

*Wrongful misdemeanor*

Kudos for the hard work and excellent outcome obtained by law students in “No Small Matter” (October-November, page 44). Overturning a verdict—whether by a retrial, reversal on appeal or by a sealing/expungement motion—is insufficient relief for a criminal client for the record will still be visible for anyone who looks hard enough to find it. Many but not all states have a process for a finding of factual innocence. Such a finding will result in the removal of the arrest and conviction information allowing Richard Leach to rightfully claim not only that he has no conviction, but also that he has never been arrested. Mr. Leach will have new employment opportunities and better living conditions restored. His record information will be removed from state data banks. We need to offer more diversion programs for minor crimes to hold offenders accountable while also giving them opportunities to avoid having a lifetime criminal record.

*Judge Eugene M. Hyman (retired)*

*Los Altos, California*