court vacated Bill’s conviction. He was released from prison in June 2016, and a week later, the San Bernardino County District Attorney’s Office finally dismissed the charges.

Michael Tirpak – [Unreliable/false evidence]

Michael Tirpak spent 25 years in prison on a first-degree murder conviction for a crime he did not commit.

After overruling the Los Angeles County District Attorney’s challenge to the constitutionality of California Senate Bill 1437, Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Curtis Rappe vacated Tirpak’s murder conviction and ordered his immediate release from prison. Tirpak is the first person in Los Angeles County to receive the retroactive relief provided for in Senate Bill 1437.

Tirpak was convicted of first-degree murder in 1996 for his alleged role as a “getaway driver” in an attempted robbery that tragically ended with the death of David Falconer. “Since the time of his arrest, Michael has maintained that he had nothing to do with the crime. He didn’t plan it,

he didn’t have knowledge it was going to take place, and he didn’t know the guys he was with that night were armed,” said Loyola Law School’s Project for the Innocent Staff Attorney Seth Hancock . “In fact, evidence presented at trial showed that Mr. Tirpak was using a payphone down the street at the time the attempted robbery took place.”

Greg Wilhoit – [False or Misleading Forensic Evidence, Inadequate Legal Defense]

On June 1, 1985, Kathryn Wilhoit’s throat was slashed in the Tulsa, Oklahoma apartment she shared with her two infant daughters. Ms. Wilhoit had recently separated from her husband, Gregory Wilhoit, who became the leading suspect. Greg was arrested and charged with capital murder on January 16, 1986.

The trial was held in May 1987. The prosecution argued that Greg had visited his estranged wife on the night of the murder, and killed her in the course of an argument. No physical evidence was found at the crime scene, and attorneys based their case on a bitemark on the victim. Two dentists with no forensic experience testified that the mark could be conclusively linked to Wilhoit, and that a rare form of bacteria found on the wound was consistent with bacteria from Greg’s mouth.

Greg’s parents had hired a forensic expert who disagreed that the bitemark could be used to connect Greg to the crime, but the defense attorney did not interview this expert, or conduct any other investigation on the matter. On May 15, 1987, Greg was convicted, and five days later he was sentenced to death.

In a 1988 petition to the Oklahoma Court of Criminal Appeals, a new team of defense attorneys presented evidence from 11 forensic odontologists testifying that the bitemark did not match Greg Wilhoit, and that the bacteria found on the wound were common, not rare. The defense also presented evidence that Greg’s trial lawyer had suffered a serious brain injury a year before the trial, and that he had been abusing alcohol and prescription drugs before and during the trial. On July 3, 1990, the Oklahoma Court of Criminal Appeals ordered a hearing to consider evidence that Greg had received ineffective assistance from his attorney. On April 16, 1991, the Court reversed the conviction and remanded it for retrial.

Clemency

Director/Writer, Producers and Cast *Justice in the Arts Award*

The morning after Troy Davis was executed in a Georgia State prison in 2011, the sounds of the hundreds of thousands who protested against his execution kept ringing in my ears, and I couldn't help but wonder: if so many of us struggled with what had happened to Mr. Davis, what about the people who actually had to carry out his execution? What if some of them were also grappling with having to kill this man? Thus, the seed for *Clemency* was planted.

I spent four years researching for *Clemency*. I spoke with six different wardens, interviewed corrections officers, death row lawyers, Lieutenants and a Director of Corrections about their experiences working in prisons and in death row facilities. I spoke with men currently on death row and one man who was exonerated from death row, after being incarcerated for 28 years for a crime he did not commit.

Wardens, former death row lawyers and several formerly incarcerated individuals read my script and gave me detailed feedback. I also volunteered for nonprofit legal organizations on several clemency cases for women serving life sentences. My work on these cases included shooting the video testimonies of co-defendants to be used during clemency hearings; shooting and editing individual video testimonies for clemency applications to be sent to the Ohio governor; creating a PSA campaign. This really informed my grounding *Clemency* in the ecosystem of humanities tied to incarceration.

Clemency observes a world that few audiences have gotten a realistic look into. Most American prison films include melodramatic depictions of prison life (i.e. over the top fights, dehumanizing "criminals"), but *Clemency* is rooted in an unfiltered realism that will, hopefully, force audiences to connect to the humanities that exist between prison walls.

– Chinonye Chukwu

Director, Writer: Chinonye Chukwu

Producers: Bronwyn Cornelius, Julian Cautherley

**Cast: Alfre Woodard, Aldis Hodge, Richard Schiff, Wendell Pierce,
Richard Gunn, Danielle Brooks, Michael O'Neill**



George Gascón

Special Guest

On Dec. 7, 2020, George Gascón was sworn in as the 43rd District Attorney of Los Angeles County, delivering his visionary approach to criminal justice reform to the nation's largest local prosecutorial office.

Gascón, who rose through the ranks of the Los Angeles Police Department from patrol officer to Assistant Chief of Police under Bill Bratton, served as Chief of Police in Mesa, Ariz., before being named Chief of Police in San Francisco by then-Mayor Gavin Newsom.

In 2011, Newsom tapped Gascón to fill the District Attorney vacancy created by Kamala Harris' election to the U.S. Senate. The Cuban-born attorney became that city's first Latino police chief and the nation's first police chief to become District Attorney.

During his two terms in office, Gascón decreased San Francisco's jail population by nearly 30% and reduced violent crime to historic lows. He was the nation's first District Attorney to call for an end to cash bail and first to launch an automatic record-clearing program for marijuana convictions following legalization.

Gascón created California's first independent investigation bureau to enhance transparency and limit the conflict of interest that occurs when police agencies investigate themselves. He was the state's only District Attorney to support a law creating stricter standards for police use of force.

Gascón holds a Bachelor of Arts in History from California State University, Long Beach, and a Juris Doctor Degree from Western State University, College of Law.

He is married to Fabiola Kramsky, a three-time Emmy Award-winning journalist.



Mike Farrell

Presenter

Best known as an actor, for his eight years on M*A*S*H and five seasons on “Providence,” Mike Farrell is also a writer, director and producer who made a number of TV films as well as the features “Dominick and Eugene” and “Patch Adams.” He continues to act in television, motion pictures and on stage, where he periodically performs “Dr. Keeling’s Curve,” a one-man show.

For three years he served as first vice president of the Screen Actors Guild, and as a member of the Guild’s national board of directors.

