



Summer 2012

# Seizing the Momentum

## Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty

### Carlos DeLuna was executed nearly 25 years ago — Why his case still matters

*“I didn’t do it, but I know who did.”*

On December 7, 1989, a young, poor Hispanic man of diminished intelligence, Carlos DeLuna, was taken from a small cell in Huntsville, strapped to a gurney, and injected with lethal drugs. While this scenario is not uncommon – the State of Texas has carried out 482 such executions since 1982 – the story of Carlos DeLuna should shake the faith of even the most hardened death penalty proponent.

From the moment of his arrest to the night of his execution, DeLuna maintained his claim of innocence in the 1983 murder of convenience store clerk Wanda Lopez in Corpus Christi. An article that appeared in May 2012 in the Columbia University *Human Rights Law Review* sheds new light on his case and seeks to answer haunting questions as

**“One day, sooner than you think, when the United States Supreme Court again outlaws the death penalty, the justices will almost certainly cite the DeLuna case as one of the prime reasons why.”**

**- Andrew Cohen, “Yes, America, We Have Executed an Innocent Man”, *The Atlantic*, May 14, 2012**

to whether Texas executed the wrong person for this brutal crime. *Los Tocayos Carlos: An Anatomy of a Wrongful Execution* represents one of the most thorough depictions of a criminal investigation and its aftermath in U.S. history, cataloguing in minute detail all the failures of the system that wrongfully executed DeLuna. Everything that could possibly go wrong in a death penalty case did so here, including faulty eyewitness testimony, grossly inadequate legal representation, and prosecutorial misconduct. The flaws and failures that were starkly evident in DeLuna’s case persist in today’s imperfect system. Since 1973, 140 people – including 12 in Texas – have been exonerated from death rows nationwide due to evidence of their wrongful conviction. The cases of Cameron Todd Willingham, Claude Jones, Gary Graham, and Ruben Cantu also have raised serious questions about the risk of wrongful executions in Texas. What sets DeLuna’s case apart from others is compelling evidence of the identity of the real killer: Carlos Hernandez, a dangerous man who was well-known to law enforcement, had a long history of violence against young Hispanic women in Corpus Christi, and bragged about committing the murder for which his “*tocayo*” (namesake or twin), Carlos DeLuna, was sent to death row. Unbelievably, prosecutors ridiculed the existence of Hernandez as a “phantom” of DeLuna’s imagination during his trial. In upholding the conviction and death sentence on appeal, multiple courts said the same thing – Hernandez did not exist, despite his lengthy arrest and prison record.

***DeLuna Cont. on Page 5.***



**L: Carlos DeLuna R: Carlos Hernandez**

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- Voices of Texas: Agnes Fernandes
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- Member Spotlight: Scott Ruthart, Fort Worth
- News from the Field
- Thank You Members, Donors, and Partners for Justice!

#### Scheduled Executions

##### July

18 Yokamon Hearn

##### August

1 Marcus Druery

7 Marvin Wilson

22 John Balentine

##### September

20 Robert Harris

25 Cleve Foster

Execution Vigils: [tcadp.org](http://tcadp.org) under “Get Involved - Stop Executions”



## From the Executive Director

Dear TCADP Members and Supporters,

If you've ever wondered what your contributions to TCADP support, look no further than our organizational calendar during the first half of June... we were coordinating so many events at that time, we completely ran out of space to record anything else on the large wall calendar that hangs in our office! All told, over the course six weeks this summer, TCADP participated in a dozen different conventions and festivals across the state, where we reached out to tens of thousands of people with our call to end the death penalty.



People of faith, civic and civil rights leaders, business owners, political activists, and socially aware citizens stopped by our information booths to meet our volunteers, take information, and share their own reasons for opposing the death penalty. We talked with Texans who are concerned about the flaws and disparities in the system, Texans who understand that the death penalty is exorbitantly more expensive than alternative punishments, and Texans who firmly believe that our state has executed innocent people.

Even more significantly, we met Texans who can see that the climate on this issue is changing and are eager to become involved in our efforts to seize the momentum for abolition. To date this year, TCADP has recruited nearly *one thousand new supporters* who will be standing with us as we continue to deliver the message to our elected officials that it's time for Texas to end the death penalty!

As always, thank you for being part of our efforts to educate Texans about the fatal flaws of our state's death penalty system and mobilize our elected leaders to end this arbitrary, discriminatory, and irreversible punishment, once and for all.

