

## **PETITIONER'S STATEMENT FOR REQUEST OF A SENTENCE MODIFICATION**

I come before you with gratitude for the time you are providing in considering my path through incarceration. This path has been one of redemption, personal, and intellectual growth. At the age of seventeen I began as an immature juvenile. Now approaching the age of 35, with over half of my life in prison and through many difficult and successful moments, I have grown to be a compassionate, mindful adult.

Discovery of oneself in an environment non-conducive to change can be daunting. Early in my incarceration, revisiting the night of the crime proved difficult: How can I have participated in something that resulted in a person's death? For a teenager, this was difficult to comprehend. I oscillated from denial to reality. After I was sentenced to 38 years, I was provided a copy of the pre-sentence investigation report. Included in it were letters by the Horan family, and it was their letter that broke through the wall I created to avoid completely feeling and facing my role in their pain and suffering.

With an open heart and mind I read each word. Most profound was the letter of Mr. John Horan. His suffering, unimaginable to me as a father, touched the depths of my heart and mind. He also showed compassion and the hope that I would reflect on the errors of my life choices, rehabilitate myself and practice "constructive efforts that can validate an altered maturity towards service to others." It was his words and examples of humanness that helped me to recognize that I was not beyond redemption.

Gradually, a maturity developed and life's lessons became clearer to me. Each institutional program that became available I participated, learned and completed. I learned life skills and became a peer mentor. I was later provided the honor of becoming a hospice and bereavement volunteer, a service I continue to provide. With the financial help of my family, I was able to expand my education and earn an Associate's Degree with a 3.8 GPA. Currently I am completing courses towards a Bachelor's Degree (Psychology Major).

Occupational opportunities provided a wealth of knowledge and experience while I worked as an Optical Lab Technician (1998-2000), Industry Shop Clerk (2000-2006), Librarian's Aide (2006-2007), Recreational Aide (2007-2008), and a Certified Nursing Assistant (2008-present). When each job offer presented itself I accepted the chance to acquire a new skill set and working experience.

Working as a CAN and hospice volunteer has created an insight into life that has proven invaluable to me. The ability to give myself to others, to be of service and provide care for those

suffering through disease and terminal illness has given me another dimension of personal development and life understanding.

This statement may only be a few pages in length as I try to convey significant areas of growth. Each day of my imprisonment has been filled with a plethora of human emotion that required humbleness and patience to balance reflection, shame, progress, guilt, encouragement, and remorse in endeavor to understand my place in life.

I am fortunate to have become the man I am. Thankfully, I have had so much help along the way. From the unconditional love of my family, to the guidance and direction of people gracious enough to see past my status as an inmate, each person contributed to the evolution of my maturity. Along with a formal education and personal enrichment learning I gained what was integral for the self-edification that affirmed my value as a thinking, rational, decent, moral human being.

Each avenue afforded to me by law to express my remorse has been used by me. This statement allows me another opportunity and I want to communicate my apology again. I am sorry and will forever be for the suffering I caused the Horan family. My contrition not only resides in words, but also my actions and service to others.

My description of growth and maturity in addition to the accompanying document are what I offer as evidence of change. A change that created a value system I cannot imagine living without. I am not the same juvenile that failed David Horan, his family, my family, and society. Before you is an adult, rehabilitated, and humble that seeks a second chance in life. Hopefully all that I have submitted will provide you with insight into assessing my maturity, atonement, and remorse.

Respectfully,

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Nicholas Aponte