

# SECOND CHANCES



**100 YEARS  
OF THE  
CHILDREN'S  
COURT:**

**GIVING KIDS  
A CHANCE  
TO MAKE  
A BETTER  
CHOICE**



**The Children's Court Centennial Communications Project**

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*Cover photos, from top left: Andre Dawkins, Terence Hallinan, Sally Henderson and Derrick Thomas.  
Inside cover photos, from top left: Lawrence Wu, Dennis Sweeny, Luis Rodriguez and Ronald Laney.*

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# INTRODUCTION

**T**hey're prosecutors, politicians, poets and probation officers; academics, attorneys, athletes and authors; students, stockbrokers and sales people; football players and firefighters.

They've worked at the highest levels of government, as advisors to presidents and in the US Senate. They've prosecuted, defended and judged their fellow men and women. They've achieved unprecedented feats on the field of athletic competition. They've served their country honorably.

And when they were kids, every one of them was in trouble with the law.

But for the protections and rehabilitative focus of the Juvenile Court - a uniquely American invention that was the brainchild of a group of Chicago women activists in the 1800s - many of them would simply not be where they are today. And most of them would be the first to admit it.

America's Juvenile Court celebrates its 100th anniversary this July 3. In 1882, John Altgeld, an aspiring young lawyer who would later become governor of Illinois, toured the House of Corrections in Chicago and discovered that hundreds of children, including children as young as eight years of age, were jailed alongside adults. Appalled by the tragic circumstances of these children, other Chicago reformers like Jane Addams, Lucy Flower and Julia Lathrop pushed state lawmakers to create a separate justice system for children. Before women could vote and while segregation was still the law of the land, their efforts led to the creation of the first juvenile court in the world, which opened its doors on July 3, 1899, not far from Addams' Hull House on Chicago's West Side. The court was just the first in a series of century-shaping reforms inspired by the work of the Hull House women, including mandatory universal education for children, child-labor laws and the development of parks and recreation spaces for children.

Addams and the other Chicago reformers helped to redefine "childhood," creating a new vision of childhood as a sacred period in human life, a period during which children and adolescents required the nurturance and guidance of responsible adults. No longer were children viewed as "mini-adults;" they were qualitatively and developmentally different from adults. These differences made them both less culpable for their actions and more amenable to intervention than their elders.

To these reformers, the last thing a civilized society should do to its children was to process and punish them like adults in the criminal justice system. They believed that the State had a moral responsibility to act as "kind and just parents" to each of its children. In the context of a court system, this meant that children should receive individualized attention, under the watchful eyes of trained and sensitive judges and probation officers, in a system premised on rehabilitation rather than on the crippling punishments of the adult system.

In addition to delinquent children, the first juvenile court catered to the needs of abused and neglected children as well. Court proceedings were informal, non-adversarial and closed to the public: The stigmatizing language of the criminal court was rejected, and court records were eventually made confidential to protect children from long-term damage to their future prospects.

The reformers' ideas spread like wildfire, leading to the development of juvenile courts in 46 states, 3 territories, and the District of Columbia by the year 1925. America led the world with its

more humane approach to juvenile crime as well. By 1925, Great Britain, Canada, Switzerland, France, Belgium, Hungary, Croatia, Argentina, Austria, India, the Netherlands, Madagascar, Japan, Germany, Brazil and Spain had all established separate court systems for children. Today, every state has a separate court system for children, as do most nations throughout the world.

In commemoration of the Court's Centennial, the Justice Policy Institute and Northwestern University School of Law's Children and Family Justice Center undertook to profile 25 individuals who had gone through the court when they were younger, who had turned their lives around and made something of themselves. This book is the result of that work.

As individuals who work directly with youth in trouble with the law, we know that many young people (not to mention many older people) are guilty of youthful indiscretions that do not permanently inhibit their capacity to live successful lives. In fact, quite the opposite is true. Research has shown that the vast majority of people commit crimes at some time or another during their youth and the vast majority of us stop doing so as we mature.

So, while we expected to find a broad array of former delinquents-made-good, what we ultimately discovered surprised even us.

Terence Hallinan had gotten into so much trouble for fighting when he was a teenager that he was literally banished from his home county. He eventually channeled his pugnacious ways into an amateur boxing career, and then became, in the words of one local newspaper, "San Francisco's Fighting District Attorney."

Jeremy Estrada fell into the gang lifestyle in Los Angeles, but when he turned himself in after being chased by police, he got a second chance from the juvenile court and was sent to a wilderness challenge program in Nevada. Today, the 23-year-old is a premed student at Pepperdine University in Southern California.

When Alan Simpson pled guilty to charges of destroying federal property at the age of 17, no one could have guessed that he would one day have a 20-year career working on federal property. The one-time delinquent went on to a term in the US Senate spanning several decades.

As a teenager, Judge Reggie Walton was repeatedly dragged in to local police stations for getting into fights in neighboring schools. During one fight, Walton was surprised when one of his friends pulled out a knife, stabbed and almost killed a boy. Walton, who was not directly involved in the stabbing, was still allowed to attend college (on a football scholarship) and then law school. He later became a federal prosecutor, was the nation's first Deputy Drug Czar and is now a Superior Court Judge in the District of Columbia.

When Bob Beamon was 16, he turned away from a life of petty crime and gang activity and set his sights higher – much higher. In 1968, Beamon shattered the world-record in the long jump at the Mexico City Olympics, and was recently named one of ESPN's top 100 athletes of the 20th Century.



TOO OFTEN, when the public hears about the juvenile court, it is following a hyper-violent act committed by a youth. Although less than one half of one percent of all American kids were arrested for a violent crime last year, the majority of times kids are portrayed on the evening news it is in connection with violence. The result: although juvenile homicides have dropped by 45% since 1993, two-thirds of Americans believe that crime by juveniles is on the increase.

The “man bites dog” credo of news coverage coupled with the pandering of some self-aggrandizing politicians has given the public the impression that the isolated is the common. It has also created an environment in which this 100-year-old experiment called the juvenile court is badly misunderstood by the very nation that founded it. The result is ambivalence, and at times outright hostility, towards a separate system of justice for juveniles.

Some themes emerged during the course of this project which serve to remind us that the core tenets of the juvenile court – rehabilitation, confidentiality, giving kids a second chance and keeping them separate from adults in prisons and jails – are as important now as they have ever been.

Fire Captain James N. Short, who once broke his neck in the line of duty, was nearly denied a promotion because of his youthful arrests. District Attorney Hallinan had to appeal to the California Supreme Court before he could be admitted to practice law. Judge Walton, Sen. Simpson, Terry Ray, Lawrence Wu and Brian Silverman are all attorneys who might have been denied admission to the bar had their juvenile offenses carried the same weight as adult convictions. All benefited, sometimes profoundly, from grants of confidentiality which allow people to put their past behind them and move on. In the process, we too have benefited from having them become productive citizens and not an ongoing drain on society’s fiscal and human resources.

Although the rehabilitative ethic of the juvenile court is in serious jeopardy today, the juvenile justice system still largely promotes the concept that kids should be helped to turn their lives around. Kansas City Chiefs linebacker Derrick Thomas, pre-med student Jeremy Estrada, former Presidential Honor Guard Scott Filippi, author Claude Brown and students Brandon Maxwell and Jason Smith, all credit rigorous rehabilitative programs for putting them on a path toward a better life.

Perhaps most importantly, the juvenile justice system is more likely to be populated by individuals committed to helping rather than simply punishing. Terry Ray, Carolyn Gabbard, Sally Henderson and Andre Dawkins all emphasized that people – real people like Mrs. Sybil, Wilma Cress, Karen Jordan, and Patti Puritz – were there for them again and again when they needed a helping hand, and that made all the difference. While decent people can be found even in the darkest prison, that’s only by chance; in the juvenile justice system, it’s by design.

And finally, several profilees’ lives spoke to the importance of simply giving kids repeated chances to turn their lives around and room to grow up, sometimes on their own. Olympic Gold Medallist Bob Beamon, poet Luis Rodriguez, professor and Juvenile Probation Commission President Joe Julian and Columbia University Law Review editor Lawrence Wu were all gang members with several contacts with the law before they got on the straight and narrow. For some, their turnarounds came as a result of self-introspection rather than system-driven rehabilitation. But the system still allowed them numerous opportunities to fail and ultimately succeed, without permanently staining their records.

But Percy Campbell takes the prize. Arrested 59 times, Percy was dubbed “Crime Boy” by numerous Florida tabloids and made a poster child for the excessive leniency of the juvenile justice system by prominent Florida politicians. He is currently the national weight lifting champion in his age group, has a GED, a job and a good shot at getting an athletic scholarship to college.

In sum, their stories, which we have reported but they have lived, are living, breathing testaments to the resiliency of the vision of the Hull House women. They are also a ringing reaffirmation of the need for a court system that continues to recognize that children are not adults – a court system that gives young people a chance to make a better choice.

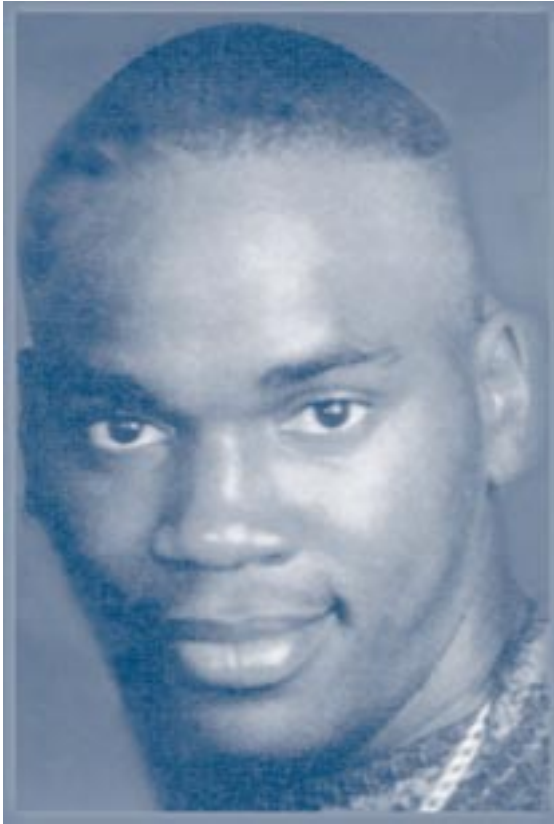
Ironically, as it celebrates its Centennial, the juvenile court has never been more under attack. The annual report for the nationwide Coalition for Juvenile Justice this year was entitled *A Celebration or Wake? The Juvenile Court After 100 Years*. Barry Krisberg, President of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, has dubbed recent federal juvenile justice legislation “the death knell for the juvenile court.”

Between 1992 and 1995 alone, 41 states changed their juvenile justice systems to make it easier to try juveniles as adults, and just as many have eroded confidentiality protections. Last year, nearly 18,000 youth spent time in adult prisons, 3,500 in general population with adults. There are another 7,000 to 8,000 youth jailed with adults on any given day and several times as many roll through America’s jails during the course of a year.

Although they might not have had the statistical sampling techniques available to them in 1899 that we do today, the 19th Century reformers possessed an uncanny common-sense prescience about what the results of such policies would be. While it is far from a perfect institution, the majority of children who get referred to juvenile court never come back again. We also know that youths transferred to the adult system get rearrested more frequently and more quickly than similar youths retained in the juvenile justice system. And youths jailed with adults are five times more likely to be sexually assaulted and eight times more likely to commit suicide than youths detained in juvenile facilities.

These stories of hope, of perseverance, of young people thriving despite heavy odds – sometimes with help, sometimes on their own – to live productive lives – sometimes of an ordinary nature, sometimes of an extraordinary brand – cannot be presented without a pang of regret and a twinge of irony. For the Bob Beamons and Judge Waltons of 1999 may not have the chances we accorded to the teenage Beamons and Waltons of yesteryear.

So as we celebrate their victories, we must also mourn the fact that so much of the founders’ unique vision of children-as-hope, rather than despair, has been discarded. This is not because young people have changed, but because adults are no longer as willing to devote the time, energy and resources to guide children through adolescence and because it has become fashionable to give up on youth. As we close out the second millennium and the court enters its second century, it is our hope that these success stories will rekindle the same fire that led Jane Addams and the other turn-of-the-century crusaders to make our world a better and more humane place for our children.



Tears rained down his face as his mother cradled 14-year-old Derrick Thomas, already over six feet tall, in her arms. After years of beating the system, of committing crimes and not getting caught, of conning adults with his engaging smile and winning personality, Thomas' number had finally come up. He was going to juvenile jail.

Placed on home confinement while awaiting trial on a burglary charge, his first juvenile court referral, Thomas repeatedly left the house. His pre-trial services officer, Ms. Gibson, had reached her breaking point. She pulled Thomas out of class and summoned him and his mother to her office to break the bad news. For the next 30 days, Thomas was going to be locked up in juvenile hall.

At the time, "getting locked up seemed like the worst thing that could happen to me," says Thomas, now a ten-time All Pro-Linebacker for the Kansas City Chiefs and one of the N.F.L.'s all time sack leaders. But getting involved in the juvenile justice system actually turned out to be "one of the most important breaks I ever got." Through the court, Thomas would meet several people

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## DERRICK THOMAS

**Age:** 32

**Occupation:** Linebacker, Kansas City Chiefs; Founder, Third and Long Foundation, a program to help inner-city children learn how to read.

**Residence:** Kansas City, Missouri.

**Education:** University of Alabama, major in criminal justice and social work.

**Delinquency History:** Burglary and auto-theft. Referred to juvenile detention for 30 days, and sent to the Dade Marine Institute, an alternative school for youth for six months. Court ordered restitution on a charge of auto-theft when he was 18.



who helped him turn his life around. His juvenile court experiences led him to set up his own foundation for troubled inner-city youths and inspired him to use his life to make a difference on behalf of other troubled youths.

Thomas was born in Miami, Florida on New Year's Day, 1967. He was raised by his mother Edith and his grandmother Annie Addams in Perrine, a middle-class neighborhood in Dade County. Soon after Thomas was born, his father, Robert Thomas, enlisted in the Air Force, rising through the ranks to become one of a select few black pilots. Around Christmas 1972, just before Thomas' sixth birthday, Capt. Robert Thomas' B-52 plane was shot down during a bombing mission over North Vietnam. First thought to be "missing in action," Capt. Thomas was finally declared "legally dead" in 1980, shortly before Thomas' 13th birthday.

It was around this time that Thomas started getting into trouble. He began to hang around with some boys from Circle Plaza, the housing projects on the other side of the large park which divided those with means from those without. Four of the boys were his cousins and the rest he had known since elementary school or had met at the park where he and all the other local teens spent their free time.

Ironically, Thomas' delinquency came at a time when he had all the material possessions he wanted. The Air Force had compensated him for his father's death, and Thomas used his share to buy bikes, mopeds, sports equipment and many other fashionable luxuries that other teens craved.

"I wasn't content with having everything, that was too easy," says Thomas. So he began acquiring things the hard way by stealing them. According to Thomas, his crew "could raise or lower the crime rate of Perrine on any given day if they chose to." He and his friends started stealing bikes, moved to mopeds, then motorcycles, and finally cars. Along the way, the group collected their own arsenal of weapons because "every time we stole a car there was a weapon in it."

Thomas' delinquency also occurred as he began to blossom as an athlete. He excelled in all sports but was especially adept at football and track. He was also a competitive BMX bike racer, rising to the rank of top rider in his age group in the state of Florida. Between sports and school, Thomas was busy, but when unsupervised and with his peers, trouble was never far away.

It was with his peers that Thomas picked up his first and only juvenile charge. Towards the end of 9th grade, Thomas and three of his friends planned to burglarize a home in the affluent section of town. Neighbors spotted the boys entering the home and called the police. After a long foot chase, Thomas was caught as he tried

to cross a park. He was taken to the juvenile detention center, where he remained for a day before appearing in court.

To Thomas, his first overnight stay at the detention center was no big deal.

“I knew everybody there and was pretty sure I’d be going home because I was a first-time offender,” he says. His first court appearance was also uneventful and brief. A trial date was set, and he was set free but placed on home confinement. When he promptly violated the conditions of his release, however, his pretrial officer had him locked up.

“When Ms. Gibson told me I was going to be locked up, I cried and cried and cried to my mama,” says Thomas. “Reality hit. I wasn’t going home tomorrow.”

His stint in detention was more painful. He got into several fights and spent some time in solitary confinement. Things got much worse before they got better. While in detention, he was assigned a counselor, Ms. Judy Gordon, who met with Thomas and told him that she was recommending he be sent to Dade Marine Institute (DMI), an alternative day school, in lieu of straight probation.

DMI was a favorite program of Judge William Gladstone, the juvenile court judge who presided over Thomas’ case. Judge Gladstone accepted Ms. Gordon’s recommendation. As Thomas was leaving the courtroom, in words which turned out to be prophetic, Thomas’ Public Defender said to him, “I’m going to buy you some gloves for Christmas so you don’t leave any of your fingerprints any place.”

Thomas was despondent over being sent to DMI because it meant that he couldn’t play football. But he soon took to the program and began to excel. He developed a special bond with the Director, Nick Millar, a collegiate wrestler, and his group counselor, Carl Lewis, a medical student who worked at DMI when not in school. They helped Thomas believe that he could play college football and get his degree. The program, which featured incentives for students who completed assigned tasks, inspired Thomas. He learned to set short-term, intermediate, and long-term goals, and he charted his daily progress. There was plenty of fun at the program as well, including canoe trips and scuba diving excursions, novel and challenging experiences for inner-city kids who rarely ventured outside their neighborhoods.

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Most of the boys stayed at DMI for two or three years, earned their GEDs and stayed out of trouble – 82% of those in Thomas’ group did not re-offend. Thomas, however, had higher ambitions. He wanted to go back to South Miami, get his high school diploma and get a football scholarship to college. He finished the program in record time – approximately four months – and soon re-enrolled at South Miami High.

Back at South Miami, Thomas lettered in four sports: baseball, football, basketball, and track. After playing tight-end and running back his junior year, a linebacker spot opened up before his senior year. He seized the opportunity and earned All-League Honors. The scholarship offers began rolling in. He chose the University of Alabama and signed a letter of intent. All he had to do was finish the school year without incident.

But a lapse in judgment almost cost Thomas everything. A few days after his senior prom, some of Thomas’ buddies decided to steal a car for old times’ sake. Thomas met up with them later and allowed them to store some of the stripped parts in his car. Later that evening, he began to have misgivings. He remembered his Public Defender’s parting words, and feared he might have left his fingerprints on the stolen car. He convinced several friends, including one who also had a full athletic scholarship, to go back and wipe down the car. The police were there waiting.



Now eighteen, Thomas was an adult as far as the law was concerned. He and his friends spent a day in the county jail. When he finally got to court, he was greeted by the same PD who had represented him in juvenile court. Standing before the judge, his head bowed in shame, Thomas caught one final break. The judge ordered him to make restitution and told him “if I ever see you again, I’m going to give you

the time you came for and the time I didn't give you this time." Thomas bolted from the court and never looked back.

At Alabama, Thomas became one of the most dominant defensive players in the country. Regarded as the nation's finest pass-rusher, Thomas set a school record with a total of 52 quarterback sacks. In 1988, his senior year, he won the coveted Dick Butkus award as the top linebacker in the country. Thomas was the first round draft pick of the Kansas City Chiefs and the fourth pick overall in the draft, following Troy Aikman, Tony Mandarich, and Barry Sanders.

Thomas has had a stellar career since joining the Chiefs, making All-Pro each of his 10 years in the league, becoming the Chief's all-time sackleader and surpassing the 100-sack milestone faster than any other linebacker in league history.

His on the field efforts have been eclipsed by his charitable efforts off the field. Early on at Alabama, while majoring in criminal justice and social work, Thomas vowed that he would "try to make a difference" by working with kids in the juvenile justice system. In his first year after joining the Chiefs, Thomas contacted Judge Gladstone seeking advice on how he could help kids. Judge Gladstone told Thomas that there were many programs for kids once they got in trouble, especially children who were over 13, but a real need for prevention programs for kids aged 9 to 13.

With help from Judge Gladstone and others, Thomas founded the Third and Long Foundation, a program dedicated to helping inner-city children improve their reading skills. Over the years, the program has grown to provide social, cultural, recreational, and educational opportunities to 58 children in three Kansas City middle schools. During the summer, the kids attend an outdoor summer camp with character building activities modeled after some of those Thomas experienced at DMI.

***"The stigma that is put on kids in the juvenile justice system is wrong; every kid is not a bad kid...all they need is an opportunity."***

Thomas' community service activities have earned him the NFL's most prestigious service awards, including the NFL Edge Man of the Year and the Byron "Whizzer" White Humanitarian Award. Former President George Bush chose Thomas as the 832nd out of his 1,000 "Points of Light" - the only NFL Player to be so honored.