With gratitude,

### Follow TCADP on TWITTER!

**@TCADPdotORG**

**Breaking news,  
coming events,  
things you  
should know!**

**RETWEET!**

twitter



### TCADP Seizing the Momentum

*TCADP Seizing the Momentum* is published quarterly by the Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, the only statewide grassroots organization working solely to end the death penalty in Texas through education, outreach and advocacy.

Subscription Information: *TCADP Seizing the Momentum* is distributed to TCADP members and allies. To find out more about the organization and become a member, visit our website at [www.tcadp.org](http://www.tcadp.org).

Issue #37, Summer 2012  
(Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall)

Editor/Contributor: Vicki McCuiston  
Contributors: Kristin Houle, Chris Castillo, Christina Dunigan, Angelle Adams, Anita Grabowski

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## Calendar of Events

### July

No El Paso Chapter meeting this month.  
7-12 NAACP National Convention, Houston  
18 Scheduled Execution: Yokamon Hearn; Dallas Chapter meeting 7:00pm, [dallas@tcadp.org](mailto:dallas@tcadp.org)

### August

1 Scheduled Execution: Marcus Druery  
5 Odessa Chapter meeting 4:00pm, [odessa@tcadp.org](mailto:odessa@tcadp.org)  
7 Scheduled Execution: Marvin Wilson  
15 Dallas Chapter meeting 7:00pm, [dallas@tcadp.org](mailto:dallas@tcadp.org)  
18 Freethinkers Association meeting, San Antonio 1:30pm  
22 Scheduled Execution: John Balentine  
27 El Paso Chapter Meeting, 6:00pm, [el Paso@tcadp.org](mailto:el Paso@tcadp.org)

### September

2 Odessa Chapter Meeting, 4:00pm, [odessa@tcadp.org](mailto:odessa@tcadp.org)  
15 – Oct 14 Austin Area Month of Faith in Action  
16 St. Paul UMC UMW, Houston 12:30—3:00  
16 House Concert w/Sara Hickman, Austin 5:00pm  
19 Dallas Chapter Meeting, 7:00pm, [dallas@tcadp.org](mailto:dallas@tcadp.org)  
20 Scheduled Execution: Robert Harris  
24 El Paso Chapter Meeting, 6:00pm, [el Paso@tcadp.org](mailto:el Paso@tcadp.org)  
25 Scheduled Execution: Cleve Foster  
30 First UMC Austin DP Education Opportunity 9:45am

*Full event descriptions and monthly chapter meeting dates with active links can be found at [www.tcadp.org](http://www.tcadp.org) under "Get Involved - Attend Events".*

## TCADP Welcomes New Intern

Christina Dunigan was born and raised in Houston, Texas. She recently moved to Austin to attend the University of Texas. As a Government major, she is keenly interested in the criminal justice system's major issues and trends, in terms of both public and social policy. Christina is eager to be-



come more attune to the nuances of capital punishment through her work with TCADP. Her efforts will include updating TCADP databases, assisting with research and annual report composition, and serving other functions of TCADP. Christina is extremely excited to begin her involvement with this noble cause.

### Board of Directors

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Sylvia Gonzales, LULAC/Hispanic Women in Leadership  
Steve Hall, StandDown Texas Project  
Dr. Rick Halperin, Southern Methodist University  
Jim Harrington, Director Texas Civil Rights Project  
Sara Hickman, singer, musician, songwriter  
Sam Millsap, Former District Attorney  
Rev. Carroll L. "Bud" Pickett, Former Death House Chaplain  
Sr. Helen Prejean, author  
Rabbi Samuel M. Stahl, Rabbi Emeritus Temple Beth-El  
Linda White, Murder Victim Family Member  
Bishop Joe A. Wilson, Retired Methodist Bishop

### Volunteers

Thanks so much to the following individuals who have volunteered in the TCADP Office or provided administrative support in recent months: Angelle Adams, Jim and Sherry Coombes, Margot Cromac., Christina Dunigan, Tom Egan, Mary Heartlein, Jade Herman, and Alex Noll. We are immensely grateful for your assistance!



## Voices of Texas

*“Attending the trial of the man who pulled the trigger was like reliving the murder all over again. It was as traumatic for me as the murder had been. It was difficult to hear what the informant had to say.”*

*- Agnes Fernandes*



Agnes Fernandes of Sugarland lived through the murder of her son in 2008. Then, a year later her husband was murdered in an unrelated incident. Now, the men who murdered her husband are behind bars. After years of waiting, the trials are over.

Agnes recently shared her story of tragedy and forgiveness with a Bible Study group at St. Lawrence Catholic Church in Sugarland.

