



**SUPPORT LETTER**

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**TOOL KIT**

**RTime Co.**



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## INTRODUCTION

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RTime Co. is a nonprofit 501c3 organization made up entirely of formerly incarcerated lifers, all of whom were classified as “Youth Offenders” under California law. We have a combined one hundred and twenty-two (122+) years of life experience in California’s prison system. Each one of us has a unique story of resilience and triumph navigating the prison system and continuing that success into the free community. We share common stories of personal transformation, higher education, and resocialization of being community conscientious through the power of mentorship. Today, we are not only free, we are certified life coaches, substance use counselors, community organizers, certified circle keepers, seasoned facilitators, and prison experts.

Our mission is to help incarcerated people heal, grow, and thrive through the power of life changing peer mentorship so they can be good neighbors when released back into the free community. We believe that our lived experience of incarceration and personal transformation makes us credible messengers and subject-matter experts in the field of healing-centered care, rehabilitation, and recovery.

Our goal is to assist people who are incarcerated, and also to help families of incarcerated people learn best practices for supporting their incarcerated loved one(s).

This ***Support Letter Tool Kit*** is meant to help incarcerated people and their loved ones create powerful portfolios to increase their chances of being found suitable by the Board of Parole Hearings (BPH). Whether this is a person’s initial parole hearing or their 10th, this toolkit can help people identify best strategies for humanizing an incarcerated person, highlighting positive changes, addressing BPH concerns, and showing a strong support system, all of which can increase an incarcerated person's chances for release.

The Forensic Assessment Division (FAD) psychologists and BPH Commissioners strongly prefer support letters that are within a year of a person's actual Board hearing, but that doesn’t mean you can’t start the letter writing process now and just update it when it’s time to submit letters of support. If your loved one is going to their subsequent hearing, each letter of support should be updated with the current date. Any letters that are not current are usually not considered valid. The (FAD) psychologists and BPH Commissioners will not take outdated letters seriously, and oftentimes they will reject them outright, so it is super important that letters of support be as close to a person’s



Board hearing as possible but also submitted before the person's psychological evaluation, which is typically 3-5 months before a person's Board hearing.

Well-crafted support Letters are instrumental in your incarcerated loved one being found suitable for parole. At the same token, bad letters of support or a lack of support letters can be used by the Board as part of their reason for denial, thus keeping your incarcerated loved one in prison longer than they need to. If the Board believes that a person has no outside community/family support, they will deem it as a risk factor for reoffending, which becomes a barrier to being found suitable for release.

Effective letters of support should paint a picture and tell a story about your incarcerated loved one, and no one can tell that story better than you can because you know them best. The story should be about who your loved one is today and the tangible support they will have upon release. Be specific about those changes and the support you can realistically provide. Support letters reveal the type of support your loved one will have available to them when they are granted parole or early release. It also reflects the support system your incarcerated loved one has created and maintained for themselves while incarcerated.

Community support is more than just family and friends. It includes and can be: potential employers, character reference letters, transitional housing acceptance letters, organizations, NA/AA sponsors, mentors, life coaches, religious institutions, politicians, teachers, college acceptance and support, the incarcerated person's former neighbors, employer, or coworkers, etc. As a general rule, the closer the relationship to the incarcerated person, the more impactful the letter can be. It's also worth noting that a "bad" support letter can be more damaging than no support letter, so please consider the following suggestions:

- Format of a Support Letter
  - Invite readability by typing the letter and include a lot of white space
  - Save the document so you can easily revise or update later if you need to
  - Keep the letter to one to two pages in length
  - Include: date, signature, contact information
  - Include a photo of yourself on the letter so that the BPH commissioners can put a face to the words
- Contents of a Support Letter
  - Introduce yourself (what you do for a living)
  - Describe the purpose of your letter



- Describe your relationship to the incarcerated person, any positive changes you've seen in them, and why you believe they will be an asset to the free community (character reference)
- Tell a story about the person and be specific
- Highlight the person's personal accomplishments since being incarcerated
- Describe how you plan on supporting him or her (housing, financial support, friendship, employment, transportation, emotional support). Be specific.
- Do NOT include
  - Animosity against the prison system or court system (unjust, unfair, etc.)
  - Animosity against the person(s) who was harmed (the person provoked it, etc.)
  - Your belief that your loved one has already served enough time
  - Don't tell the commissioners how to do their job
  - Don't ramble. Respect the commissioner's time. Be concise and keep content relevant
- When to submit & how to submit a support letter
  - Submit the letter at least six (6) months before your loved one's Board hearing so that it will be in their C-File before the psych eval. If your loved one is not having an updated psych eval, you may submit letters at least one (1) month before the hearing. Your loved one can also submit letters during the hearing, but this is not advisable because you want the commissioners to read these before the hearing
  - Do not submit support letters more than a year before your loved one's Board hearing
  - Make copies of the support letters and send to:
    - BPH Lifer Desk at your loved one's institution (original letter)
    - Send a copy to your loved one's CCI Counselor
    - Send a copy to your loved one's attorney
    - Send a copy to BPH headquarters in Sacramento
    - Board of Parole Hearings PO Box 4036
    - Sacramento, CA 95812-4036
    - Send a copy to your loved one
    - You can also send the original to your loved one's CCI Counselor or to BPH headquarters in Sacramento, but if you do so, make sure you also send a copy to the prison's BPH Lifer Desk. The purpose of sending in all these copies is because sometimes letters get lost or the person failed to put it in the C-File. Sending in all of these



copies ensures that the support letters will make it into your loved one's C-File

