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## Greetings & Blessings!

At the arrival of this piece of paper, I wish you, your loved ones & the Court, the best states physically, mentally & spiritually!

First & foremost, I want to thank you for taking the time and consideration to read my letter. Your Honor, I Destin Burks, 24 year old African American male, born & raised in New York City. I come from a house of 2 parents & 6 children (5 boys & 1 girl). At the age of 7 or 8 my parents split, but I would go to my father house every weekend. I always enjoyed going to spend time with him (God Bless his soul) and wish I still could. Five months of me being incarcerated, he passed away from kidney cancer. My mother is still in my life, she loves & misses me dearly.

At the start of my freshman year of high school, I dropped out of school. All my years before, I was a straight A student, student of the week, multiple weeks in a row, & student of the year 2 times. Since I've been incarcerated, I have been trying to get back on track with my education and get my G.E.D. Since the Covid-19 pandemic they say its no educational staff or theres not enough staff in the building to start back the programming. But that does not stop me from doing little work study's that don't get documented.

Your Honor, I did not get raised in the streets, nor did I get raised by the streets. But when my teenage years approached, I was exposed to the streets & I began exploring what I wasn't accustomed to and began going down the wrong path & following the wrong people. I never needed to be in the streets, I was just a youth making the wrong decisions. I've learned that life is about making decisions!

Since I've been in federal custody, I met multiple people serving life sentences for making the wrong decision. Because of those decisions, they will never get the chance to be who they always wanted to be or do what they always wanted to do in life. Mrs. Ross, I never took time to ask myself, what it is I want to do in life. So after one of those conversations with one of those (multiple life sentences inmates) I asked myself what do I want to be in life. With all honesty, I want to go home & build community centers. Through out the week my centers will run different programs. Mondays, we program on starting & owning your own business, Tuesdays, we cover real estate, how to find, buy, sell & rent property's. Wednesdays some type of mentoring/counseling, for kids that don't have nobody to talk to at home. Thursday's, Physical fitness, Friday's we order food for the kids, Saturday sports & Sunday video games. That is my plan. A lot of inmates go home without a plan, that's why they go home & do the same thing that got them in here. I refuse to be a part of those statistics any more.

I will not blame my environment for my past,  
I chose to do those things & I accept full  
responsibility for my actions & deeply apologize.  
Your Honor, whatever amount of prison time  
you feel is appropriate ~~for~~ for me, I will accept  
& continue to seek knowledge that will help  
me reach my goals when I go home. As I  
said before life is about making choices, &  
I will choose to do the right thing. Once  
again thank for taking the time to read  
my letter.

- Destin  
Burks

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