

## **JEFFREY GARDNER**

Jeff Gardner was convicted of second degree murder and sentenced to 20 years imprisonment before the Circuit Court of Cass County, despite evidence that he shot the deceased in lawful self-defense. Kent represented Mr. Gardner both on his direct appeal and in his Rule 29.15 proceeding. In 2003, the Missouri Court of Appeals, Western District found that Jeff's trial counsel was ineffective and ordered a new trial. *Gardner v. State*, 96 F.3d 120 (Mo. App. W.D. 2003). Rather than risk a second trial, Mr. Gardner, with the assistance of Kent, plea-bargained with the state for a seven-year sentence on the reduced charge of voluntary manslaughter. As a result of this plea-bargain, Mr. Gardner was immediately released from prison and was able to resume his life and career as a truck driver.