

Carl S. Daniels, BB-7463



Abolitionist Law Center



February 21, 2022

Greetings,

My name is Carl Sheldon Daniels. I'm 52 years old and I've been standing under the weight of Pennsylvania's Death By Incarceration Sentence since 1988. Prior to being taken into prison, though grossly underdeveloped and learning through trial and error, I lived as a family man with the expecting mother of my only child and her two year old son. My son was born two weeks after my arrest.

In my youth I attended and graduated from Potter Thomas, Mary McCloud Bethune, Sol Agricultural School, Fels Jr. High, and Swenson Skill Center. I excelled in Home Economics and Computer Applications. I attended North East High School but unfortunately dropped out of the 10th. grade. As fate would have it, one day while going to school late I ran into a neighborhood drug dealer who asked me to watch out for the police while he sold his drugs. I did this for five hours and was given \$300.00. Already bored with school, that chance encounter was the catalyst that moved me into criminality. The next day I went looking for him and never went back to school. Living in a home where drugs were being used and sold, my new life decision didn't even raise an eyebrow. This spiral reached it's conclusion when I was arrested on July 12, 1988 for two counts of 1st. degree murder. I was sent to Philadelphia's notorious Holmesburg prison, aptly known as the Terror Dome. I was indeed terrified. Afterall, because I was charged with murder, it didn't make me a killer.

I fell in line learning to survive and found my lane getting a job in the Social Service Department. One of the Counselors, Ms. Helen Smith was in charge of who takes the G.E.D. and I pestered her until she agreed to put me on the list. I took the test and passed, receiving my G.E.D. on May 5, 1989. My then counselor, Lateef Okafor marvelled at my ability to pass the test without taking the pre-test. Four months later I was led like a lamb to slaughter by a drug addicted court appointed attorney who used the tears of my mother and sister to bully me into pleading guilty to a crime I did not commit. I was sentenced to Death By Incarceration on September 13, 1989 and sent straight to the penitentiary.

After a brief stint in Graterford and Camphill, I was sent to SCI-Huntingdon. I immediately got involved in the Educational Department as a teacher's aide and Literacy tutor under Mr. R.M. Kough. During my time in SCI-Huntingdon I successfully completed numerous programs and was part of the steering committee for the introduction into the Institution of the Victim Awareness Programs with Ms. Mary Achilles, and Alternative to Violence with Barb Toews. I was one of three prisoners used to speak to delinquent juveniles, parents, and college students at the behest of Unit Manager, Scotty Walters. I've held every position in the Community First Step from Parliamentarian to President and later held several positions in the Pennsylvania Lifers Association, both prisoner organizations that advocate for community revitalization and parole eligibility for lifers. I was president of the Lifers Association when I received a promotional transfer to SCI-Dallas in 2005. I was the president of the Lifers Organization in SCI-Dallas from 2007-2009. Afterwards I remained in an active roll in the organization as presidential advisor. In 2012 I was one of nine prisoners chosen to establish A-Annex, an aftercare therapeutic community as a facilitator. An innovative program that is still going strong under the guidance of Ms. Pamela McDonald, DATS. I spearheaded writing the community's first book. Shortly thereafter I became a member of the Hospice Program, a group of men who voluntarily provided hands on care to other prisoners with terminal illnesses. This program was overseen by medical department Supervisor, Leah Martin. I was also selected by Robin Lucas, Secretary of the Superintendent to speak to college students who had aspirations of a career in corrections.

I'm co-founder of the Youth Self Help Improvement Community with David Lee, as well as REAL RAP, with Sean Davis. Both programs were designed to mentor young men into seeing the error of our ways and identifying where and why we embraced the culture of criminality. The objective is after recognition we can alter our perspectives on destructive behaviors then alter the behavior. I'm a prolific writer and have an E-Book on Amazon titled, Can I Stand A Chance.

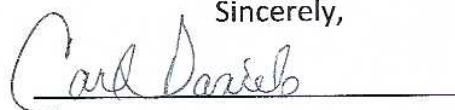
I've been in prison for 33 years. My incarceration has been one of evolving,

participation, and activism on behalf of myself and community. Both inside and outside. I make no excuse for my own destructive behaviors and accept none from the young men whose presence I'm constantly in. I refuse to be shackled as a man by poor decisions made as a boy. My desire is to be a servant of the community, a bridge over the gaps, and a beacon for those still trying to find their way. For this I am ever willing.

On this trek, every level of emotion is scorched, reborn, and fine tuned. There is no training ground. You find your humanity and hold onto it. Regrow every piece stripped from you after every abusive strip search. Replant hope every time hope is dashed. Look forward to tomorrow no matter how hard it is to see it. Years ago the commutation process came to a screeching halt but its slowly moving now. No matter how small the drip, it still makes a splash. Death By Incarceration is the wretched breath of the vampire that feasts on revenge. If men and women can be pillars of rehabilitation exemplified in penitentiaries, only revenge says so what, you're still no good for the community. These laws should be changed because the needs of the community demand such. We don't declare to be the cure, but we will undoubtedly help. If numbers don't lie, then it is beyond dispute that the lifer population is and has always been the least likely to recidivate. Only revenge ignores this fact when so much blood of our children runs through the cracks of concrete and armies of mentors are in exile praying for an opportunity to get in the way of death.

This diabolical law breathes because it's codified in the 13th. Amendment. A ghost of slave codes. By ballot initiative this dispicable language should be invalidated and all laws that validate throwing away a lifetime for any moment. Particularly when the light of humanity has shown its way through.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carl Davis". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line that extends to the right.