



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CONTACT:** Kristin Houlé, TCADP Executive Director  
512-441-1808 (office); 512-552-5948 (cell);  
[khoule@tcadp.org](mailto:khoule@tcadp.org)

## **Abolitionists Gather in Austin for Annual Conference**

*Local filmmakers to receive 2013 Media Award*

**(Austin, Texas)** — More than 150 activists and supporters from across Texas will gather this Saturday, February 23, 2013 at St. Edward's University in Austin for the annual conference of the Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty (TCADP). This event, "Changing the Conversation," will feature workshops and a panel discussion on how instances of wrongful convictions and evidence of wrongful executions are changing the conversation on the death penalty. Panelists include:

- Karen Boudrie, an award-winning journalist, news director, and public relations consultant who covered the capital trial of Carlos DeLuna in Corpus Christi in 1983 and was the last person to speak with him before his wrongful execution in 1989;
- Anthony Graves, a motivational speaker and legal consultant who spent 18 years in prison, including 12.5 years on death row, before being exonerated in 2010;
- Professor James Liebman, Simon H. Rifkind Professor of Law, Columbia University School of Law, and the lead author of *Los Tocayos Carlos: An Anatomy of a Wrongful Execution*

TCADP Board Member Estrus Tucker, an independent consultant from Fort Worth, will moderate the discussion.

During the conference, TCADP will present the 2013 Media Award to Joe Bailey, Jr. and Steve Mims, the filmmakers behind "Incendiary," a 2011 documentary about the case of Cameron Todd Willingham. Willingham was executed in 2004 for setting a fire in 1991 in Corsicana that killed his three young daughters. Serious questions persist regarding his culpability. "Incendiary" exposes the political manipulation of the Texas Forensic Science Commission as it sought to determine whether flawed forensic science played a role in Willingham's conviction and ultimate execution.

TCADP will present Appreciation Awards to JC Dufresne, of Cibolo, Texas, who played an instrumental role in the Texas Democratic Party's decision to endorse abolition of the death penalty in its 2012 Party Platform, and to the members of the Methodist Federation for Social Action-Southwest Texas Chapter, for their years of involvement and ongoing contributions to the abolition movement.

"The theme of this year's conference reflects our conviction that it is no longer a question of whether we should or will end the death penalty but, rather, what it will take to hasten its demise," said Kristin Houlé, the Executive Director of TCADP. "We encourage all elected officials in Texas to engage with us in this important conversation and evaluate the impact of the death penalty on our counties and the state as a whole."

The 2013 TCADP Annual Conference will take place in the Mabee Ballroom, which is located on the Third Floor of the Robert and Pearle Ragsdale Center at St. Edward's University, 3001 South Congress Avenue, Austin, Texas, 78704, from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. The awards ceremony will take place from 12:30 to 2:00 PM. All are welcome.

For more information, visit <http://tcadp.org/what-we-do/annual-conference/>.

TCADP is a statewide, grassroots advocacy organization based in Austin.

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