A new approach to innocence claims in Texas.
In January 2016, UNT Dallas College of Law opened the Joyce Ann Brown Innocence Clinic within the new law school in downtown Dallas, Texas, with funding from the state legislature.

The College of Law’s new innocence clinic expands the capacity for pursuing innocence claims in the state of Texas and introduces an innovative approach to working on behalf of clients.

A multidisciplinary team to work cases

UNT Dallas College of Law has created an approach to the review and investigation of cases that involves multiple disciplines from the criminal justice field of studies. Law students are partnered with teams of students from UNT Denton and UNT Dallas who have studied and worked in other areas such as forensics, criminalistics, and criminal justice. Working together, these student teams have skills and knowledge helpful in evaluating, investigating, and pursuing actual claims of innocence.

Joyce Ann Brown Innocence Clinic is the first law school in Texas to use multidisciplinary student teams in an innocence clinic.

A personal approach to clients

As you’ll read later in this material, student teams who work in the innocence clinic are inspired to work for others by studying the fight Ms. Joyce Ann Brown undertook to earn her own freedom from wrongful incarceration. Our students are driven by a spirit of service to others, and by honoring our mission of fighting for individual clients who count on us for legal representation.

Licensed Texas attorney-professors supervise the students in their review of letters and claims of actual innocence. All decisions to accept a case and pursue an investigation are ultimately made by the attorney-professors. UNT Dallas College of Law students are active participants in all levels of the representation of the client.
Case Requirements and Criteria

The Joyce Ann Brown Innocence Clinic considers cases with the following criteria:

1. Claims of actual innocence: The person seeking assistance must be in no way responsible for the crimes for which they were convicted.

2. The Clinic does not review claims of self-defense.

3. Sentence requirement: Five years or more remaining on your sentence.

4. Post-conviction status: The trial must be completed and resulted in a conviction and sentence.

5. New evidence: There is new evidence that was not available during the original trial.

How to Apply

If you believe your case meets the requirements and criteria for making a claim of actual innocence, please take these steps to apply to the Joyce Ann Brown Innocence Clinic:

1. Complete the Texas Prisoner Innocence Questionnaire.
   Please answer all questions on the questionnaire. If you do not know an answer, please write “I do not know.” If a question does not apply to your situation, please write “Does not apply.”

2. Sign the Consent for Release of Information form.

3. Mail both to the following address:
   
   JOYCE ANN BROWN INNOCENCE CLINIC
   UNT Dallas College of Law
   1901 Main Street
   Dallas, Texas 75201
**Naming the Innocence Clinic**

While planning for the new Innocence Clinic at UNT Dallas College of Law, the law school decided to connect the identification of our clinic with a person who had lived the experience of wrongful conviction. We want our students to always remember that we are representing people - we are not just handling cases. We want students to think about what it must be like for a person to be in prison for a crime that they did not commit. We know that our students will be separated by distance from their clients, but we want them to always be aware that people are counting on them. Naming the clinic after a person who had fought for her freedom and exoneration inspires our students as they work to free others wrongfully convicted.

We are proud to have Joyce Ann Brown as our namesake.

**Joyce Ann Brown**

Joyce Ann Brown was convicted of murder in 1980. She served nine (9) years, five (5) months and twenty-four (24) days for a crime she did not commit. With the help of Centurion Ministries of Princeton, New Jersey, a program dedicated to help those who have been wrongfully convicted, and a CBS *60 Minutes* television broadcast, Ms. Brown’s case was brought back before the courts in Dallas, Texas. In 1989, the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals reversed her conviction, finding that there had been prosecutorial misconduct. The Dallas County District attorney decided not to retry Ms. Brown. In 1993, her record was expunged. Her exoneration was fully recognized although she never received any monetary compensation from the state of Texas.

After her release, Ms. Brown dedicated her life to telling her story and working on cases of actual innocence. She was the author of the memoir *Joyce Ann Brown: Justice Denied* which shared her battle for justice, even from behind the prison walls. She founded MASS, Inc. (Mothers (Fathers) for the Advancement of Social Systems), an organization dedicated to aiding the transition of formerly incarcerated persons as well as those persons claiming actual innocence. Until her untimely death on June 13, 2015, Ms. Brown was a nationally recognized strong and devoted advocate for persons who have been incarcerated.
American Bar Association Accreditation

The UNT Dallas College of Law will be seeking American Bar Association (ABA) accreditation, which begins when a law school applies for provisional accreditation during its second year of operation. Provisional accreditation may be granted during a school’s third year of operation. A student who graduates from a provisionally approved law school is entitled to the same recognition given to students and graduates of fully approved law schools. The College of Law—including the Dean and its administration—is fully informed as to the ABA’s Standards and Rules of Procedure for the approval of Law Schools. We are determined to devote all necessary resources and to take all necessary steps to provide a program of legal education that will qualify for approval by the American Bar Association. The College of Law does not make any representation to any applicant that it will be approved by the ABA before the graduation of any matriculating student.