- Inside tips that help with the process
  - Keep a copy for yourself
  - Share a template for others. Oftentimes people want to submit a support letter but don't know what to say
  - You can help a person write it and offer feedback, but it's best practice to have the person write it for themselves
  - Focus on tangible support. Be specific
  - Have a point person collect the letters from others, and submit them. It's a good idea to have a point person gather letters from others and submit them. People have busy lives, so it's helpful if a point person stays on them and does the footwork by submitting the letters for others who may forget or seem too busy with other priorities



January 7, 2023

Your Photo Here

**RE: John Doe, CDCR #A12345**

Dear Honorable Commissioners of the Board of Parole Hearings,

**Step 1: Introduce yourself** - Describe what you do for a living and your relationship to the incarcerated person. Example:

My name is Tamara Lopez, and I am writing in strong support of my younger brother John Doe who is scheduled to appear before the BPH on 4/17/2023. I've worked as a registered nurse for the past 16 years and lived in Oakland for the past 41 years. I am also an active member of the Oakland Unified School District PTA. I've been married to my husband Jose for 19 years, we own a house, and we have two children who absolutely adore their Uncle John.

**Step 2: Describe the incarcerated person** - Bring the person's character to life. You can use a short story to paint a picture of the person. Be specific. Example:

John is a compassionate man and very generous with his time. A few months ago I was going through a very difficult time with some health issues. Throughout my whole ordeal, John comforted me and shared scripture to help me get through it. He even made a get well card and had all of his friends sign it with encouraging words. Had it not been for John's emotional support, I'm not sure I would have made it through. This is just one example of John going out of his way to help others.

**Step 3: Describe your support for the incarcerated person** - This step is very important. Be specific. Example:

## Tool Kit

### Support Letters



When John is released, I will personally drive him to see his parole officer and take him to NA meetings. I also have a room at my house for him to stay for as long as he needs until he is able to afford a place of his own. I will buy John clothes and help him financially until he gets a job. I will provide emotional support and do everything in my

power to make sure that John succeeds.

#### **Step 4: Describe any positive changes you've seen in the incarcerated person and their personal accomplishments - Example:**

I've known John all his life, and I have personally witnessed his positive transformation. Throughout the years, John has consistently demonstrated remorse, accountability, and insight through the transformative work he's done within himself as well as through the service he does for his peers. I am very impressed by the complete turn-around he's achieved, particularly in regards to his sobriety and the mentorship that he devotes to incarcerated youth. John volunteers his time to mentor, guide, and support incarcerated youth ages 18-25. John is a STOP Domestic Violence Program facilitator, where he helps his peers develop behaviors of building healthy relationships while addressing harmful behaviors based on power and control. John is also a GRIP facilitator for a one-year program that helps students comprehend the origins of their violence and develop the skills to track and manage strong impulses to avoid acting out in destructive ways. John actively participates in Church services and has consistently and faithfully participated in NA during the past 11 years where he currently serves as NA chairperson. John's personal change is sincere and real. I am confident that he will succeed in the free community.

#### **Step 5: Thank the commissioners, give your contact information, and SIGN your letter - Example:**

Thank you, Honorable Commissioners, for taking these thoughts into consideration. You can reach me at (987) 654-3210 or tamlopez24@gmail.com.

Sincerely, Tamar Lope Tamara Lopez



# 1. CHECK LIST

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A **Check List** can be used as a way to keep track of the letters of support you or your family member will need to request. Keeping track ensures that you are requesting letters of support in a timely manner that will fall within the time (1 year) of your family member’s actual board hearing.

| <b>Family &amp; Friends</b> | <b>Name &amp; Address</b> | <b>Date Sent</b> | <b>Date Returned</b> |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|----------------------|
|                             |                           |                  |                      |
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|                             |                           |                  |                      |
| <b>Employment Offers</b>    |                           |                  |                      |
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**Tool Kit**  
**Support Letters**

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|-------------------------------|--|--|--|
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|                               |  |  |  |
| <b>Character Reference(s)</b> |  |  |  |
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| <b>Transitional Housing</b>   |  |  |  |
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| <b>Organizations</b>          |  |  |  |
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**Tool Kit**  
**Support Letters**

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|----------------|--|--|--|
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| <b>Sponsor</b> |  |  |  |
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|                |  |  |  |

## 2. FAMILY & FRIENDS SUPPORT LETTERS

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Here are some examples of letters written on behalf of their love ones. These men were found suitable and their support played a huge factor.