Her son John, 23, was murdered in 2008. Since the assailant pleaded guilty, there was no trial. He was sentenced to 25 years for murder and 35 years for arson. He is eligible for parole after 12 years.

Joe Fernandes, 54, her husband, was helping a friend at a convenience store in Houston when he was murdered by four youths who wanted to rob the store. He had been on the job for only two hours.



Three boys were convicted of killing her husband. Two of them received life in prison and the informant will serve a 10-year sentence. The fourth man who was in the store at the time of the killing has not been arrested.

“Attending the trial of the man who pulled the trigger was like reliving the murder all over again. It was as traumatic for me as the murder had been. It was difficult to hear what the informant had to say,” Agnes said.

Agnes testified during the first trial. “It was especially painful for me when the jury was shown pictures of my husband’s autopsy. Attending the trial was a very traumatic experience. It was very emotionally draining for me and my family.”

Agnes, who is opposed to the death penalty, is grateful that none of the verdicts included the death penalty. She said she and her family have forgiven the men responsible for the murders. “We only hope that they reconcile with God and turn their lives around and become valuable citizens,” she said. “For me, that is what being Catholic is all about - forgiveness and the love of God. My faith has helped me through this double tragedy. If it wasn’t for my faith I wouldn’t have been able to deal with this tragedy.”

“Both the murder of my husband and my son were senseless killings. Valuable lives were taken for no reason at all,” Agnes concluded.

Agnes Fernandes taught school for 35 years. She taught students in Pakistan, Kuwait and the U.S. She is a cradle Catholic from Pakistan. She plans on starting a support group for parents who have had a child taken by homicide and other traumatic deaths. She was approached by a group in her congregation to start the group after others in her church heard her speak about her loss. Her son-in-law, daughter and grandson moved in with her after the death of her husband.



Submitted by Chris Castillo, National Outreach Coordinator for Murder Victims' Families for Reconciliation, [ccastillo@mvfr.org](mailto:ccastillo@mvfr.org).

Read more “Voices of Texas” at the link under “Resources” - <http://tcadp.org/what-we-do/victims-outreach/>



DeLuna's case sped through all the supposed safeguards in the process at an alarming pace – just six and half years from the time of the crime to the night of execution. Dozens of other cases have shown us the dangers of moving forward with executions with such haste – just look at Anthony Graves or Michael Morton, for whom it took 18, and 25 years, respectively, to secure their exonerations. Yet with DeLuna, the courts simply rubber-stamped his conviction without a second look.

This case represents one of the most profound failures in Texas' experience with the death penalty. The possible execution of an innocent person at the hands of the state should give everyone pause. When we incarcerate and execute the wrong person for a heinous crime, we leave guilty perpetrators free to harm more innocent victims. That's the real collateral damage.

Now, nearly 25 years since DeLuna's wrongful execution, Texas is steadily moving away from use of the death penalty as prosecutors and juries embrace alternatives that punish the truly guilty and protect society. Last year, the state carried out the fewest executions since 1996 and death sentences remained at a historic low level, when just eight people were sentenced to death statewide. Overall, new death sentences in Texas have declined more than 70% since 2003 and have become isolated to a small number of jurisdictions. Nationally, momentum clearly has shifted toward abolition; in April, Connecticut became the fifth state in five years to abandon the death penalty and California voters will consider repeal when they go to the polls this fall.

The case of Carlos DeLuna is not the first, and certainly won't be the last, to question whether Texas has executed an innocent person. In fact, the question has been asked so often now that it has essentially answered itself. The real question is how many more cases will it take before the leaders of this state finally acknowledge that the Texas death penalty system is broken beyond repair and that the only way to guarantee that we don't repeat the colossal failures of the case of Carlos DeLuna and many others is to end this arbitrary, discriminatory, and irreversible punishment once and for all.

*Los Tocayos Carlos: An Anatomy of a Wrongful Execution* is based on an 18-month investigation by Columbia Law School Professor James Liebman and a team of students. Learn more at [www.thewrongcarlos.net](http://www.thewrongcarlos.net).

## New Resources

### Documentary: *Into the Abyss*

Reviewed by Angelle Adams, TCADP Board Secretary

*Into the Abyss* is a thought-provoking and raw documentary highlighting the events leading up to the July 1, 2010 execution of 28-year old Michael James Perry, who was convicted of a triple homicide that occurred in October 2001 in Conroe, Texas. The documentary contains interviews with the two convicted murderers, Perry and Jason Aaron Burkett. Only Perry received a death sentence. The documentary also includes interviews with the family members of the three victims: Sandra Stotler, her teenage son Adam Stotler, and his friend Jeremy Richardson. According to Perry's confession, he and Burkett committed these crimes while trying to steal Adam Stotler's red Camaro.