Beyond the world of entertainment, Farrell serves as spokesperson for Concern America, a refugee relief and development organization, and has, for the last 40 years, served as part of international human rights and peace delegations to El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras, the then U.S.S.R., Paraguay, Chile, Israel, the Occupied Territories, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Czechoslovakia, Somalia, Kenya, Croatia, Bosnia, Cuba, Rwanda, Zaire, Tanzania, Mexico, Costa Rica and Samoa.

During the Salvadoran civil war, after one of many trips to the region, he testified against U.S. policy before the Foreign Affairs Committee of the U. S. House of Representatives.

Involvement in Central America led to his association with what was then Americas Watch, now Human Rights Watch. He subsequently helped establish the California Committee of Human Rights Watch in the late ‘80s and served as its co-chair for 10 years.

In the 90s, Farrell served for three years as a member of the State of California’s Commission on Judicial Performance.

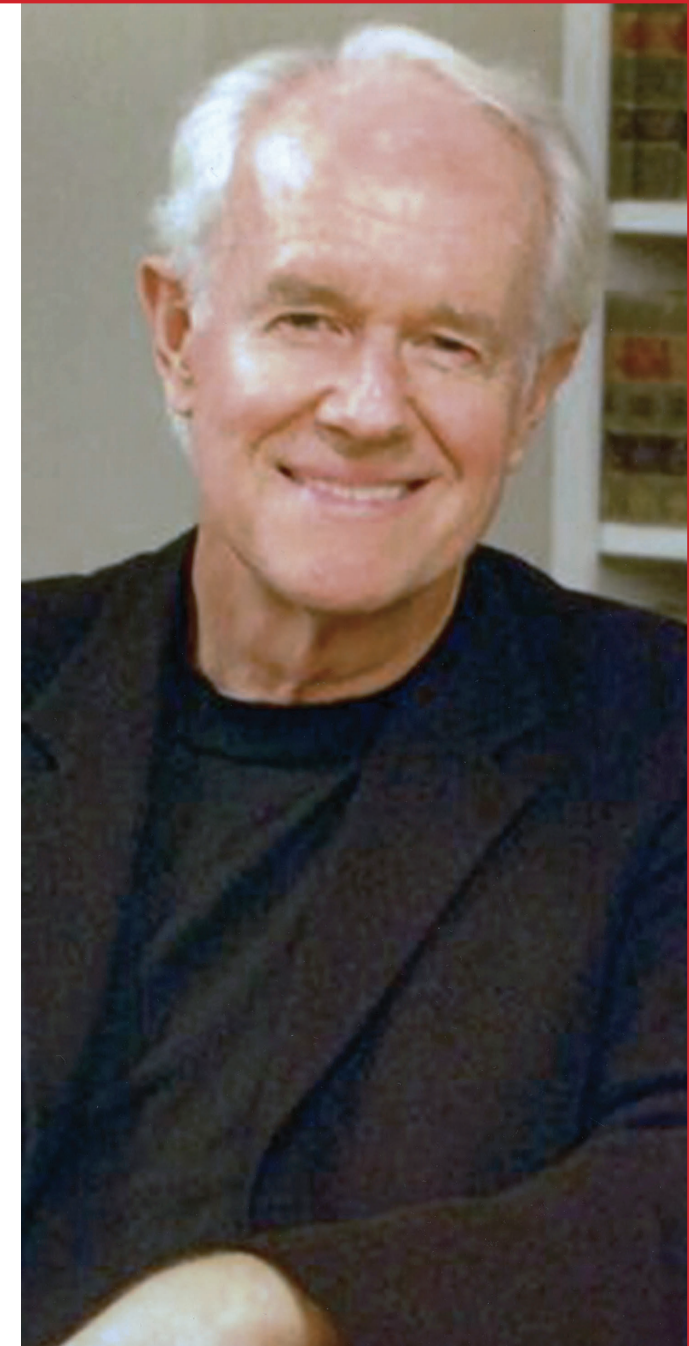
Opposing the war in Iraq led to in his co-founding Artists United to Win Without War and representing the anti-war position across the U.S. and in the media.

A life-long opponent of the death penalty, Farrell has “seen too many death rows.” President of the board of Death Penalty Focus since 1994, he speaks, debates, writes extensively and campaigns across the country in opposition to state killing.

In 2004, he represented Death Penalty Focus before the Inter-American Court on Human Rights in support of the Mexican Government’s claim against the U. S. for violating the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations.

Believing that state killing brutalizes the society that practices it, and confident that state, national and worldwide abolition is inevitable, he has been deeply involved in efforts to end the use of capital punishment for decades, most recently meeting with government leaders in Samoa on behalf of the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty, encouraging them to ratify the 2nd Optional Protocol to the ICCPR.

Farrell is the author of two books: “Just Call Me Mike: A Journey to Actor and Activist,” and “Of Mule and Man.”



Bryan Stevenson

The Rose Elizabeth Bird

Commitment to Justice Award

Bryan Stevenson is the founder and Executive Director of the Equal Justice Initiative, a human rights organization in Montgomery, Alabama. Under his leadership, EJI has won major legal challenges eliminating excessive and unfair sentencing, exonerating innocent death row prisoners, confronting abuse of the incarcerated and the mentally ill, and aiding children prosecuted as adults.

Mr. Stevenson has argued and won multiple cases at the United States Supreme Court, including a 2019 ruling protecting condemned prisoners who suffer from dementia and a landmark 2012 ruling that banned mandatory life-imprisonment-without-parole sentences for all children 17 or younger. Mr. Stevenson and his staff have won reversals, relief, or release from prison for over 135 wrongly condemned prisoners on death row and won relief for hundreds of others wrongly convicted or unfairly sentenced.

Mr. Stevenson has initiated major new anti-poverty and anti-discrimination efforts that challenge inequality in America. He led the creation of two highly acclaimed cultural sites which opened in 2018: the Legacy Museum and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice. These new national landmark institutions chronicle the legacy of slavery, lynching, and racial segregation, and the connection to mass incarceration and contemporary issues of racial bias. Mr. Stevenson is also a Professor of Law at the New York University School of Law.

Bryan has received over 40 honorary doctoral degrees, including degrees from Harvard, Yale, Princeton, the University of Pennsylvania, and Oxford University. He is the author of the critically acclaimed *New York Times* bestseller, *Just Mercy*, which was named by *Time Magazine* as one of the 10 Best Books of Nonfiction for 2014 and has been awarded several honors, including the American Library Association's Carnegie Medal for best nonfiction book of 2015 and a 2015 NAACP Image Award. *Just Mercy* was recently adapted as a major motion picture.