Name

Return Address

October 11, 2018

RE: Reynaldo Aguilar, P20708

Dear Honorable Members of the Board of Parole Hearings,

We are writing on behalf of our eldest son Reynaldo Aguilar Jr., P20708 in support of his release. Over the years of his incarceration we have seen him grow into a man, a man that we are very proud of. He has taken responsibility for his life and become a tremendous asset to our family. We look forward to

his contribution not only to our family but also to the larger community we are part of. It amazes us to hear and see what he's done with his life. We know it's his strong faith in God and desire to atone for what he's done that propels him forward. Unlike his childhood and the different phases he went through growing up, who he is today is the man he set out to become. We have seen him work hard to be who he is today. That path has not been easy for him. There have been trials, situations, and events that he has confided in us about that have tested his character but he continues to remain committed to this path he has chosen for himself. In our opinion he has proven what it takes to live life in the real world. He is no longer the 19 year old boy who didn't weigh the consequences of his actions.

We will continue to support our son as we have been. He has expressed to us his desire to finish college. We will financially support him with that. After he receives his driver's license we will purchase him a used car to help him with transportation to and from work. We own two homes. He will be welcomed to stay at either one. Our pastor, Pastor John Atkins of Calvary Chapel of North Long Beach, is also willing to provide housing for our son. Pastor John has also expressed how he would like for our son to start a 12 step program at his church for the people in the community. We look forward to our son getting an opportunity to finally be a part of our lives out here.

With all that has been said we don't ignore the fact that a travesty has taken place. We have never forgotten the Gonthier family in our prayers. We will continue to support our son in his efforts to try and right his wrongs. We bare some of that responsibility because of the mistakes we made in our personal lives and in raising our son. We too have been impacted by this event. We have drawn closer to God and each other as a result. Our family is far from perfect and we continue to have struggles with our other children, but we believe our son Reynaldo will be a stabilizing and positive force in our family.

Thank you for giving due consideration to the pleadings and confessions of parents who feel inadequate to write about loss and second chances in the same letter. For that we ap

Sincerely,

Name & Contact Information

## Tool Kit

### Support Letters

Name

Return Address

June 18, 2019

Re: Parole Suitability Hearing for Reynaldo Aguilar, P20708

Dear Board of Prison Hearing Commissioners,

My name is Eric Aguilar. I am the younger brother of Reynaldo Aguilar Jr. I am 28 years old. I currently work for Steps & Stones Inc. I've been employed for the past ten years. I'm a high school graduate and a follower of Jesus Christ. I've never been in trouble with the law, and although my brother Reynaldo has encouraged me to go to college since high school, only recently have I decided to achieve a vocational trade.

I was 5 years old when my brother Reynaldo was suddenly taken out of my life. For a long time my parents hid from my twin Ernesto, my other brother Ryan, and me that my brother was in prison and what he was in prison for. All throughout my childhood and adolescence my mother had us believing my brother was coming home in 2 years. I believe it was her way of coping with my brother's incarceration. But, for me that did more harm than good. I grew up thinking my brother would show up one day only to be cruelly left disappointed and resentful.

I have been fortunate to maintain contact with my brother throughout these years through phone calls, visits, and family overnight visits. He's always been someone I've admired and looked up to. There was a time in my adolescence when my twin and I began to act out. I would hide and avoid any contact with my brother because I knew what I was doing and how I was living was unacceptable to him. He wouldn't tolerate any of it and would tell me "God expected better from me." During our visits with him he would always pull us aside and tell us how he felt about gangs and drugs. He never ever glorified that lifestyle. He made sure we understood he did not want us following in his footsteps.

As I got older and began to understand that my brother was in prison and finding out what he was in prison for it was hard for me to believe because that's not who I grew up knowing. From as young as I could remember he's talked to me about God, he's tried to inspire me by sharing with me his achievements & everything he's learning in there, we've prayed together, and he's never steered me wrong. He's been nothing but what a big brother should be. There were times when I would get jealous and envious of the relationship/friendship he's developed with guys my age in prison and I've wished that was me. But, I've also seen his heart break when he talks to me about his past. There's no doubt in my mind that my brother is not the same person he was when he went to prison at 19 years old.

As far as support, there's nothing I wouldn't do for my brother. Today, he and I have a really strong relationship. We talk weekly on the phone. I am financially able to help him with packages and college books. Nothing will change. If he is released from prison I would help him with whatever he needs.

I do have to admit it breaks my heart to hear him say he can't come home because of the lifestyle my other two brothers are living, but I understand. Wherever he is sent I'll be there

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for my brother. If he tells me he needs clothes, not a problem. If he needs a ride to one of his groups, not a problem. If he is released my family and I are going to buy him a car. If your concern is whether or not he has support I assure you he's very much taken care of. Truth be told I'm looking forward to his support.

There's no question my brother is sorry for what he's done and though he doesn't talk to me much about it he tells me by the life that he lives today. All I ask is a second chance for my brother so that we can start working on all the plans we've made over the years.