Thomas has also become a powerful advocate for delinquent children; in 1991 he testified before a Congressional Subcommittee on Crime and Criminal Justice, asking for an increase in prevention funding. Following this appearance, he became the first non-Supreme Court Justice to address the Missouri General

***“When [they] told me I was going to be locked up, I cried and cried and cried to my mama.... Reality hit. I wasn’t going home tomorrow.”***

Assembly, urging state lawmakers to provide Missouri children with the same opportunities that he had through DMI. In reflecting upon his experiences, Thomas is quick to credit the juvenile justice system as having made “all the difference” in his life. “If I could do one thing to improve it, I’d want every kid in the system to have the chance to go through a program like DMI.”

Thomas especially values the fact that his past was kept confidential and that it was his choice to reveal it: “Unless I give you my background, you have no reason to view me as other than the nice guy that I’ve presented myself as to you,” he says. “The stigma this put on kids in the juvenile justice system is wrong; every kid is not a bad kid, they may do bad things, but all they need is an opportunity. The juvenile justice system gave me that second chance.”

In public speaking engagements, Derrick tells audiences the same thing he said in testimony before the United States Congress and the Missouri General Assembly, words which are a fitting epilogue to this profile: “I come to you today to say you can make a difference and to tell you that there are any number of success stories in the juvenile justice system, just like mine,” he says.





It was a simple plan. Lawrence Wu would walk down a street in New York City, trying to look like an ordinary kid as he managed to hide a gun up his sleeve. If the then 15-year-old saw any members of a rival Chinatown gang, his orders were to shoot them dead, and to toss the gun into another gang's neighborhood. He would then hop a cab to Times Square where he would meet someone from his gang to smuggle him out of the city.

For an hour, he paced up and down the rival gang's territory. "I was so nervous, and I thought, I'm not standing around here

for another fucking minute with a gun up my sleeve. I'm getting out of here." Realizing how unprepared he was for gang-assigned killing missions, he later fired off a couple of practice shots inside the gang hangout.

"My ear was shaking, and my arm nearly flew off," Wu says. "I would have been stunned by my own shot. Looking back now, I know I would have gotten caught. It was such a stupid plan."

As a student at Columbia University School of Law, Lawrence Wu knows the waiver provisions in New York State that could have changed his life forever. He knows now, kids as young as 13 who are charged with murder are automatically sent to the adult court in New York, and if found guilty, face long prison terms.

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## LAWRENCE WU

**Age:** 23

**Occupation:** Corporate Tax Lawyer, former editor, The Columbia University Law Review

**Residence:** New York, New York.

**Education:** The Columbia University School of Law; State University of New York (Binghamton).

**Delinquency History:** Arrested for attempted murder, fighting and other crimes relating to his involvement with an Asian gang. Spent a few days in a New York City jail cell, and a brief period on probation.

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“I was lucky in the sense that any different set of circumstances could have led to a very different result,” Wu says.

***A student at The Columbia University School of Law, Lawrence Wu knows the waiver provisions in New York State that could have changed his life forever. He knows now, kids as young as 13 who are charged with murder are automatically sent to the adult court.***

Luck, and the law, allowed him to leave his street uniform of spiked, bleached hair and black leather jackets behind him. Today, wearing neatly pressed khaki pants and a dress shirt, the 23-year-old is at the top of Columbia’s academic heap. Wu is editor-in-chief of the Columbia Law Review, one of the most prestigious law journals in the country, and is about to embark on a career in corporate law. But he counts his blessings. “I think it is definitely true that a system of second and third chances are very important,” Wu says. “I know that from my own life.”

Getting to the Ivy League should have been easier for Wu. The son of Chinese immigrants who had degrees in engineering, law, and library sciences, both he and his two older brothers passed the test to gain entrance to Stuyvesant High School - one of three top New York institutions that skims the cream of the crop out of the city’s public schools. While earning straight A’s in elementary school, family

life became “dysfunctional” in his early teens after his father left home, saddling his mother with managing the home, and raising him.

“We suddenly became lower middle class,” he says. “It always seemed like we were teetering on bankruptcy.” Starting in junior high, and continuing in high school, Wu’s grades began to slip. He moved neighborhoods - from schools where he was the only Asian child (and often, the target of racial taunts) - to a high school where half the kids were Asian, and where joining one of the half-dozen gangs was considered an instant jump to “coolness.”

“They were universally feared by everyone, and I thought, this is wild and fun, and I started hanging out with these kids,” Wu says.

When he returned home with some low grades, his mother promptly kicked him out of her house, and he gradually dropped out of school, and gravitated towards the gangster life.

Lawrence Wu chose to join one of the city’s many Asian gangs, and became a foot soldier for an international triad that ran gambling, prostitution, and enforcement

syndicates from New York to Hong Kong. Killing missions, like the failed run, were rare events. One other time, he waited in a movie theater to execute some rival gang members, but they never showed up. Instead, Wu earned \$80 a week from his Dai Lo (“big brother”) to watch his territory, shake down store owners, deliver his packages (“I suspect they were drugs and guns, but I didn’t ask”), and to be available for fighting.

Most of the time, Wu said, the gang gambled and partied, “wasted time, and looked for trouble.” Eventually, trouble found him. His first contact with court came when he was the sole gang member arrested when the police broke up a fight. “I had an injury from the day before, so I was limping away while everyone was running,” he says. He was held at the police station on 23rd St. until his mother came and had him released to her custody.

While on probation, he met a juvenile probation officer who graduated from Brooklyn Technical High School - one of New York’s three specialized high schools, along with Stuyvesant. “We had an instant connection, and because I was from Stuyvesant, he said there couldn’t be a big problem,” he says. “That was the last I heard of the charge.”

He was arrested for fighting a second time in Flushing, Queens. “They never asked for ID, so I gave a false name, and put down my grandmother’s address,” Wu says. “I never heard of it again, and for all I know, I could have a big fine accruing.”

The game he played with the law caught up with Wu when he was arrested as an accomplice in a brutal beating of someone he thought was a rival gang member. “One of my friends had a lock, put his finger through the ring, and we walloped this guy with a “fist of fury,” and basically bashed his head to a pulp,” he says. The injuries were so serious, the police arrested him in Chinatown and charged him with attempted murder. Not only was the charge serious, but this time Wu was arrested and held by Chinatown police - a precinct that had a reputation for being particularly brutal with the young Chinese gangs.

Before they took him to the station, Wu says the police beat him and his friend in the back of their car. “They know where to hit people without making marks: the neck, the solar plexus, and they hit you with their elbows, so they don’t get marks,” he says. “They knew they couldn’t shut us down, so this was their way of finding equilibrium, and menacing us.” He was held in a dingy, dark adult jail cell for two days with the other kids, and tells of one of the officers who handed him a cheese sandwich after rubbing it against the railing of the cell.

His mother got him a lawyer, who told him there was a chance he could go to jail for a couple of years. He was released to his mother's custody, and in the intervening weeks, the person he had beaten recovered, and did not suffer any serious long-term health consequences, and the charges were dropped.

Wu says the whole experience was a catalyst for him to leave the gang. "It scared the shit out of me, and my other friends started talking about going to college and stuff like that," Wu says. "It made me feel like, this gangster stuff is getting old."

However, Lawrence Wu knew, you don't just leave a gang. One built-in safeguard is that he had used a false name with his gang, and they did not know where his mother lived. At about the same time, people in his gang started getting killed, or arrested in an FBI sting operation. "A year later, there was an article showing that twenty-five high up members of the gang were sent to jail," he says. "Before that, a rival gang started this war campaign against us, and people started dying. I was lucky I got out when I did," he says.

But not lucky enough, he points out, to avoid getting beaten up by members of a rival gang at a party, even though he said he was no longer in the gang, and was dressing like "a preppy, college person," trying to blend in.

He never looked back after that. Wu moved back in with his mother, got a job as a teller at Chemical Bank, and began the process of catching up in school. He took his GED, and got accepted to Queens College, and eventually made up his lost years. "I was excited about college, and I studied hard, but I had a small English vocabulary, and I had to learn how to write again," he says. "I was reading words like 'polemic,' and I had to look up what they meant."

As he transferred to more prestigious schools, first to New York University, and then to the State University of New York at Binghamton, he wrestled with his new-found faith as a Christian. For a time, he thought of becoming a missionary, and became a youth leader in a Chinatown church and at his college.

During his time as a Christian, he began to think about the damage and pain he caused his family, particularly his mother. "I noticed how much she seemed to have aged over the nearly two years I was gone," Wu says. "It saddened me to think how the whole experience exacted a tremendous toll on my mother." His mother invited him back in, no questions asked, helping him make the transition from gang

***"It is hard to have a general rule of culpability when there are so many individual circumstances."***

life, to school. In university, Wu's studies centered on rationalistic philosophy and biblical criticism. He found it increasingly difficult to intellectually justify his faith.

***“Based on my experiences, I can say that a system of second chances is necessary.”***

Eventually, Wu says he found it impossible to maintain both his intellectual convictions and his traditional faith, and he “unconverted.” Shortly after Wu's unconversion, he reunited with his high school sweetheart whom he dated when he was a gangster. He chose Columbia Law School over Harvard because he was certain they were going to get married and he wanted to stay close to her in New York. His decision paid off, as they got married before his second year of law school.

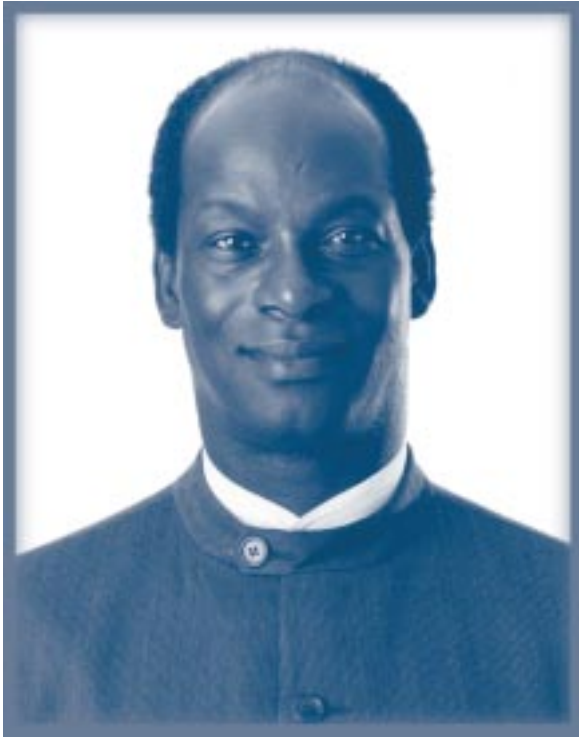
Today, Lawrence Wu is putting in 40 to 100 hours a week as editor-in-chief of the Columbia University Law Review - one of the greatest honors a student can receive in the school. He oversees every step of the production of one of the nation's most prestigious law journals. “I try to see that every single piece is substantively better,” he says.

When asked what he thinks of the recent spate of tough-on-crime juvenile justice legislation - laws that would have made his own reclamation more difficult - Wu soberly deliberates over the competing legal values. “I know a lot of people from the gang that I would want to see locked up,” he says. “They really are irredeemable. But it is hard to have a general rule of culpability when there are so many individual circumstances. It's hard to say where the line should be drawn.” He says he is hesitant to say anything on public policy unless he has enough information, and dislikes the common tendency to make rash judgments. But it doesn't take much consideration for him to reject recent Congressional plans to make juvenile records available to universities.

“It won't have a deterrent effect,” Wu says. “If I'm a 14-year old kid, do I actually care that my record won't be expunged before college? The only thing it is punishment for the sake of punishment, and there are other ways to exact punishment that are more socially useful.”

“I hate and despise when people just say things, without giving the matter serious thought,” he says. “People have different circumstances that require some degree of individuation, and that it is terribly difficult to have a general rule, especially when it comes to exacting criminal punishment.”





**“I** was lucky. My grandmother stepped up for me and said she would take responsibility for me and a compassionate juvenile judge took a chance and gave me one. They were getting ready to send me away to do real time, but they sent me instead to a juvenile alternative day school. And I guess that was the beginning of my turnaround.”

What a turnaround it was. Bob Beamon would go from being a gang leader and sentenced juvenile delinquent to performing what is considered one of the most spectacular athletic achievements ever. In the midst of the wild and politically charged Mexico City Summer Olympics of 1968, he captured the world’s attention by shattering the world and Olympic records for the long jump with a leap of 29 feet 2 1/2 inches. Perhaps even more

importantly, he went on to become a motivational speaker who now tries to move others like himself to get back on the “straight and narrow.”

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## BOB BEAMON

**Age:** 52

**Occupation:** Olympic Athlete, set the long-jump record in 1968 with a jump of 29 feet, and 2 1/2 inches. President of Bob Beamon Communication Inc., and Director of Athletic Development at Florida Atlantic University.

**Residence:** Miami, Florida.

**Education:** Adelphi University.

**Delinquency History:** Assaults, truancy and running away from home. Referred to the juvenile court in New York for getting into a fight in a school. Spent some time in a detention center and sent to the "600 School" in Manhattan, an alternative school for juvenile delinquents.

***By the time he was 9, Beamon was already getting into trouble. "I was hanging out with thugs and the whole 9 yards," he says.***

Bob Beamon never knew his biological father or mother. His mother died when he was an infant and his step father assumed responsibility for him. His stepfather did little in the way of parenting. He drank a lot, beat his wife, his mother and Bob and finally ended up in prison. Little Bob never “had anyone to look up to” and no one to parent him. His grandmother, Bessie, was the one who tried the most. She worked long hours as a domestic worker, kept a roof over his head, and put food on the table. But, there was little supervision and “certainly were no hugs or affection.”

His neighborhood in Jamaica, New York was poor and life there was hard. “For most of my childhood it was just more or less survival,” Beamon says. “I grew up by learning and getting hurt at the same time.” As a child he experienced and witnessed violence and a lot of what he calls “very serious scenes.” As a young boy he once saw a man literally being beaten to death on the street.

By the time he was 9, Beamon was already getting into trouble. He was stealing things, getting into fights, and skipping school. “I was hanging out with thugs and the whole nine yards,” Beamon says. The juvenile authorities put him in a counseling program for one year and tried to intervene but over the next five years he kept getting into trouble, finally “graduating into juvenile court.”

At 14, he ran away from home, skipped school, drank, and fought. He couldn’t even read. He joined a gang, worked his way up the gang hierarchy and got into lots of fights.

One of those gang fights spilled over into school and into a classroom at Queens P.S. 40. A teacher intervened and was struck. Beamon was expelled from school and charged with assault and battery. The judge looked over his record (dating back four years) and his school reports. Court social workers recommended he be sent to a prison-like facility in upstate New York where, Beamon describes, “juveniles were locked up and locked down for a long time.”

Beamon remembers “being real scared and looking down at the ground the whole time the judge was talking.” But his grandmother told the judge and told him she would take more responsibility and would take charge of Beamon. The juvenile judge was thoughtful, compassionate and obviously interested in helping kids. He sized up the situation and “must have seen something. He said he was going to take a chance,” Beamon says.

***His grandmother stayed true to her words to the judge by staying after Bob. He began to "get off the corner and into the community center and school."***

Instead of jail, he was sent to an alternative or "600 School" in Manhattan with other juvenile delinquents. It was a hard place where the teachers were tough and the kids were locked up inside during the day. But Beamon learned some things, made some good friends and was given the opportunity to grow. It was a place where he had time to learn that there was more to life than trouble.

By the time he left the 600 School he had a good relationship with the staff and recognized how important that was. He still remembers two teachers, Mr. Rogers and George Goggins, among others, because they showed him that there was a different way to live and behave. There is no doubt in his mind that the 600 school experience was the "key to his turnaround." And his grandmother stayed true to her word and closely supervised him.

"I got off the corner and into the community center and school," Beamon says. "Going into Manhattan every day from Queens showed me a world that intrigued me."

And while he still got into a little trouble here and there by "dipping and dabbling," he was definitely on a different path—one that would take him up and out of the gang lifestyle.

After setting a Junior Olympics record in the long jump while in Junior High, Beamon was determined to go to Jamaica High School. He learned to "stay away from the old crowd and stay with better influences." He was helped by Larry Ellis, the school's dean and track coach, who took Beamon under his wing. Ellis recognized Beamon's athletic ability and encouraged him to have dreams and to pursue them. At 16, Beamon started setting city-wide records in track, culminating in a New York State record for the long jump. Now, he had a purpose, an opportunity, encouragement from others and an Olympic dream.

Five years later, in Mexico City, Bob Beamon realized his potential by leaping 29 feet 2 1/2 inches thereby setting new world and Olympic records in the long jump. In a sporting event where records were broken by inches, Beamon jumped nearly two feet longer than anyone else ever had. His world record remained intact for 23 years. Indeed, in modern sports lingo, a record shattering event or feat is now termed "Beamonesque."

Following his Olympic triumph, Beamon went on to graduate from Adelphi University and entered a career in public relations first at a bank, coaching college track, and later running Parks and Recreation programs in Miami-Dade, Florida. He has lived and worked in Mexico and Spain and has remained active in the Olympic movement. Along with actor Arnold Schwarzenegger, he organized the South Florida Inner-City Games for at-risk kids and is Chairman of the Bob Beamon United Way Golf Classic, which benefits youth-related programs of the United Way. He is a member of the New York Track and Field Hall of Fame, the Olympic Hall of Fame and is in the ESPN's list of the top 100 athletes of the 20th Century.

Beamon's story did not end with his athletic gifts and accomplishments. Indeed, he has gone on to pursue new dreams. He operates his own corporation, Bob Beamon Communications Inc., in Miami, Florida where he now lives with his wife and daughter. He is an exhibited artist, has designed and marketed a successful line of neckties and spends much of his time as an inspirational speaker and corporate spokesman. He has developed his own motivational program The Champion in You, in which he describes how, "Champions are made by the things you accomplish and by the way you use your abilities in everyday life situations." His autobiography, *The Man Who Could Fly: The Bob Beamon Story* has just been published. Most recently, Beamon accepted an appointment as the Director of Athletic Development at Florida Atlantic University.

Beamon emphasizes that "we must all do our part to make sure children are a priority in our society." He concentrates on working with troubled kids, "trying to give something back." Acknowledging that, while some kids today are involved in more serious crimes and appear to be less attached to society, he says that "kids are still basically the same; they have the same needs and problems; they are kids; they need our love and attention."

He notes, however, that kids today are subjected to more violence - be it in the streets, in the classroom, on TV, on the internet or in video games. He is particularly concerned that the inner cities, where many troubled kids live, are even more devastated than when he was a boy. "The backup systems—extended family, church, neighbors—are simply not there like they used to be." Beamon also observes that while today's children are being exposed to more dangers, parents are becoming less watchful over, and less involved with, their own kids. Families are far more fragmented and disconnected.

***"The backup systems... family, church, neighbors are simply not there like they used to be. Kids are basically the same - they have the same needs and problems - they are kids."***

“They are not sitting around the dinner table, talking and bonding,” he says. “They are in their own worlds.”

He speaks of the need for those in power to understand the realities of troubled kids—to know their devastated worlds and lives—and then to begin to make those kids’ lives better. “We need to get out of denial and reach out to these kids. They need to understand what can happen to them and what is in store for them in the penal system. We must teach them that there is a better, more interesting world out there.”

Beamon says despite his early troubles, he was given the opportunity to make mistakes and to learn from them. He had a grandmother who cared, a thoughtful juvenile judge, a responsive juvenile system, all of which encouraged him and enabled him to become a better person. There is no question that his early life experiences were not much different than those of many of today’s troubled kids. However, he worries that too little attention is being paid to them. Today’s society is “clearly less tolerant and more willing to throw away many kids.” Beamon believes it is very possible that he would not have been given that same chance today.

The opportunities provided by a competent juvenile justice system gave Beamon time to find himself, to learn to work hard and to make his Olympic dreams. And the rest is Beamon-esque history. He leapt into the record books and into our hearts in the Mexico City Olympics. And we are still talking about him.



# SALLY HENDERSON

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Walking through her West Side Chicago neighborhood each morning on her way to school, 12-year-old Sally Henderson passed the young men on the corner yelling “rocks and blows.”

She crossed through gang-infested streets by herself as she made her way to catch the bus that took her to O.A. Thorpe, the middle school for gifted students she attended on Chicago’s North Side. On many winter days, it was dark in the morning when she boarded the bus and by late afternoon when she was dropped off.

After her younger sister was robbed, Henderson and her family decided she needed some protection. First, she carried a rock in a sock in her book bag. Later, however, she felt she needed more to defend herself and she started carrying a “little blade” in her pocket, which she clutched on her way to and from school.

“I never intended to use it,” says Henderson, 23, as she reflects back on the incident that would bring her into contact with the juvenile court system and forever change her life.

