

22<sup>nd</sup> JDC

Division E

District Attorney Warren Montgomery

Prosecutors

Diversion

This letter is in appreciation for your faith in me and for giving me the chance to prove myself via the *Pre-Trial Intervention Program*. On June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014 I was arrested for several narcotics related felonies including DUI. This was my first time being charged with a crime outside of being delinquent on my child support payments or minor traffic violations.

I am a disabled combat veteran of the Iraq war. I received a medical discharge on June 14<sup>th</sup> 2007. A few months after my discharge I began working in law enforcement for [REDACTED]. I was employed with that agency for a few years. I had purchased a new vehicle, was buying a home, was attending Southeastern Louisiana University working on degrees in criminal justice and one in political science. Towards the end of my employment with [REDACTED] I was living what appeared to be a great life with a promising career. However, things were not so. I had previously been prescribed various narcotic medication due to my injuries while in the Army. Nearing the end of my employment with [REDACTED] I began struggling with PTSD. My nights were sleepless; I was on constant alert, my anger was spiraling out of control. I began seeking treatment through the VA. Once treatment began then so did the prescriptions.

Once I was no longer employed in law enforcement I had no reason to not take the narcotics. We all know how this story goes, in the beginning the medications helped greatly. Of course, things

progressed to the point where I was needing more and stronger medications both for pain and anxiety. Before I knew it, my life began spiraling out of control. All of the things I had worked for had somehow vanished. They were replaced by narcotics and friends that used narcotics. I tried asking for help with substance abuse through the VA which resulted in a week stay in a detox and me no longer being prescribed narcotics through the VA. So, my solution was to begin seeing outside "pill mill" doctors. The problems increased but I did not know where to turn for help. At this point I had alienated all my family, law enforcement, and military friends.

Fast forward to my arrest date. On this date I had every intention to get full of narcotics and commit suicide. It would have been my 3<sup>rd</sup> attempt at that point but this day I was determined to succeed. I was taken to Covington police station by Covington PD. I do not recall any of my conversations there nor being booked into the St. Tammany Parish jail. I just remember waking up in an isolation cell about 4 days later.

I was given an opportunity to enter the *Pre-Trial Intervention Program*. I knew it would require some accountability on my part which I desperately needed. More importantly it required this court, district attorney's office, prosecutors, and diversion staff to have faith in me. It was a faith that I did not have in myself nor had I had in quite some time. I again sought out treatment and was then given the opportunity to attend inpatient substance abuse treatment followed directly by inpatient PTSD treatment.

I am proud to say that I have been 100% clean and sober since December 6, 2014. All of the requirements for the *Pre-Trial Intervention Program* have been completed. Many of such have not only been completed but exceeded. I attend, lead, and even sponsor people through the AA program. I am very active in my church. Community

service is a big part of my life now and it has replaced my "life's purpose" if you will. I am an active member in both my local VFW and American Legions. Today I use my law enforcement and military training to lead a security team for my church which includes compliance with all laws and coordinating training with local law enforcement.

If it weren't for the faith shown in me by this court and district attorneys office I would not be where I am today. I would still be the broken, suicidal, pill popping alienated former army guy who couldn't manage to not get hurt, (crazy thinking I understand but these were my thoughts at the time) ex-cop whom failed at that too. Instead today I am a community leader, a disabled veteran, a sponsor who is active with 7 sponsees (4 in drug court, 1 in veteran's court), and most importantly an example that life isn't over that we can recover and are worth the faith! So, from the bottom of my heart and also from my family and all those whom I have had the privilege to pass a little experience, strength, and hope on to, truly thank you for just that small gesture of faith! Alternative sentencing saved my life!

[REDACTED]