



BIOGRAPHIES OF NEW PLAINTIFFS IN ILLEGAL ARRESTS LAWSUIT

(Detailed descriptions can be found in the amended complaint.)



*(Armondo Horsey
pictured above)*

ARMONDO HORSEY AND JONATHAN LINDSAY

On July 22, 2007, Armondo Horsey, an architect, and Jonathan Lindsay, a teacher, were illegally arrested while out in the Canton Square area of Baltimore. At approximately 2 am, while waiting for takeout pizza on the Square, Armondo's brother alerted him to a disturbance nearby, where an African American man was being detained by the Baltimore City Police. Armondo and Jonathan both decided to get a closer view, and noticed that there were approximately five officers restraining a man who was already in handcuffs. Both also saw that a plain-clothed officer was picking up the head of the man in cuffs and attempting to drive his head back down into the asphalt. Believing this to be excessive use of force, Jonathan pulled out his cell phone and opened it as if he was filming the scene. Several officers told Jonathan that he could not take pictures. When Armondo saw Jonathan speaking with the officers, he told him not to engage in a conversation with the officers, but to simply obtain their names and badge numbers and then leave, because he did not want to start a confrontation. An officer overheard Armondo's comment to his friend and singled him out from among the spectators and placed him under arrest. The officers told Jonathan to walk away and placed Armondo's arms behind his back and placed plastic cuffs on his wrists. The officer then began to drag him backwards. There were several people witnessing the arrest, and many inquired as to why he was being arrested. Witnessing the arrest of his friend, Jonathan shouted, "He didn't even do anything." Upon hearing this, another officer demanded that Jonathan be arrested as well. Officers pulled him out of the crowd and placed plastic cuffs around his wrists. Both Armondo and Jonathan were brought to Central Booking, Armondo was strip searched, and both men were released without charges the next morning.



TIM JOHNSON

On June 25, 2006, Tim Johnson, a Ph.D. candidate in neurobiology and a research associate at Texas A&M University, was illegally arrested while visiting Baltimore for the Annual Scientific Meeting of the Research Society on Alcoholism. Following a day of seminars, Tim went out in Fells Point with several colleagues, including a professor and a neuroscientist. As they were walking back to their hotel that night, the group saw a woman walking near them who they thought might be heading back to the conference too. A police car pulled up, questioned and then handcuffed the woman. Tim stopped walking to watch out of concern for the woman, and a plain-clothed police officer questioned and searched him. Without explanation, probable cause, or legal justification, the officer placed Tim under arrest, binding his hands behind his back with metal handcuffs. He was brought to Central Booking, strip searched, and then was released without charge at 8:30 am – just thirty minutes before he was supposed to make a presentation at the conference. The rest of the researchers at the conference, who were from all over the country, were outraged about the arrest of their colleague. The police report indicates that Mr. Johnson was charged with failure to obey.



TAVIS CROCKETT

On Sunday, July 23, 2006, 18-year-old Tavis Crockett was illegally arrested while sitting on his friend's front steps with a group of six young friends who were getting ready to walk together to play basketball. More than six police cars quickly drove up and parked on the street. A number of officers rushed out and demanded to know where a certain local drug dealer was. When the group of was unable to provide information, each of the young men was asked for his name, made to show identification, and patted down. No weapons, drugs, or contraband were found on Tavis or any of the other boys. Following the searches, without explanation, probable cause, or legal justification, Tavis was placed under arrest, along with all six of his friends. Tavis asked why they were being arrested and an officer said that they were being arrested because they were hanging around with a guy named Brandon, who the officer said was a drug dealer. Later, the boys learned that they were all arrested for loitering. Tavis tried to explain that they don't "hang around" Brandon and that they only know him from the neighborhood. Tavis was taken to Central Booking, strip searched, and ultimately released without charges the next morning – over an hour after he was supposed to report to his job.

On August 22, 2006, Tavis was illegally arrested again, for the second time in the same summer, while visiting his friend's house to play video games. He left the house to buy a soda at a local convenience store. Less than a block from the house, he was stopped by four officers who were in a marked police car parked on the street. An officer grabbed Tavis by the arm and said, "Come on, you're going downtown with us." Tavis asked why and was told he was being arrested for littering. Tavis immediately offered to pick up the food wrapper the officer claimed he dropped, tried to apologize, and said he didn't mean to litter, but the officer arrested him anyway. He was again taken to Central Booking, strip searched, held in a tiny hot cell, and was eventually released without charges.

