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Waller Shares His Story During Exoneree Luncheon

FORT WORTH, Texas – More than 100 Texas Wesleyan students, faculty and staff were on hand at the annual Wesleyan Innocence Project (WIP) Exoneree Luncheon to hear Patrick Waller share his story of being imprisoned for more than 16 years for a crime he didn't commit.

The luncheon was held at noon on Thursday, Sept. 3 in the law school's Bernie Schuchmann Conference Center. Waller is the 18th person to be exonerated in Dallas County through DNA testing.

"I did time for two other men's crimes," Waller said. "And they walked free."

Waller was convicted of aggravated robbery and aggravated kidnapping in 1992 after four people misidentified him in photo and in-person line ups. He was sentenced to life in prison.

Years later, the two men that were guilty of the crime confessed. But, because the statute of limitations had run out, they could not be prosecuted.

"One of those two men has apologized to me," Waller said.

Waller was freed in July 2008, and was exonerated of all charges by the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals later that year.

During the hour-and-a-half-long luncheon, Waller provided the students with some advice.

"In whatever law you end up practicing – civil, criminal – keep the fairness in you."

Currently, Waller is a junior at the University of Texas at Arlington, and said he would like to attend law school someday.

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