

Tavis Smiley Profiles Four Exonerated Men
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The two-night conversation from Chicago airs on WYCC-TV Wednesday, June 29 and nationwide Thursday, June 30 and Friday, July 1

LOS ANGELES, June 27, 2011 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Tavis Smiley sits down with four wrongfully-convicted men who, despite their innocence, spent more than a combined 50 years in prison. The conversation airs on the award-winning PBS program *Tavis Smiley*, exclusively on Chicago's WYCC-TV this Wednesday, June 29 and nationwide on public television Thursday, June 30 and Friday, July 1, 2011.

Recorded during Rainbow/PUSH Coalition's 40th anniversary conference, Smiley is also joined by the Reverend Jesse L. Jackson. Jackson and others have been working to address social injustices around the country.

A recent study by the Better Government Association, finds that 85 people wrongfully convicted in Illinois spent a total of 926 years in prison. These 85 wrongful convictions cost Illinois' taxpayers 214 million dollars.

Smiley talks with four men who are a part of those statistics. **Johnnie Savory** was convicted at the age of 14 for a double murder. After spending 30 years in prison and now on parole, he is still not fully exonerated by the state. **Marcus Lyons**, a military veteran with no previous record, he was found guilty of a rape he did not commit and served three years of a six year sentence.

Gordon Steidl spent 12 years on death row for murders he did not commit before winning a motion for a new trial in 2003. **Ken Berry** was convicted and sentenced to 35 years for kidnapping and sexual assault. He won a new trial because his lawyer failed to call witnesses who could have exonerated him.

To learn more about the four men, Illinois' Innocence Project and *Tavis Smiley* on PBS, visit www.pbs.org/tavis.

About TAVIS SMILEY on PBS

TAVIS SMILEY is a unique hybrid of news, issues and entertainment, featuring interviews with politicians, entertainers, athletes, authors and other newsmakers. In 2009, Tavis Smiley was named to *TIME*'s list of 100 "Most Influential People in the World."

TAVIS SMILEY is produced by The Smiley Group, Inc. / TS Media, Inc. in association with WNET/ New York. Major funding is provided by Wal-Mart and Nationwide Insurance. Additional support comes from PBS.

The 30-minute program airs weeknights on PBS. To get local listings and to watch past episodes, please visit www.pbs.org/tavis.

SOURCE TS Media, Inc.

Contacts: Leshelle Sargent, WNET, +1-323-953-5758, SargentL@wnet.org

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