


To Whom it may concern:

My name is Stanley Mason. I'm a 52 year old black man who has been in and out of the system in one form or another all of my life. I'm currently living at Friendship Apartments a subsidiary of High Hope Employment Services in Milan MO. I've been an alcoholic and drug addict most of my adult life. I've been incarcerated in the department of corrections several times, as well as numerous treatment facilities. I've been shot, stabbed, beat up and still couldn't find a way out of my own personal hell. I just couldn't seem to see any light at the end of the tunnel. As I look back at my life, I would often wonder if I was destined to die a victim of the disease of addiction. However, I don't want to dwell on the things that I've had to go thru in pursuit of my addiction and lifestyle, because I'm sure there are thousands of those out there.

This is a letter of gratitude, a letter of recovery and success. Let me start by saying that I never thought that this could be possible, until I found the best program in the world. After going thru yet another rehab program, I found myself in Milan, MO. I was accepted into the Friendship Apartments homeless program. I've been in several homeless programs through out the state of Missouri, but I feel that this one could be a model for all. With the support and services that I've received here at Friendship, I've been able to turn my life around. Everyone, from members on the board of directors to the resident managers, has been very helpful with helping me achieve my goals. They've helped me in ways that are really to numerous to express them all. From outpatient groups to providing space for self help groups like N.A. and A.A. meetings. With the help and support of all the staff here, I've been able to get my life back on track. I'm now fully employed in my profession, my health is good and I can finally see some hope for the future. They have helped me regain my pride and dignity as well as my self-esteem. But, I feel that the most important thing that has come out of this is that I'm once again a tax payer and not a tax burden.

I would just like to say to whoever this letter reaches, "Thank You" for programs like this. My only hope is that places such as Friendship Apartments continue to be funded. It is a good feeling to feel that my tax dollars can help fund programs like this, for people like me who just need a chance to become productive and responsible members of society.

Thank You
Sincerely


Stanley Mason