He is a graduate of the Harvard Law School and the Harvard School of Government.



Celisse Henderson

Musical Performance

Celisse Henderson is a singer, songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, performer and spoken word artist.

Her deep and varied career has seen her in concert at venues ranging from the Beacon Theater supporting Mariah Carey, Town Hall supporting Graham Nash, Madison Square Garden supporting Kesha at the *60th Annual Grammy Awards*, The Greek Theater in Trey Anastasio's *Ghosts of the Forest*, and the Apollo Theater with Melissa Etheridge; as well starring in the recent revival of *Godspell* at Circle in the Square Theater, singing in Bridget Everett's *Rock Bottom* at Joe's Pub at The Public; and appearing on television in *30 Rock*, *The Electric Company*, *Rescue Me*, *The Big C*, *the LATE SHOW with Stephen Colbert* as a special guest of Jon Batiste and Stay Human, and most recently playing lead guitar with LIZZO on *SNL*.

But it's her prodigious talents as a singer-songwriter and musician that have defined Celisse the most as an artist. Her original music, powered by her soulful voice, is hard-rocking and blues-tinged with infectious hooks that stay with you.

@CelisseMusic





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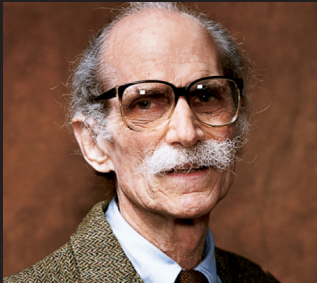
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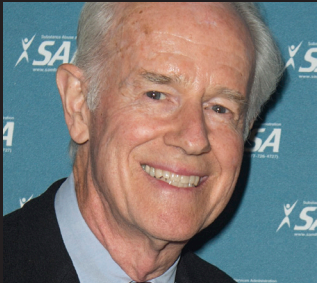
Previous Honorees



AARON SORKIN



TONY AMSTERDAM



MIKE FARRELL



SEN. BERNIE SANDERS



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RABBI LEONARD BEERMAN



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BARRY SCHECK



SEAN PENN



SISTER HELEN PREJEAN



SEN. EDWARD KENNEDY



ALEC BALDWIN



RENNY CUSHING



Previous Honorees

1996 Awards Dinner:

1996 Abolition Award: **Rubin “Hurricane” Carter**
1996 Abolition Award: **Kiefer Sutherland**
The Mario Cuomo Act of Courage Award: **Gov. Mario Cuomo (Inaugural)**

1997 Awards Dinner:

The Aline and Norman Felton Humanitarian Award: **Chief Justice Rose Elizabeth Bird**
1997 Abolition Award: **Sean Penn**
The Mario Cuomo Act of Courage Award: **Rev. Jesse Jackson Sr.**

1998 Awards Dinner:

1998 Abolition Award: **Senator John Burton**
The Mario Cuomo Act of Courage Award: **Larry Fox (on behalf of the American Bar Association)**
The Rose Elizabeth Bird Commitment to Justice Award: **Steven Allen**
The Aline and Norman Felton Humanitarian Award: **Bud Welch**

1999 Awards Dinner:

The Mario Cuomo Act of Courage Award: **David Protes and Lawrence Marshall**
The Aline and Norman Felton Humanitarian Award: **Linda and Peter Biehl**
The Rose Elizabeth Bird Commitment to Justice Award: **Norman Jewison**

2000 Awards Dinner:

2000 Abolition Award: **Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee**
The Aline and Norman Felton Humanitarian Award: **Rabbi Leonard Beerman**
The Mario Cuomo Act of Courage Award: **Senator Russ Feingold**
The Rose Elizabeth Bird Commitment to Justice Award: **David E. Kelley and Robert Breech and the Cast of The Practice**

2001 Awards Dinner:

The Aline and Norman Felton Humanitarian Award: **Murder Victims’ Families for Reconciliation**
2001 Abolition Award: **Cardinal Roger M. Mahony**
The Mario Cuomo Act of Courage Award: **Gov. George H. Ryan**
The Rose Elizabeth Bird Commitment to Justice Award: **Aaron Sorkin, Thomas Schlamme and the Cast of The West Wing**

2002 Awards Dinner:

The Norman Felton and Denise Aubuchon Humanitarian Award: **Rev. James Lawson**
Justice and Media Award: **Studs Terkel**
The Mario Cuomo Act of Courage Award: **Congresswomen Barbara Lee**
The Rose Elizabeth Bird Commitment to Justice Award: **Stanley Sheinbaum**
2002 Abolition Award: **Danny Glover**

2003 Awards Dinner:

The Norman Felton and Denise Aubuchon Humanitarian Award: **Patch Adams**
Justice in Media and Arts Award: **Jessica Blank and Erik Jensen**
2003 Abolition Award: **Ramona Ripston**
The Mario Cuomo Acts of Courage Award: **President of Mexico, Vicente Fox Quesada**
The Rose Elizabeth Bird Commitment to Justice Award: **Gov. George H. Ryan**

2004 Awards Dinner:

The Norman Felton and Denise Aubuchon Humanitarian Award: **Aqeela Sherrills**
Justice in Media and Arts Award: **Robert Wise**
2004 Abolition Award: **Bishop Gabino Zavala**
The Mario Cuomo Acts of Courage Award: **Harry Belafonte**
The Rose Elizabeth Bird Commitment to Justice Award: **First Lady Rosalynn Carter**

2005 Awards Dinner:

The Norman Felton and Denise Aubuchon Humanitarian Award: **Bishop Henry Williamson**
Justice in Media and Arts Award: **Bradley Whitford and Jane Kaczmarek**
2005 Abolition Award: **Senator Edward Kennedy**
The Mario Cuomo Acts of Courage Award: **Sister Helen Prejean**
The Rose Elizabeth Bird Commitment to Justice Award: **Andy and Deborah Rappaport**

2006 Awards Dinner:

2006 Abolition Award: **Barry Scheck**
Justice in Media and the Arts Award: **Carl Reiner**
The Norman Felton and Denise Aubuchon Humanitarian Award: **Rev. George Regas**
The Mario Cuomo Acts of Courage Award: **Dorothy Ehrlich**
The Rose Elizabeth Bird Commitment to Justice Award: **Vicki Riskin and David W. Rintels**
Lifetime Achievement Award: **Assemblyman Mervyn M. Dymally**
Special Award to Activist Exonerees: **Gloria Killian, Tom Goldstein and Greg Wilhoit**
The Mike Farrell Human Rights Award: **Mike Farrell (Inaugural)**