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## SALLY HENDERSON

**Age:** 23

**Occupation:** Television broadcasting.

**Residence:** Bloomington, Illinois.

**Education:** Parkland Junior College and Illinois State University.

**Delinquency History:** Aggravated battery. Served six months on juvenile probation.

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***She felt she needed to defend herself and she started carrying a "little blade" in her pocket.***

***"Before I knew it, I grabbed my blade and cut one of the girls in the hand," Henderson says.***

Sally Henderson was born in Chicago on December 30, 1975. The oldest of three girls, Henderson and her sisters were raised by her mother. Her parents were divorced and her father drifted out of her life and into a lifelong struggle with drugs. Henderson's mother rose early every morning to start her trek from Chicago's West Side to the suburbs where she supported the family by cleaning the homes of white families, supplementing her income with public assistance.

"We struggled to make ends meet but I didn't really understand this until I was older," says Henderson. "We always had food on the table and clothing on our backs, although we depended on food stamps and were often given hand-me-downs from some of the families my mom worked for. My mom didn't let us see that she was struggling. What I remember most was that my mom never complained ... she always made out like she was lucky to have her job."

At Duke Ellington Elementary School, Henderson was singled out for her academic potential and in the fifth and sixth grades was placed in a program for gifted students. She won a school-wide essay contest, writing on the topic "What I would do if I was Mayor." Her essay was chosen as the best in the district. She remembers attending Kennedy-King College for the competition and thinking, for the first time, that she wanted to go to college.

After graduating from the sixth grade, Henderson enrolled at O.A. Thorpe, following the lead of most of her classmates in the gifted program. When she got to Thorpe, she felt estranged from the popular clique.

"I was the new girl, I had a shape, and the boys were attracted to me," says Henderson.

A group of girls started harassing her, called her a "ho" and a "bitch," and bumped into her when they passed her in the halls. When Henderson's mother complained to the principal, "he just brushed it off," says Henderson, because he said, "girls will be girls."

On one December day, two days before Henderson was to appear in a Christmas play, a group of girls boarded Henderson's school bus and jumped her.

“Before I knew it,” says Henderson, “I grabbed my blade and cut one of the girls in the hand.”

Henderson was arrested, taken to the police station, and charged with aggravated battery. After she was processed by the police, she was released to her mother. She was suspended for two weeks from school and told that she was not welcome back for eighth grade.

“When I returned to school,” says Henderson, “I was treated as if I was a criminal... I’ll never forget one teacher, who knew I wanted to be in television, told me that I would never be a news reporter now that I had been arrested.”

She remembers little of her courtroom experience, though she has bad memories of her public defender.

“He was a big, mean black guy with a nasty attitude, who had read the police reports and thought I was this big criminal,” Henderson says. “He wanted me to do time in juvie.”

Henderson believes the Public Defender didn’t care to listen to her or explain things to her mother and stepfather who accompanied her to court: “The experience was a nightmare. I remember crying a lot.”

Henderson was sentenced to six months of probation for the knifing incident - her first and only offense. Her first probation officer was not much better than her lawyer. He would come by the house, take out a pad and paper, write down a few things, and leave. But Henderson’s fortunes took a turn for the better when her case was reassigned to a new probation officer, Karen Jordan.

“Jordan was so different, she would pick me up at home, take me out to eat, to picnics, to meet other kids, or just to talk,” says Henderson. Even though she was only Henderson’s probation officer officially for six months, Jordan remained her friend and mentor for years. She took Henderson to a career conference where Henderson met Mary Dee, a local television broadcaster, inspiring Henderson to continue her pursuit of a career as a television reporter.

***"When I returned to school, I was treated as a criminal....I'll never forget one teacher, who knew I wanted to be in television, told me that I would never be a news reporter now that I had been arrested."***

***"Jordan [her probation officer] came into my home, she got to know me, and she showed me that she genuinely and honestly cared.....I can't begin to thank her enough for what she did."***

"Jordan came into my home, she got to know me, and she showed me that she genuinely and honestly cared," says Henderson. "She had a special spirit, a gift at being able to relate with young people like me ... I can't begin to thank her enough for what she did for me."

What Jordan did not know - because Henderson has only begun talking about it recently - was that Henderson desperately needed someone to work through these tough issues. For the previous 6 years, from the time she was 6 years of age, she had been sexually molested by an older cousin. When she tried to tell her relatives, they didn't believe her, taking the side of her cousin— just as he said they would. Jordan's kindness and attentive ear helped Henderson to work through the pain of the abuse.

Henderson and Jordan continued to keep in touch when she went to Lane Tech, an academic high school with high entrance standards. One day, after she and Jordan had not spoken for several months, Jordan showed up at Lane Tech while Henderson was sitting in study hall and told her about Project Lifeline, a program developed by several probation officers to offer college scholarships to juvenile court wards.

Jordan insisted that Henderson write a letter applying for the scholarship.

"She sat next to me and waited until I finished the letter and then she fine-tuned it and typed it for me," says Henderson. "Before I knew it I was called for an interview and then I received a letter in the mail, telling me I could attend the college of my choice, free of charge, for the next four years."

Project Lifeline was the brainchild of several probation officers at the court, says Steve Eiseman, the probation officer who worked with Henderson after she received the scholarship. One day, some probation officers got together and bemoaned the fact that children who finished high school often didn't have the resources to continue their education. "It was so rare that our kids were graduating from high school that we felt it was tragic not to do everything possible to assist those who wanted to go on and further their education," says Eiseman. Since 1990, Project Lifeline has funded 80 children to go to college and apprenticeship programs. Currently, there are 40 children in the program. In addition to providing financial support for college, the program also provides mentoring, supportive services and social opportunities for the children who receive scholarships.

Henderson used the scholarship to go to Parkland Junior College in Champaign, Illinois and then transferred to Illinois State University (“ISU”) in Normal. Henderson went to ISU in part to break off a relationship with a high school boyfriend that had soured shortly after she gave birth to their daughter, Jazzlyn, on July 7, 1997. She and “Jazz” moved to ISU to make a clean break.

At ISU, Henderson pursued her dream of becoming a television broadcaster. In her senior year, she hosted “First at Five,” a talk show on T.V. 10, ISU’s Cable Access Channel. She was a producer, editor, writer, and reporter on the show, which aired once a week for 14 weeks. She also served as a news reporter and news anchor for T.V. 10. She graduated in May 1999 with a degree in communications and now works as an intern at WEEK, the local NBC affiliate in Bloomington, Illinois. This October, Henderson will marry her fiancée, a sociology major at ISU.

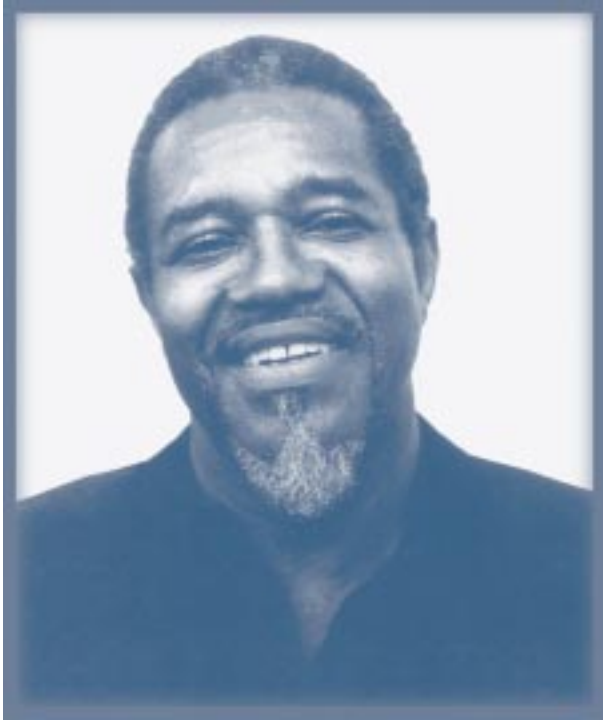


Henderson reflects positively on her juvenile court experience. “What started out as a nightmare, turned out to be a blessing ... I doubt that I’d be where I am at today if I hadn’t been brought to court.” says Henderson. “If I could do one thing to improve the system,” says Henderson, “it would be to fill it with people like Karen and Steve, people who really care, who take the time to find out what a child is thinking.”

Henderson is disturbed by the trend in society to try kids as adults. “That’s the worst thing you could do to a child,” says Henderson, the anger rising in her voice. “Even though children may commit adult crimes, they are still children. What these children need are people who honestly and genuinely care about them.”

Henderson cares about them. She wants young girls in the inner city, who have shared similar experiences to know that with self-determination, love from others and faith in God, they can overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles. She plans on applying her communications skills to become a motivational speaker, using her story to give hope to others. “I feel like I have to do this,” says Henderson, “It must be why I went through this.”





“**W**hen the bus was all loaded and ready to take us back to the Youth House, one of the boys in the seat behind me tapped me on the shoulder and said, ‘Hey, shorty, ain’t that your mother standin’ on the court stoop?.... Man, she’s cryin.’”

“I said, ‘So what?’ as if I didn’t care. But I cared. I had to care. that was the first time I had seen Mama crying like that. She was just standing there by herself, not moving, not making a sound as if she didn’t even know it was cold out there. The sun was shining, but it was cold and there was ice on the ground. The tears just kept rolling down Mama’s face as the bus started to pull away from the curb. I had to care. Those tears shining on Mama’s face were falling for me. When the bus started down the street, I wanted to run back

and say something to Mama. I didn’t know what. I thought, maybe I woulda said, “Mama, I didn’t mean what I said, ‘cause I really do care.” No, I wouldn’a say that. I woulda said, “Mama, button up your coat. It’s cold out here.” Yeah, that’s what I forgot to say to Mama.”- *Manchild in the Promised Land, 1965.*

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## CLAUDE BROWN

**Age:** 62

**Occupation:** Author, *Manchild in the Promised Land*, a best selling autobiography on his youth in Harlem, New York. Freelance writer, *The New York Times Magazine*, *Esquire*, *The Saturday Evening Post* and *Life Magazine*.

**Residence:** Newark, New Jersey.

**Education:** Howard University and Rutgers Law School.

**Delinquency History:** Graduated from youthful fights and shoplifting to drug sales and assault. He served time in New York’s juvenile detention center, and two upstate youth training schools, including the Wiltwyck and Warwick schools for boys.

Claude Brown's *Manchild in the Promised Land*, published in 1965, just as America's involvement in the Vietnam War was escalating, is an autobiography of his youth in Harlem, New York; the story of how he survived "street life." Brown originally thought he might sell 100 copies of the book, but he soon received letters from soldiers overseas that foretold the 4 million copies it would sell, and how important *Manchild* would become.

"I would get letters from brothers who were stationed in Vietnam, who were from places that I didn't think had blacks," Brown says. "They would write things like, 'Hey brother, are you sure your father didn't have a twin, because he sure sounds like mine.' And some would say, 'thanks for writing our story.'"

"I realized after reading some of these letters, this wasn't just my biography. It was the biography of an entire generation of African Americans," he says. "And that is why it sold so many copies, and that's why it was such a significant contribution to American literature at the time."

Sadly, the story of today's African-American boys too often includes a chapter with a mother crying on the court house steps as their children are bussed away. But today, Claude Brown knows they are less likely to end up in the nurturing environment he wrote about in *Manchild*, the Wiltwyck School for Boys in upstate New York (to which he dedicated the book). Instead, they are heading to adult prisons or crumbling juvenile detention centers. The 62-year-old author and intellectual spends plenty of time with young offenders in America's jails, prisons and detention centers, and thinks he knows at least some of the reasons why it's hard for them to climb out of the "street life."

"One of the worst things that happened in my lifetime was the demise of the Wiltwyck school, and so many [other] facilities when they were most needed," he says. "There should have been a hundred more of this type of facility."

He knows, too, that reforming programs for the nation's at-risk youth is more complicated than just building 100 more training schools. While he dedicates his book to Wiltwyck, where he was sent at age 11, Brown kept committing crimes well into his late teens, long after leaving Wiltwyck, and even after several stints in Warwick, a more hardened upstate school for juvenile offenders.

"When *Manchild* first came out, everybody asked, 'How did you do it, what's the formula?'," he says. "There are no formulas for life."

Claude Brown's crime run began at the tender age of 8. His father, a dock worker, would frequently beat him and his siblings when they got into trouble, and his mother struggled with the juvenile court to get him into the best state delinquency programs. But nothing seemed to prevent Brown from breaking the law. In spite of his unstable, alcoholic father, and the poverty of his youth, his siblings all grew up to lead normal lives.

"I was the black sheep of the family," he says. "Also, life on the streets, it was pretty exciting life for an 8-year-old."

He started stealing from cash registers, shoplifting, and playing hooky at age 9. The court made his parents send him to live with grandparents in South Carolina for a year. As soon as he came back, he began running with his old gang again, stealing and fighting. After a series of stints in New York City's juvenile home, Brown was 11 when the court ordered him to Wiltwyck for two-and-a-half years.

While he kept up a reputation as the school's bad boy, he found positive influences in the kinds of adults he met there. Wiltwyck was the first place Brown met any African-Americans who finished high school, let alone college. He also wrote warmly of dinners he spent at Eleanor Roosevelt's home, who helped found the school (and to whom he also dedicated the book).

But it was his relationship with a white man, with the European executive director of the school, that left the most lasting impression on him. At Wiltwyck, Brown constantly battled with Ernst Papanek for the loyalty of the school's residents. Only

***Wiltwyck was the first place Claude Brown met any African-Americans who finished high school, let alone college. He found positive influences in the kinds of adults he met there.***

after he left did he and Papanek become friends, and did he come to appreciate his help, and the other staff at Wiltwyck. Papanek kept in touch with Brown over the years and encouraged him to go back to school. Even at Warwick, the much tougher training school he later attended, he found positive influences in Mrs. Cohen, who gave Brown books to read, and encouraged him to finish high school and told him he was smart enough to go to college.

"Eventually, it started getting to me," Brown says. But the positive influences in his life were balanced by negative ones, forcing him to choose his future.

After Wiltwyck, he returned to a life of crime, culminating in him getting shot in the abdomen and nearly dying while attempting to steal some bed sheets to finance drug

purchases. Despite three more stints at Warwick, Brown continued to graduate to more serious offenses, including selling marijuana, then cocaine. The pieces finally came together in his life when a junkie named “Limpy” stole his drug stash at gunpoint. If Brown was going to stay in the game and maintain his reputation he would have to shoot Limpy dead. A friend urged Brown to get out.

“I think if anybody on Eighth Avenue ever makes it, I think it could be you,” the friend said. As he tells it today, Brown didn’t really want to go to school, “but it seemed like the only exit.”

Brown told his customers he was out of business, got some odd jobs to pay his way through, moved downtown to Greenwich Village and started evening high school when he was 17. He credits some of his success climbing out of street life to the luck of missing the scourge of heroin in Harlem—something he vividly describes in *Manchild* as having destroyed the next generation of Harlem hoods. Gradually, he parted ways with his gang. As his friends graduated from training school, to prison, he married a woman he met in night school and finally began to learn enough to seek out a college education.

In 1959, Brown entered Howard University in Washington, and on a visit the following year to Harlem, he saw how far he was from street life. He remembers getting off a bus in his old neighborhood, when he heard a familiar voice call his name.

***“I spent a lot of time in correction facilities with adults and adolescents, and it is one of my deepest convictions that, of the guys I grew up with, most of them didn’t have to be there.”***

“This guy I had been to Wiltwyck with, and Warwick with, says “man, I just got out of Sing (Sing Sing State Prison). ‘Everybody’s up there, and we’ve been looking for you. If you were up there, we’d be running the joint’.”

Brown remembers his friend mentioning that he saved seats for him in all the different juvenile jails and prisons that defined his life. By the time he got to Sing, he decided, Brown wasn’t going to show.

“And then he said in an accusatory tone, ‘You know what someone said about you. Somebody said, you went to college.’ And I said, “Ah, you know, somebody is always lying about somebody on something’.”

“It was almost as if we had tacitly pledged allegiance to the criminal life,” Brown says. “And you sort of felt like a traitor.”

**“One of the worst things that happened in my lifetime was the demise of the Wiltwyck school, and so many [other] facilities when they were most needed. There should have been a hundred more of this type of facility.”**

As he worked his way through a liberal arts degree at Howard, working part-time as a postal clerk, Brown began writing short stories and articles for non-paying intellectual magazines like *Dissent* (where his work was edited by Norman Mailer) and *Commentary*. At Howard, novelist Toni Morrison was his writing teacher. She frequently read and critiqued his early work. A publisher from MacMillan who had read some of these articles took Brown out for lunch, (“got me drunk,” he says) and convinced him to write something about life in Harlem.

At that point, the longest thing Brown ever wrote was a 20-page short story. He had no idea how to write a book. Six months later, long after he spent the publisher’s advance, he was nowhere. Then, he picked a copy of Richard Wright’s *Eight Men*, a collection of short stories of eight people’s lives, and it inspired him enough to write about Harlem through his own life story.

“I didn’t know anything other than my own life, so that was what I wrote,” he says. “I know people like to idealize things more, like, ‘wrote to correct the world,’ but that’s how it happened.”

Almost 35 years, and 4 million copies later, *Manchild* has become the second best selling book MacMillan ever published (the first was *Gone with the Wind*), and it was published in 14 languages. It launched his career as a writer, giving him a platform to publish in *Esquire*, *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Life*, *Look* and *The New York Times Magazine*. For a while, he attended law school, but dropped out when his writing and lectures developed into a full career.

Meanwhile, Brown started a family. He has two children by two marriages, and now, a grandson. Though living in Newark, New Jersey, he is still involved in Harlem and helping kids out of the street life. He works to maintain a program that mentors kids from Harlem, and helps them go to college. Brown also supports a Newark-based program that diverts kids caught up in the court system into an intensive eight week residential treatment program that tries to turn young people’s lives around.

“All these kids get a copy of *Manchild*, and I come in to talk to them when they come in, and 8 weeks later,” Brown says. “You get a lot of interesting turn-around, and positive changes.”



While Brown sees more positive changes, and positive influences in community structures than ever before, he argues that at-risk kids have greater needs than ever before. That, and a mix of harder drugs, and change in culture, produced a different kind of childhood criminals than he and his gang were. In the 1980s and early 90s, Brown spent many of his visits to juvenile detention centers and prisons trying to understand the senseless violence being committed by muggers. Why, he asked, were their victims shot dead, for “chump change?”

“You shoot them if they don’t have any money. You shoot them after they give it up. Why?” Brown asked. “And they would tell me things like, ‘Well, it’s what you do.’ And I would say, ‘No, I’ve been there. That’s not what you do.’”

Exasperated, Brown finally asked: “Do you mean that [shooting your victims] is like, style, like wearing blue jeans? And they would say, ‘yeah, that’s it.’”

Brown thinks many of these kids he has visited in detention are victims of a kind of “society endorsed abandonment,” and that that is the heart of the juvenile crime problem.

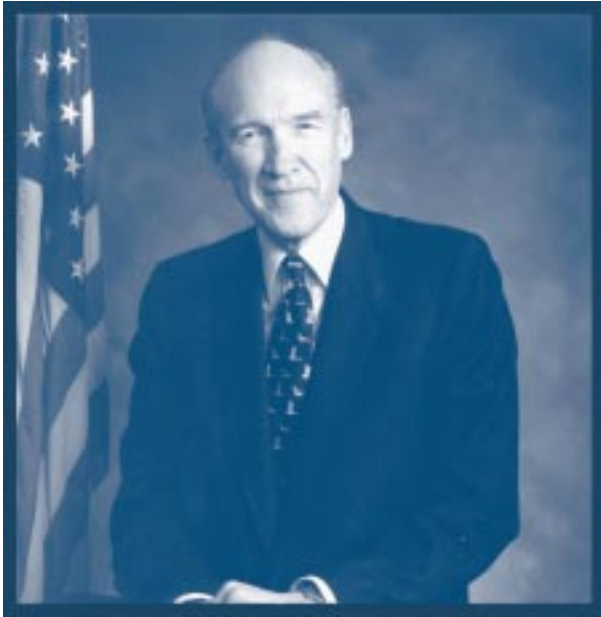
“The most common form of child abuse in America, regardless of socioeconomic status, is neglect,” Brown says. “The rich abandon their kids to boarding schools, and the poor, to TV. What happens when you abandon a whole generation to TV is you get a lot of kids who think, ‘TV’s not real, maybe I’m not real, either.’ ‘Let’s go out and shoot somebody.’ You want to cut crime, we have to stop abandoning our kids.”

Positive Change. Positive Influences. Claude Brown says he believes, instinctively, that most of the kids he ran with, along with most of the kids today can be turned around.

“They were good people,” he says of his former street gang. “I spend a lot of time in correctional facilities with adults and adolescents, and it is one of my deepest convictions that, of the guys I grew up with, most of them didn’t have to be there. They weren’t necessarily bad or evil, they did the natural thing and succumbed to the environment. And every time I walk out of those huge prison gates, I sense, I could have been here.”

