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KANSAS
COALITION
AGAINST THE
DEATH
PENALTY



A 501(c)(3) organization | Fall 2012

Kansas Coalition Against the Death Penalty

Save the Date for KCADP's 2012 Abolition Conference! *Former Death Row Warden Says "No More"*

On Saturday, November 10th, the Kansas Coalition Against the Death Penalty will host the 2012 Abolition Conference in Olathe, KS.

The 2012 Abolition Conference is a continuing event that includes KCADP's Annual Meeting. Last year's Rally for Repeal was a great success, and this year's event will be another inspiring and motivating afternoon.

Dr. Allen Ault will be the keynote speaker at this year's conference. Dr. Ault is a former prison warden of the Georgia Diagnostic and Classification Prison, where he oversaw executions for the state. Dr. Ault has also served as a Commission of the state Departments of Corrections for five governors in three states--Georgia, Colorado, and Mississippi. He is currently the Dean of the College of Justice and Safety at Eastern Kentucky University.



Dr. Allen Ault

Dr. Ault's presentation will be a rare opportunity to go behind the walls of our nation's prisons and get a firsthand account of life and work on death row. Dr. Ault's story addresses a concern about the death penalty that is often overlooked. He will speak about his experience overseeing executions, and the effects carrying out executions can have on corrections workers.

Following Dr. Ault's presentation, the 2012 Abolition Conference will continue with a series of educational workshops focused on different aspects of the death penalty. Attendees will have the opportunity to learn more about the risk of executing an innocent person, how the death penalty harms murder victims' families, how the death penalty is inconsistently applied, and public safety and cost.

The 2012 Abolition Conference will be preceded by the 2012 KCADP Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting will begin at 1:00pm. All members are invited to attend. The 2012 Conference will begin with Dr. Ault's address at 1:30pm. The conference is free and open to the public, but registration is requested. For more information please contact KCADP at 785-235-0214 or info@ksabolition.org.

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2012 Abolition Conference Details

Saturday, November 10, 2012
KCADP Annual Meeting: 1:00pm
Abolition Conference: 1:30pm
Located at the Center of Grace
520 S. Harrison St, Olathe, KS 66061
Registration is Free

KCADP Welcomes Our New Executive Director!



The Kansas Coalition Against the Death Penalty is pleased to announce that Mary Sloan has joined the organization as our Executive Director.

Having made Kansas her home many years ago, Mary brings her valuable skills and connections to our campaign to end the death penalty in Kansas.

Mary has over 20 years of senior executive experience including previous Executive Director positions, Fundraising Director, Lobbyist, and Government Affairs Director in both Kansas and in Georgia. She has successfully taken on other important public policy issues such as challenges of chronic illnesses, homelessness, and concerns of the aging.

Mary holds a BA in Political Science from Furman University and a Master's in Public Administration from the University of Missouri–Kansas City, with a concentration in Non-Profit Management. She has trained at the Midwest Center for Non-profit Leadership, as well as Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

A current resident of Overland Park, Mary is a member of St. Aidan's Church in Olathe and serves on the Vestry and Stewardship Committee. Her other memberships include the Olathe Chamber of Commerce and the Association of Fundraising Professionals.

As many of you know, Mary is the very first Executive Director for our organization. The Board is very excited that Mary has joined KCADP's staff. We look forward to the energy, experience and commitment she brings to our organization at this important time as we expand our campaign in support of abolition. Mary can be reached at 785-608-7229 and mary@ksabolition.org.

Please join us in extending a warm welcome to Mary Sloan!

From the Executive Director...

By Mary Sloan

What does the new Executive Director have to say? You may have asked yourself that question since I joined the organization in August.

First, I say that it is an honor and a privilege to be here at KCADP and to be working with you on this important issue. I also say we have a wonderful opportunity to achieve repeal, and I believe we are on the brink of making it a reality.

As Donna points out in her column, many new legislators will be coming to Topeka in January. While this may seem daunting at first, it is, in actuality, a great opportunity. That being said, it will take all of us to seize the opportunity.