Previous Honorees

2007 Awards Dinner:

The Norman Felton and Denise Aubuchon Humanitarian Award: **Robert Greenwald**
The Mike Farrell Human Rights Award: **Senator George McGovern**
The Rose Elizabeth Bird Commitment to Justice Award: **Max Palevsky and Jodie Evans**
Justice in the Arts: **David E. Kelley**
The Mario Cuomo Acts of Courage: **Kamala D. Harris**
2007 Abolition Award: **Bishop Thomas J. Gumbleton**

2008 Awards Dinner:

The Mike Farrell Human Rights Award: **Sid Sheinberg**
The Mario Cuomo Acts of Courage: **Julian Bond**
The Rose Elizabeth Bird Commitment to Justice Award: **Sarah Timberman and Ed Redlich**
Justice in the Arts: **John Grisham**
Special Recognition for Outstanding Achievement on behalf of Social Justice: **Melody Ermachild, Henry Weinstein, and Dr. Arthur Zitrin**
The Norman Felton and Denise Aubuchon Humanitarian Award: **Azim Khamisa**
2008 Abolition Award: **New Jersey Governor Jon Corzine and New Jerseyans for Alternatives to the Death Penalty**

2009 Awards Dinner:

The Mike Farrell Human Rights Award: **New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson**
The Mario Cuomo Acts of Courage Award: **Jeanne Woodford**
The Rose Elizabeth Bird Commitment to Justice Award: **John Van de Kamp**
Justice in the Arts Award: **Nancy Miller**
The Norman Felton and Denise Aubuchon Humanitarian Award: **Bryan Stevenson**
2009 Abolition Award: **Nick McKeown**

2010 Awards Dinner:

Justice in the Arts Award: **Alec Baldwin**
The Mario Cuomo Acts of Courage Award: **Paul Haggis**
The Rose Elizabeth Bird Commitment to Justice Award: **Sherry & Leo Frumkin**
The Norman Felton and Denise Aubuchon Humanitarian Award: **Sister Suzanne Jabro, CSJ**
2010 Abolition Award: **Richard Dieter**

2011 Awards Dinner:

Justice in the Arts Award: **Hilary Swank**
The Mario Cuomo Acts of Courage Award: **Lance Lindsey**
The Rose Elizabeth Bird Commitment to Justice Award: **Thomas Schlamme**
The Norman Felton and Denise Aubuchon Humanitarian Award: **The Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange**
Abolition Award: **Death Penalty Clinic at University of California, Berkeley, School of Law (Elisabeth Semel & Ty Alper)**
Human Rights Award: **Stephen Bright**
Courageous Leadership Award: **The Honorable Pat Quinn, Governor of Illinois**

2012 Awards Dinner:

Justice in the Arts Award: **MC Hammer**
The Rose Elizabeth Bird Commitment to Justice Award: **Denise Foderaro Quattrone**
The Norman Felton and Denise Abuchon Humanitarian Award: **Father Gregory Boyle**
The 2012 Abolition Award: **The West Memphis 3: Jason Baldwin, Damien Echols, Jessie Misskelley**
The 2012 Abolition Award: **The West Memphis 3 Defense Team: Patrick Benca, Stephen Braga, Michael Burt, Blake Hendrix, Donald Horgan, John Phillipsborn, Dennis Riordan, Jeff Rosenzweig, Deborah Sallings, Lonnie Soury and Lorri Davis, leader of the movement to free the West Memphis 3**

2013 Awards Dinner:

Human Rights Award: **Norman Felton (posthumously)**
The Norman Felton and Denise Abuchon Humanitarian Award: **Javier Stauring**
The 2013 Abolition Award: **Proposition 34 Leaders, represented by: Natasha Minsker, Obie Anthony, Arnold & Porter, LLP/ Steven L. Mayer, Ron Briggs, California Catholic Conference, Franky Carrillo, Gil Garcetti, Miriam Gerace, Donald Heller, Paula Mitchell, SEIU Local 721, Steve Smith, Bethany Webb**
Justice in the Arts Award: **James Cromwell**

2014 Awards Dinner:

Mario Cuomo Acts of Courage Award: **The Honorable Martin O'Malley, Governor of Maryland**
Human Rights Award: **Juan E. Mendez, United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture**
Lifetime Achievement Award: **Michael Millman, Executive Director of the California Appellate Project**
Justice in the Arts Award: **Peter Sarsgaard and Veena Sud, on behalf of The Cast and Crew of "The Killing"**

Previous Honorees

2015 Awards Dinner:

Justice in the Media Award: **Alex Gibney, Bred Hebert, Laura Michalchyshyn on behalf of Death Row Stories**
2015 Abolition Award: **Dale Baich, Assistant Federal Public Defender**
Lifetime Achievement Award: **Rabbi Leonard Beerman**
The Rose Elizabeth Bird Commitment to Justice Award: **Death row exonerees Kwame Ajamu, Wiley Bridgeman,**
and Ricky Jackson along with their attorneys Terry Gilbert, Mark Godsey, Brian Howe and David Mills.

2016 Awards Dinner:

2016 Abolition Award: **Sir Richard Branson**
Norman Felton and Denise Abuchon Humanitarian Award: **Dolores Huerta**
Justice in the Arts and Media: **Jackson Browne**

2017 Awards Dinner

2017 Abolition Award: **Senator Bernie Sanders / Presented by: Jane Sanders**
Mario Cuomo Acts of Courage of Award: **Judy Clarke and Speedy Rice / Presented by: Sr. Helen Prejean**
Justice in the Arts Award: **Joan Baez / Presented by: Mike Farrell**

2018 Awards

Lifetime Achievement Award: **Rev. James Lawson**

2019 Awards

The Mario Cuomo Acts of Courage Award: **Mike Farrell / Presented by Peggy Farrell**
Abolition Award: **Hon. Renny Cushing / Presented by Beth Webb**
Lifetime Achievement Award: **Anthony Amsterdam / Presented by: Seth Waxman and Ed Redlich**
The Rose Elizabeth Bird Commitment to Justice Award: **The late Justice Stevens / Accepted by Larry Marshall**

2020 – Due to pandemic, no Dinner was held.