# SENATOR ALAN SIMPSON

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**A**t the kick-off rally for his 1978 campaign for the U.S. Senate in Jackson, Alan Simpson spied a familiar face in the sea of people near the stage. Simpson waded into the crowd to meet his old friend, J. B. Mosley, and asked him to join his family and campaign workers around the podium. Modestly, Mosley declined the offer. “This is your day,” he told the would-be Senator. But Simpson could not let the moment pass. After his introductory remarks, Simpson told the crowd there was someone present who had a great influence in his life and had helped him to make it to this moment: his probation officer, J.B. Mosely. The crowd was suprised, but also quite moved. “I tell you, I think I got every vote in that building,” Simpson says with a chuckle.

The ex-Senator and one-time assistant Republican Leader of the upper chamber fondly remembers the caring relationship he shared with Mosely during a time when Simpson describes himself as being “on the edge.”

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## SENATOR ALAN KOOI SIMPSON

**Age:** 67

**Occupation:** Director, Institute for Politics, Harvard University, Former U.S. Senator (R-WY), 1978-1996.

**Residence:** Boston, Massachusetts; Cody, Wyoming.

**Education:** Bachelors and Law Degrees from the University of Wyoming, and several honorary degrees from universities around the country.

**Delinquency History:** Served two years on probation for destruction of federal property (vandalized mailboxes); shoplifting; arrested for breaching the peace as a young adult.

When he was 17, after he pled guilty to charges of destroying federal property by shooting mailboxes, Simpson met Mosely while serving out a two-year term on probation. Today, Simpson says the second chance he had helped him to become an attorney and to go on to politics, capped off by serving 18 years in the U.S. Senate. At 67, Simpson continues his commitment to public life as Director of the Institute of Politics at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and also teaching at the graduate level. Discussing America's juvenile justice system, Simpson is as enigmatic as he was in the Senate. While he is disappointed with "do gooders" in the juvenile justice system who are often "snowed" by "cunning juveniles," he is also critical of the demonization of youth by the media, and of the mandatory sentences that are often robbing kids of the kind of second chances he had.

"Anybody in our society—unless they are totally out to lunch—can understand that a guy of 22 or 25 is not the same guy of 17," Simpson says. "I don't know what they [the juvenile justice system] are doing right, but it is sure a helluva lot more right than what they were doing wrong."

Alan Simpson, whose father Milward L. Simpson was governor and U.S. Senator from Wyoming, grew up in a loving, stable home in Cody, Wyoming. His mother, Lorna, once told *Time* magazine that "Alan did have a temper," and she recalled punishing him for throwing rocks at other kids.

"My mother was near tears half the time while I was growing up, because of my always being on the edge," Simpson says.

He and his friends graduated from throwing rocks to playing with 22 caliber rifles at a nearby ravine: The boys would fire off rounds at each other, bouncing bullets off the rocks, just to see how close they could get without actually hitting each other. The game, Simpson says with remarkable understatement, "it is rather hazardous, actually!" To play, Simpson and his friends sometimes stole 22 rifle shells from local hardware stores. Later, when he and his friends were older, Simpson returned money to one of the stores he shoplifted, cutting and pasting a message on the envelope in newspaper letters which read, "we did wrong, here's your bucks."

***"Anybody in society, unless they are totally out to lunch, can understand that a guy of 22 or 25 is not the guy of 17."***

When he was 17, he and four of his friends loaded into his family's second car, an old Nash and drove off to shoot at mailboxes on a dusty rural road. "I was a crack shot," says Simpson. He hit a number of targets, blasting holes in the

mail. But he says one of his less accurate friends killed a cow hidden in a willow patch. They also shot up a road grader.

***“They would call and say, ‘I didn’t think you had the guts to come back to this town after what you did around here.’ And I would say, ‘Well, everybody gets a second chance.’”***

When the postmaster asked around, he began hearing descriptions of five kids making much noise, exploding fire crackers and firing off shots, all from a vehicle resembling Milward Simpson’s car. Alan Simpson soon confessed, and he and the four other boys pled guilty to destroying federal property in the Cheyenne federal court. As it was their first known offense, the judge sentenced them to 2 years probation and ordered them to make restitution for the mailboxes, the road grader and the dead cow. Mosely was assigned to monitor Simpson and the other miscreants.

Simpson remembers the distressing looks his parents gave each other. “They must have thought, ‘Where have we failed,’” he says. “My mother was looking at my father, my father at my mother. My father cried too, and I do remember that because I hadn’t seen him do that before,” Simpson says.

For the next two years, J.B. Mosely visited Simpson and his friends whenever he made the trip into Cody, even seeing them at home, in the pool hall, at school and on the basketball court. Simpson remembers Mosely being a wonderful guy who would sit down with him, asking him how he was doing in school, keeping tabs on Simpson’s success on the high school basketball team and his scholastic work.

“I didn’t know him intimately, but I did know that he cared about me,” says Simpson. “He paid attention to me, and I liked him very much. He didn’t preach...he listened.”

Everyone in town knew about the incident and jokes about it followed him through high school. Kids would call into a local radio station request line to have the old country western song, “There’s a hole in my mailbox,” dedicated to Simpson. But the attention he and his friends received from his probation officer made a difference in his and his friends’ lives. Of the four other mailbox shooters, Simpson says one became a school teacher and principal, another became a school administrator, and one worked in the space industry. “Another died in his youth, but every one of the others went on to a successful life,” he says.

Simpson was the only one of the group to get into trouble again as an adult. When he was 21, he got into a shoving match with a drunken friend in Laramie, Wyoming. A police officer, who mistook the shoving for a fight, cracked Simpson’s head with

a billy club and Simpson lashed back. “A real mistake!,” Simpson states dryly. The police made him spend the night in jail. He and the friend were charged with breaching the peace, and he was released on a \$300 fine. His parents found out, and he again earned the anguish of his father.

“The older you get, the more you realize their disappointment is so real,” Simpson says. “But you also come to realize your own attitude is stupefying, and arrogant, and cocky, and a shitty way to live.”

From then on, Simpson went straight. He graduated with a bachelors degree in 1954 and married his girlfriend, Ann Schroll, now his wife of 45 years. After a stint in the army in Germany, he attained a law degree from the University of Wyoming in 1958. He worked in his dad’s law firm for 18 years in Cody. As he and Ann raised three children (Bill and Colin became lawyers and Susan is a commercial art dealer), Simpson was often appointed by the courts to represent juvenile delinquents and was frequently approached by parents who knew his history with the law. One of the kids whose case he handled was an 18-year-old who stole a car and drove it to Seattle. The man later became Simpson’s chief of staff.

“Some were surprised when I was back to Cody to practice,” he says. “They would see me and say, ‘I didn’t think you had the guts to come back to this town after all you did around here.’ And I would just smile and say, ‘Well, everybody gets a second chance’.”

When he worked juvenile cases, Simpson believed in tough love, and tough talk. “I’d go right for the jugular. ‘Look you little shit, I’m going to tell you about the real world, and if you don’t like it, you’ll end up being as important as a sparrow fart.’ Sometimes, the only way to cut through the bullshit, is to use profanity, whether you are at Harvard University or in the jail with a client in Cody.”

After nearly 13 years in the Wyoming legislature rising from majority whip to majority leader to speaker “pro-tem,” Simpson took his father’s Senate seat in Washington. Over his 18 years in the capitol, he held the second highest leadership position within the Senate GOP, while staking out some rather libertarian positions. He is a strong defender of abortion rights, for sensible immigration policies and supports the “decriminalization” (“not legalization,” he says) of marijuana.

***The ex-Senator seems to have an unwavering sense that most kids will rise past their youthful indiscretions, despite the ‘do gooders.’***



His thoughts on the criminal justice system are harder to peg. He strongly believes in giving kids a second chance and that one's youthful crimes should be put in their proper perspective by thoughtful people. But he also supports the court's discretion in making juvenile records widely available.

"I say, expose more of the onery little bastards," he says. "It sure got my attention when I knew people knew about me!"

Still, he acknowledges how that system leads to abuse. He is pained by the stories of people who smoked marijuana as kids, and then, 15 years later, are barred from joining the FBI and law enforcement. In 1991, when Simpson earned the ire of women's groups for his strident, some would say belligerent, questioning of Anita Hill during the Clarence Thomas confirmation hearings, the specter of his past delinquency hung over him.

"Remember, she wasn't charging him with "sexual harassment—she just wanted us to be aware of his behavior," Simpson says. "So, suddenly, from eight years back comes a guided missile aimed at Thomas' brain," he says.

"I just bristled, because, I thought of the fact that I had been on federal probation for two years—so many years ago," he says. "I thought, this is violently unfair. This reminds me of what could have happened to me."

His stormy relationship with the media also influence his view of the way reporters cover juvenile crime.

"The media will always portray the barbarism and the viciousness of the worst ones," he says. "The 11-year-old who assaults and kills the little girl in a back lot....yes, that's shocking enough but then you find out, well, it might not have been the 11-year-old at all. The high drama of the 24-hour news cycle have many of them portrayed as monsters."

And yet, the ex-Senator seems to have an unwavering sense that most kids will—and do—rise past their youthful indiscretions, despite the "do gooders." He recalls the story of a kid who came before him while he was a city attorney. Along with a group of other children, the boy assaulted a Spanish teacher on the streets of Cody, hurling broken bottles and racial slurs at him. Simpson recalls that the parents of all the boys could not believe that their "little dears" could have committed such a crude and cruel act. Always the iconoclast and believing that brutal honesty is the best policy, Simpson put the teacher up on the stand, "to tell every word and describe every action."

“Oh, God, it was wonderful to look at these doting parents and see them all squirm,” he says, again with a chuckle. “They couldn’t believe their children would do that. Those boys all went on to various degrees of success. All did well. Now, there was a lot of stuff to their rehabilitation, and I’m not a shrink, but those who do turn it all around with the great help of others—I say God bless ‘em!”

# TERRY K. RAY

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“Kids need to be anchored to something positive, something strong, something that will not leave them and something that will send them in the right direction,” says Terry K. Ray, a former juvenile delinquent who left his troubled past to become a federal prosecutor.

Fortunately for Ray, during a seven-year odyssey in the juvenile justice system, he was able to anchor himself to people who made a positive impact on his life. He credits not necessarily the system itself, but rather several individuals in it – a maintenance worker and some teachers and counselors – for giving him the tools he needed to succeed in life.

Born in 1950 in Shaw, Mississippi, Ray grew up with five siblings in a fatherless home in the Englewood section of Chicago’s South Side. In 1961, shortly before his 11th birthday, Ray began to get into trouble in school and in the community. During a neighborhood rock fight, he threw a bottle top at his best friend, which unbeknownst to Ray, had a piece of glass in it, cutting his friend above the eye. The friend’s father came after Ray, broke down his front door, pulled him out on the

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## TERRY K. RAY

- Age:** 48
- Occupation:** Private attorney and former assistant U.S. prosecutor, Dallas, Texas. Formerly with the U.S. Department of Justice, Tax Division, in Washington, D.C.
- Residence:** Dallas, Texas.
- Education:** Luther College, Northwestern University School of Law, L.L.M in Taxation, Washington University at the St. Louis Law School.
- Delinquency History:** Includes several assaults, theft and use of a weapon. Spent seven years in and out of the juvenile justice and foster care systems, including a stint in the maximum security facility for juveniles at Sheridan, Illinois.

porch and beat him up. The friend's father then called the police and filed a complaint.

Ray was taken from his home and placed in the Audy Home, Cook County's juvenile detention center, for six months. In 1961, children had few constitutional rights; Ray was neither taken before a judge nor given a lawyer.

At Audy, Ray met a special woman who touched him and whose kindness he has never forgotten. Ms. Sybil was in charge of cleaning at the Audy Home. She always had a smile or a hug for Ray, occasionally giving him a candy bar, and consistently picking him to head a cleaning crew.

After his release from Audy, Ray's troubles continued. During a fight at school, he stabbed a classmate in the leg with a pair of scissors and cut a teacher who tried to break up the fight. He was sent to an alternative school for a year. There, he was mixed in with kids who had serious mental health problems. He learned nothing in the dingy basement where class was held, except that he didn't belong there. He continued to get into fights, once striking another student with a sharpened pencil.

After a year, Ray returned to a regular public school where he had what he refers to as a "defining moment in his life," a phrase he often invokes to describe those experiences, both good and bad, that shaped his character. The incident began on a day like any other. The students in Mr. Cunningham's class were taking exams. One of the brightest students at the school, Ray finished his test early and began to grow restless. Mr. Cunningham grew angry with him because Ray had forged ahead to complete the test.

After class, Cunningham, a big, hulking man with a Mr. Universe-like physique, took Ray into the boys' room and beat him senseless. His face swollen, his body aching, Ray struggled up to the office of Mr. Wickern, his division teacher and one of the teachers who admired Ray. Ray was so angry and dazed by the beating that he couldn't speak clearly. He kept pointing at his face and shaking, trying desperately to signal to Mr. Wickern what had happened to him.

Unable to communicate, Ray finally exploded in rage, picked up a chair and ran down the hall after Mr. Cunningham, yelling "I'm going to kill you motherfucker." After Ray was subdued, Mr. O'Connor, the principal,

***"But for the grace of god, and the kindness of a few good people," says Ray, he could still be mired in the justice system, or more likely, dead.***

convened a meeting with Ray and Mr. Cunningham during which Cunningham accused Ray of lying. He explained away Ray's bruises by claiming they were self-inflicted. Mr. O'Connor told Ray that he could not take his word against the word of a teacher.

Sitting in that room, shaking and crying, Ray lost all respect for authority and vowed that he would never allow anyone to beat him up again. His life soon began to spin out of control. Ray returned to school armed with several weapons including a chain with a combination lock on it. He got into fight after fight at school, responding violently to the slightest provocation.

During one incident, Ray pummeled a bigger boy with his chain and lock. At home, things were also deteriorating. Ray, then age 14, told his mother that he would no longer stand for her beatings. When Ray refused to let his mother hit him, she kicked him out of the house.

For eight days, Ray wandered the streets, sleeping in abandoned cars. In reflecting on this period of life, Ray remarked, "I had so much anger, so little respect for authority and such a short fuse that I could easily have killed another human being."

When he refused to return home, the police took Ray back to the Audy Home where he remained for five months. There, he was visited by Mr. O'Connor and Mr. Wickern, both of whom felt somewhat responsible for his plight. Even though he had not completed the eighth grade, Mr. O'Connor graduated him after he passed a test so that he could enroll in high school upon his release.

After being released in September, 1964, Ray bounced from foster home to foster home and from high school to high school. Ray stayed with his uncle over the holidays that year. But when his uncle decided rather suddenly that Ray could no longer live with him, Ray was returned to Audy, and then to the Joliet Youth Center of the Illinois Department of Corrections.

He was eventually shipped to the St. Charles Youth Center for his first extended stay in juvenile corrections. Most boys stayed at St. Charles for 60 or 120 days. Because of his fighting and negative psychiatric evaluations, Ray stayed over thirteen months.

***During a fight at school, Ray stabbed a classmate in the leg with a pair of scissors and cut a teacher who tried to break up the fight. He was sent to an alternative school for a year.***



Ray has fond memories of St. Charles, even though he spent much of his time in solitary confinement. There, he learned how to box, growing so proficient at it that many of the other boys were afraid to fight him.

***He is quick to point out that he did not need a system to rehabilitate himself. What he needed was for a few decent people to show him he was valued.***

Ray experienced two “defining moments” at St. Charles. One day, Reverend Perkins, a counselor, brought in a book to read to the residents. The book was Claude Brown’s *Manchild in the Promised Land*, a story of a young juvenile delinquent whose troubled and painful childhood reminded Ray of his own life. Brown’s triumph over adversity to become a gifted writer inspired Ray and gave him some hope for his future.

Ray also fondly remembers Ms. Betty Harris, his counselor at St. Charles. In the midst of his anger, she reached out to him and showed him that she cared. Although she could not hug him, as the rules prohibited it, Ray felt embraced by her, whether the two of them were just chatting or she was taking him to the commissary and buying him a candy bar. They have kept in close contact throughout the years and remain close today.

In 1966, Ray was released back to his mother’s care. He re-enrolled in high school even though he had not completed a single semester in high school thus far.

He didn’t last the semester. He stole a typewriter from the school, planning to sell it for pocket money. He was caught, and once again, found himself in Audy. This time, however, he stayed for only a few hours and was taken back to Joliet. After a week at Joliet, he was put on a bus and sent back home. He was quickly kicked out of home again, and took up residence in the home of a minister. He didn’t last long there, either. In May, 1967, he had another confrontation with a teacher, Mr. Green, which brought back the Cunningham incident and all the other beatings in his life. He ran out of school in search of a gun to kill Green. After getting the gun, he changed his mind and decided he would just pistol whip Green with the gun. He removed the bullets and charged ahead. On the way, he was intercepted by the police who, according to Ray, saw the rage on his face and pulled him over. Ray surrendered and gave them his gun. The police beat him severely, using their fists, a lit cigarette on his hands, and a stick to poke him repeatedly in the stomach.

This time, Ray was dispatched to the Department of Corrections maximum juvenile facility at Sheridan. About six months later, he was released to a Y.M.C.A. in

downstate Decatur, Illinois so that he could complete the electronics program which he had begun in Sheridan, under the tutelage of Jack Evans. After completing his apprenticeship, he returned to Chicago in search of work.

Ray enrolled in Wilson Jr. College and got a job working at St. Luke's Hospital as an orderly. He worked there for nearly a year when another confrontation with an authority figure almost derailed his future. A registered nurse, upset over something he did, yelled at him and pushed him. Although he was angry at the nurse, and although the altercation resulted in him getting fired, Ray did not respond physically to the nurse's confrontation.

Shortly after losing his job, several people came together to create another "defining moment" for him. Dr. Ada Willoughby, a counselor at Wilson Jr. College, recognized Ray's potential and advised him to get out of Chicago for his education. She arranged for him to enter Luther College, a small Iowa school, where he was one of only 50 black students out of a student body of 2,000. Although he struggled at first, maintaining only a C average, he ultimately graduated on the Senior Honor Roll with a psychology degree in 1972.

Ray enrolled in Northwestern University School of Law in the Fall of 1972. Throughout law school, he was singled out as a gifted trial lawyer by his law professors. After graduating, Ray decided to further his education by getting an L.L.M. degree in taxation. During law school, one of his tax courses "had gotten the better of him" and he wanted to prove to himself that he could master tax. He was accepted at Washington University at the St. Louis Law School and received his L.L.M. a year later.

Even though he had graduated from Northwestern and had received an advanced degree, Ray was frustrated by the lack of job opportunities for black attorneys. He worked as a finance attorney for the Allstate Insurance Company for fourteen months before a chance encounter with two law school professors (Mayer Freed and Dan Polsby) gave him the break he needed. These professors arranged for Ray to be interviewed for a job in the Tax Division at the Justice Department in Washington, D.C.

Ray was hired, moved to D.C., and worked as a trial attorney assigned to Chicago for the next seven years. At the time, there were only three black attorneys out of two hundred and fifty in the Tax Division, all of whom were much older and had transferred from the I.R.S. He then moved to the Criminal Division of the United States Attorney's Office in Washington, D.C. for a short period before transferring to the Criminal Division of the U.S. Attorney's Office in Dallas, Texas where he was in charge of the Tax Prosecution Unit.

In Dallas, Ray's career took off. Working seventeen hour days, he cleared a huge backlog of cases. When he left in 1987, the Assistant Commissioner, Criminal Investigations and the Dallas I.R.S. agents bid him farewell by making him one of their own – an honorary special agent – the highest honor they bestow on non-I.R.S. employees. Ray was the first Assistant United States Attorney in the country to receive this honor.

Since leaving the Justice Department, Ray has set up his own practice as a criminal defense lawyer, specializing in federal white collar criminal defense. Ray and his wife, Lanita have been married for 25 years and have four children, two boys and two girls. His oldest child, Terika, is a senior at Washington University of St. Louis and is majoring in both biomedical and mechanical engineering. His second oldest, Jamar, is also at Washington University where he is majoring in mechanical engineering and is class president. His third child, Jaron, is a sophomore at St. Louis University, majoring in electrical engineering. His youngest, Jehana, is a high school senior and is President of the National Honor Society. She has been admitted to Northwestern University's McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science and will enroll there this fall and major in computer science engineering.

In reflecting upon his past, Ray is quick to point out that he did not need a "system" to rehabilitate himself. What he needed was for a few decent people to take a minute or two out of their busy days to get to know him, to give him a kind word, and to show him he was valued. He does recognize, however, that he was far more likely to have encountered such people as Ms. Sybil, Betty Harris, Jack Evans, and others in the juvenile justice system than in the adult criminal justice system. He's glad that some of the people he encountered took the time to look at him as an individual and to see his potential. He doubts he'd have met such individuals in the adult system with its tendency to stereotype all young men and its one-size-fits-all sentencing policies.