Former Corrections Officer, Fred Allen, shares his experiences from assisting in over 120 executions performed by the State of Texas. He explains the effect that his job had on him emotionally and psychologically. Allen, who is no longer a correctional officer, is quoted as saying, "No one has the right to take another's life, I don't care if it is the law. And, it's so easy to change the law."

*Into the Abyss* reveals the underlying issues of how victims' families are effected by the death penalty; the cycle of criminal behavior that often exists within families; and the impact poverty and poor choices can have on our youth.

**Available on DVD and Netflix:** <http://www.ifcfilms.com/films/into-the-abbyss>

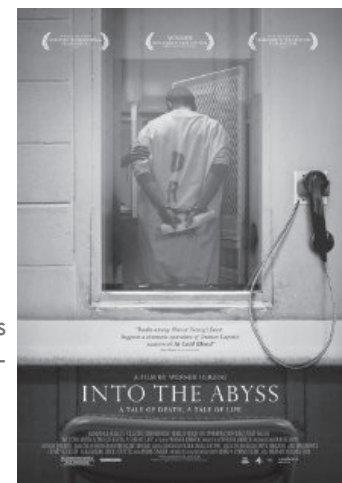
**We need YOU to ensure that the story of Carlos DeLuna continues to reach a wide audience by taking action today!**

**Download TCADP's fact sheet on the case at <http://tcadp.org/get-informed/wrongful-execution/> and share it with your faith communities, student groups, and civic associations.**

**Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper, expressing concerns about the death penalty's irreversible risk of error and calling for its repeal. Talking points are available at <http://tcadp.org/deluna-talking-points/>.**

**Organize a screening of the film "At the Death House Door" or host a presentation by Reverend Carroll Pickett, who was with Carlos DeLuna on the last day of his life and witnessed his execution. The film interweaves the stories of Pickett, who served as the death house chaplain for 15 years, and that of DeLuna. Contact TCADP at [info@tcadp.org](mailto:info@tcadp.org) to make arrangements for a film screening or presentation.**

**Write to your state legislators, encouraging them to read *Los Tocayos Carlos*. A sample letter is available at <http://tcadp.org/deluna-sample-letter-to-legislators/>.**





### Executions

- To date this year, the State of Texas has carried out five executions (out of 23 nationwide). There currently are nine executions scheduled to take place in Texas over the next five months.

### Stays of Execution

- Anthony Bartee received a second stay of execution on May 2, 2012, when the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals declined to overturn the stay of execution granted to him earlier in the day by a federal judge in San Antonio. This effectively allowed his May 2 execution date to expire. Bartee was convicted and sentenced to death for the 1996 murder of David Cook in San Antonio. His attorneys have argued that there is still potentially exonerating evidence that must undergo DNA testing. Their lawsuit against the Bexar County District Attorney charges that office with violating their client's civil rights by denying access to post-conviction DNA testing. Chief U.S. District Judge Fred Biery granted the temporary stay of execution in order to further examine the civil rights claim.

According to the *San Antonio Express-News* ("Decision adds to scrutiny of death penalty cases," May 26, 2012), DNA testing has been conducted on drinking glasses and cigarettes collected at the crime scene and revealed the DNA of three people – two men and one woman so far unidentified. The additional evidence will be sent through state and federal databases while this case remains in federal court.

- Steven Staley received a stay of execution on May 14 from the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, which did not provide a reason for the reprieve. At issue is Staley's competency to be executed. He was diagnosed as a paranoid schizophrenic after he arrived on death row in 1991. At times over the last few years, he has been forced to take anti-psychotic drugs against his will. Staley believes that the drugs are poisoning him. State officials argue that this forced medication is necessary in order to render him competent to be executed.