DEFENDER

These are the faces of the 556 inmates executed by the state of Texas since 1976. The images are composed with algorithms of their parting words. The artist is Amy Elkins. Her work speaks volumes about the inhumane and racist nature of the death penalty.

Thank you to Bryan Stevenson, Rabbi Sharon Brous, Michael Radelet and the creative team behind “Clemency” and to Mike Farrell and all of Death Penalty Focus for doing everything in your power to end this madness in Texas, in California and everywhere.

Sherry and Leo Frumkin



Amy Elkins, installation view of Parting Words

DEFENDER



Impatiently waiting for an
end to the death penalty!

**Congratulations to
all honorees!**

Robert M. Myers
and Linda Sullivan

DEFENDER

“It reminds me of another old story. A man is walking along a country road, and he sees a farmer pulled over by a drainage ditch with a wagon. And he’s hitched up to that wagon a tired old horse that’s obviously blind. The farmer has a couple of hired hands with him and in order to clear out the ditch, they’re piling all kinds of things into this wagon, rocks, roots, garbage, tree stumps, boulders...it’s a huge heavy load. Finally, the farmer climbs up on the wagon, snaps the reins once at this pathetic old horse and says, ‘Hey, gidde up, Clyde!’ Horse doesn’t budge, doesn’t move at all. The farmer doesn’t seem to mind. He snaps the whip, pulls the reins again, says, ‘Hey, gidde up, Elba!’ Horse doesn’t move. Third time, ‘Gidde up Sunshine!’ That horse didn’t even look up. The guy’s watching the farmer, watching the blind horse, can’t figure it out. Then he hears the farmer say, ‘Gidde up, Dust!’ And suddenly, the decrepit old horse leans into his traces, digs his hooves into the dirt, puffs and strains and by some miracle he gets that wagon moving. Moving indeed, he moves it about a half mile, gets to the place where the farmer wants him to stop, and he stops. The guy watches all of this, follows the wagon and the farmer, and finally says to the farmer, ‘I can’t believe what I just saw. That was some load. That horse was blind wasn’t he? Why did you call him all those names? Don’t you know the damn horse’s name?’ The farmer looks at him and says, ‘Yeah, you’re right, he’s blind. And yeah I know his name. But do you think that horse would have dragged and pulled that big load if he knew he was alone?’ Tonight you have reassured me that even if I have to wear my glasses a little more often these days, I’m not yet a blind horse. And you have reassured me and all of us that none of us is working alone. Thank God.”

- Mario Cuomo, 1996 DPF Dinner Honoree

To Everyone at Death Penalty Focus - It has been such an honor to work alongside you in this struggle.

**We love you all.
Ed and Sarah**

ASSOCIATE

We Dedicate This Page to....
**All Who Are Dedicated to Elevating
Our Country's Morality by Ending State Killing.**



With Special Recognition to the
DPF Board & Staff
For Their Tireless Efforts in Advancing This Cause,
We Hope and Say: One day soon we will prevail.



Sue & Dick Wollack


FRIEND

Amnesty International USA Group 283 in Sacramento California is a proud partner of Death Penalty Focus to defend human rights and advocate for the abolition of the death penalty. Amnesty International works to stop all forms of the death penalty in the U.S. and worldwide.

We join **DPF** in honoring the work of **Bryan Stevenson, Rabbi Sharon Brous, Michael Radelet** and the creators of “**Clemency**”.

Amnesty International Sacramento Group

Connect with our local work at www.amnestysacramento.org

Follow us on Twitter:  **@AmnestySac**

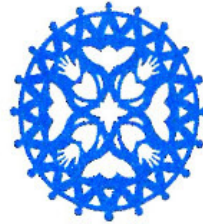
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FRIEND

THE DUDLEY T. DOUGHERTY FOUNDATION



DUDLEY T. DOUGHERTY FOUNDATION

is proud to support

Death Penalty Focus

and congratulates the

2021 Honorees

www.dudleytdoughertyfoundation.org

FRIEND

“The true measure of our character is how we treat the poor, the disfavored, the accused, the incarcerated, and the condemned.”

– **Bryan Stevenson**

Congratulations to ***Bryan Stevenson*** and the other honorees.
Heartfelt thanks and appreciation to Death Penalty Focus
for their ongoing efforts to end the death penalty.

– **Robert Greenwald & Heidi Frey**

St. Camillus Center for Spiritual Care
with Chaplains at LAC USC Medical Center,
Catholics Against the Death Penalty,
Pax Christi LA and Fr Chris Ponnet

celebrate the justice work of
DEATH PENALTY FOCUS

honoring all the honorees including
Bryan Stevenson, Rabbi Sharon Brous,
Michael Radelet and all
involved with **CLEMENCY**

We wish to lift up the holy memory of
REV. GEORGE REGAS
prophet for nonviolence and abolition
against the death penalty.



FRIEND



The Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary
join with **Death Penalty Focus** in recognizing

The 29th Annual Awards Event Honorees

Bryan Stevenson

Rabbi Sharon Brous

Michael Radelet

Director, Producers, and Cast
of CLEMENCY

We thank you for being a voice
of justice and mercy
in working to abolish the death penalty.

FRIEND

Thank you Death Penalty Focus
Congratulations to the 2021 Honorees

Greg Walker

We could not have imagined the challenges a small non-profit like ours would face in creating a virtual event like this. We are grateful to our incredible honorees for the work they have done for decades and decades. We pay tribute to those everywhere who have been wrongfully convicted.

We thank everyone who lent their voices to speak out for abolition and who joined with us to make this event possible. We could not have done it without the talent, passion and tireless work of our all-volunteer committee of abolition advocates, our hardworking administrator Yoko Otani-Spurlin, our innovative event planner Michael Teta, our creative director and editor Tim Hyten, and the producer of this evening, Clifton Trucks, who told us what was needed, guided us through the process and donated countless hours and his prodigious talent to putting together what we will share with you tonight.

We are also deeply indebted to the compassionate and dedicated members of our Board of Directors and to all our generous donors and loyal supporters.

Sherry Frumkin and Stephen Rohde
Co-Chairs, 2021 Annual Awards Event Committee

Congratulations to the 2021 DPF Honorees

Bryan Stevenson

Rabbi Sharon Brous

Michael Radelet

Director, Producers, and Cast of *Clemency*

Kudos to Sherry Frumkin, Steve Rohde and the
Event Committee for putting on such a
great event in these trying times.