Since leaving the system, Ray has kept in touch with many of the people who helped him overcome his difficulties. He devotes countless hours to mentoring young people, frequently sharing his story with them. He has even gone back to St. Charles and Joliet to try to inspire the young people there and give them hope for a healthy, productive life outside the system. To Ray, such mentoring "goes beyond an obligation."

"But for the grace of God" and the kindness of a few good people, says Ray, "I could still be mired in the justice system, or more likely, dead."

# LUIS RODRIGUEZ

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Sitting in the back of a black bus chained to other young Chicano boys and men, his head still groggy from the blow of a sheriff's billy club, and his eyes still burning from a macing, 16-year-old Luis Rodriguez wondered what was in store for him.

Earlier that day, August 29, 1970, he was one of 30,000 Chicano protesters gathered in East L.A.'s Belvedere Park to oppose the Vietnam War. Still a member of South San Gabriel's Las Lomas gang, Rodriguez was beginning to shed his gang "jacket" as he became swept up in a new kind of youth empowerment brewing in the barrios—community organizing and political protest.

The bus' first stop was at juvenile hall but there was no room so Rodriguez was taken back to L.A. County Jail. Though it was illegal, the police held Rodriguez and the three other teens, including a terrified boy of 13, in the adult facility. They soon moved the four boys into the Hall of Justice jail, known as the Glasshouse, and tossed them into "murderer's row" where the most hardcore criminals awaited trial. In the cell next to the boys was none other than Charles Manson, who soon began ranting and raving about having to be next to "niggers and spics" and urging the few white inmates to kill them all.

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## LUIS RODRIGUEZ

**Age:** 45

**Occupation:** Poet, Author and Journalist.

**Residence:** Chicago, Illinois.

**Education:** California State University.

**Delinquency History:** Shoplifting, burglary, robbery and attempted murder in relation to his membership in a gang. Spent time in jail, both as a juvenile, and for a short time as an adult. Arrested for disturbing the peace at anti-war march.

But Manson's ravings were only the beginning of Rodriguez's problems. Within minutes after being placed in the cell, one of the murderers pressed a razor against Rodriguez's throat while several others covetously eyed the other boys. For Rodriguez, it was do or die. He knew that if he showed fear, he and the other boys could probably be raped or killed.

Years of *La Vida Loca*, "The Crazy Life", — gang membership, violence, drugs and watching friends die — had prepared Rodriguez for this moment. He stared down his assailant, signaling that he would not go down without a fight. The older cons backed down and left the other boys alone.

Although he survived, Rodriguez calls the time he spent in adult jail "his ten days in hell." Throughout this stay, he kept up his front but feared that at a moment's notice he or one of the other boys would be assaulted. "Placing kids in adult jail cells is a guarantee that you will destroy them," says Rodriguez. Those who are assaulted "can't whine, can't cry, and can't tell nobody" because the abuse will only grow worse. Those, like he, who were not assaulted, are still harmed because they are forced to ally themselves with more criminally sophisticated adults.

Rodriguez's teenage encounter with Charles Manson is just one of many compelling stories recounted in his highly acclaimed memoir, *Always Running: La Vida Loca: Gang Days in L.A.* The book chronicles every step in Rodriguez's evolution from a hardcore-gang-banger to an accomplished poet and author. Rodriguez's life is a testament to the resiliency of children, their capacity for change, and the important role that committed adults must play in helping them gain control of their destinies.

Born in El Paso, Texas in 1954, Rodriguez was the son of a high school principal in a large town on the Mexican side of the border. Shortly after Rodriguez's birth, Rodriguez's father was jailed after a dispute with local politicians. As soon as he was released, the family fled Mexico for the barrios of South Central and East L.A. where they ultimately settled in a neighborhood known as South San Gabriel.

Describing himself as a "shy and broken down" kid, Rodriguez was drawn to the gang life at 11. "We didn't call them gangs," says Rodriguez, "they were clubs or clicas," loose affiliations of neighborhood teens who bonded together for self-protection against other teens and abusive

***They began shoplifting food, but quickly moved to stealing cars, ripping off homes and sticking up trucks and stores for bigger loot.***



police officers. Shortly after Rodriguez and three friends formed their first club, “Thee Impersonations,” Rodriguez’s family moved to a new neighborhood smack in the middle of the territory presided over by the area’s two largest gangs – Las Lomas and Sangra.

***The Youth Center director, Chente Ramirez, agreed to mentor Luis on one condition: he had to re-enroll in high school.***

For a while, Rodriguez and three friends tried to operate outside the confines of the two rival gangs. They began shoplifting food from the local grocery store but quickly moved to stealing cars for a local chop shop operator. They then starting ripping off homes and sticking up trucks and stores for bigger loot. But Las Lomas and Sangra began taking over all outside clubs to consolidate their power. Rodriguez and his friends were forced to choose.

Rodriguez chose Las Lomas and was initiated into the gang with a barrage of blows and kicks from steel-tipped boots. Later on the night of his initiation, Rodriguez and the other newcomers were piled into a pickup and driven into rival Sangra territory. The truck pulled up beside a group of teens in a Desoto who were listening to music and drinking beer. Soon, tire irons and two-by fours were raining down on the boys’ heads and destroying their car.

From his perch in the pickup, Rodriguez observed the beating but felt almost oblivious to it. He was shaken from his stupor when an older Lomas leader suddenly thrust a rusty screwdriver into his hand and led him to one of the wounded boys. “Do it,” directed the leader. Rodriguez followed orders, stabbing the already injured driver in the arm. He was now a full-fledged member of Lomas.

As Rodriguez’s criminal activity escalated, so did his drug use. He started using drugs when he was 12, sniffing spray paint, aerosol, gasoline and anything else that would give him a cheap high. After a friend had to use mouth-to-mouth resuscitation to revive him, he stopped sniffing and moved on to reds (downers) and whites (uppers). Heroin soon followed. The drugs numbed his emotions and tended to mediate Rodriguez’s rage rather than fuel it.

By 15, Rodriguez had been expelled from school and thrown out of his house by his mother, who had tired of picking him up from police stations and waiting up nights wondering whether he’d come home alive. He lived on the streets for a while, sleeping on the floors of friends’ houses, crashing in fields, in parks, in cars, or wherever he could get some sleep. He felt hopeless and contemplated suicide, even taking a blade to his wrists on one occasion.

As the violence between Las Lomas and Sangra gangs escalated and the death toll mounted, the South San Gabriel community rallied to halt the violence and reclaim their youth. Funded by federal anti-poverty money, community centers sprung up throughout East L.A.'s barrios, offering dropout programs, job placements, counseling and recreational and cultural opportunities for young people. Rodriguez hung out with other Lomas members at the John Fabela Youth Center (named after a fallen comrade), where he first met the Youth Center's director, whom he gives the pseudonym Chente Ramirez in this book.



Ramirez played a pivotal role in changing Rodriguez's world view, channeling his rage into a constructive activism and assisting him to leave the gang. Rodriguez was instantly drawn to Ramirez, a former counselor for the California Youth Authority, an experienced community organizer and a native of East L.A.'s barrios who had come back after college.

Ramirez was drawn to Rodriguez, attracted by his thirst for learning. As a youth, Rodriguez had read all the history books about Mexico he could find in the library. He also read books like Claude Brown's *Manchild in the Promised Land* and Alex Haley's "*The Autobiography of Malcolm X*" and later Puerto Rican Piri Thomas' "*Down These Mean Streets*," autobiographical novels which spoke to and inspired Rodriguez. Ramirez agreed to mentor Rodriguez on one condition: Rodriguez had to re-enroll in high school.

Rodriguez agreed to give high school a second chance. He immediately became a leader of the Chicano student club and soon led the charge to break down the barriers between white and Mexican students. He and a female co-leader became the first Mexicans to be the school's mascots "Joe and Josephine Aztec"—dazzling the judges with their well rehearsed authentic folkloric routine in full Aztec costume dress. He also organized a successful walkout for Chicano studies, helped open up the football team to Mexican players and convinced the school to make soccer a school-sponsored sport.

Rodriguez's creative side also blossomed. Inspired by a book of Mexican muralists, Rodriguez led teams of youth gang members throughout the nearby city of Rosemead, painting vivid and colorful murals, doing their best to copy the Mexican masters Rivera, Siquieros, and Orozco. He began writing in earnest, compiling his thoughts and reflections on gang life in a journal and pounding out a weekly column in the school's newspaper.

But just as Rodriguez's life started to turn around, he was pulled off course by "La Vida Loca." When a friend from Lomas was jumped and called a greaser by a neighborhood club of white bikers, Rodriguez was recruited to participate in the payback. He shot one of the bikers, was arrested as he fled the scene, and was charged with attempted murder.

Ramirez came to the rescue. He helped get Rodriguez out of jail and convinced Rodriguez's parents to take him back in. The bikers refused to identify Rodriguez as the shooter, choosing instead to pin the rap on the boy who had lent Rodriguez the gun and with whom they had a long-running beef. Rodriguez's life was back on course.

When Rodriguez returned to school, he learned that he had won a writing contest, earning him \$250, a publishing contract and a plane ride – his first – to Berkeley. Unbeknownst to him, Ms. Baez, a school counselor, had entered Rodriguez's work in a Chicano literary contest. Rodriguez graduated high school and with Ms. Baez's and Ramirez's assistance, he received an Economic Opportunity Program ("EOP") Grant to attend California State University.

Rodriguez began California State in Los Angeles in the fall of 1972, majoring in Broadcast Journalism and Chicano studies. He worked odd-jobs to help pay for college, joined Mexican clubs at school and wrote for a club's newspaper. He also trained and organized youth from neighboring high schools. He met a beautiful girl Camila Martinez who would later become his wife. But a chance encounter with the L.A. County Sheriff's again set him back.

At a club one evening outside the barrio, Rodriguez saw several L.A. County Sheriffs assaulting a woman. When he called out for them to leave her alone, they pounced on him, cuffed him, and tossed him into a squad car. He

***"Youth is youth for a good reason. Youth are very malleable and it is society's obligation to try to change them: I am living proof of the capacity for change."***

was charged with assaulting a police officer and for the first time in his life, faced hard prison time as an adult.

On the day of his trial, Rodriguez's Public Defender urged Rodriguez to enter a plea. Rodriguez wanted to tell his side of the story but the PD kept saying the judge would never believe him over the deputies. Ramirez urged Rodriguez to take the deal. Rodriguez swallowed his pride and pled guilty to drunk and disorderly conduct even though he wasn't drunk. He had to spend nearly three months in a jail, but he escaped a longer stint in state prison.

His jail time set him too far back to continue at Cal State. He stayed in the barrio, worked odd jobs and attempted to mediate a truce in the still-brewing gang war between Lomas and Sangra. Viewed as a traitor, Rodriguez became a target of members of his own gang. When several life-long friends opened fire at him, he was finally ready to leave the gang. Ramirez again came to his rescue, hiding Rodriguez in a San Pedro housing project and helping him find work outside the barrio.

For the next seven years, Rodriguez worked in steel mills, foundries, and constructions sites in the industrial corridor that ringed L.A. He continued his community and organizing work and stayed out of the barrio and the gang life. He married Camila and had two children, a daughter, Andrea, and a son, Ramiro.

But something was missing. His new life, consumed with work, left little time for writing. Without an outlet to unleash his pain, he began to drink heavily. His marriage crumbled and Rodriguez soon saw little of his two small children.

This time, writing brought Rodriguez out of his despair. When he was fired from his job in 1979, he moved back to East L.A. and got a job paying \$100 a week working for an east L.A. paper. He went back to school, got a certificate in a journalism training program and soon began working regularly as a crime reporter for a San Bernardino daily. Unable to find a newspaper job at a big Los Angeles daily, in 1985, he moved to Chicago.

In Chicago, Rodriguez's career took off. He published two books of poems, *Poems Across the Pavement* and *The Concrete River*, both of which won prestigious literary awards. He founded Tia Chucha Press, a company dedicated to publishing the works of young, mostly minority literary voices.

In 1993, Rodriguez wrote *Always Running* and dedicated the book to 25 close friends who died during his days in Las Lomas. He also wrote the book as a gift to

his own son, Ramiro, who had moved to Chicago to live with Rodriguez as a teenager but soon thereafter joined a gang. Rodriguez was unable to keep Ramiro from following in his footsteps. In 1997, Ramiro was convicted of attempted murder and sentenced to 28 years in prison.

The tragedy of losing Ramiro to “La Vida Loca” brought Rodriguez's whole family closer together and helped crystallize for Rodriguez what he wanted to do next with his life.

“I tried to save Ramiro but he saved me,” says Rodriguez, referring to the fact that he has become a more attentive father to his children (he has two other children, 10-year-old Ruben and 4-year-old Rodriguez Jacinto) and a better husband to his wife Trini. He has finally stopped drinking and has poured his heart and soul into Youth Struggling for Survival (“YSS”), a program he founded to help Ramiro and other gang members transcend violence and gang involvement.

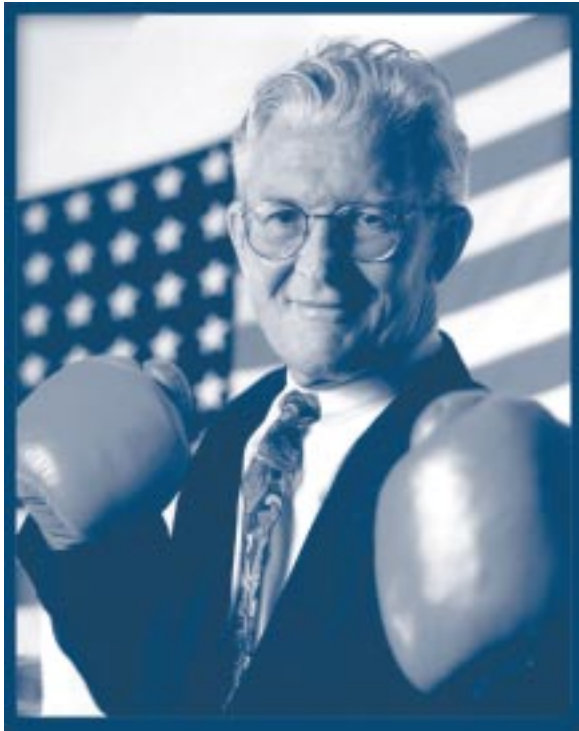
YSS is Rodriguez's attempt to replicate the type of mentoring program developed by Ramirez a generation earlier in East L.A. Through the program, which involves 15 youth and eight adults, Rodriguez aims to help young people take charge of their lives. The program builds trusting and respectful relationships between youth and elders, exposes the youth to a heavy dose of the arts and culture and empowers them by giving them leadership roles in keeping the peace within the community.

Ramiro's experience has also inspired Rodriguez to step up his advocacy efforts on behalf of youth. He now speaks out forcefully against many of today's policies, like trying children as adults. “Youth is youth for a good reason” says Rodriguez. When youth commit murder, “it is a grave crime” but it is not “an adult crime.” “Youth are very malleable and it is society's obligation to try to change them: I am living proof of the capacity for change.”



# TERENCE HALLINAN

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In his three years as District Attorney of San Francisco, Terence Hallinan has used his passion for justice and his personal understanding of juvenile delinquency to hold San Francisco's delinquent youth accountable and make sure they have a chance at rehabilitation. During his tenure as DA, he has diverted more delinquent youth into rigorous counseling and supervision services, and increased the use of early intervention in the belief that it is important to help young people who have gotten into trouble to turn their lives around, like he was able to do.

The results thus far have been impressive. The violent juvenile crime rate in San Francisco dropped by 13% during Hallinan's first year as DA, more than twice the decline in juvenile violence experienced by the rest of the state that year.

Ironically, in 1966, Hallinan was actually refused admission to the California Bar, based at least partially on his youthful misbehavior. At the time, the Bar wrote "this Committee does hereby refuse to certify the applicant to the Supreme Court of California for admission and license to practice law because said applicant does not satisfy the requirement...that he be of good moral character."

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## TERENCE HALLINAN

**Age:** 63

**Occupation:** District Attorney of San Francisco.

**Residence:** San Francisco, California.

**Education:** University of California (Berkeley); Hastings School of Law; London School of Economics.

**Delinquency History:** Spent time in San Francisco's juvenile hall, and the Marin county jail for fighting and assault. Adult convictions for civil disobedience.

Originally, when the Bar Association Sub-Committee reviewed Hallinan's application, it denied him based solely on his arrests for civil disobedience during the civil rights movement. It was only later, when the full Bar reviewed his application, that they added his juvenile arrests for fighting as a reason to find him "morally unfit." To this day, Hallinan opines that his juvenile charges were added as a smoke screen to mask the Bar's obvious disapproval of his non-violent organizing in support of the civil rights movement. It would take a six-to-one decision of the California Supreme Court to allow Hallinan to practice law and ultimately occupy the office which prosecuted him on several occasions.

***"There was a lot of hostility directed towards our family during that period.... And we returned it, in kind."***

Terence Hallinan was born on December 4, 1936, the second of six sons born to Vincent and Vivian Hallinan. Vincent Hallinan was both loved and loathed in the San Francisco Bay Area as a fighter for progressive causes. His left-leaning tendencies brought him and his family under considerable legal and community pressures.

When Terence Hallinan was in the third grade, his family moved from the more tolerant confines of San Francisco to a more affluent and conservative community in Marin County, California. Terence remembers the constant harassment he and his brothers were subjected to, including being called communists and having a hammer and sickle spray-painted on their home.

"The whole country was moving right at that time, and my father moved left," he recalls.

In its description of Vivian Hallinan's testimony, the California Supreme Court gave a surprisingly poignant recitation of the pressures Hallinan was under during his adolescence: "...[I]t appears to be her feeling that the primary causes of her son's bellicosity lay in certain unique developments during the period of his adolescence. During this period, petitioner's father, a prominent attorney, was becoming an increasingly controversial, if not a notorious figure in the community, as a result of his widely publicized and unorthodox political views (among other things, he ran for President as the candidate of the Independent Progressive Party) and his outspoken defense of various unpopular causes and individuals. Because of the controversy surrounding his father, petitioner experienced 'social ostracism and isolation and unpopularity' while a student in grammar school. Occasionally, he and his brothers were physically abused by older boys because of the political views associated with the Hallinan family. Petitioner testified for example, that one older

brother was badly beaten up by three marines “because of our opposition to the Korean War.” At this point, petitioner’s father gave his sons formal instruction and training in boxing. According to his wife, petitioner’s father believed that, “if you are going to hold radical opinions, you have to be able to fight.” According to Mrs. Hallinan, petitioner initially resisted the importuning of his father that he learn to fight. Once he reconciled himself to the alleged necessity, however, the training provided by his father converted petitioner into a formidable opponent – as is attested...by the name by which he is regularly known: “Kayo Hallinan.”

After Hallinan’s older brother, Patrick, was badly beaten up by a group of Marines, Vincent Hallinan built a boxing ring in his basement and got a boxing coach to school his sons. Tony Curro, himself a former welter-weight boxer, did such a good job with the Hallinan boys that the first five of them became boxing champs at U.C. Berkeley.

“There was a lot of hostility directed toward our family during that period,” Hallinan relates, with the difficulty of that time still obviously fresh in his mind. “And we returned it in kind.”

Hallinan grew to adolescence in the late 1940s. As the Cold War heated up, the pressure on his family increased. When Hallinan was 14 years old, Vincent Hallinan was sent to the Federal Prison at McNeil Island for six months for contempt of court arising out of his defense of famed labor leader and founder of the Longshoreman’s union – Harry Bridges. During most of Hallinan’s adolescence, Vincent and Vivian Hallinan were defending themselves from one or another indictment. When Hallinan was age 16, his father was again sent to McNeil Island, this time for two years.

***If his juvenile record had been forwarded to U.C. Berkeley or Hastings when he was applying for admissions, Hallinan says, “I guess I’d be a Longshoreman now.”***

“My father never stopped organizing, even in prison,” Hallinan laughs. “While he was at McNeil Island, he became the head of the prison grievance committee and got the dining hall desegregated.”

But Hallinan gets more serious when he talks about the impact his father’s imprisonment had on him during his formative years. “It was hard to grow up with that much pressure and not have your father around to help you through it.”

As a result, Hallinan began to fight, like he was taught to do.

As a youth, Terence Hallinan had numerous fighting-related scrapes with the law, and he saw the inside of both Marin County's and San Francisco's juvenile hall on several occasions. Eventually, when he was age 17, one of those fights got him kicked out of Drake High School in San Rafael, and made a ward of the juvenile court. The juvenile court judge ordered young Hallinan removed from Marin County for a period of one year, allowing him to return home from Friday night to Sunday evening to visit his family.

"My father got me a job as a warehouseman in Sacramento, I got my own place, and worked a nine-to-five job," Hallinan remembers. "It was good for me, in a lot of ways. It got me away from the bad chemistry in my home neighborhood, and allowed me to start over and make it on my own."