It would not be right if I didn't mention the Gonthier family, my brother taught me that no matter how good things are, and blessed we as a family are there's a family out there who is living with the pain of what he's done. For that I too am sorry. I along with my family always pray for them and their healing.

Thank you for considering what I have shared with you about my brother.

Sincerely,

Name & Contact Information

## Tool Kit

### Support Letters

Name

Return Address

July 10, 2019

RE: Parole Hearing for Reynaldo Aguilar Jr., P-20708

Dear Members of the Board of Parole Hearings,

My name is Valerie Arteaga, I am 41 years old, and I am a Case Manager at a Private Law Firm which specializes in Social Security Benefits, and have been employed at this office for 11 years and 4 months.

I am Mr. Reynaldo Aguilar's first cousin. I believe despite the mistakes he has made, he is a good person. If given the chance he will be a law abiding citizen and continue being a better man. He has accepted the crime committed and has taken responsibility for his actions. Since being incarcerated he has taken full advantage of the opportunities he has been provided, furthering his education, joining programs, and working on bettering himself, emotionally and spiritually.

He has a strong family structure and I am willing to provide housing, transportation, and any other help he may be in need of.

I appreciate your time in reading my statement. Thank you.



Name & Contact Information

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### Support Letters

May 1, 2019

Board of Parole Hearings  
Avenal, CA 93204

Dear Board of Commissions,

My name is Jennifer Gallegos, I'm 39 years old. I am currently working as a Disclosure Coordinator for a mortgage company. I've been residing at my current residence for the past 6 years.

I met Reynaldo Aguilar two years ago through a mutual friend. During this time I've gotten to know him very well. He's been really honest and open about his past. We've talked at great lengths about the things he's had to overcome, for example his gang involvement and drug addiction. During this time we have developed a strong friendship and since then it has evolved into a relationship.

We are currently engaged. I support and believe in the man he is today. I in no way condone his past actions or the choices he made that brought him to prison that resulted in the death of an innocent man. What I know about him today, the person I speak to daily on the phone and the person I visit monthly and sit across from the person I have welcomed into my life, it's hard for me to fathom the life he has once was a part of. I'm convinced his change has everything to do with his relationship with God and his commitment to his rehabilitation.

I understand he will have challenges from employment to adjusting to a new life outside of prison, but I'm completely committed to his success while on and off parole. I will open my home to him. When I'm not working I will assist him with transportation, drive him to any required programs he must attend until he gets his driver's license. I will show him how to use the internet and other technology to help him find employment. His mother and I will collaborate together and see to it he has what he needs to get adjusted to his new life outside of prison. I hope the board panel gets to see the tremendous change that I have been able to see and experience after getting to know Reynaldo. I respectfully ask that you give great consideration not only to this letter, but also to his continuous efforts toward change and making amends. I believe he will not only be a positive force and contributor to me and my family, but also to my neighbors and community.

Name & Contact Information



### 3. EMPLOYMENT OFFERS

Employment offers are particularly hard to get because of the long delay between a person’s actual hearing, when they are found suitable, they then have to wait for the governor’s decision. Nonetheless, it is important if there are family members or friends who own businesses willing to offer temporary employment it is good to get that on record for the board to consider.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA — DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AND REHABILITATION

EDMUND G. BROWN JR., GOVERNOR

**DIVISION OF ADULT INSTITUTIONS**  
CORRECTIONAL TRAINING FACILITY  
PO BOX 686  
SOLEDAD, CA 93960  
(831) 678-3951



March 11, 2016

To whom it may concern:

#### LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION FOR MR. AGUILAR

Mr. Aguilar was assigned to the Correctional Training Facility (CTF), Facilities A/B Vocational Construction Technology. This course is part of a curriculum produced by the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER). NCCER develops and maintains a Training Process which is nationally recognized, standardized and competency based.

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) has chosen this NCCER-Accredited Program and hired certified NCCER instructors to ensure that the men that complete a vocational program at CTF will be qualified, competent and can be gainfully employed. Mr. Aguilar's occupational job title is: **Carpentry Helper DOT Code Number 869.687.01; Form Builder's Helper DOT 869.664.015; Laborer Carpenter DOT 863.664.0147; Plumber's Helper DOT 862.381.034; Carpenter DOT 860.281.010; Construction Worker DOT 869.644.014; Maintenance Repair DOT 899.381.010; & Tile Setter DOT 861.381.054.**

As a trainee in this NCCER- accredited program, Mr. Aguilar has acquired the trade skills in: blue print reading, site layout, concrete & masonry footing and foundations, floor systems, wall and ceiling frames, cutting and stacking rafters, interior and exterior finishing, stair layout & assembly, electrical residential, plumbing, HVAC, drain, waste, and vent (DWV), cabinetry, commercial electrical, and green building techniques. In addition Mr. Aguilar has received Training from the Hazardous "Right to Know".

Mr. Aguilar has demonstrated personal integrity, leadership and has been a role model for others by his own conduct. Mr. Aguilar has consistently maintained a strong desire to advance in his knowledge and proficiency in this marketable profession by continuing his education and experience. Mr. Aguilar is a trainee in this program and is listed in the NCCER National Registry.