### New Death Sentences

- On May 21, 2012, a Dallas County jury determined that Roderick Harris should be sentenced to death for the murder of Alfredo Gallardo during a 2009 robbery. Harris also is charged with killing Carlos Gallardo, the brother of Alfredo, but has not been tried for that crime. This is the first new death sentence in Dallas County since 2010. Last year, no new death sentences were imposed in Dallas County for the first time in five years; it also was the first time in 15 years that Dallas County prosecutors seeking the death penalty did not win a capital murder conviction. Overall, Dallas County accounts for the second-highest number of death sentences (103) and executions (47) in Texas.
- On May 31, 2012, a Smith County jury sentenced Kimberly Diane Cargill to death for the June 2010 murder of her 39-year-old babysitter, Cherry Walker. Cargill is the first woman to be sent to death row in Smith County and one of 10 female death row inmates in the state. Texas has executed three women since 1982.
- In Brazos County, Stanley Lamar Griffin was given the death penalty on June 29, 2012 for murdering a 29-year-old mother, Jennifer Marie Hailey, and violently assaulting her 9-year-old son in September 2010. Griffin's trial marked attorneys' first attempt to use a mental retardation defense against the death penalty in Brazos County, in light of the U.S. Supreme Court's 2002 decision (*Atkins v. Virginia*) to bar capital punishment for individuals with intellectual disabilities. This is the fifth new death sentence imposed to date this year in Texas.

### Jury Rejection

- On April 2, 2012, a jury in Angelina County, Texas rejected the death penalty for Kimberly Saenz, a former nurse, and instead sentenced her to life in prison without the possibility of parole. The jury convicted Saenz of killing five patients at the DaVita Dialysis Clinic by injecting their IV lines with bleach in April 2008. She will be one of 28 women serving life in prison without parole, a sentencing option that went into effect in Texas in September 2005. This is the second time this year that a death-qualified jury has rejected the death penalty and opted for a sentence of life without parole. Over the past five years, death-qualified juries have rejected the death penalty in at least 16 capital murder trials.

### Updates on Other Cases

- On June 1, 2012, the State of Texas filed an advisory with the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals in which it agreed to DNA testing for death row inmate Henry "Hank" Skinner. Skinner was convicted of the 1993 Pampa murders of his girlfriend Twila Busby and her two adult sons. Last year he faced two serious execution dates, even though key pieces of evidence collected at the crime scene have never been subjected to DNA testing. He was granted a stay of execution on November 7, 2011.

Later in June, Skinner's attorneys and the State of Texas reached an agreement that secures DNA testing in this case. There are lingering concerns, however, as a key piece of evidence - the sweat-stained, blood-spattered men's windbreaker jacket found next to the victim's body - is missing and will not be subjected to testing. Read more on the TCADP blog.



## Partners for Justice Enrollment Form

**YES!** I want to participate in the Partners for Justice program to help ensure a steady, reliable source of income that is crucial to the success of TCADP's outreach, education, and advocacy initiatives!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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**WE WILL NOT SHARE YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS.**

I will make my gifts by:

**E-Check**

By selecting this box, I authorize my bank to pay TCADP the amount I have indicated in the time frame stipulated below. I understand this agreement will remain in effect until I notify TCADP that I wish to change or cancel my pledge.

**Recurring Pledge Amount:**

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**Frequency:**

- Monthly
- Quarterly
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**Payment Information:**

Routing Number

\_\_\_\_\_

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*\*Please note that the minimum amount for credit card and e-check transactions is \$10.00.*

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By selecting this box, I authorize TCADP to automatically charge the amount indicated below to my credit card on a recurring basis. I understand this agreement will remain in effect until I notify TCADP that I wish to change or cancel my pledge.

**Recurring Pledge Amount:**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Frequency:**

- Monthly
- Quarterly
- Semi-Annually
- Annually

**Payment Information:**

- Visa
- MasterCard
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Credit Card Number

\_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date

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Security Code

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**Check**

My first gift by check is enclosed.

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\$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Frequency:**

- Monthly
- Quarterly
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THANK YOU!

Your gift will make a difference in our work for justice.

If paying by e-check or credit card, please sign and date below:

Signature (required) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**To enroll as a Partner for Justice, please mail this completed form to:**

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## Member Spotlight...

Scott Ruthart, Fort Worth, TX  
New Member - May 2012



### How did you come to be against the death penalty?

I believe I developed consciousness of the issue in High School—likely as a result of literature like *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Native Son* etc...I consequently thought the issue through in regards to how it was being applied in TX through the 80's-90's and the alarming frequency starting with [Governors] Bush through Perry.

### How did you learn about the Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty?

My wife (Liz Stevens) did a story on Rick Halperin for the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* around 2000.

### What are your expectations in becoming a member of TCADP?

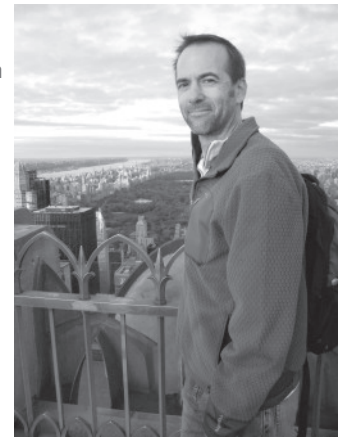
I would like to be involved in any way that is productive for the organization and am looking for opportunities to volunteer.