Hallinan notes with obvious pride that not only was he supporting himself on his wages at this time, but that he quickly saved up enough money to buy his parents the first television set the family had ever owned.

After his "year of exile," Terence Hallinan moved to San Francisco and graduated from Drew High School. He then worked in Hawaii as a laborer and clerk for the Longshoreman's Union for a year.

Upon his return to California, Hallinan entered the University of California at Berkeley. There, he joined the University's boxing team, coming within two fights of making the 1960 U.S. Olympics team as a middleweight.

After graduating from U.C. Berkeley, Hallinan attended the famed London School of Economics. While in London, he met philosopher Lord Bertrand Russell, then part of the opposition to America's involvement in the Vietnam War. Hallinan attended a peace demonstration in front of the American Embassy, where he experienced his first civil disobedience arrest for "blocking a footpath". He was fined one pound.

Upon Hallinan's return to America and entrance into Hastings School of Law, his interest in the anti-war and civil rights movements grew. He became a member of the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and was arrested several times in Mississippi attempting to register African-Americans to vote.

"The police really hated us down there in Mississippi," Hallinan remembered.

"When they got the white kids in jail, they beat us up even worse than they beat up the black kids."

***The violent juvenile crime rate in San Francisco dropped by 13% during Hallinan's first year as DA, more than twice the decline in juvenile violence experienced by the rest of the state.***

When he returned to San Francisco, Hallinan became a member of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Ad Hoc Committee to End Racial Discrimination, and was one of the founders of San Francisco's W.E.B. DuBois Club. Hallinan was active in organizing sit-ins of numerous San Francisco businesses which, at the time, had no African American employees. These included the Sheraton Palace, Mel's Drive-in, and a Cadillac dealership on San Francisco's "Auto Row."

In total, Terence Hallinan was arrested 19 times during law school for his involvement in peaceful, civil-rights demonstrations. On one occasion, after protesting at the Sheraton Palace, Hallinan was actually jailed at the same time as his mother and older brother, Patrick.

The California Supreme Court's precedent-setting decision allowed Hallinan to serve in the profession he had worked so hard to enter about two years after the rest of his class had begun to practice law. In an almost triumphantly-worded decision, the Court wrote "After reading the entire record, and exercising our independent judgment as to the weight of the evidence, we find that the conclusion of the Committee of Bar Examiners that petitioner does not possess the good moral character required of applicants for admission to the bar is not justified by the record, and to the contrary we find that the record demonstrates that petitioner possesses such character. This being so, being qualified in all respects, petitioner is entitled to be admitted to practice law."

After being admitted to the Bar, Hallinan practiced law as a defense attorney for over 20 years before being elected to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. He was elected District Attorney of San Francisco in 1995.

Towards the end of the interview in his office adorned with pictures of his civil rights activities, Hallinan discussed recent legislation that would abolish confidentiality protections for juveniles and, in some cases, forward their juvenile arrest records to colleges to which they are applying for admission. When asked what the implications would have been for him if his juvenile record had been forwarded to U.C. Berkeley or Hastings when he was applying for admission, Hallinan replied, "I guess I'd be a Longshoreman now."





Carolyn Gabbard remembers the Atlanta juvenile detention center where she was housed as a 13-year-old as a “nightmare.” She and her older sister, Teresa had seen juvenile jails before. The cycle was, every time they fled their father’s custody in Hamilton, Ohio, they were picked up by the police and detained before they were shipped home. But Atlanta’s detention center was very different from the small town jails they had seen before.

“Those girls were rough,” Gabbard says. “They would fight you for your food. They were really just hard-core girls, who scared me to death. Even though home life was abusive, I prayed to get home.”

Atlanta aside, Carolyn Gabbard thought that her brief periods in juvenile detention were vastly preferable to hanging around the household of Everett Bowling, her father: He routinely beat his two daughters and son, sometimes, with billy clubs, cut them with knives, and on one occasion, threatened to shoot an apple off Teresa’s head. Their mother fled Bowling’s beatings when Gabbard was just an infant. More than a decade passed before a new figure could fill the void left in the family and lift the children to safety.

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## CAROLYN GABBARD

**Age:** 42

**Occupation:** Youth Leader and mentor, Butler County Juvenile Rehabilitation Center.

**Residence:** Hamilton, Ohio.

**Education:** Working towards a GED.

**Delinquency History:** Charged with running away from home, and spent time in detention centers all over the country. Her probation officer forced an investigation into her family life, revealing profound abuse at the hands of her father. She was eventually placed with a foster family.

Thirty years after they were removed from Bowling's custody, Carolyn and Teresa had a chance to celebrate the force that freed them from their troubled childhood. At Wilma Cress' retirement party, they honored the juvenile probation officer who rescued them from their father and mentored them throughout their lives. Even after Gabbard had "graduated" from the juvenile justice system, Cress continued to be there for her, helping her survive bad marriages and working with Gabbard when her own children ended up before the juvenile court.

Cress' inspiring example led Carolyn to follow in her footsteps: she became a youth leader and mentor in the Butler County Juvenile Rehabilitation Center. In addition, Carolyn and her husband operate Reconciliation Ministries, a church based group that helps families work through the juvenile court process.

At Cress' retirement, Carolyn thanked her not only as a client but as a colleague. "My sister was so emotional, she couldn't speak at the retirement party," says Carolyn Gabbard.

"I told them what a difference she had made in my life," she says. "She corrected us, loved us, molded us and shaped us. We gave her the recognition and honor she deserved."

Carolyn Gabbard's earliest memories were of smelling alcohol on her father's breath as he tried to fondle her. While Everett Bowling never had sex with his daughters, Gabbard says, "he sure did try." Their stepmother, and family friends, knew what was going on and did nothing.

But Everett Bowling succeeded in driving his children away from him with other forms of physical abuse. Like clockwork, he got drunk every Friday night and stayed drunk until Sunday. Bowling—a factory worker who provided well for his family—kept a gun and knife collection. He once pointed a loaded gun at Teresa and often shot door knobs off with his handgun. Bowling also carried billy clubs and would occasionally take a whack at his son, Everett Lee.

When Carolyn was 11, and Teresa, 13, they started running away nearly every weekend. They started staying at friends' and neighbors' houses. The two girls effectively dropped out of school. During the next two years, they progressively fled further and further, running away as far as Georgia,

***"I told them what a difference she [her probation officer] had made in my life. She corrected us, loved us, molded us and shaped us."***

***Her father succeeded in driving his children away from him with other forms of physical abuse. Like clockwork, he got drunk every Friday night and stayed drunk until Sunday.***

Florida and California. Each time, they were arrested, and as a condition of their release, Everett Bowling would wire them money to have them sent back home. It took several arrests for running away and truancy, and several visits to the old Buttlar County Juvenile Detention Center, before the horrors taking place in the Bowling household finally appeared on the court's radar screen.

Wilma Cress was assigned as the Bowling daughters probation officer after their final arrest for running away from home and truancy. Carolyn Gabbard describes Wilma Cress as a muscular woman, who spoke to the sisters with power and authority.

“By looking at her, you would think, definitely this woman's taking no crap,” she remembers.

Cress lobbied for an investigation of Carolyn and Teresa's case. The investigation led to the sisters being placed with foster parents, giving them the first normal environment they ever had. Over the next few years, Cress and Gabbard worked through the baggage the girls carried from their abusive home. She watched the Bowling sisters like a hawk, making sure they went to school, had clothes and shoes and met with them every week at court.

“She basically became our mother,” says Gabbard. “She would discipline us, tell us we couldn't go out on the weekend. But she would hug us, too.”

Cress was devastated to hear that, at age 16, Gabbard was pregnant. But rather than give up on her, she got Gabbard the counseling she would need as a young mother. Cress also helped Gabbard through the toughest time in her life - Gabbard's first husband, Elbert, left when she was 18, and she had to care for her children alone. Gabbard was forced to drop out of school and go on welfare while raising her sons Jason, Jeremy and Josh. Cress continued to be there for her when she re-married her first husband, divorced him, re-married another man, had another son, Brian, and then divorced again.

Carolyn's relationship with Cress over the long term helped her to finally stabilize her life when her kids started going to school. Her first solid job, a five-year stint waiting tables at Bonanza Steakhouse, was a success for her. It gave her independence and the confidence to make bigger jumps.

Six years ago, Carolyn Gabbard - who by then, was re-married to Gary Gabbard, a 911 supervisor at the Hamilton police department—got a job working in the kitchen of the newly built Butler County Juvenile Rehabilitation Center.

From the kitchen she graduated to housekeeping where her warm relationship with the kids was noticed by corrections staff. Though she never finished high school, the administrators had so much confidence in Gabbard they offered her a part-time position in the center as youth leader, contingent upon her getting a GED. For the last two years, Gabbard has been responsible for managing the lives of 15 troubled boys, ages 13 through 17, ensuring they go to their classes and regular programs. Next year, when the new wing of the center opens, she will be a full-time youth leader.

“Because of Carolyn’s background as a troubled youth, she was able to understand and empathize with these young men and women,” says Thomas Barnes, superintendent of corrections and Carolyn’s boss. “She’s a treasure.”

“I intervene, counsel, and often just supply a shoulder to cry on,” says Gabbard. “I’ve had children come back and tell me, I’ve made a difference in their life, and that I’m different from the rest of the staff.”

Carolyn also has made a difference in kid’s lives in her church, where she operates a program to help guide troubled families through the court process.



About the time she started working in the detention center, Carolyn was well placed to make a difference in the lives of her own kids when her sons, Jason and Jeremy, were arrested. Again, with the help of Wilma Cress, she represented her kids before Judge David Niehause's juvenile court, on at least a half dozen occasions.

"At the time, I joked, I was before Judge Niehause so often, that he had to put me on the payroll," says Gabbard.

Both her sons are now leading productive lives, working in housing construction. Jeremy has started a family and now has a son, Carolyn's first grandson.

Though she credits Cress and others for making a difference in the juvenile justice system, she wishes the court weren't the only entry point for kids needing help.

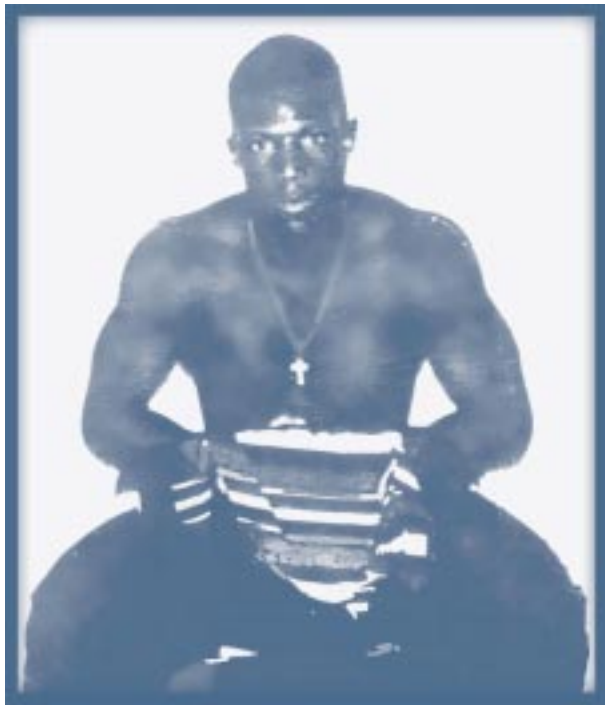
"There needs to be programs where parents can go to get help before their children get into problems," says Gabbard. "I went to the welfare system, the court system, but they waited until my kids committed a crime before they intervened. I would like to see kids and parents get help."

In June, 1998, Carolyn Gabbard buried some harsh memories of her growing up when her father Everett Bowling died. His passing greatly affected the family - Teresa, who also worked at the detention center, left her job to "work on herself," as Carolyn describes it. Her brother, Everett Lee, came for the funeral, but hasn't been in touch with the family since.

"My dad hurt me so deeply as a child that I couldn't forgive him until I became a Christian," says Gabbard, who was at her father's bedside in his final days. "He let my husband Gary pray with him, he prayed the sinner's prayer."

***"Because of Carolyn's background as a troubled youth, she was able to understand and empathize with these young men and women," says Thomas Barnes, superintendent of corrections and Carolyn's boss. "She's a treasure."***





“I don’t think he can be turned around. At heart, he’s a career criminal.” Florida State District Attorney Deborah McClosky, as quoted by *The Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel*, September 25, 1994.

Percy Campbell remembers the fear in his heart when he stood before Judge Robert Carney in Broward County, Florida.

“The judge said something like, ‘Son, in all my years, I have never seen a record as long as yours,’” says Campbell. “The judge wouldn’t let me say nothing, and I just dropped my head and said, ‘damn.’ I thought I was gone.”

Campbell’s life, then only 14 years long, hung in the balance. This was his third appearance before Judge Carney, on this latest burglary charge. The judge was carefully weighing the arguments of a team of social workers, a public defender and juvenile rehabilitation expert against the sordid tale the state’s attorney told of Campbell’s record: he had previously been convicted of 59 felonies, including eight auto thefts, fourteen burglaries, a handful of armed robberies, and the assault of a police officer.

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## PERCY CAMPBELL

**Age:** 19

**Occupation:** Maintenance Engineer, part time, Desota Memorial Hospital, Arcadia, Florida; Part-time student. Motivational speaker and national weightlifting champion.

**Residence:** Arcadia, Florida.

**Education:** Pursuing GED, and planning on junior college.

**Delinquency History:** Accumulated 59 felony charges by age 14, including 8 grand theft auto charges, and 14 burglaries, and was labeled “Crime Boy” by the Florida media for his recidivism. After several stints in juvenile detention centers in and around Fort Lauderdale, Florida, he was sent to the Associated Marine Institute’s “Last Chance Ranch” in Venus, Florida. He graduated from the program, and has been living on his own for a year.

Judge Carney told *People Magazine*, one of the dozen media outlets that covered the story, that “Campbell was the worst I had ever seen.” Newspapers across the state of Florida that wrote about Campbell’s story called him “Crime Boy.” In a state which already sends more kids to adult court and prison than any other in the country, he came to symbolize the “repeat juvenile offender”—the poster boy for those who favor blending the juvenile justice system with the adult system.

Typical of the tone was a 1994 column by John Grogan in the *Palm Beach Post*: “After years of acting with impunity, Crime Boy is getting his first taste of adult-style justice. The child known as Crime Boy has been acting like a full-fledged grown-up criminal for nearly half of his life now. It’s about time he stand up and face the music.” Fred Grimm, a columnist for *The Miami Herald* summed up the mood best in 1994, as Campbell was jailed, when he referred to him as “the ultimate lost cause.”

But none of the reporters, politicians and columnists who publicized his case were there three-and-a-half-years later when Campbell, then 17, walked into a field at the Last Chance Ranch for boys in Venus, Florida and hammered into the ground a wooden cross that read, “Crime Boy, RIP, B. 1980, D. 1997.” Two years since he buried Crime Boy, Campbell is living on his own in Acadia, Florida, working as a maintenance engineer in a local hospital. He is on the verge of earning his GED. He plans to head off to college to study physics and has a pretty good chance of winning an athletic scholarship to pay his way. He is anything but a lost cause.

During his three-and-a-half year stint at the Last Chance Ranch - the model juvenile rehabilitation program Campbell was remanded to by Judge Carney - he became a champion weightlifter. He has since won three World Natural Powerlifting titles and breaks records every time he competes. Recently released from the custody of the Last Chance Ranch, Campbell is already on the motivational speaker circuit, counseling young offenders to turn their lives around. Considering his chaotic family life, Campbell’s path to becoming a normal, independent 19-year-old represents an inspiring success story. “I’m not where I want to be, yet,” he says. “But I’m not where I was.”

Campbell grew up in a series of homes in Port Charlotte and Fort Lauderdale, Florida with his mother, Sandra Goodwin, and younger brother Sedrick. He never knew his father and his uncles and aunts were all single parents. Along with his mother, all the relatives he can name were caught up in the criminal justice system. He remembers once coming home and discovering a step brother had sold his stereo, TV and other possessions.

***Campbell had previously been convicted of 59 felonies, including eight auto thefts, fourteen burglaries, a handful of armed robberies, and the assault of a police officer.***

“People would take turns stealing from each other,” he says. “They were a bunch of people in one house but it was every man for himself. People tell you they love you, but it was a lot of words. There was never too much of a family.”

Campbell’s criminal career began in earnest at age 8. Though he knew his mother had committed some crimes, he picked up a newspaper one day to read that she had been arrested as an accessory to murder. Goodwin was sentenced to life in a Georgia State prison; Campbell and his brother were sent to live with his grandmother in Fort Lauderdale.

His grandmother was destitute. Campbell maintains that at least one part of his gravitation towards crime was related to money.

“We had to sprint to the table, and then there was never any food,” he says. “Everyone would look my way or to my uncle [to provide food]. Me and my uncle used to run together, and when he went to prison, it was on me.”

When he was 8, Campbell and his uncle were picked up for armed robbery of a restaurant, an act that made Campbell one of the youngest children ever held in the Broward County juvenile detention center. Though he remembers spending a month in detention, he says he basically “grew up” behind bars. The rest of his court experience is a haze to him. His grandmother, got tired of coming to court and dropped out of his life (In 1995, after Campbell was out of the house, his grandmother was arrested for continuing to receive a government rental subsidy meant for him).

“To be honest, I only understood two or three words from the court process,” he says. “He can go now, or he’s detained.”

Things continued to escalate—even after age 11, he was shot in the leg and spent some time in the hospital.

“I’ve been in a lot of shoot outs, so many that I can’t even remember them all,” he says. “Let me put it this way: I made money, any way possible.”

Any way possible included selling marijuana and cocaine, robbery, auto theft and burglary. Campbell can't account for all the money that passed through his hands during that time.

"I kept the house maintained, the cars, and I got the things everyday people want," he says. "But when you are making fast money, as soon as you get it, you get rid of it."

Campbell effectively dropped out of school, never making it past third grade. Even living in a foster home, miles away from his old neighborhood did not separate him from his criminal life. He remembers seeing counselors and juvenile probation officers but he says none of them spent enough time with him to make a difference. "They just thought I was crazy. It was like running around the mulberry bush."

When he finally ended up in Judge Carney's court, and was threatened with prison, a thoughtful public defender contacted the Last Chance Ranch about Campbell's case. His lawyer, together with the public defender offices' social workers, and a caseworker from the ranch, investigated Campbell's life and discovered the depth of his problems.

"We found out that he was hit by a car when he was really young and a lot of medical issues related to his state of mind," says Lamar Crenshaw, a caseworker with the Last Chance Ranch. "He used to fall asleep all the time in class as a result of his injuries. It was never entered into his court record before."

"We argued, 'the system dropped the ball on this kid'," says Crenshaw, "'now you're holding him accountable for it?' We asked, 'what good would it do him now to go to prison instead of giving him this opportunity?'" Judge Carney agreed and released Campbell to the Last Chance Ranch on the condition that one more charge, even trespassing, would land him back in prison. Those conditions are still in effect today.

The appropriately named Last Chance Ranch in Venus, Florida, is run by the Associated Marine Institutes and takes kids headed for prison or for long stints in the juvenile justice system. Residents are put into an intensive work, education and life-skill building regiment. Children assigned to the program work on the ranch farm, go to school, including holidays and weekends, and participate in group activities. The children move through three stages or phases in the program, depending on their improvement

***"The judge wouldn't let me say nothing, and I just dropped my head and said, 'damn.' I thought I was gone."***

and behavior, each level providing more freedom and requiring more self-control. After two-and-a-half years of studying, feeding the chickens, working on the farm and being an active part of the ranch community, Campbell gradually moved from the military-style barracks into his own room. Campbell says he took the ranch seriously from day one.

“I did all the programs before,” he says. “But there is a stopping point in everybody’s life. Some end up dead but for me, I found life.”

During the 30-minute breaks between school and lunch and at the end of the grueling days, Campbell squeezed in time for weight training. He used to lift weights with his uncle and friends on the street and he found a counselor there to help him train in earnest.

“It was something I always knew I could do,” he says, “I just didn’t know how. They [the ranch] helped me every step of the way.”

After earning the privilege with good behavior, he and a trustee left the ranch intermittently to compete. In his first match, Campbell beat the state champion in his weight class. In subsequent competitions, he won the national title, then three world titles.

“For me, it felt good to win anything,” Campbell says.

This July will mark Campbell’s one-year anniversary in Phase three of the program: virtual freedom. He is living on his own in an independent living facility in Arcadia, Florida. He spends his mornings at school finishing up his GED and his afternoons working at a part-time job at Desota Memorial Hospital. While physically free to do whatever he likes, any breach of the terms of his release, including an evening curfew or getting fired from his job, will land him back in Judge Carney’s court. He says he will soon have his high school degree and he is confident that he will be able to handle a future college career studying physics.