Mr. Aguilar was given an opportunity to design and fabricate two (2) special construction projects for the Vocational Construction Technology Shop. He successfully demonstrated his knowledge and ability in the construction of the hands on tasks listed below. He is commended for his effort, hard work and for the success of these two (2) projects.

It is our opinion that Mr. Aguilar would be an asset to any Construction Technology worksite or to any employer. For additional information, please contact Mr. Chaney or Mr. Johnson at the numbers listed below.

  
TIMOTHY CHANEY  
Supervisor of Vocational Instruction  
Correctional Training Facility  
(831) 678-3951 x5971

STEVE PADILLA  
Construction Technology Vocational Instructor  
Correctional Training Facility  
(831) 678-3951 x7233

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### Support Letters

STATE OF CALIFORNIA — DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AND REHABILITATION

EDMUND G. BROWN JR., GOVERNOR

**DIVISION OF ADULT INSTITUTIONS**  
CORRECTIONAL TRAINING FACILITY  
PO BOX 686  
SOLEDAD, CA 93960  
(831) 678-3951



March 11, 2016

Dear Prospective Employers:

#### **VOCATIONAL PORTFOLIO FOR MR. REYNALDO AGUILAR**

Mr. Aguilar has completed the Construction Technology Vocation at the Correctional Training Facility (CTF) during his incarceration. He was initially assigned on October 2, 2013 and worked diligently to complete the course work. He completed the vocation on July 23, 2014 and has been certified through the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) Training Programs of the Office of Correctional Education (OCE) in the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR). Enclosed in this portfolio is a listing of the course curriculum, letters of recommendations and pictures of his completed projects that were verified and evaluated by NCCER certified instructors.

NCCER is a non-profit 501(c)(3) education foundation established in 1995 by the world's largest and most progressive construction companies and national construction associations. It was founded to address the severe workforce shortage facing the industry and to develop a standardized training process and curriculum. Today, NCCER is supported by hundreds of leading construction and maintenance companies, manufacturers and national associations. NCCER also maintains a National Registry that provides transcripts, certificates and wallet cards to individuals who have successfully completed modules of the NCCER Standardized Curriculum. You are invited to visit the NCCER website at [www.nccer.org](http://www.nccer.org) for completion verification.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. Chaney".

TIMOTHY CHANEY  
Supervisor of Vocational Instruction  
Correctional Training Facility  
(831) 678-3951 x5971

## 4. CHARACTER REFERENCE

Character reference support letters can come from the community or can be from your incarcerated family member's community. Prison staff can write a support letter attesting to the character of your love one.



### Prison Letters 4 Our Struggling Youth

March 21, 2017

California Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation  
Board of Prison Hearings

RE: Reynaldo Aguilar P20708

A lifer inmate founded prison Letters 4 Our Struggling Youth Project now at Corcoran State Prison and has now grown to 25 facilities, 65 yards, 65 facilitators with 5000 plus men/women that have participated in our program. Our mission in having California prison inmates write letters to our struggling youth is to let "Youth at Risk" read for themselves about negative behavior/criminal behavior and the consequences of their involvement in street gangs.

We are notifying you that he writes letters to the youth through our organization. He encourages youth not to believe what gangs offer them. He has mentored and counseled inmates as well as youth. He has made it possible to save youth from this pipeline of youth to prison. He uses his knowledge of gangs, crime, and drugs to discourage youth from joining gangs and using drugs. He tells them that when you are faced with life in prison or any amount of years in prison you ask yourself where are my homies that promised to be there for me. Well, they have moved on to the next victim and you are forgotten, you are of no use to them any longer, now you belong to the prison gangs.

He lets the youth know who the people are that are there for you. It's their family members and a very, very small circle of friends' maybe. He talks to them about the importance of family and education. Educating ourselves is what is going to take us and our family members from poverty to productive lives.

He believes that our youth are not aware of the dangers of gang life. One wrong decision will land them in prison for the rest of their lives. He uses his knowledge of gangs, crime, and drugs to discourage youth from joining gangs and using drugs. By doing this he has become part of gang and crime prevention.

His commitment to our youth has been a valuable part of our program. We urge you to take this into consideration when reviewing his central file.

If we can be of any further assistance, please contact me at 323-552-2613.

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Lupe Ross

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA — DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AND REHABILITATION

EDMUND G. BROWN JR., GOVERNOR

**DIVISION OF ADULT INSTITUTIONS**  
AVENAL STATE PRISON  
PO Box 8  
Avenal, CA 93204



September 21, 2018

Board of Parole Hearings  
P.O. Box 4036  
Sacramento, CA 95812-4036

**RE: AGUILAR, REYNALDO, P20708**

Dear BPH Commissioners,

I am an academic instructor at Avenal State Prison. I am writing to attest to the parole suitability of Inmate Aguilar, P20708. I have had many opportunities to observe Aguilar from July 18, 2015, when he enrolled in the Voluntary Education Program (VEP) through the present. I have worked at Avenal State Prison for over twenty-four years. Inmate Aguilar enrolled in VEP to participate in self-help courses and college studies. He has worked as a VEP tutor, and even though it is not his current job position he is always helpful to the students.