RAFFIC SCOTT AND KERRELL WRIGHT

On August 30, 2006, Raffic Scott and Kerrell Wright, both members of the Israelite Church of God and Jesus Christ, were illegally arrested while engaged in protected First Amendment activity – handing out religious literature on the corner of Belair Road and Erdman Avenue with six of their fellow church members. When a police car pulled up, Kerrell began to use a video recorder to document the exchange between the officers and the church members, because church members had had past incidents of harassment with the Baltimore City Police. One of the officers told Kerrell that he did not have permission to record them. The officer then came toward Kerrell in an aggressive manner and tried to push the video camera down to prevent filming. When Kerrell did not immediately cease filming, another officer demanded that he produce identification. Kerrell had a Bible and the video camera in his hands, so he passed the video camera to Raffic, who continued to film the exchange. Then, the officer arrested both Kerrell and Raffic, after which they were taken to Central Booking, strip searched, and charged with disorderly conduct and loitering. The charges were eventually *nolle prossed*.

(See ACLU-MD's website to see video of Raffic and Kerrell's arrest: www.aclu-md.org.)



ERIN MARCUS

On October 12, 2007, Erin Marcus was illegally arrested when, along with seven other members of the Baltimore Animal Rights Coalition, she staged a peaceful, constitutionally protected protest outside Salt Restaurant in Baltimore City, to oppose their use of *foie gras*. The group carried signs and handed out literature about *foie gras*. They made sure to stand clear of the entrance to the restaurant, as well as to keep the walkway in front of the restaurant clear for pedestrians and patrons. Soon after they arrived, two Baltimore City police officers came and told all BARC members to cross the street or they would be subject to arrest for violating Baltimore's ordinance prohibiting loitering outside of liquor establishments. One BARC member explained that a representative from the Office of Licensing and Permits told him that they did not need a permit to protest. Another BARC member attempted to review the Baltimore City loitering ordinance with a police shift commander called to the scene in order to establish their legal right to be there. Not persuaded, the officers repeated their threat. All but two BARC members crossed the street and continued protesting on the other side of the street, where they could not be seen or heard by patrons of the restaurant. Erin, who had not been speaking with any of the officers, initially crossed the street with the other protestors, believing that they were moving only temporarily. When she realized that they were being prohibited from conducting their protest effectively, she returned to the original location with the other two protestors who remained. All three protestors were ultimately arrested and charged with Failure to Obey. Erin was taken to Central Booking and released on her own recognizance after being held for approximately thirteen hours. The charges against her were ultimately *nolle prossed*.



CAROL HIGGS

On March 2, 2004, Primary Election Day in Baltimore City, Carol Higgs was illegally arrested while exercising her protected First Amendment right to political free speech at a designated polling site on Cathedral Street. Carol was volunteering for presidential candidate Dennis Kucinich and was there to post signs and distribute literature in the designated area outside the polling site. When Carol arrived, there were two "no electioneering" signs – one on each side of the building – indicating the boundary between where electioneering was prohibited and where she was allowed to place her signs and pass out literature. She even asked an election judge if she and a colleague were allowed to hand out literature where they were standing and the judge said, "Yes, you're fine." Nonetheless, an officer came up, questioned her, and even harassed her by moving a "no electioneering" sign to make her leave. Ultimately, the officer arrested her for loitering when Carol didn't immediately leave after she asked whether she was free to go. Carol was taken to Central Booking and eventually released without charges being filed.



DONALD WILSON

On April 5, 2007, Donnie Wilson was illegally arrested for the second time by Baltimore police while waiting for his friend to play basketball. Donnie had placed his foot on the stoop of a vacant house next door to his friend's in order to tie his laces. He was then approached by plain-clothed officers, questioned and searched. Donnie indicated to the officers that he was offended that they seemed to assume, wrongfully, he was a drug dealer, after which one of the officers said at the scene that he was being arrested for "getting smart." However, the Statement of Charges filed by the arresting officer states that Donnie was charged with trespassing, and asserts that Donnie "did enter upon the property of 1567 Abbottson, said property being posted against trespassers in a conspicuous manner." In fact, the property was not posted, which is legally significant because under Maryland law trespass on unposted property is a crime only if the owner or owner's agent notifies the person to leave. Donnie was once again taken to Central Booking, strip-searched, and then released when the State's Attorney declined prosecution.



JEFFREY CHAPMAN

On October 13, 2005, Jeffrey Chapman was illegally arrested after getting off work. He left his normal daytime shift as a parking attendant for Camden Yards, went to a doctor appointment, stopped at CVS to purchase a few personal items, and then grabbed lunch from McDonald's. As Jeffrey walked down Marion Street in Baltimore City, while eating his Chicken McNuggets, an officer rode his bicycle up to where Mr. Chapman was walking, stopped just ahead of him, and threw a packet of sweet and sour sauce at his chest. The officer then ordered Jeffrey to pick up the sauce and accused him of littering. Jeffrey first stood in silence, dumbfounded by the officer's conduct. He then said to the officer "You didn't have to throw that at me." Without further incident or explanation, the officer arrested Jeffrey, who was eventually taken to Central Booking, strip-searched, and then released without charge at 6 am, shortly before he was supposed to go to work that day.

Go to ACLU-MD's website to learn more about the illegal arrests lawsuit:

www.aclu-md.org