I believe we have what we need to seize it. We have the assets we need. We have a highly qualified, experienced and talented team of board members and staff at KCADP. We have committed, talented and dedicated members all over the state. As we mobilize, and contribute our time, voices, knowledge and skills, we will make a difference.

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From the Executive Director...

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Elected representatives *want* to know how voters feel. If they don't hear from us, they may interpret silence as a reason to keep the status quo. We must - and we will - make sure they hear us.

So, finally, what do I say? I say I am delighted to have the chance to work with all of you for abolition. I say we have great opportunities coming up. I say we have what it takes to succeed. I say now is the time.

From the Board Chair...

By Donna Schneweis

"Who" supports abolition? As I talk with people and encourage them to reach out to others, I frequently get questioned about "who" will help repeal the death penalty in Kansas.

Often they are surprised by my answer. With many new legislators coming to Topeka in January, this is a prime time to look at the answer - and our potential for progress.

Our citizen supporters are old and young, middle class or not, all races and religions from the city and the country. On the legislative front, many assume that a legislator's party or political stance means they are for or against abolition. That simply isn't true for the death penalty.

In the 2010 Senate debate and tie vote, we had support for abolition from strong conservatives, middle of the roaders and progressives. Republicans and Democrats voted to repeal. The same holds true in the House - support comes from all sides.

One cannot simply assume a given legislator is pro or anti-abolition just because of their party or political leaning. This is such an important reality to remember as Election Day approaches. We must all continue to reach out to our candidates about their position and not make any assumptions.

There is no better example of the "unexpected abolitionist" than former death row warden, Dr. Allen Ault. We are so lucky to have him as our featured speaker at the 2012 Abolition Conference on November 10th. Most of us talk about the death penalty. This man carried it out.

He is not a lone voice in the wilderness. There is a growing chorus of support for abolition from corrections professionals who have been involved in executions. They understand it's not about partisan politics. Dr. Ault and other wardens speak out because they see how the death penalty fails us and the toll it takes on prison staff.

"Who" supports abolition? Even corrections officials! On November 10th, come, bring a friend, and see the diversity of support for abolition in Kansas!

Get Involved!

Join the KCADP Email List

You'll receive news updates, upcoming events and information about actions you can take to support abolition. Sign up by emailing info@ksabolition.org or returning the form on the back of this newsletter.

Donate

Your contribution will go a long way toward making abolition a reality in Kansas. Donations fund educational events, and print materials like this newsletter. Contribute online today at www.ksabolition.org/donate or mail your donation to KCADP using the form on the back of this newsletter.

Help Us Meet Our Goal!

As the next Legislative Session approaches, KCADP is preparing to mount its most intensive campaign phase to end the death penalty in Kansas. Given the years of hard work from volunteers, members and legislative supporters, an experienced staff operation, and the national momentum of repeal in 17 former death penalty states, it's time to make abolition a reality in Kansas again.

Buoyed by the endorsement of 28 Kansas organizations— including faith groups of many denominations, human rights advocates, social justice supporters, and members of legal and educational alliances – KCADP has sought and obtained an exciting boost to its future efforts.

A challenge grant from Atlantic Philanthropies will multiply new gifts from donors who contribute to KCADP. **Atlantic will match every contribution from first time donors 2:1 through May 2013. For donors who have given before, Atlantic will match 2:1 an increase over their previous level of giving.**

This challenge grant offers KCADP an excellent opportunity achieve the longed-for goal of a justice system that keeps Kansans safe and honors the suffering of victims without reinforcing a culture of violence and adding unnecessary costs to the state budget.

On the back of this newsletter you will find a donation form. Please consider making a donation to KCADP. It's the perfect time to maximize your contribution and help abolish the death penalty in Kansas.

If you have given to KCADP before and want to make sure your next contribution will count toward the matching grant, please contact Mary Sloan at 785-608-7229 or mary@ksabolition.org

Atlantic will match 2:1 every new donation through May 2013!

Make your donation today using the form on the back of this newsletter!