Farrokh & Garland Allen

Since we first met in 2004, you have inspired us with your passion, moral courage, intellect and unique ability to leverage the wisdom of our tradition to respond to the vexing social challenges of our time.

We also just love you, Dave and your family and are grateful for the innumerable ways you have enriched our lives. And we laugh with you even where there is precious little to laugh about.

With love, admiration, and awe,
Melissa, Adam, Maya and Emma



Thank you Death Penalty Focus
for all of the work you do.
Proud to stand side by side with
you in the fight for abolition.

Reiss Clauson-Wolf & Dana Levy

We are proud to support the important work of
Death Penalty Focus

Congratulations to all of tonight's honorees!

Betsy Beers & Bruce Cormicle

“Mercy is just when it is rooted in hopefulness and freely given. Mercy is most empowering, liberating, and transformative when it is directed at the undeserving. The people who haven’t earned it, who haven’t even sought it, are the most meaningful recipients of our compassion.”

- Bryan Stevenson, *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption*

Congratulations to all the honorees

Bryan Stevenson

Rabbi Sharon Brous

Michael Radelet

Director, Producers, and Cast of *Clemency*

Nancy Cotton and John Given

“... the most deeply human and courageous men and women are those who in life and death dare to submit themselves to the ordeal of walking through the fire of selfhood, of loneliness and tragedy. In their example we can learn... that this life, this world, for all of its cynicism and stupidity and anguish, is also a place where change is possible, where one can take on a host of evils, even death itself. There is no guarantee of victory, but there is a choice: one either collaborates with the enemy... with whatever is miserable or inhumane, or one joins the resistance. To be most deeply human is to be among the resisters, to resist whatever demeans life. And that will lead us to become aware of what one human being owes to another, can mean to another, and to have compassion for all people - all of us - in our terrible fragility.”

- Rabbi Leonard Beerman

With love from Shelley Fabares and Mike Farrell

“That which is inhuman cannot be divine.”

- Frederick Douglass

The death penalty is inhuman and it is racist. We salute Death Penalty Focus for its tireless work over so many years to end this scourge on our society.


Paula & Barry Litt

WE PROUDLY SALUTE



AND ALL OF TONIGHT'S HONOREES.





"Do not stand idly
by the blood of
your neighbor..."

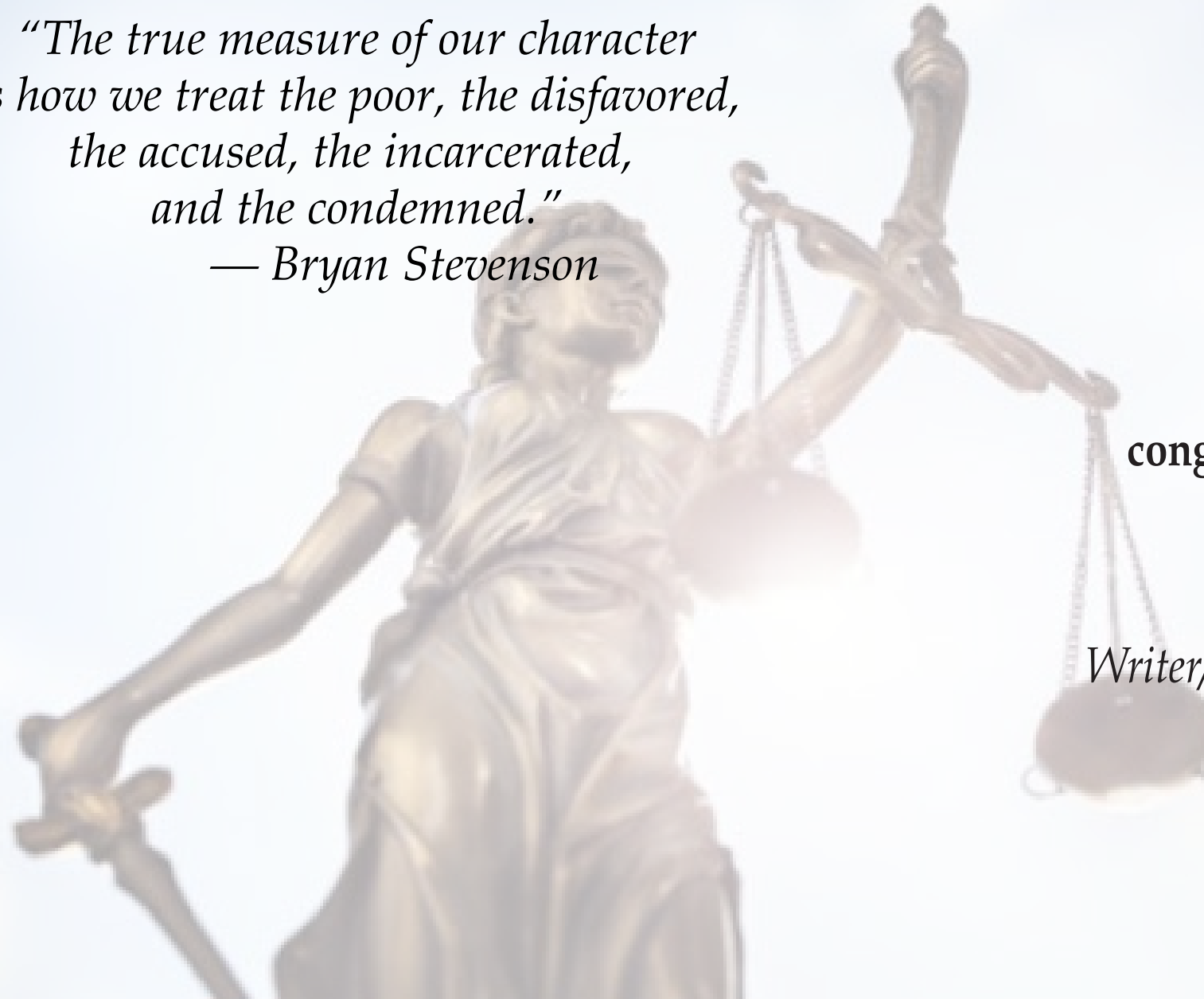
Leviticus. 19:16

Thank you
Rabbi Brous for never
standing idly by and
for inspiring us to keep
fighting for justice.

