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DARCEL D. CLARK
DISTRICT ATTORNEY, BRONX COUNTY

198 EAST 161ST STREET
BRONX, N.Y. 10451
(718) 590-2234

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**BRONX DISTRICT ATTORNEY DARCEL D. CLARK ANNOUNCES
VACATING OF CONVICTION IN 1989 MURDER;
HUWE BURTON SERVED 19 YEARS FOR STABBING HIS MOTHER TO DEATH
WHEN HE WAS 16**

Conviction Integrity Unit Reinvestigated; Found Burton's Confession Unreliable

Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark today announced that she joined the request to vacate the conviction and dismiss charges against Huwe Burton for the 1989 fatal stabbing of his mother, after a review of the case by the Conviction Integrity Unit determined that Burton's confession to the murder as a 16-year-old is not reliable based on new expert information about the phenomena of false confessions, as well as contradictions in the proof presented at Burton's trial.

Bronx Supreme Court Justice Steven Barrett granted the motion by the Innocence Project attorneys to vacate the conviction and dismiss the indictment against Mr. Burton, 46, in a hearing today in the Bronx Hall of Justice.

District Attorney Clark said, "Mr. Burton served 19 years in prison and since his release in 2009 has led a law-abiding life. He has maintained his innocence for almost 30 years and now we will clear his name of this brutal killing. The interests of the community are best served by dismissing this indictment so he can move on with the rest of his life."

"After a request by the Innocence Project attorneys, over a two-year period, the Conviction Integrity Unit worked with them to conduct a comprehensive reinvestigation of the case, which drew headlines during a time of crack cocaine-fueled violence in the city. Now, police and prosecutors use different techniques to interview suspects, and solve and try crimes, and we believe that Mr. Burton might not have been convicted using today's standards in law enforcement and the criminal justice system. I thank the Innocence Project for giving us the time to thoroughly investigate. The Conviction Integrity Unit will review any application and is prepared to review any conviction where there are legitimate concerns about the reliability of a confession."



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Innocence Project Attorney Susan Friedman said, “Huwe Burton is an extraordinary individual. The injustice he endured is unimaginable—to be wrongly convicted of murdering his mother, whom he adored. Today, Mr. Burton will finally get some measure of justice. The defense team is extremely grateful to District Attorney Clark and the Bronx CIU for their extraordinary work. We hope this tragic case can serve as a learning moment about the value of new scientific research on false confessions and steps that can be taken to avoid dangerously coercive interrogation techniques. Based on the three false confessions revealed during this investigation, we also hope and expect that the CIU is open to reviewing other cases handled by these detectives if the parties can develop a mechanism to identify them.”

The Conviction Integrity Unit scoured transcripts and case files, interviewed witnesses and scrutinized the quality of evidence used to convict Mr. Burton. Scientific evidence not available until recently has identified flawed interview techniques as well as other factors, such as youth, that increase the likelihood that a confession is untrue. Based on this new expert information, and on the inconsistencies and contradictions in the proof that was presented at trial, the District Attorney no longer has confidence that Burton’s confession is reliable. Had this new evidence been presented, it is probable that the verdict would have been more favorable to the defendant.

After a trial in Bronx Supreme Court, Burton was convicted on September 25, 1991 of second-degree intentional murder and fourth-degree weapon possession for stabbing his mother, Keziah Burton, 59, in her bed in their apartment on Eastchester Road on January 3, 1989. On February 13, 1992, he was sentenced to 15 years to life in prison.

District Attorney Clark thanked Gina Mignola, Deputy General Counsel and Chief of the Conviction Integrity Unit; Assistant District Attorney Risa Gerson, Senior Investigative Counsel; Assistant District Attorney Ryan Mansell of the Conviction Integrity Unit; NYPD Detective Brian Shea of the District Attorney’s Squad for their work on the investigation.

District Attorney Clark especially thanked Seth Steed, former Assistant District Attorney in the Conviction Integrity Unit, now Managing Attorney for the Criminal Defense Practice of the Neighborhood Defenders Services of Harlem, for his work on the investigation.