Inmate Aguilar facilitated a workshop titled, "Money Matters." The curriculum that Aguilar has developed on this topic of financial responsibility has changed many inmates' ideas about how to handle money intelligently. Inmate Aguilar provided information about budgets, savings, and careful investments as the way to financial success.

Inmate Aguilar demonstrates maturity and has a very serious and ethical attitude toward life. He has prepared himself well for life outside of prison with many job experiences and trades. He attends VEP at least twice a week and often helps other students. He is very respectful towards staff and inmates and gets along well with everyone.

I have observed Aguilar's conduct, which demonstrates honesty and integrity. He is diligent in any task given him and in the tasks he sets for himself. Aguilar is focused on preparing himself to reintegrate successfully into society. In 2016, he earned an Associate of Arts degree in Social and Behavioral Science and an Associate of Arts degree in Business. It is clear from observing him that he sets high goals for himself and uses his time to accomplish his educational endeavors.

Aguilar's positive attitude and pro-social behavior increases his chance of successful reintegration into society. His ability to live in the crowded and noisy setting of dorm living at ASP is further evidence that he has excellent coping skills. I hope this observation is of some benefit in your determination of Aguilar's suitability for parole.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sharon Blanton".

SHARON BLANTON, VEP Teacher  
Avenal State Prison

cc: C-File  
Writer  
Inmate

**CALIFORNIA MEN'S COLONY**  
**East Protestant Chapel**

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Sunday, August 19, 2012

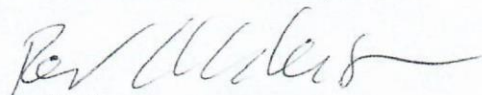
Reverend H. W. Alderson  
Protestant Chaplain  
California Men's Colony  
P.O. Box 8101  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93409

RE: LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

Inmate Reynaldo Aguilar (CDC# P20708):

You have invested time, energy, and effort in the Protestant Chapel's Homiletics class, which you enrolled in 2012 as a "Grandfather." While the class met for 1½ hours each time for a total of eight (8) sessions, your task was to assist the new students with their memory work and their sermon outlines. You also read at least two books for this class and assisted mutual mentoring as we struggled to become a preacher of the Word of God to the People of God. As your chaplain I highly commend you for the time you gave for this class and the students. It was a personal joy for me to share this task with you.

Cordially and professionally,



Rev. H. Warren Alderson  
Protestant Chaplain  
California Men's Colony



## Mt. Nebo Prison Ministry

P.O. Box 1848 • Gilbert, Arizona 85299

November 2015

Written of behalf of: REYNALDO AGUILAR P20708

Dear Board;

As director of Mt Nebo Prison Ministry for almost 25 years I am frequently asked to provide "letters of recommendation," but most often I respectfully decline the request. My reasoning is simple; these documents regularly become the basis upon which very important decisions are made. And as a result, I approach these appeals seriously. That makes this a special moment for me. I am able to wholeheartedly and without reservation present this letter on behalf Rey Aguilar.

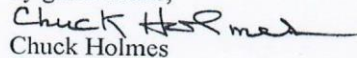
I have had regular contact with Rey for over 15 years. He has been (and remains) one of the most 'solid' and mature individuals this ministry has had the privilege to know and disciple. 'Jail-House' Christians often have a less than stellar reputation. Many identify with the Christian message and movement within the jails as prisons for a variety of reasons. It might be a sense of belonging, looking for some answers or just a sense of protection through the numbers of others participating. Yet, for those that work within the hundreds of prisons and jails, both as staff and volunteers (as well as yourselves) they come to recognize those individuals whose profession of faith in Christ is real, defined and lasting. Their lives are literally transformed and they stand out as 'different'. Rey Aguilar is one of those men.

As a mentor and friend of Rey there's literally nothing my wife and I wouldn't do to assist Rey upon release. Should it be possible as to parole arrangements we would have Rey live in our home for as long as it takes him to get on his feet. As a pastor in a church with eight congregations throughout Arizona we would have a very solid support system for him. All his basic needs would be met.

I realize that Rey will probably have to do his parole in California. We are committed to help in that process by researching the places he has come up with for shelter and help. I know Rey's parents and other family is also there for support. Our other commitment is to aid him financially for whatever expenses he initially incurs during those first months of getting 'started'. Because of my close relationship with Rey I would be coming to California shortly after his release to spend some time and energy in his transition.

I have zero concerns for Rey Aguilar as to being a productive member of the community he resides in. He is one of the godliest men I know and his heart for the Lord and desire to serve and represent Him are steadfast. I implore you to give Rey every consideration based on his record while incarcerated and the time he has served since coming to prison as a 'kid'. Thank you.

by grace alone,

  
Chuck Holmes

Director/MNPM

Office: 480-635-9532/E-mail: mtnebo@cox.net

## 5. TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

It is good to have at least three (3) acceptance letters from three different transitional housing programs.