Upcoming Events

October

Oct 12th

Damien Echols of the West
Memphis Three Presentation
7:00pm

Unity Temple on the Plaza
707 West 47th St
Kansas City, MO 64112

*Tickets Required. Available at
<http://www.themip.org/Events>
(816)221-2166*



November

Nov 10th

2012 Abolition Conference
Featuring Former Warden Allen Ault
Annual Meeting: 1:00pm
Abolition Conference: 1:30pm

Located at the Center of Grace
520 S. Harrison St
Olathe, KS 66061

Kansas Capital Case Update

In the last few months, there have been several new developments in Kansas capital cases.

Riley County: Luis Aguirre was sentenced to life without parole in August. Aguirre was convicted in the murders of Tanya and Juan Maldonado. The jury recommended the sentence of life without parole.

Greenwood County: On August 24th, the Kansas Supreme Court overturned the death sentence and ordered a new trial for Scott Cheever. Cheever was convicted in the death of Sheriff Matthew Samuels. The decision by the Supreme Court marked the fourth death sentence to be overturned in the mandatory appeals process due to errors made during the trials.

“In a death penalty trial, even a small mistake can mean the difference between life and death. This case is another example of just how flawed the Kansas death penalty is. We can’t eliminate the possibility of error. It’s time for Kansas to replace the death penalty with life without the possibility of parole,” said KCADP Board Chair Donna Schneweis in a statement following the decision.

Damon Thibodeaux is the 141st person to be exonerated from death row.



Thibodeaux, who was released from a Louisiana prison on September 28, 2012, spent 15 years on death row for a crime he did not commit. He was sentenced to death in 1997 after giving a false confession in a 9-hour long interrogation.

Recent Kansas Editorials

Momentum for repeal is building in Kansas. Over the last few months several Kansas newspapers have taken a public stance against the death penalty.

In April, the *Leavenworth Times* called on lawmakers to consider repealing the death penalty. The paper noted that “It is impossible for the death penalty to be a deterrent for violent criminals when the sentences get tied up in the courts and never completed. Instead, it costs millions of dollars in legal fees, ties up judges and courts on endless appeals and motions, and delays final justice for victims and their families.”

In September, both the *Hays Daily News* and the *Marysville Advocate* printed editorials about the death penalty. The *Hays Daily News* questioned the state’s death penalty given the number of mistakes that have been uncovered. The wrote “it is obvious the system needs some work. Actually, a lot of work, given the 100-percent conviction reversal rate of late. Why have taxpayers foot a 70-percent-higher bill for a death penalty case if there isn’t a chance we’ll impose the penalty?”

The *Marysville Advocate* called on lawmakers to replace the death penalty with life without the possibility of parole. The *Advocate* wrote “investigations in other execution-minded states continue to reveal there is no fail-safe death penalty. Some defendants there have been put to death and later evidence surfaced revealing their innocence. It’s a frightening prospect that states hold that much power, because sometimes they get it wrong.” The *Advocate* concluded by saying “Locking someone up for life is far less costly and far more humane.”

You can find links to the full editorials on our website at www.ksabolition.org.



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If you want to receive your newsletter via email, please use the form below. If you enjoy the newsletter and want to support the anti-death penalty effort with a financial contribution, please use the form below to send a donation.

Make checks payable to: **KCADP**. Our address is: P.O. Box 2065, Topeka, KS 66601. *We thank you for your support!*

KCADP now accepts donations online via PayPal! Visit our website at www.ksabolition.org to contribute online today!

<p><u>Please send my newsletter by email:</u></p> <p>NAME: _____</p> <p>EMAIL: _____</p> <p>STREET ADDRESS: _____</p> <p>CITY: _____</p> <p>COUNTY: _____</p> <p>ZIPCODE: _____</p> <p>PHONE: _____</p>	<p><u>I would like to donate to KCADP:</u></p> <p>ENCLOSED FIND \$ _____</p> <p>NAME: _____</p> <p>STREET ADDRESS: _____</p> <p>CITY: _____</p> <p>ZIPCODE: _____</p> <p>PLEASE SEND ME A TAX RECEIPT: _____</p> <p>(Please note that we are a 501(c)(3) not for profit organization. Contributions are tax deductible.)</p>
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