“Everything else you study is pretty much basic,” he says. “But in physics, you really learn something. I was always good with science, and it should come easy.”

***Today, Campbell is living on his own, working as a maintenance engineer in a local hospital, and on the verge of earning his GED. He plans to head off to college to study physics.***



Campbell, who now gives speeches to juvenile judges and delinquents, has a lot to say about the system that both “dropped him,” and gave him the opportunity to pick himself back up.

“I tell these kids, that ain’t the way,” he says. “A reputation in the streets, that ain’t nothing. They can shoot a few holes through you, and it’s over.”

He thinks very carefully about his former life as “Crime Boy,” and the times judges and the media threatened him with adult prison for his crimes.

“They [the judges] are pretty much fitting people into categories,” he says. “What I say to them is, you got to think about your own kids. Everybody talks about throwing away the kids, charge them as adults, but what if your kids went down that road? When they talk about throwing away the kids, what they are doing is jeopardizing their own lives.”

Every few months Campbell gets a sharp reminder of the life he could have lived when he visits his mother at Polaski state prison in Georgia.

“They are building all these prisons,” he says, thinking of the time lost with his mother. “And they aren’t solving the problem.”

It is always a painful trip for him up to Georgia but he is struggling to carve out some relationship with his mother, behind the walls. “It’s a lot of years to make up, and we may spend the rest of our lives trying,” he says.

**T**welve-year-old Jeremy Estrada felt his heart hardening as he held his best friend in his arms and watched his blood stain the pavement. Six rival gang members had jumped out of a car, stabbed Rudy, and fled. Estrada was left alone to watch the slow death of his only friend.

Life was tough for Estrada, growing up in LA, surrounded by gangs, his family separated since he was ten. His only role model had been Rudy - his neighbor, his big brother, his companion. When Rudy died, Estrada lost interest in school and sports. His only urge was to fight, to unleash his anger and grief. He turned for solace to the gang for which Rudy lost his life.

Estrada is now 22 and a senior at Pepperdine University. He channels his energy into education rather than violence. When asked what initiated this transformation, he replies, "I learned how to do fractions."

After Rudy died, fighting became Estrada's way of life. During one skirmish he sent a boy to the hospital with internal bleeding in the brain. He was charged with assault and battery and given six-months of probation, during which he never saw a probation officer. With no treatment for his anger, Estrada had another assault charge on his record a few weeks later. He was placed on more restrictive probation. The pattern repeated – he was arrested another four times for assault and put on probation each time, but never received any counseling.

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## JEREMY ESTRADA

**Age:** 22

**Occupation:** College student, science and pre-medicine.

**Residence:** Los Angeles, California.

**Education:** Senior, Pepperdine University.

**Delinquency History:** Assault and battery and carrying a concealed weapon, all relating to his time with a gang. Spent time on juvenile probation, juvenile detention, an alternative boy's school, and finally, the Rite of Passage Wilderness Challenge Program in the Nevada desert.

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At age 13, he assaulted his mother's boyfriend and was placed in juvenile hall for three days. Even with the supervision of a probation officer every month, he acquired two more assault charges, and was sent to juvenile hall on two separate occasions. His assault charges soon escalated to armed robbery and breaking and entering. Finally, he was sent to a group home for a year-and-a-half.

Estrada didn't mind the group home. A lot of friends from his gang were there with him. But it provided no real treatment. When he was released to his mother, the family was homeless. Estrada lived with his father for a while, but continued to be arrested for assault and battery. By this time, juvenile hall was no threat. He liked having hot meals, a bed to sleep in, a daily shower, clean clothes and friends.

When he was released from the group home again, he violated his probation by skipping school altogether. He was on the run for weeks, hiding out in friends' houses. When he finally turned himself in, he was sentenced to 6-9 months in a camp where he was taught job skills, but again, received no specific treatment. When this placement expired, he was released to his father.

This time when he returned to the streets his gang was at war. Several of Estrada's friends were killed. "I decided to go get those bastards," he says. Before he made good on that promise, Estrada's stepmother found his pistol and called the police. He ran from the helicopters and dogs that chased him. Two weeks later he turned

***A year into the program he met a teacher who took the time to change his life. He taught Estrada how to do fractions, working with him until Estrada learned the skill. From that point on, "something inside of me was sparked."***

himself in and was sent to Rite of Passage, a Wilderness Challenge Program tucked in the Nevada desert, fifteen miles from a paved road. Unlike his previous placements, Rite of Passage offered Estrada positive reinforcement. Although a kid might be disciplined for bad behavior, at the same time, he would be encouraged and motivated to improve.

Although Estrada began to excel, he continued fighting. A year into the program, he met a teacher who took the time to change his life. He taught Estrada how to do fractions, working with him until Estrada learned the skill. From that point on, "something inside of me was sparked - fractions struck my passion for education," he says.

Estrada soon moved beyond fractions-he learned to write essays, studied politics and government. Estrada began to channel his anger towards learning and earned his high school diploma. His counselor challenged him to go to

college and helped him with the financial paperwork.

With the encouragement of his father and counselors, Estrada opted to get out of the neighborhood and attend Lassen College in northern California. Two days after his release from Rite of Passage, Estrada was a college student. During his first night on campus, however, he began having fears of not succeeding. Once his anxiety would have spilled into violence; now, he took up a different challenge: "I'm going to sit in the front row of every class and study harder than any other student."

Keeping his word, Estrada earned straight A's in his two years at junior college, was student body President of the Hispanic Student Association, and a student ambassador. He met a college scout from Pepperdine who encouraged him to apply for admission.

Estrada is now preparing to graduate from Pepperdine University and plans to attend graduate school to study neuroscience. Estrada attributes his success to Rite of Passage, positive reinforcement, academics, his parents and, of course, the teacher who opened up the world of knowledge for him.

Estrada believes kids need individualized attention. His biggest gripe with the juvenile justice system is that, even when juveniles are rehabilitated, the system throws them back into the conditions that set them up for failure. A major reason for Estrada's success was his decision not to go back to his neighborhood.

Estrada now works for Rite of Passage during school vacations. He speaks at juvenile justice conferences and was recently keynote speaker at the World Conference on Juvenile Justice. He is happily married to Angelita Estrada, who attends California State University in Los Angeles, and is the proud father of a baby girl, Angelica Nadya Estrada. He'd like to obtain a doctorate degree and continue to give back to disadvantaged youth.

***He was charged with assault and battery, and with no treatment for his anger, Estrada had another assault charge on his record a few weeks later.***

“I remember a lot of dark rooms...a lot of hitting...and a lot of crying. No lights, just smack! and locked into a dark room.”

While this may sound to some like a description of a night in jail, this is Scott Filippi’s earliest recollection of his childhood. The physical and psychological torture in Filippi’s life, much of it administered at the hands of his mother, built to a crescendo when he was 16 and culminated in him shooting and killing his mother. Filippi then made a remarkable transformation from a profoundly abused child, through the juvenile justice system, emerging as a soldier on the elite Presidential Honor Guard and later becoming a successful businessman.

There is no account of Scott Filippi’s childhood – his physical abuse and his psychological torture – that isn’t profoundly disturbing. According to court records, Filippi and his sister were abused so badly that his sister lost her hearing and sight. Filippi was sexually abused by a stranger, learned of his sister’s sexual abuse at the hands of his stepfather, and walked in on his mother being unfaithful to his stepfather on several occasions. Filippi was beaten with a two-by-four and belts, was punched and kicked and thrown down the stairs and across rooms. This period of abuse spanned from before Filippi entered kindergarten until the time of his arrest.

Filippi was born to Jerilei Rakin (mother) and Lori Filippi (father) in 1970. Jerilei was 16 at the time of Filippi’s birth, and Lori was 17. The Filippi household was in chaos right from the start. Filippi’s earliest remembrances include his parents screaming at one another and throwing objects around the house. According to

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## SCOTT FILIPPI

**Age:** 29

**Occupation:** Finance Director of a Mercedes-Benz Dealership. Former member of the U.S. Army’s Presidential Honor Guard, under President George Bush.

**Residence:** Tarzana, California.

**Education:** GED.

**Delinquency History:** Fatally shot a parent who had been abusing him for several years. Detained in juvenile hall, and then referred to the Oakendell residential treatment facility for 21 months.

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***Scott was beaten with a two-by-four and belts, was punched and kicked and thrown down the stairs and across rooms before entering kindergarten. The abuse continued until an arrest in his teens put an end to his nightmare.***

school records, unexplained bruises and breaks began appearing on both Filippi and his younger sister Tyanna during this time. His parents' relationship ended in 1973 when Lori was fired from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department for being physically abusive to suspects.

As bad as things were when Lori Filippi was in the home, they got much worse after he left. Jerilei refused to let the children have any contact with their father, returning gifts and letters that Lori sent for years after the break up. Worse still, when Filippi was age four, Jerilei married a vicious man, Paul Furta, who constantly bloodied Filippi and Tyanna. Child Protective Services was frequently called to the home. The psychological trauma caused by Furta's physical and sexual abuse of Tyanna was so extensive she experienced temporary sight and hearing loss.

Tyanna was removed from her mother's home to live with her aunt when Filippi was eight years old. "Then," Filippi reports "he turned his attention to me." Filippi was petrified over the next four to five years. "I spent my whole childhood being scared to death of every adult around me."

Filippi relates that he was either completely ignored or abused by his mother and Furta. His mother told Filippi he was "worthless" and "a shithead" more times than he can remember. And Furta beat him regularly.

"One time when I was in the third grade," Filippi recalls, "my teacher told Paul and my mother that I had skipped school. When we got home, I ran right up into my room, crying all the time, knowing what was coming. Paul just charged up the stairs. I was in the upper bunk of my bed when he started wailing on me with his belt and yelling at me. He hit me over and over and eventually knocked me out of bed. He began kicking me and kept on beating me with the belt. It seemed like it lasted forever. Eventually, he just dropped the belt, and said something sarcastic like it looks like 'it made a good impression,' because of all the bloody welts on me. Then he walked out of the room. I was bloody from my head to my knees. My mother just walked in and said 'you better take a shower and get cleaned up.'"

"My mother knew what Paul was doing to me and worse, what he was doing to my sister, and she never did anything to protect us," Filippi remembers.

In 1980, Filippi secretly began to contact his father to arrange to move in with him in Colorado. Jerilei had been keeping Filippi and Lori apart since the divorce, and she was enraged that Filippi had contacted him. When Lori came from Colorado to visit Filippi, Jerilei hid him.

Filippi was eventually able to move in with his father for a short time. On the day he left, his mother's last words were "get out of here." She refused to talk with him on the phone or answer his letters. Lori admits he too physically abused Filippi. Lori Filippi punched his son in the stomach until he couldn't breathe, and once threw him down a flight of stairs in a fit of rage. Filippi was returned to his mother who promised to turn over a new leaf.

A year later, Jerilei began dating and then married Bruce Lee. Although Lee was not as abusive as Furta, he occasionally beat Filippi at the request of Jerilei, hitting him with a two-by-four on one occasion. Jerilei and Bruce also provided Filippi and his sister with little in the way of material necessities, with the two teenagers having only three pairs of shirts and pants to their name. In order to be able to afford to buy himself some new clothes, Filippi obtained several different after-school jobs.

Filippi's work and other outside activities immediately became the source of severe strain between he and his mother in the fateful summer of 1986. Filippi got a job on the Santa Cruz boardwalk, where Jerilei would visit and loudly tell other patrons how bad the service (provided by Filippi) was. She periodically demanded that Filippi leave work immediately, eventually resulting in his firing.

***Juvenile hall court records: "he was in a serious state of shock and for several days, was unable to do anything but shake and cry...He is very sad and tearful when questioned about this offense."***

Jerilei also cut Filippi off from girlfriends and other activities. She told the first girl Filippi brought home that "you could do a lot better than him." In order for Filippi to join the school band, the principal and the band leader had to come to Filippi's house to implore Jerilei on his behalf. When she came to one of his concerts and ordered Filippi to leave immediately, he was kicked off the band.

Filippi's Uncle JT saw what was happening and tried to get Filippi over to his house periodically for odd jobs, just to give him a break. But in the summer of 1986, Uncle JT had taken ill suddenly and died. At his wife's end, Filippi repeatedly attempted to return to his father. About a month before his mother's death, right after his uncle died, Filippi

***“The Army, Juvenile Hall, Oakendell - I think I did well in all of them because they offered me structure without the abuse. The attention to detail the Honor Guard required of me was easy compared to what I had been through at home.”***

ran away from home, called his father and said he couldn't stand it at his mother's home any longer. His father wired him a plane ticket and spoke with Jerilei about sending Filippi's clothes with him. Jerilei told her ex-husband that she didn't care if Filippi died. She bagged all of his clothes and threw them in the town dump. In an act of unspeakable vengeance, she even killed Filippi's pet hamster. But when the plane was about to leave, Jerilei apologized and told Filippi that she loved him. Filippi instantly canceled his trip. "When she told me she loved me, that's all I needed to hear," he remembers.

No sooner had Filippi decided to stay than things between he and his mother deteriorated. In the next two weeks, Filippi called his father three times, each time sounding more disillusioned. Finally, on the Saturday before the killing, Filippi implored his father to let him live with him. Lori reprimanded his son and told him to wait until the end of the semester before moving.

On October 6, 1986, when Filippi was 16, he came home from school and started to wash, wax and vacuum his mother's car. The whole time he was working on her car, she was glaring at him and criticizing him. When he was finished, she swore at him, complaining that he hadn't spent enough time on it, and ordered him to do it again. Filippi still chokes when he talks about what happened next. "All of a sudden, she just started going off on me, telling me she hated me and she didn't love me," Filippi relates. "Just going off. I ran upstairs, I grabbed a 22, one of Bruce's.... I just wanted her to listen, just to stop yelling at me and listen." Filippi fired once, killing his mother, and immediately ran out into the yard.

When Lee returned later that day, Filippi wanted to tell him what happened. But as Lee walked up the steps, Filippi grabbed a two-by-four and struck him once on the shoulder. "What did you do that for?" Lee protested. "I killed mom," was Filippi's reply. "And I want you to kill me. I want to die."

Filippi then ran away from his home and flagged down a passing patrol car on a nearby highway. His confession to the police officer resulted in Filippi's first and only arrest.

By the time Filippi arrived at juvenile hall, records recount “he was in a serious state of shock and for several days was unable to do anything but shake and cry and seemed to be unable to even comprehend that anyone was in the room with him or speaking to him...He is very sad and tearful when questioned about this offense. He states that he only wishes he had gone to live with his father on the Saturday before the shooting so that it would have never happened.”

Throughout Filippi’s life, he had tried desperately to please his mother by doing his chores and cleaning his room to perfection so as to avoid abuse. Filippi’s perfectionism now began to serve him well. He excelled in the regimen of juvenile hall, despite the trauma he had undergone and the series of pending legal dramas he was facing. The case made headlines in the local papers and the District Attorney quickly decided to ask the court to try Filippi as an adult despite numerous verified accounts of his abuse. Since transfer to adult court in California is done at the discretion of the court, as opposed to the district attorney, as is the case in Florida, Filippi still had a chance of staying in the juvenile system.

Judge William Kelsey, appointed to the Superior Court by Governor Ronald Reagan, heard lengthy testimony about the abuse Filippi had endured and about his potential for rehabilitation. Judge Kelsey not only retained Filippi in the juvenile court but made the unusual move of stopping Filippi’s trial in the middle of the proceedings, rendering a verdict of manslaughter, and sentencing Filippi to a long-term, highly structured therapeutic placement.

Filippi thrived in the Oakendell residential treatment facility where he spent the next 21 months undergoing a strict regimen of psychological treatment. Filippi also began to work for the office of the California Human Development Corporation helping low-income people find jobs and making sure that shut-ins continued to have heat and other utilities. With his meticulous attention to detail, Filippi rose quickly to the position of project director.

Filippi remained in the Northern California area after completing the Oakendell program and continued to work with the Human Development Corporation. After he was laid off due to budget cuts, he enrolled in the United States Army. Again, Filippi’s perfectionism served him well. Based on his testing scores and his performance in boot camp, Filippi was recruited for a position in the Presidential Honor Guard assigned to guard President George Bush. This is an elite military corps which stresses perfection in dress, comportment and behavior and is both a highly competitive and disciplined unit.

“The Army, Juvenile Hall, Oakendell - I think I did well in all of them because they offered me structure without the abuse,” he says. “The attention to detail that the Honor Guard required of me was easy compared to what I had been through at home.”

Filippi served honorably in the United States Army. After discharge in 1992, he began working for a Mercedes-Benz Dealership in Southern California. He rose quickly through the ranks there, becoming the finance director in 1995 and the sales director in 1998. Filippi is currently engaged to be married, and plans to write a book about his life experiences. Reflecting on his life and current efforts to automatically try kids like himself as adults, Filippi thinks that is a bad idea.

“Jailing kids with adults isn’t just bad for juveniles, it’s bad for society as a whole,” he says. “Far from getting the guidance and counseling which enabled me to become a productive citizen, kids in adult jails learn their lessons from violent criminals. I, and others like me, are living proof that prevention and rehabilitation programs are the best tools for deterring crime.”

“I know that after reading this, people may view me differently. But when I was 16 and facing a life sentence in adult prison, I swore that if I could help others get the same consideration I had, I would do it. I am grateful for the chance I was given to make a new start, and hope other young offenders get the same chance.”



# CAPTAIN JAMES SHORT

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**A**t age 13 James N. Short, Jr. and his schoolmates left their Washington, D.C. junior high school in Northeast and proceeded to a neighboring junior high school in Southeast D.C. where Short hit a 21-year-old with a stick. The following day, he and his schoolmates were called to the principal's office and arrested. After being taken to police headquarters, all, except Short, were released.

His father James, Sr., a strict disciplinarian, refused to pick him up, hoping to teach his son a lesson. The Short family was known in the community for its strong religious, moral, and family values and his parents had never had this type of problem before. Short, Jr. speaks with regret about the embarrassment he caused his family.

Short was taken to D.C.'s Receiving Home for Children. Two months later he was released to his father. When he returned home, he was alienated from his neighborhood friends because very few young people from his immediate neighborhood had brushes with the law. He began hanging out with a rougher crowd, resulting in another arrest for fighting and another stint in detention.

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## CAPTAIN JAMES N. SHORT, JR.

<b>Age:</b>	52
<b>Occupation:</b>	Captain, District of Columbia Fire and Emergency Services Department.
<b>Residence:</b>	Washington, D.C.
<b>Education:</b>	GED.
<b>Delinquency History:</b>	Assaults and burglary. Spent a year in the National Training School in Washington, D.C., and then a year on work-release, working as a barber.

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By this time, his father was at his wits' end. The judge released Short to his eldest brother's care. Although Short worked at odd jobs and attended school, he still had a problem with making poor decisions and again ended up in trouble. As 1963 ended, Short, now in the 12th grade, was re-arrested and committed to the National Training School for Boys, a federal facility.

Short's judge admonished him in open court, in the presence of his coaches Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Watts and other concerned citizens who had come to court on Short's behalf. He felt he had let them all down.

Upon leaving court, the bus drove first to an adult prison to drop off some men, where he witnessed grown men crying.

The ride to the National Training School also took him past his neighborhood. Reality was setting in. Short figured that because he was 17, he would be released that September when he turned eighteen. Only later did he learn he was close to facing three years in the locked training school, and might not be released until his 21st birthday.

Today, Fire Capt. James Nathaniel Short Jr., can best be described as a man of strength and a different kind of fighter. Speaking in a clear, deliberate tone, he describes how, with the help of the juvenile justice system, he pulled himself through his early delinquency and launched a heroic career in the D.C.'s Fire Department. A 28-year veteran of the force, he once broke his neck when a building collapsed on him during a fire. In his spacious Southeast Washington, D.C. home, surrounded by a thick bible, pictures of his grandchildren and family members and a photo of President Clinton (taken when he inspected a downtown hotel on a presidential security detail), he reflects on how juvenile court helped him.

"I got a chance to thank the judge who sentenced me," he says. "A lot of the rough crowd I ran around with felt nobody was really interested in them. I think it is important that our young people know they're cared for. That's more important than putting them in a juvenile system and throwing away the key."

Glancing up at the picture of Clinton, he says, "If we ruin their lives, who's going to run our country?"

*Short and his "guys" broke into a men's clothing shop and stole some suits, swiped the change carrier from a bus, and got into several fights.*

***Captain Short learned the hard way about the value of having sealed records: “I had to explain to someone half my age about my record. It was embarrassing and humiliating.”***

James Short was born into a stable, working class family. His father, a store stocker, and his mother were both members of the PTA. He describes his schools as being “wonderful places, I wish I would have taken advantage of all the opportunities they gave me.”

Short was the fourth born of his two brothers and three sisters. When he was 13, just after his first arrest, Short’s mother died and the family started to disintegrate as his older siblings left.