Amity Foundation

Arizona · California · New Mexico · [www.amityfdn.org](http://www.amityfdn.org)

February 8, 2018

RE: Reynaldo Aguilar P20708

To: Whom It May Concern,

This letter will serve as verification for Reynaldo Aguilar who has been accepted at Amity Foundation's residential program at 3745 S. Grand Ave. Los Angeles, CA 90007.

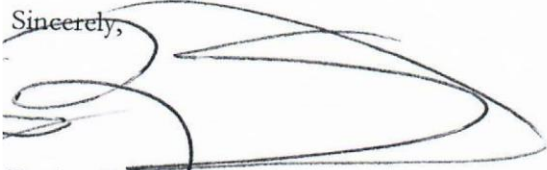
Amity has had very successful results for many men and women that have been serving years in prison. Once he arrives, we will begin the much needed process for him to make a successful transition back into the larger community.

In addition to providing a safe place for him to live, we will engage him in a process with other residents we have here to focus on some issues in his life that may, if not addressed, become an obstacle for his success. The curriculum that he will do has many areas of focus including emotional literacy, family dynamics, and social reintegration.

Amity will help also with all of the other aspects of reentry, including, but not limited to, employment, obtaining proper ID, healthcare etc. Currently, Amity is under contract with CDCR for this placement and we will work closely, as we do now, with local parole. This acceptance letter is subject to bed availability at the time of release.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at (213) 741-2276

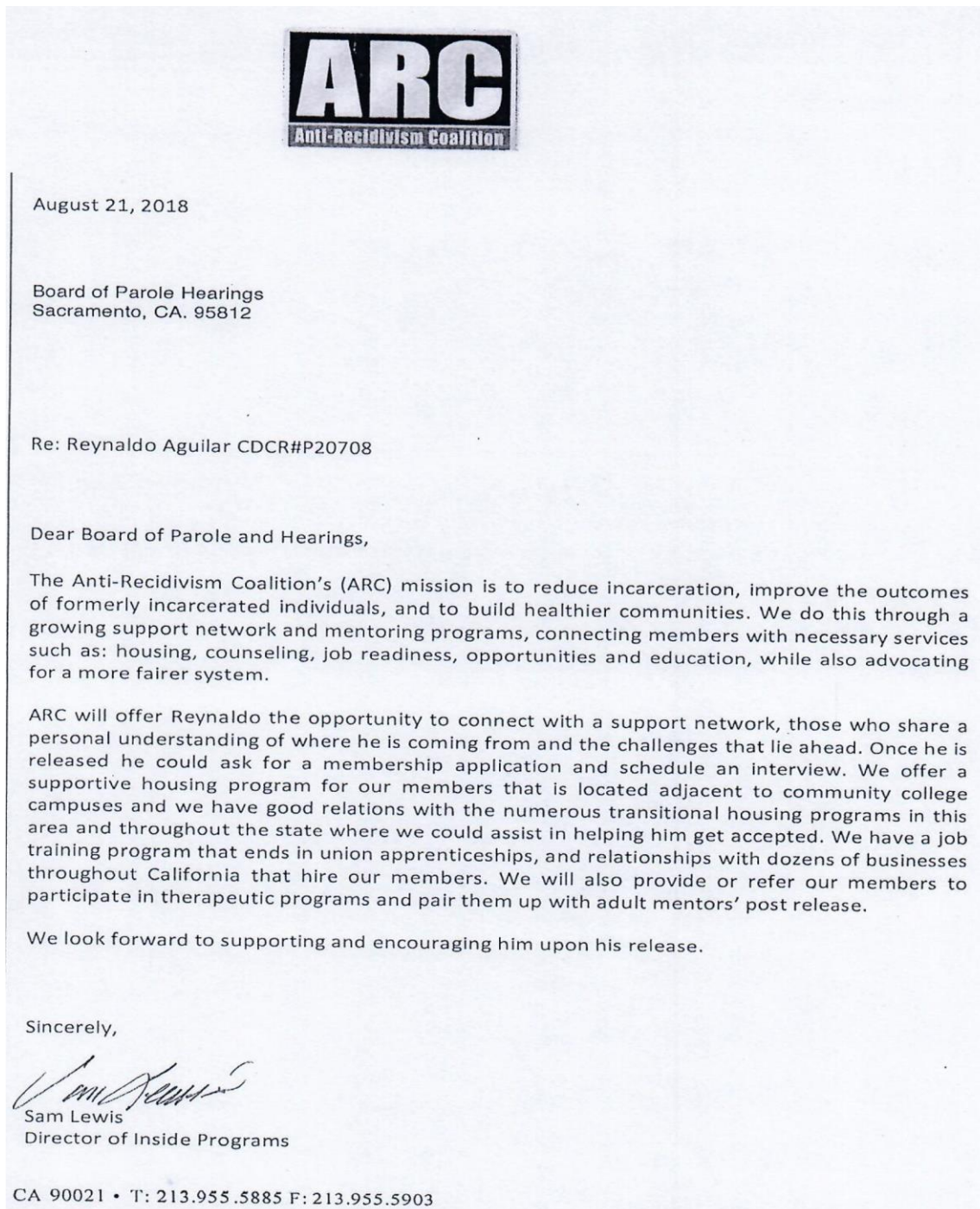
Sincerely,



Regina Slaughter  
Director

## 6. ORGANIZATIONS & SPONSORS

Organizations are great examples of being connected to the larger community. Organizations can include your family's church or other community programs your family may be involved with.