### What is the most compelling argument for you that the death penalty should be repealed?

As compelling as the notion of making sure no one who is innocent be put to death is, I would rather see organizations like TCADP make a broader argument. The state should not be killing people. Like many I see state-sponsored execution as revenge, not justice. When the state executes a person it reduces itself to the ethic of the murderer and its moral authority is compromised. So as a matter of principle I don't believe any person should be executed no matter how heinous the crime.

### You mentioned learning about TCADP due to an interview with Rick in 2000 or so. What motivated you to become an official member in 2012?

I am in a position now with my job etc, where I have some time to be more involved in the issues I care about and I was reading *Anatomy of Injustice* by Anthony Bonner which deals with a death penalty case in South Carolina and that stirred my sensibilities. Generally, as a native Texan, I am very disappointed that Texas is a negative exemplum for the death penalty. I did a field placement for State Rep. Lon Burnam when I was getting my MSW and visited death row with him and that experience has always been a spur for me. But, as for the timing, it's something I just haven't taken the time to do until now.



## 2012 Texas Democratic Party Platform Calls for Abolition!

During the Texas State Democratic Convention, which took place June 7-8, 2012 in Houston, delegates voted to endorse abolition of the death penalty in the 2012 Texas Democratic Party Platform. We are immensely grateful to everyone who played a role in securing this victory for justice! Here's the full text of the Death Penalty section in the platform:

Despite 41 DNA exonerations in Texas in the last 9 years, Rick Perry says he never loses sleep over executing the innocent. Perry has overseen over 240 executions in Texas. Detailed research shows that the Texas death penalty system cannot insure that innocent and undeserving defendants are not sentenced to death. Death penalty exonerations have already revealed deep flaws in our State's criminal justice system.

Evidence – including scientific evidence, extensive studies by Innocence Project, major newspaper and university research strongly suggests that Texas has already executed innocent defendants including Carlos DeLuna, Ruben Cantu, and Cameron Todd Willingham. Former Governor Mark White has stated we must take every step to ensure there is never another innocent man executed.

The application of the death penalty in Texas is disproportionately applied to the poor and minorities. The system has allowed, in the past, the execution of juveniles, the mentally ill and poor defendants who had such inadequate counsel that their lawyers literally slept through their trials.

Other states are increasingly rejecting the death penalty as evidenced by the legislatures in New Jersey (2007), New Mexico (2009), Illinois (2011), and Connecticut (2012) repealing the death penalty.

In order to promote public confidence and fairness in the Texas Criminal Justice System, Texas Democrats call for the passage of legislation that would abolish the death penalty in Texas and replace it with the punishment of life in prison without parole.

[www.txdemocrats.org/issues/platform](http://www.txdemocrats.org/issues/platform)



## News from the Field

Here's a snapshot of just some of the outreach and educational events that TCADP has sponsored or participated in over the last four months:

**Austin:** On May 8, the Austin Chapter hosted a program entitled "From Violence to Restorative Justice." It featured the film "Meeting with a Killer: One Family's Journey," which focuses on murder victim family members Linda and Ami White. Afterwards, Ellen Halbert, the Director of the Victim Witness Division at the District Attorney's Office in Travis County and the professional mediator of the meeting between the Whites and the offender, led a discussion. The event was co-sponsored by Trinity United Methodist Church. A committee reflecting diverse religious traditions is planning the Austin "Month of Faith in Action" for the Fall—see page 12!

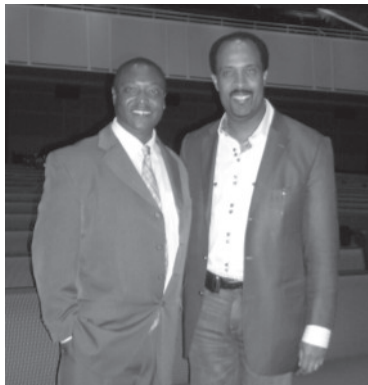
**Brazos Valley:** On April 4, the Brazos Valley chapter helped organize a "Community Conversation" with murder victim family member Jan Brown – "Remembering Kandy Kirtland: A Mother's Journey after Murder". It took place on the Texas A&M campus and was sponsored by the Office of Multicultural Issues. Members of the audience included candidates for elected office and staff from the District Attorney's office. The event also received extensive media coverage. Before Jan spoke, TCADP Program Coordinator Vicki McCuiston provided information about the state of the death penalty in Texas.

