



TEXAS EXONEREES VISIT PORTLAND TO SUPPORT THE OREGON INNOCENCE PROJECT AND SHARE THEIR REMARKABLE STORY

April 27th, 2017

NEWS ADVISORY

- CONTACT:** Alice Lundell, Director of Communication, Oregon Innocence Project
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- WHAT:** Visit to Portland of Anna Vasquez and Cassandra Rivera, two of a group of Texan exonerees known as the San Antonio Four. They spent nearly 15 years in prison after their conviction for the sexual assault of two young girls. They were found innocent by the Texas Court of Appeals in November 2016. They are visiting Oregon as the special guests of the Oregon Innocence Project (OIP).
- WHEN:** Wednesday, May 10th – Thursday, May 11th
- WHO:** Oregon Innocence Project
- WHERE:** **THIS IS INNOCENCE: a benefit for Oregon Innocence Project**, Thursday, May 11 at 6 pm at Urban Studio, 935 NW Davis St., Portland. Speakers will be Anna Vasquez and Cassandra Rivera of the San Antonio Four and OIP Legal Director Steve Wax. Tickets are available online at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/this-is-innocence-a-fundraiser-for-oregon-innocence-project-tickets-33096913760>
- WHY:** Anna Vasquez and Cassandra Rivera's true story of wrongful conviction, imprisonment, eventual release, and exoneration is a fascinating insight into the American justice system. Their experience sheds light on the influence of prejudice and fear-mongering in the courtroom as well as the impact of inaccurate expert testimony on the outcome of a case.
- WEBSITE:** <http://www.oregoninnocence.org/this-is-innocence-san-antonio-four/>
- BACKGROUND:** Oregon Innocence Project is the only program in our state whose sole mission is to aid the wrongfully convicted in proving their innocence, campaign for reforms that prevent and address wrongful convictions and train law students. Founded in 2014, OIP provides free legal assistance to people who have been convicted in Oregon and are making a claim of innocence.

Interviews with Anna and Cassandra are available during their visit and may also be possible in advance. See press release for more information about their story and the event.