## Tool Kit

### Support Letters



#### **Board of Directors**

*John Brady, Chair*  
*Taylor Adams*  
*Javier Angulo*  
*Joe Argilagos*  
*Sean Arian*  
*Fr. Gregory Boyle, SJ*  
*James A. Burk*  
*Rosa Campos-Ibarra*  
*Alex Chaves, Sr.*  
*Rick Creed*  
*Fr. Allan Deck, SJ*  
*Renee Delphin-Rodriguez*  
*Oscar Gonzalez*  
*J. Michael Hennigan*  
*Bruce Karatz*  
*Pernille Lopez*  
*Christine Lynch*  
*Mercedes Martinez*  
*O'Malley Miller*  
*J. Mario Molina, MD*  
*Ashley Palmer*  
*Viktor Rzeteljski*  
*Rob Smith III*  
*Alan Smolinisky*  
*Elizabeth Stephenson*  
*Carlos Vasquez*  
*Chris Weitz*

November 20, 2018

To Whom It May Concern,

I write to you on behalf of Reynaldo Aguilar, #P20708, who is scheduled to appear before you. I know Reynaldo through, my capacity as Founder and Executive Director of Homeboy Industries. We are a non-profit organization that provides hope, job training and support for previously incarcerated and formerly gang-involved men and women, allowing them to redirect their lives and become contributing members of the community.

Upon Reynaldo's release I am committed to assist by providing him with mentoring and counseling services, in addition to assisting him with locating employment. Our free post release services will aid Reynaldo in his transition to life on the outside. Our wrap around services include: tattoo removal, employment services, twelve step meetings (AA/NA/CGA), G.E.D tutoring, case management, mental health counseling, legal services solar panel installation training and more.

Reynaldo can also receive services such as:

- Obtaining his Social Security card, Driver's License or California ID
- Creating a resume, learning interview techniques, building job skills
- Obtaining his G.E.D. through prep classes and one on one tutoring
- Learning important life skills through interpersonal communication, leadership and courses such as Anger Management, Parenting, Building Healthy Relationships, Alternative to Violence, etc.,

I've attached an information sheet about Homeboy Industries and our most recent class schedule for your review.

It is my sincerest hope that you will consider the above as you review Reynaldo's suitability for release. I greatly appreciate your attention to this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fr. Gregory J. Boyle, S.J." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Fr. Gregory J. Boyle, S.J.

## Tool Kit

### Support Letters

Lorie Adoff, MA  
Ministry to the Human Family  
P.O. Box 4404  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93403-4404

January 22, 2016

To: Board of Parole Hearing  
Re: **Reynaldo Aguilar P20708**

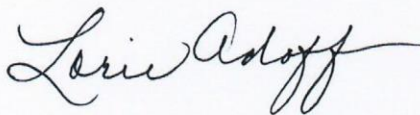
As the former Director of Spiritual Care for Supportive Care Services (SCS), a hospice based program at California Men's Colony, I trained and supervised inmate **Reynaldo Aguilar P20708** as an SCS volunteer from 2010 until his transfer in 2012 companionship dying inmates. Having retired June 2013 I have been out of the correctional environment for over a 2 years but, I believe, this gives me an objectivity to recommend Mr. Aguilar's suitability for parole from a different vantage point.

After an intensive application and training process, which included reading his C-file and interview by CMC staff, Mr. Aguilar became an SCS volunteer in 2010. On a weekly basis he visited his patients supporting them in all their moods and fears and being part of the 24 hour vigils when the patient was dying. He visited a chronically ill inmate/patient for over a year until the patient's transfer to a care facility where he passed away. This commitment requires personal integrity, dedication, and compassion to face death with frightened, sick men in a loving, caring way. Not everyone is suited to do this kind of work but Mr. Aguilar did an admirable job.

Although this type of hospice program does not exist where Mr. Aguilar is currently housed it has had a far reaching impact on his life and on the many other lifers who have been part of this program. Over 40 lifers, SCS volunteers, have been found suitable and paroled since the inception of the program in 2001 with no recidivism.

California correctional system includes *Rehabilitation* in its title and looks for the development of human qualities in inmates to be found suitable for parole. Mr. Aguilar has demonstrated that he has indeed cultivated the human qualities and skills needed to be a productive, caring member of society. I recommend that he be given an opportunity to be the compassionate and capable person in a free society that is sorely in need of men such as himself. I will continue to be available to him as a spiritual support and guide if Mr. Aguilar is found suitable.

Sincerely,



Lorie Adoff, MA  
Spiritual Director