**Corpus Christi:** Members of the chapter purchased a table at the Annual Spring Luncheon featuring Sister Helen Prejean, which was sponsored by the Coastal Bend Women Lawyers Association on April 18. More than 350 people, including local elected officials, judges, and the Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Corpus Christi, attended the event.

**Dallas:** On April 22, TCADP staff hosted a DFW Metroplex Members' meeting in Dallas. Participants learned about TCADP's new strategic focus on Dallas County and brainstormed ideas for organizational allies, grassroots leaders, and civic and religious outreach. The next night, April 23, Friendship-West Baptist Church in South Dallas hosted a conversation between death row exonerate Anthony Graves and Senior Pastor Dr. Frederick D. Haynes III. More than 300 people attended the event and were left understandably awed by Anthony's incredible poise, passion, and determination.

On April 26, David Noblin represented TCADP at the Steve Earle concert in Dallas and provided materials and information to concertgoers. One month later, TCADP participated for the first time in the Dallas International

Festival. Thanks to our amazing members who staffed the information booth and met lots of new community supporters! TCADP also had a presence at the North Texas United Methodist Conference in early June and shared information with lay and faith leaders in the area – thanks to David Noblin and Rev. Wes McGruder for their efforts! Members of the TCADP Dallas Religious Outreach Committee now are working with the staff of local faith communities and religious groups to plan a "faithful conversation about the death penalty" later this year. Stay tuned for details!



**Top: Anthony Graves with Dr. Frederick D. Haynes, Senior Pastor of Friendship-West Baptist Church Bottom: Shot of the audience at the Friendship-West event.**



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Look for TCADP on Facebook and "Like" today! See photos of activities and links to important news developments.

facebook



## News from the Field cont. from page 9

**Fort Worth:** From June 20-22, Chris Castillo with Murder Victims' Families for Reconciliation participated in the 2012 Cooperative Baptist Fellowship General Assembly, a national gathering that took place this year in Fort Worth. TCADP Board Member Bernard Kern also helped with this effort to provide information and reach out to people of faith.

**Houston:** The City of Houston hosted a number of national and state conventions this summer – and our members were out in force to provide information on the death penalty and reach out to new supporters. We are so grateful for all of the wonderful Houston-based volunteers who helped staff TCADP's information booth at the Texas State Democratic Convention (June 8-9), the Texas Black Expo (June 16 -17), and the National NAACP Convention (July 7-10)! TCADP members also participated in the Houston Peace Festival on May 26 and the Houston PrideFest on June 23. Earlier in the year, on April 25, Nancy Bailey and Art Dietz represented TCADP at the Steve Earle concert in Stafford.

**San Antonio:** From April 12-15, the Bexar County Campaign hosted death row exonoree Juan Melendez. The "Death Penalty No Más" Speaking Tour reached more than 600 people at 8 venues (universities, churches, community centers, and high schools) across San Antonio! One highlight of the tour was Juan's visit to Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, which hosted both a documentary screening during the Fulfillment Hour and a presentation by Juan during the worship service - more than 200 people attended one or both

events. Coverage of Juan's visit to the church aired later that night as a top news story on KABB Fox San Antonio. Thanks to all the co-sponsors of the tour –



**Juan Melendez telling his story to a full house.**

Congregation of Divine Providence, Inc., Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, and Northwest Vista College!

On April 29, Susan Ives represented TCADP at the Steve Earle concert in San Antonio. On May 1, community organizers held an "Anti-Death Penalty Poetry Slam", featuring a cash prize for the best poem.

## Vigil Locations [tcadp.org](http://tcadp.org) under "Get Involved"

**Huntsville (Location of Executions)** Corner of 12th and Ave. I (in front of Walls Unit) at 5:15 pm

**Austin (Site 1)** - On Congress at 11 St., 5:30 - 6:30 pm, **(Site 2)** - Prayer vigil at St. Ignatius Martyr Catholic Church on Oltorf and Congress at 6:00pm (approx 20 minutes)

**Beaumont** Diocese of Beaumont, Diocesan Pastoral Office, 703 Archie St. @ 4:00 pm on the day of an execution

**Brownsville** 802 and Paredes Lane from 4:30 -5:30pm

**College Station** 5:30 to 6 pm, east of Texas A&M campus at the corner of Walton and Texas Ave. across the street from the main entrance

**Corpus Christi** Sisters Of Incarnate Word Convent, 2930 Alameda, 6:00 pm

**Cuero** At Gazebo on Main Street , next to Library, 5:45 pm. Public Invited. For information call 361-676-2921

**El Paso** 6:00 pm Saint Patrick Cathedral, 1118 N Mesa St , Our Lady of Mount Carmel, 131 S Zaragosa Rd and Our Lady of Guadalupe 2709 Alabama.

