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Dean Logan's Blog: Perserverance, Faith, and Some Damn Good Lawyers: The Fernando Bermudez Story

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Fernando Bermudez was robbed of half his life, spending 18 years in prison – from age 22 to 40 – for a murder he didn’t commit.

He was finally freed in November 2009, when his conviction – for killing a teenager outside a New York City nightclub – was thrown out by New York State Supreme Court Justice John Cataldo. In a scathing 79-page decision, Cataldo ruled that Bermudez’s rights had been violated due to grievous police and prosecutorial misconduct.

‘‘It’s been a very long, bitter struggle in which at times I lost hope and even questioned my own existence as a person,’’ says Bermudez. ‘‘What happened to me should not happen to anyone.’’

The Bermudez case was the basis for a fascinating program at RWU Law last week, featuring a stirring presentation by Mr. Bermudez, but also compelling commentary from his lead lawyer Barry Pollock, an expert on wrongful convictions from the Innocent Project Alba Morales crusading lawyer Betty Anne Waters (RWU Law 1998), and top officials from the Office of the RI Attorney General (Deputy AG Gerry Coyne) and RI Public Defender John Hardiman.

The event was conceived and organized by 3L Greg Rosenfeld, who wrote his law review note on the Bermudez case and is an advocate for improved police practices that can decrease the risk of erroneous identifications, the basis of so many wrongful convictions.

More details are posted in our newsroom.
Dean Logan, Greg Rosenfeld '11, and President Champagne

(Back Row L-R) Sean O'Mahoney '12, Gerald Coyne, R.I. Deputy Attorney General,
John Hardiman, R.I. Public Defender, Alba Morales, Fernando Bermudez, Betty Anne Waters '98, Barry Pollack, Esq. (Front Row L-R) Greg Rosenfeld '11, Dean David A. Logan, and Associate Dean Andrew Horwitz

Betty Ann Waters, Fernando Bermudez, Greg Rosenfeld