

AFFIDAVIT

I, Luis Peña being first duly sworn upon my oath depose and state that the following matters are both true and correct made upon personal knowledge and belief and if called as a witness, I am competent to testify thereto:

Growing up to become an Adult in prison means more than how old you have turned. Becoming an Adult means learning about Emotional Intelligence, maturity inside of having Values, and how every decision you make impacts you, your environment, and those who love and support you.

My thinking has changed Greatly. Because now, I do what I never did before, I take consideration into all those things before I make a decision. It may have taken a while due to the very same circumstances that existed in which were part of my detrimental youthful environment, existed in my prison environment, drugs, alcohol, gangs, violence, peer pressure, stress, lack of positive influences, opportunities and outlets, etc.. while I was still trying to emerge as an adult. But as a Man, I had to learn, "It's okay to change, and to give myself permission to be okay with that change."

My journey for change started with a lot of soul search within oneself. As I started getting older I started to learn what I "like" and "dislike" as a person. It comes with being honest with oneself and not running from the cold hard truths."

I sat down with my True Self. Nothing motivates me more every morning when I wake up than trying to become a better man, seek knowledge, growth, positivity and anyway I can sharpen myself, mind, body and spirit. To do that I had to recognize and acknowledge my faults and negative traits that led me down this path.

I've always believed in God but not until recent years did I become a Follower of the Word in the Bible. Once you start to use the Wisdom and Guidance that lies within The Bible, it lays bare your True Self. Like staring at a mirror and seeing not only what lies on the outside but seeing most importantly, the inside. It was while doing this I learned I was worried and focused on all the wrong things in life when I was younger.

My behavior in the past was fueled by negativity. I was quick to anger and act on it, when now I do my best to act void of emotions because emotion clouds judgement. I was impulsive when now im patient. I cared about what my peers thought of me while now im Confident and Sure of myself. I was prideful and would never let a slight go unanswered when now im humble. If someone was mean to me, I was mean to them when now I practice Grace, being kind and nice to others even when they dont deserve it. I valued alot of wrong thing in life.

My Mother was another reason for change. There

was times I couldn't talk to her because of my actions. I thought she was okay because she was free and could distract herself from my incarceration. After reading her letters and talking to her, I seen she too was struggling with worry, anxiety and sometimes fear.

So I decided to get a job and stay out of trouble. I'm enrolled in the "GED" program, which is difficult to get into due the amount of time I was sentenced to, since March 2024 and classes rarely run due to Menard staff shortages. I use to think Education solely defined "Rehabilitation". I would say to myself "How could I rehabilitate myself without any programs?"

Then I learned rehabilitation starts with you! It starts with your mind, facing your fears, releasing your mistakes and accepting that regrets are okay because they too will teach you if you let them. To me this is how a young afraid adult grows into a mature man in prison.

This is my journey and as an honest adult im still afraid of some things. My peers, enviroment and even my family (if they are not productive) dont control my mind or influence me emotionally. I've held a job in a controlled enviroment thats not 100% positive and negativity is easier to choose then doing right!

My choice to change has helped me everyday. I'm not afraid of hard work or un-equal pay. I'm not afraid of walking away from negative situations knowing it didn't

hurt my pride or define the man I've become.

I have more potential to gain. I have a lot more small and big goals I will reach with hopes they will lead me out of prison so I can once in my life be a Productive Member of Society. Something I never had or had a real chance to do. There is no better deterrent from street life than showing others a positive way out a being a beacon of Hope and Light.

I am Luis Gustavo Peña the adult, mature and Constantly Rehabilitating his self. I ask this court to see me, see my potential and my Future potential and know I've grown from my unacceptable past. I can only show you that I can and I am willing to do right but those words turn to actions in the court's eyes only after you willing too, give me an Actual Chance in Society.

Under penalties as provided by law pursuant to 735 ILCS 5/1-109 of the Code of Civil Procedure, the undersigned certifies that the statements set forth in this instrument are true and correct, except as to matters therein stated to be on information and belief and as to such matters the undersigned certifies as aforesaid that he verily believes the same to be true.

Subscribed and sworn to before me on the

25 day of November, 2024

Rosalynn R. McClure
Notary Public



Respectfully Submitted,
Luis Peña