**Ganado** At Assumption Catholic Church Pro-Life Monument, 5:45 pm Public invited. For information call 361-771-3325

**Houston** Rotating Locations... July-September 5:30 to 6:20 St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 1805 W. Alabama (near Woodhead).

**Lubbock** St. John's United Methodist Church, 1501 University Ave., 5:30 to 6:30 pm

**McAllen** In front of The Monitor, corner of Nolana and Jackson at 5:30 pm

**McKinney** St. Gabriel the Archangel Catholic Community located at 110 St. Gabriel Way, the last Sunday of the month, following the 11:00 mass to remember those scheduled for execution in the following month, as well as the victims of their crimes and family members on both sides

**Odessa** Public vigil takes place from 5:00 to 5:30 pm in front of St. Joseph Catholic Parish, 907 S. Dixie, Odessa 79761. Prayer takes place inside the church from 5:30 to 6:00 PM. All are welcome. The church phone number is 432-337-2213

**San Antonio (Site 1)** - Archdiocese of San Antonio, in the St. Joseph Chapel at the Chancery, 2718 W. Woodlawn Ave. (1 mile east of Bandera Rd.) at 11:30 am on the day of execution. Broadcast on Catholic Television of San Antonio (Time-Warner cable channel 15) at 12:30 pm and 6:30 pm on the day of execution. **(Site 2)** - Main Plaza across from Bexar County Courthouse and San Fernando Cathedral - Noon **(Site 3)** - Join the Sisters of Divine Providence and friends in vigil and prayer from 6:00 - 6:30 pm on Texas execution days in front of Our Lady of the Lake Convent by the large crucifix. 515 S.W. 24th Street

**Spring** Prayer Vigil at 6 pm on evenings of executions at St Edward Catholic Community, 2601 Spring Stuebner Rd, Spring, TX 77389 for the murder victim, for family and friends of the murder victim, the prison guards and correctional officers, for the family of the condemned man/woman, for the man/woman to be executed and to an end to the death penalty

**Victoria** At Incarnate Word Convent, 5:45 pm. Public Invited. For information call 361-575-7111



## Thank You for Your Generous Support

TCADP thanks the following individuals & organizations for their generous contributions in the past quarter (March 21 – July 11, 2012). Your financial assistance is critical to all of the activities and events described in this newsletter! Please let us know if we have inadvertently left you (or your partner) off of this list. We apologize in advance if we missed anyone.

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Congregation of Divine Providence, Inc.  
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 Macedonia Baptist Church  
 Marianist Province of the U.S.  
 School Sisters of Notre Dame of Dallas  
 Sisters of St. Mary of Namur  
 Lynn and Samuel Stahl Family Philanthropic Fund of the San Antonio Area Foundation\*

\*Signifies Partner for Justice, TCADP's recurring donation program; look for the form in this newsletter or go online for details!



**TEXAS COALITION TO ABOLISH THE DEATH PENALTY**

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If there is **no date** on your address label or a date prior to **7/1/2012**, please take the time to renew your membership or become a new member. See [tcadp.org/join-tcadp/](http://tcadp.org/join-tcadp/) for membership form. Thank you!

**TCADP Month of Faith in Action on the Death Penalty!  
September 15—October 14, 2012**

**All Austin-Area Faith Communities are invited to spend time talking about the Texas Death Penalty: Preach, Show a film, Host a speaker!**

The Culminating Event of the Month of Faith in Action...  
***“Faithful Considerations: A Discussion with Sr. Helen Prejean and Austin Faith Leaders”***

Friday, October 12 at 7:00pm  
St. Edward’s University, Jones Auditorium  
3001 S Congress, Austin, TX 78704



The conversation with Sr. Helen Prejean and two Austin-area clergy will include the challenges of moving Texas away from a culture of vengeance toward a culture of accountability that does not rely on the death penalty; addressing the issue of the death penalty from the pulpit; and how faith leaders and people of faith can take a more proactive role in educating their congregations about the death penalty.

**Reserve Your Free Sister Helen Tickets (Limited Seating), and Sign Up for the Month of Faith in Action at the link <http://tcadp.org/what-we-do/religious-outreach/> under “Coming Events”!**