



PARDON PROJECT OF WASHINGTON COUNTY
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March 7, 2022

To whom it may concern,

As the Pardon Project coordinator for Washington County, nearly all of my time and work has been both helpful and rewarding. I was hired on July 2021 with the expectation that I would work about 20 hours per week. This was in addition to my full time job as a machinist, for which I work a night shift. I work directly with Brian Gorman, the Executive Director of Southwestern Pennsylvania Legal Aid, who was my supervisor.

A large portion of my time was spent sharing knowledge and information. With all of the dealings I have had in regards to the project, it is very clear that a large majority of Pennsylvania residents are unaware of a pardons existence and/or the process involved. Most didn't know that a pardon was an option for them. I think we are responsible for some of the earliest applications ever here in Washington County.

As someone in long term recovery, I was able to share this information quickly and easily with the recovery community, which has proven to be the source of a high percentage of our applications. I have communicated with several treatment facilities, churches, self-help groups, non-profits, and county agencies. We continue to share and work alongside these agencies today, helping connect people with a multitude of services in and around the county. Mr. Gorman is our connection with attorneys, where we also have support and volunteers.

Since starting last summer, we have screened over 80 potential pardon applicants, over 60 of these applicants meet our counties' eligibility criteria, and we have been connecting them with pardon coaches as promptly as possible. We have over 20 volunteer pardon coaches. We've set up an email, PardonMe@splas.org and a website: <https://www.spla.org/pardon> to share information and correspond with anyone that expresses interest in the project.

Some of the most rewarding experiences have been on personal levels with pardon applicants, even with those that may not yet meet eligibility criteria. Sharing information about the pardon project gives them a sense of relief and hope. Myself being one of them.

In such a short time we were able to bridge so many gaps between people, their counties, their government(s), and the agencies involved that offer a variety of services to those in need. There's an entire new movement within the community here around pardons and second chances, that continues to grow and gain support.

I am very happy to report that an anonymous donor gave us a check for \$10,000 which extended my fellowship until June; and this week, we are submitting a grant proposal to a local foundation, which seems very interested in helping us keep this position when that money runs out.

I am grateful for this experience and for this opportunity, I feel it is only the beginning of something much larger, for me and for the people of Washington County.

Respectfully,

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