With love and admiration, The IKAR Board of Directors: Karim Abay, Lauren Applebaum, Eric Beckman, Lorne Buchman, Steve Byrnes, Austin Douglas, Lisa Friedman, Marissa Gee, Sarah Goldfinger, Ethan Goldstine, Eric Greene, Daniel Inlender, Eric Kranzler, Zachary Lainer, Mo Langer, Sophie McNally Pritzker, Jeremy Rosenthal, Michelle Rosenthal, Tziva Schwartz-Getzug, Rachel Sumekh, Rachel Waranch, Allie Weinstein, Jenny Weston-Newman & Ian Wiener and The IKAR Staff: Rabbi David Kasher, Rabbi Keilah Lebell, Rabbi Ronit Tsadok, Hillel Tigay, Melissa Balaban, Samuel Alleyne, Elad Dvash-Banks, Carrie Bohn, Lauren Epstein, Andrea Stern-Goldberg, Samuel Kanter, Jessica Emerson McCormick, Emma Mertens, Gabrielle Romero, Jane Rosen, Christina Saucedo, Arianna Sikorski, Jess Solomon, Beth Weisman, Brooke Wirtschafter, & Zvi Zobin

*“The true measure of our character
is how we treat the poor, the disfavored,
the accused, the incarcerated,
and the condemned.”*

— Bryan Stevenson



**We salute Death Penalty Focus
and
congratulate tonight’s deserving honorees**

Rabbi Sharon Brous

Michael Radelet

Writer/Director, Producers & Cast of “Clemency”

and our dear friend,

Bryan Stevenson

**With gratitude and admiration,
your friends at Public Counsel**

We support Death Penalty Focus

Alan J. Pomerantz and Evie M. Talmus

Congratulations to the 2021 DPF Honorees

Bryan Stevenson

Rabbi Sharon Brous

Michael Radelet

Director, Producers, and Cast of *Clemency*

Thank you **Gary Tyler** for the memorable day visiting EJI's National Memorial for Peace and Justice and the Legacy Museum.

Michael and Marlene Rapkin

Congratulations to
Bryan Stevenson
for his years of incredible work
and friendship.

Judy & Speedy



Clarke Johnston Thorp & Rice *A Partnership of Professional Corporations*

Attorneys at Law – 180 Broadway, Suite 1800, San Diego, California 92101

To my dear friends and colleagues on the DPF board...thank you for the years of dedication and commitment to abolishing the death penalty. It has been quite a ride, and there is no one I'd rather be in the trenches with. We are making steady progress, and I am hopeful for the future. We just need to keep our feet in the struggle and our eyes on the prize.

And a special thank you to Yoko Otani-Spurlin who has been a dedicated and loyal part of our team for so many years. We simply couldn't do it without her.

Tracy K. Rice



*"We must accept finite disappointment
but never lose infinite hope."*

- Martin Luther King, Jr.

Congratulations to all of the Honorees

BRYAN STEVENSON

RABBI SHARON BROUS

MICHAEL RADELET and

Director, Producers, and Cast of *CLEMENCY*

And may we finally end the Death Penalty in California and the Country.

SANGER SWYSEN & DUNKLE

Robert Sanger

Catherine Swysen

Stephen Dunkle

Miguel Avila

Sarah Sanger

Hon. Frank Ochoa (Ret.)

To Ed Redlich & Sarah Timberman

We admire your passion and generosity for
your focus on such a great cause.

Your friends,

Michael & Laurie Schur

We Salute **DEATH PENALTY FOCUS** *And We Salute* **GARY TYLER**

When Gary Tyler was released from Angola prison in 2016 after 41 1/2 Years in prison, his First event was the Death Penalty Focus dinner in Los Angeles. When the exonerated stood on stage by years spent in prison, at 41 1/2 years, Gary Tyler was the last one to stand. Gary Tyler immediately joined with DPF going out on the road to speak on behalf of Prop 62 to end the death penalty.

WE ASK YOU TO SUPPORT THE GO FUND ME CAMPAIGN AN ART STUDIO FOR GARY TYLER

Now it is time to support Gary's goals once again. Friends of Gary Tyler have organized a **Go Fund Me Campaign** to help Gary Tyler procure an **Art Studio** so he can once again begin doing the quilts that have been collected by Oprah Winfrey, George Soros and the Smithsonian Institute's African American Museum. Please remember that Gary Tyler came out of prison with ZERO contributions to social security because he was sentenced to death at sixteen. He must work until he is 69 to qualify for any social security benefits. This is a chance to support one of the greats in our community.

Go To: **GoFundMe.com** *then search:* **An Art Studio For Gary Tyler**

From Friends of Gary Tyler: **Chandra McCormick, Keith Calhoun, and Bob Zaugh**



THE ACLU SOCAL THANKS

BRYAN STEVENSON

RABBI SHARON BROUS

MICHAEL RADELET

& THE DIRECTOR, PRODUCERS

AND CAST OF “CLEMENCY”

FOR THEIR COMMITMENT

TO SOCIAL JUSTICE.

ACLU

AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION
Southern California

ACLUSOCAL.ORG

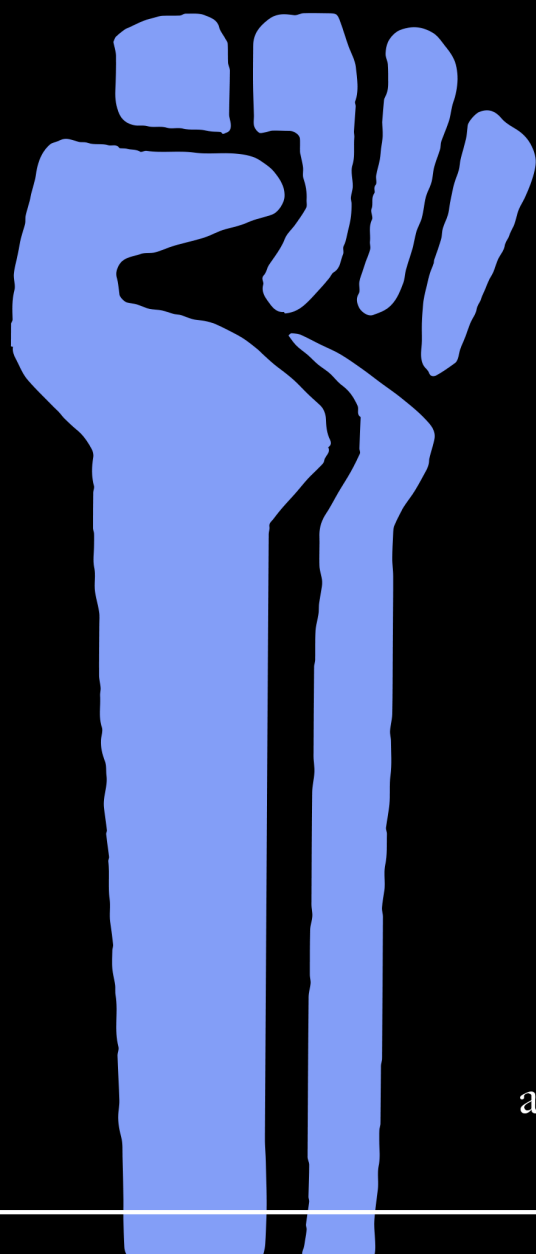


Video Production of the **29th Annual Death Penalty Focus Awards** Event by **Clinton Trucks** in association with **Fat Monster Films**.

