

## **INTEGRITY STAFFING SOLUTIONS LEADS THE WAY IN JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR EX-OFFENDERS**

ALLENTOWN, PA—Integrity Staffing Solutions, the Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia and Berger & Montague, P.C. jointly announce the successful resolution of a claim brought by an African-American job applicant who alleged that he was denied a job with Integrity Staffing Solutions at its Allentown facility due to a 30-year old criminal conviction for involuntary manslaughter.

Pursuant to the settlement agreement, Integrity Staffing Solutions has reaffirmed its policy of providing equal employment opportunity for people with past criminal convictions, and has agreed to change its employment advertisements and job applications to comply with its policy. Integrity Staffing Solutions also has further reemphasized to supervisors and personnel engaged in the hiring process the importance of and appropriate review of a job applicant's with criminal convictions.

After Mr. Dunn was initially turned away for the Warehouse Association position, based upon his 30-year old criminal conviction, the Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia and Berger & Montague, P.C. filed a claim with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, bringing the matter to the attention of Integrity Staffing Solutions. Upon being notified of the situation, Integrity Staffing Solutions acted quickly, reinforcing that people with criminal convictions should not automatically be denied work.

“Employment policies that impose a blanket exclusion on people with past convictions, without any consideration of the relationship of the conviction to the job in question, can constitute unlawful discrimination under federal and state law,” said Jennifer Clarke, Esq., Executive Director of the Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia. “Such policies remain a serious problem, with more Americans than ever before—especially racial minorities—struggling to find a job and a place in society under the weight of ancient criminal convictions.”

According to the charge, thirty years ago, Mr. Dunn, then in his early twenties, shot a man who had threatened him and his family. He accepted responsibility, pleaded guilty, and served his sentence. In the three decades since his crime, Mr. Dunn has been a model citizen, maintaining steady employment at a job that required him to obtain two government security clearances, counseling young people about the repercussions of crime, and serving on the Board of Directors for the Fellowship Farm in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, a leadership-development and conflict-negotiating organization. Still, since losing his job in a round of layoffs after 23 years, Mr. Dunn's conviction left him struggling to find good-paying work.

“We are very pleased that Integrity Staffing Solutions took prompt steps to ensure that Mr. Dunn was treated fairly under the law,” said Shanon J. Carson, Esq., of Berger & Montague, P.C. “It is our hope that the example set by Integrity Staffing Solutions will help build awareness among employers across Pennsylvania that policies discriminating against people with criminal backgrounds may be unlawful.”

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**About the Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia**

The Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia uses high-impact legal strategies to improve the well-being and life prospects of Philadelphia's most vulnerable populations by securing access to vital resources and services for those who have historically been denied them. Its current project areas include environmental health and justice, education equality for low-income, minority and disabled students, healthcare access for children on Medicaid, housing and community services for people with disabilities, employment for ex-offenders, and voting rights for low-income and minority communities.

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