



Elected prosecutors from across the country and their senior staff came together in New York yesterday to discuss the role of DAs as ministers of justice and the importance of reforms that correct past injustice and promote the integrity of the justice system. Attendees explored the vital importance of conviction integrity units as a mechanism to reevaluate past convictions that have been called into question.

The discussion underscored the growing national conversation around the role of prosecutors in correcting past injustices, the leadership role many DAs are taking to implement conviction integrity units and assess potential wrongful convictions, and what comes next as prosecutors recognize the need to address cases where the justice system failed to live up to the high standards we can and should expect of it.

***“Wrongful convictions tear at the foundation of our system and everything that prosecutors and our law enforcement partners stand for: public safety, fairness, and justice.”***

*-13th Judicial Circuit (Tampa, Florida) State Attorney Andrew Warren*

Over the day, participants heard from:

- Exonerees sharing their experiences and perspectives.
- Experts providing insight into common pitfalls and blind spots that can lead to wrongful convictions and the role of prosecutors in correcting and avoiding systemic error.
- Elected DAs and senior staff who have established and overseen CIUs that model best practices.

Additionally, participants engaged in a robust discussion exploring challenges to CIU implementation, how to create an office culture that embraces conviction integrity, and claims beyond actual innocence that the conviction integrity process can and should be used to reevaluate – such as police misconduct or due process violations that undermine the integrity of the resulting conviction.

*“I am fully committed to reviewing and correcting miscarriages of justice in Brooklyn because fairness and due process are at the heart of our justice system.”*

*-Kings County (Brooklyn) District Attorney Eric Gonzalez*

Key takeaways from the day included:

- Prosecutors must create cultures in their offices that value the pursuit of justice over achieving “wins.”
- DAs must ensure line prosecutors are trained to understand and question all evidence that comes before them, whether it is a confession, a lab test result or based on forensic expertise.
- The CIU should be supported, independent and given a broad mandate to review a wide range of integrity issues going beyond claims of actual innocence, including violations of due process and corrupt law enforcement practices.

To learn more about CIUs, check out FJP’s “Issues at a Glance” brief, [Conviction Integrity Units and Internal Accountability Mechanisms](#). For more on CIU best practices for the [21st Century Prosecutor](#), stay tuned for our forthcoming statement of principles: **Conviction Integrity and Review: Best Practices for Ensuring Justice and Accountability**.