Mr. Trucks would like to congratulate this year's honorees for their work forwarding the movement to abolish capital punishment; along with the numerous other contributors and participants who made this presentation possible. And special thanks to the board of Death Penalty Focus. Their commitment to change is matched only by their dedication to action.

(m) 323.250.9890

(e) Clinton.Trucks2@gmail.com



Death Penalty Action applauds Death Penalty Focus
& everyone attending and being recognized tonight.
Together we are making the difference!

DEATH PENALTY ACTION

Please visit DeathPenaltyAction.org
to write your members of congress.

Urge them to support HR262: the Federal Death Penalty Prohibition Act of 2021.

Death Penalty Action thanks Death Penalty Focus for being a team player
and an early member of our campaign in support of Rep. Ayanna Pressley
and Senator Richard Durbin's bill to repeal federal & military death penalty statutes.

"I've learned that the death penalty is one of the ugly legacies of slavery and classism in America. It is racist in application, is primarily if not exclusively used against the poor and ill-represented, it entraps the mentally ill and mentally damaged, the innocent and those who were children when they committed the crimes for which they are condemned. Worst of all, I've learned that despite claims to the contrary, most people in America prefer life in prison without possibility of parole to the death penalty. But that information rarely gets out, because cowardly politicians have come to believe that it is in their own best interests to maintain capital punishment in order to demonstrate how tough they are on crime."

- Mike Farrell

Congratulations to tonight's
courageous honorees.



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To the Leadership of **Death Penalty Focus**—

One day, we will look back at this time and remember those whose courage, dedication and fierce moral clarity brought an end to a cruel and shameful practice, and ushered in a new era of just mercy.

We thank you for your tireless work in the pursuit of justice.

Rabbi Sharon Brous & David Light

**Congratulations to
Keynoter and Awardee
Bryan Stevenson,
who has lifted us all up.**

**And special thanks to Awardee
Michael Radelet,
who has given years of
untiring service to
death row inmates, his students,
and the entire movement.**

Richard Dieter & Margaret Loudon

*Thank You
Death Penalty Focus
Congratulations to the
2021 Honorees*

Mary Patricia Dougherty

WE WILL
NOT STOP
UNTIL THE
DEATH PENALTY
IS DEAD!

Linda Fox

**“Justice, justice
shall you pursue”**

(Deuteronomy 16:20)

Congratulations to
Rabbi Sharon Brous
and all of the honorees.

With deep admiration for your
tireless pursuit of justice.

With love -
Wendy & Ivan, Paulette & Jeff,
Wiebke & Stuart, Rachel & Jeremiah.

Thank You

Dr. Michael L. Radelet

for your four decades of research, education, and
advocacy on erroneous convictions,
racial inequalities, and botched executions.

Your work has changed the social and
legal landscape of capital punishment and
has inspired many scholars such as myself to fight
towards ending the use of the death penalty.

Dr. Stacy L. Mallicoat



Salutes

Bryan Stevenson
Rabbi Sharon Brous
Michael Radelet
Director, Producers,
and the Cast of CLEMENCY

Thank you for your Compassion & Commitment
to being
Truth Tellers and Defenders of Justice



Congratulations Mike!

Our beloved Dad,
Brother, and Uncle

*With much love and enormous pride -
From the extended*

Radelet Family

We congratulate the inspiring
Bryan Stevenson, the visionary
Rabbi Sharon Brous, the brilliant
Michael Radelet, and the amazing
writer/director, producers, and cast of
Clemency, for their extraordinary
contributions to ending the
scourge of capital punishment.

“From this day forward, I no longer shall tinker with the machinery of death. I feel morally and intellectually obligated simply to concede that the death penalty experiment has failed. The problem is that the inevitability of factual, legal, and moral error gives us a system that we know must wrongly kill some defendants, a system that fails to deliver the fair, consistent, and reliable sentences of death required by the Constitution.”

- *US Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun (1994)*

Stephen Rohde & Wendy Herzog

In honor of all exonorees
who have chosen to put
their time and energy into
ending the death penalty.

Thank you for finding it in
your heart to embody for all
humankind the meaning of
Love in Action.

Colleen Tracy

Eugenie Ross-Leming
&
Robert Singer

*“In honor of
Norman Redlich”*

and

*“In memory of
Gary Glasberg”*

Mimi Schmir

My congratulations to
all those being honored
tonight, particularly
Bryan Stevenson
and **Michael Radelet**
for their decades of vigilant,
effective efforts to draw
attention to the horrors
and inequities of
capital punishment.

Henry Weinstein

We're in awe of **Byran Stevenson**.
Inspired by **Michael Radelet**.
And motivated by **Rabbi Brous**.

But we're supporters of
Death Penalty Focus because of
Ed Redlich and Sarah Timberman.

Talk about awesome,
inspiring
and motivational!

Jennifer & John

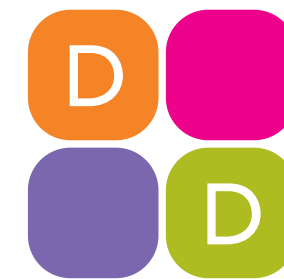
XOXO

“There is nothing
we can’t do, if we
do it together.”

– Joe Biden

Sarah Sanger
Chair of DPF Board

ALWAYS A PLEASURE TO WORK WITH
DEATH PENALTY FOCUS



DWORSKY DESIGN

DWORSKYDESIGN.COM

 [DWORSKY DESIGN](#)



Death Penalty Focus is a national non-profit organization with more than 100,000 followers. Through coalition building, education, advocacy and social media, DPF promotes efforts to abolish the death penalty. We work in coalition with organizations and elected officials to enact laws which will build a fairer, equal justice system for all regardless of race, gender, religion, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.

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