“My father did the best he could do to hold on, under the circumstances,” says Short. “But to be truthful, sometimes, the only way I could get my father’s attention was in the court. I guess you could say I had a chip on my shoulder. I knew better, I just did wrong.”

Short says he tried to get it together despite the problems at home. After being released from detention, he went to school, worked as a paper boy, shoveled snow, and tried to distance himself from the crowd he had met in the Receiving Home. During his times in and out of trouble he remained active in the community (Short was a member of the River Terrace Ram’s and played on two championship football teams).

On New Year’s Eve, 1963, Short committed his ultimate act of “misguided mischief.” He and his “guys” broke into a men’s clothing shop and stole some suits, swiped the change carrier from a bus and got into several fights. Short was sent to the National Training School for Boys until age 21.

The fights were just beginning. While in NTS, Short remembers being warned to stop participating in the church choir, because guys in the choir were “sissies.” When he refused to quit, “they sent a jump squad out for me.” Captain Short did well, though, went on the honors program, and was one of the first kids to participate in the National Training School’s work release program.

Short credits much of his transition from mischievous youth to respectable young man to NTS. He’ll never forget the role one counselor, Mr. Haden, played in his life. The “older, white gentleman” told Short he had one of the highest IQs of any boy at the school. He encouraged Short to get his GED and barbering license and told him if he behaved, he could get out of NTS two years ahead of schedule.

With Haden's help, Short spent each day at Chick's Barber Shop on work release, saved \$1800 from cutting hair and got his high school diploma. On his 19th birthday, he was released from NTS.

He soon got a full-time job at the barber shop he had been working in. To this day he still cuts hair. He bought his first car with the money he saved.

"I wish they would bring back something like NTS because it helped a lot of boys," Short says. "I know it helped to turn me around."

He found work at another barber shop, married his girlfriend and began a more stable phase of his life. He was in with a better crowd at the new barber shop located in far Northeast D.C. While working there, a friend, Fire Inspector Charles Miles, suggested that Short apply for a job at the department. At first he resisted the idea but then began to notice kids were starting to wear their hair longer, meaning he was making less money giving fewer haircuts. Miles again promoted the fireman idea and offered to drive Short to the exam during his lunch hour. Short accompanied him and "aced" the test. For the next seven years, he worked full-time at the barber shop and full-time as a fire fighter on the night shifts.

"I didn't see much of my family for a while," he says.

During his 28-year career he was promoted to inspector, sergeant, lieutenant, and is now one of 62 captains in the 1100 member department. He hopes some day to become a battalion chief.

"I like the gratification of the job," he says. "People look up to fire fighters. It pleased my father, and feels good to give back to the community."

As a captain, Short learned the hard way about the value of having sealed and confidential juvenile records. Despite turning his life around, his record followed him through adulthood, creating obstacles to his professional advancement and nearly preventing him from becoming a fire fighter in the late sixties. When he tried to get a private detective license in the 1980s, once again, his juvenile record came up.

***"A lot of the rough crowd I ran around with felt nobody was really interested in them. I think it is important that our young people know they're cared for. That's more important than throwing away the key."***

“I had to explain to someone half my age about my record,” he says. “It was embarrassing and humiliating.”

It was only after he got D.C. Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton to petition on his behalf that he was finally able to get his records expunged. He feels strongly that it is important to maintain confidentiality about youthful indiscretions.

“It is important that records are expunged,” he says.

Looking back, Short sees how far he has come, how hard he has fought to get there and the role the juvenile court played in helping him along. A few years ago, while cleaning up his deceased father’s possessions, Short found a letter he wrote to his dad in 1964, just after he had entered NTS.

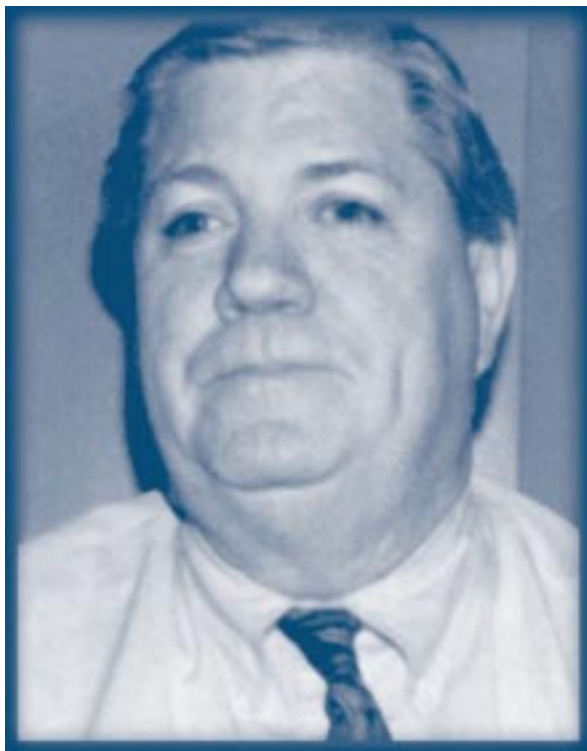
“It would make me very proud if you were to come see me father,” he wrote then.

The letter reinforced Short’s assessment that his life of crime was all about getting his father’s attention. Short and his father ultimately developed a close relationship and became great friends. Today that letter rests securely in the family Bible that lays at the entrance to his home.



# RONALD C. LANEY

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The system was ready to write Ronald Laney off. He stood before a judge in criminal court who was ready to throw the book at him because of his delinquent past. Laney had previously been before a juvenile court judge for breaking into cars, stealing liquor from restaurants and picking fights with school kids and sailors. After serving 10 months in a Florida training school for boys, and after numerous stays in the local juvenile detention center, Laney was now facing adult time. At 17 he was old enough to be held in a Florida jail even though the law he was charged with violating, drinking as a minor, was not a serious offense.

“You better get something together,” the judge told him. A police officer who had picked Laney up a number of times said, “you need to get out of here, kid, you need to get out

and do something.” Laney got the message. After the juvenile court judge, his probation officer and local police pleaded his case, the criminal court judge agreed to drop the charges. The juvenile court judge then washed his record clean. That cleared the way for Laney to enlist in the Marines. Within 30 days he was off to Paris Island and, eventually, to Vietnam.

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## RONALD C. LANEY

**Age:** 53

**Occupation:** Director, Missing and Exploited Children’s Program, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice; former juvenile probation officer, St. Petersburg, Florida; Sergeant, U.S. Marine Corps.

**Residence:** Del City, Virginia.

**Education:** University of South Florida and University of Tampa.

**Delinquency History:** Adjudicated delinquent for larceny, disorderly conduct (fighting) and drinking as a minor. Served a handful of sentences in juvenile detention, and spent close to a year at a state training school in Marianna, Florida.

Today, Laney, 52, directs the Missing and Exploited Children’s Program for the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, a Justice Department program that coordinates research, training and technical assistance and grants to find the thousands of children who are reported missing in America each year. It was a tough journey from jail to earning a top Justice Department post. During the Vietnam War, where Laney served two tours “in country” as a Marine Staff sergeant, he lost an eye, permanently injured his arm, and spent 14 months rehabilitating in a Naval hospital. But the decorated veteran, who proudly displays the Marine seal on the front of his desk, doesn’t regret a moment.

“They don’t take bad kids like me anymore,” he says, lamenting the loss of the military as an option for delinquent youth. “I met lots of people in the military with similar backgrounds. They also had a choice: the military or jail. We’ve lost an opportunity to give youth a chance at a different life.”

Born to a poor family in Kannapolis, North Carolina, Laney, his mother, and his four siblings were frequently abused by their father—an alcoholic.

“One time, a day after he got his paycheck and was drinking, my dad came home, and tried to kick my cat,” Laney reports. “He missed and kicked the wall. Then he got angry and decided he would kick me, because it was my cat. He kicked me like you would kick a football, but that was pretty much routine.” One day, when his father was out drinking, he, his mother, and siblings slipped away, fleeing to Jacksonville Beach, Florida.

Even though an older sister already lived there and was somewhat established the move was traumatic.

***Laney was on a first name basis with Judge Weingard, the juvenile court judge, and Officer Starnes.***

“Coming from a very rural community, where religion was a big factor in our lifestyle, I suddenly was an urban kid,” he says. “I got introduced to crime real quick.” As soon as he arrived, Laney says he started to hang around with “the deviant” crowd. “We kind of rumbled on the beach, like, all the time,” he says.

At 15, Laney was first picked up for fighting on the beach, earning him a day in juvenile detention. Next, he and two adults broke into a fancy French restaurant, and stole 28 bottles of liquor. When one of the adults was arrested and confessed to their burglary, the police came by Laney’s

eighth grade classroom and dragged him out of class. He was put in detention for ten days.

It wasn't long before Laney was on a first name basis with Judge Weinguard, the juvenile court judge, and Officer Starnes. One night, Laney was again arrested for fighting. He thought he was about to be thrown in the back of an empty police car, and taken in for another short stint in juvenile detention. Instead, he discovered that Judge Weinguard and his probation officer were sitting in the back of the police cab, waiting to throw the book at him. He spent 30 more days in detention before he was shipped off to the state training school in Marianna, way up on the Florida Panhandle.

It was an old-style reform school, complete with corporal punishment. The compound had a yellow building called "the white house" where beatings were dolled out for transgressions. Laney was beaten with a leather barber's strap twice: once for smoking a Winston cigarette, and another time for fighting with another kid on the basketball court. "They were careful to hit you with your Levis on," he says. "It never left a scar." He says the beatings made less of an impression on him during his ten months at Marianna than did his experiences with the toughened kids. "I knew some of them had been in there three times, and were headed to prison. I just decided, this is not for me."

He studied hard, working most of his way towards his high school diploma, spending the rest of the time picking up medical skills as a nursing assistant in the school's clinic. He was planning to pull his life together when he got out, but when he returned to Jacksonville Beach, he quickly fell back in with the same crowd, and was arrested for drinking on the beach. Judge Weinguard and Officer Starnes stepped in, pleading with the criminal court judge to give Laney the option of joining the Marines. "They knew, and I knew, I had to get out of there," he says. They saw something in Laney that was worth saving.

Staff Sergeant Laney had a stellar seven year career in the Marines. He had stints in Hawaii, served as an instructor at Quantico, Virginia, and worked at the Navy/Marine prison in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. During that time, he earned a GED, three presidential unit citations, several personal citations, and a Purple Heart. He served two tours in Vietnam, but was badly injured when during a fire fight, he

***"They [the Marines] don't take bad kids like me anymore. I met a lot of people in the military with similar backgrounds, and we've lost an opportunity to give youth a chance at a different life."***

was hit by a rocket. The explosion took off part of his shoulder and blinded him in the right eye. He spent 14 months in a hospital and was medically discharged from the Marines in October, 1970.

Laney says he was drawn towards criminology when he resumed academic life at a junior college. He was interested in helping kids like himself. While working towards an advanced degree in criminology, he worked part-time as a juvenile probation officer. He says he had a special affinity for the kids he worked with.

“I dealt with hardened delinquents,” Laney says. “The social worker would look at a kid I worked with and say: They’re easily aggravated and can’t put a complete sentence together. And the kids would come to me and say: Could you talk to us in street language and cut the therapy stuff. Without saying anything, they knew I had been there, and they knew I cared. They also knew my military background and not to mess around with me.”

Laney joined the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) in 1979, quickly working his way up through the ranks by developing juvenile training programs for law enforcement. Once, the Chief of Police came from Jacksonville Beach to attend one of Laney’s trainings.

“He remembered me,” Laney says with a sly smile. “He said he could not believe it was me.”

In 1994, Laney was appointed Director of the Missing and Exploited Children’s Program, the Division in OJJDP that coordinates and trains local officials and practitioners on how to deal with child abduction and exploitation.

“When I started working on these issues, they weren’t in the paper every day,” he says. “Now, people expect, rightly so, that society has an obligation to protect children by responding effectively to missing and exploited children cases.”

The office works to quickly get information out on missing children, trains law enforcement on how to coordinate a search for an abducted child, and how to respond to child abuse and exploitation.

***“The adult system is a failure at rehabilitation, with high recidivism. Why would we want to put a troubled kid into a system that doesn’t give him a chance to succeed? It doesn’t make any sense.”***

“What you see today that you didn’t see ten years ago is that law enforcement has a plan,” he says. “When children are reported missing, they know it is important to move quickly to start the search. Law enforcement are also learning the link between child abuse and juvenile violence and the dangers of the Internet.”

From the vantage of his busy Justice Department office, Laney wishes he could have saved his mother the grief of watching his slide towards delinquency and thinks parents like his need help. “If I was changing the system, I would add more programs to help people like her.” He also thinks that some form of mandatory service, if not an outright military draft, would give kids like him an important option. “What we do now is, stick them in a boot camp and then put them right back into the same environment where they ran into trouble with no support system. What’s the sense of that?”

He is particularly concerned with the trend towards passing new laws to blend the criminal and juvenile justice systems. In October 1998, the reauthorization of his program was tied to Senate juvenile justice legislation that would have mandated lowering the age by which kids could be tried, and imprisoned, as adults. Laney shakes his head in disgust.

“First, in criminal court, what you have done is extend the time that they can commit petty acts without sanction, and lock them up as criminals, when they do something serious,” he says. “Second, let’s face it, the adult system is a failure at rehabilitation, with high recidivism. Why would we want to put a troubled kid into a system that doesn’t give him a chance to succeed? It doesn’t make any sense.”



# JOSEPH JULIAN

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**G**rowing up in the rough Filmore District of San Francisco, bouncing in and out of juvenile hall, no one would have predicted that Joseph Julian would one day become the Dean of San Francisco State's School of Behavioral and Social Sciences and President of the Juvenile Probation Commission overseeing the very juvenile hall he served time in as a kid.

"They call it gang-bangin' now. We called it gang wars when I was a kid, but whatever you call it, I was in it," Julian remembers. "From strong-arming people, to car thefts, to shoplifting, we were into all of that stuff."

Joe Julian is now semi-retired, in the twilight of a prestigious career in academia that spanned more than three decades. He lives with his wife and family in a middle class home with a spectacular view of San Francisco and, ironically, the tough neighborhood he grew up in. One of his sons is in law school after a two-year stint in the Peace Corps; another is

Director of Advertising at a high tech firm in Silicon Valley. Julian spends his time writing, teaching and trying to figure out how to make San Francisco's Juvenile Probation Department a more rehabilitative place for kids.

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## JOSEPH JULIAN

**Age:** 64

**Occupation:** Professor and Administrator, San Francisco State University.  
President, San Francisco Probation Commission.

**Residence:** San Francisco, California.

**Education:** San Francisco State University and University of Washington.

**Delinquency History:** As a member of a gang, Julian was arrested for strong armed robbery, auto theft and shoplifting. He spent time in San Francisco's juvenile hall, and the city jail.

***“From strong-arming people, to car thefts, to shoplifting, we were into all that stuff.”***

Joseph Julian was born to Filipino parents, Isaac and Margaret Julian – then age 16 – in 1935. When he was still a toddler, Julian and his family returned to the Philippines. Isaac Julian was repeatedly unfaithful to his wife, going out until all hours of the night while she stayed home with the family. Two years later, Joe’s mother left his father and returned to San Francisco. Julian never saw Isaac Julian again.

Upon their return to America, the Julians moved into the home of a Japanese-American family who had been interned in a concentration camp (they moved out four years later when the family returned from the camp). Donning his sociologist cap, Julian describes the Filmore District where they lived as something of an uncomfortable mixture of Filipinos, Blacks and Latinos.

“The neighborhood was rough coming up, with a lot of poverty and all that goes with it,” Julian remembers. “I was lucky at first though because the nuns at school really kept me in line.”

And Julian needed that help. Aside from being subjected to a series of abusive or disinterested step-fathers after Isaac Julian’s departure, Margaret developed a severe alcohol problem. Julian and his siblings were essentially left to raise themselves.

“The nuns at the Morning Star Catholic School really helped me out, from first grade to eighth grade,” says Julian. “There was all of this stuff going on in my family and my neighborhood, but they really took an interest in me. They got me into spelling bees, and put me on after-school debate teams. They must have recognized that I had the intelligence to be something else, because for those eight years, they really nurtured me and kept me out of trouble.”

Things at home, however, did not go as well. When Julian entered first grade, his mother married Pablo Santos. Julian describes him as cruel and abusive to both Margaret and the children. “He used to beat the shit out of mom and us all the time,” Julian relates.

Fortunately, Santos did seasonal work in a cannery in Alaska for months at a time. While Santos was away, Margaret had an affair with her next husband-to-be, Johnnie Santo Tomas. When Santos returned and found out about it, he stabbed Santo Tomas in a bowling alley in San Francisco’s Tenderloin neighborhood.

“Johnnie didn’t have much to do with us kids, but he wasn’t abusive like Pablo was,” Julian recalls. “He and my mother had two daughters, one is my sister Marlene. The other died at age 2 from pneumonia. After she died, Johnnie sort of faded away and we didn’t see too much of him any more.” Julian was about 12 when Johnnie Santo Tomas disappeared from his life.

Enter Lucio Sumilang, who married Margaret when Julian was entering high school. “It was a marriage of convenience,” Julian states flatly.

This was a crucial time in Joe’s life – right when he was entering adolescence; he was no longer under the watchful eye of the nuns at Morning Star, and his mother’s alcoholism was worsening. Julian began to hang around with the wrong crowd in his neighborhood and get into increasingly serious trouble. Sumilang had no interest in stepping in as a father figure.

“I joined a gang, got some tattoos on my hand – one said “Amore” and the other was a cross with rays coming out of it,” Julian explains, pointing to his hand where the tattoos have since been removed. “We started stealing cars, snatching purses, and strong arming (robbing) people.”

Julian was 15 when he was first arrested. He and a few older friends stole a car and drove to Los Angeles. On the way, they shoplifted food from several supermarkets until they were finally caught.

“I lied about my age, and told them I was 16 so I’d be locked up with my two friends,” Julian remembers. “But since they were both white, they put them in the white tank and they put me with the Hispanic kids. The kids knew right away that I wasn’t Hispanic, because I didn’t speak any Spanish. I was by myself there with no friends. It was all pretty scary.”

Julian was arrested four or five other times in his teen years, for crimes ranging from gang fighting, to car theft, to robbery. He spent time in San Francisco’s juvenile hall, which closed in the 1950s, as well as the current juvenile hall and the city jail.

In the meantime, the future professor was getting kicked out of a series of high schools. He started in Sacred Heart Catholic School but was truant so much that he withdrew “before they kicked me out.” He moved on to Galileo public high

***Julian is unequivocal about the impact being locked up had on him: “You learn more about the wrong things than the right things.”***

school, but was expelled for excessive truancy. Finally, he dropped out of a “Continuation School” which he described as a “repository for fuck-ups.”

Things were going from bad to worse. Julian was again arrested for a car theft. When his probation officer at the time threatened to send him to a state training school, Julian high-tailed it out of town.

“I was on the lam for a while,” Julian remembers.

Then one night, Julian and some friends got into a serious accident which would change the course of Joe’s life.

Hanging around in the Filmore, Julian and a couple of teenage friends went for a ride with an older man in the man’s new car. The group took off at high speed, racing around town. The driver flipped the car, killing himself and badly injuring most of the passengers. Julian broke a bone in his hip and had to undergo surgery to have a pin inserted.

Because he continued to be active, the hip didn’t heal properly and Julian had to undergo surgery again. This time, fearing that Julian would re-injure his hip, the doctor put him in a full body cast “from my chest to my toes” for five months.

“I discovered reading and really began to reflect on my life during that time,” Julian remarks. “I remember thinking that I wasn’t a very good gang member or crook but I was good at school. That accident was a blessing in disguise.”

***“Some of the thing we’re doing now in San Francisco to rehabilitate high-risk kids are things that could have worked for a kid like me.”***

When he got back on his feet, Julian got a job, graduated from high school, and entered San Francisco State University. Once he entered college, Julian got on the straight and narrow and never strayed off.

“Most of my friends at the time were either married or starting to have kids, or joining the Army,” Julian recalls. “I couldn’t join because of my hip, so I went to college. A couple of professors there took an interest in me — maybe they recognized that I had some talent, and they started exposing me to things I hadn’t seen before.”

Well-known sociologist Don Gibbons, who never actually taught Julian but knew him from the Sociology Department, took Julian to several regional and national

conferences. He introduced Julian to members of the Sociology Department at the University of Washington, where Julian went to graduate school and obtained a job as an acting instructor upon graduation from SF State in 1958.

“If I had to point to somebody who was pivotal in my career, it would be Don Gibbons,” Julian states.

Once he turned his mind to academics, Joe Julian rose steadily through the ranks, obtaining his Masters and Ph.D. from the University of Washington, and becoming an Assistant Professor at Kansas State University in 1963. Julian went on to become an Associate Professor at the University of Nebraska, a Visiting Scholar at Columbia University, and chair of the Sociology/Anthropology Department at California State, Bakersfield. From 1986 through 1995, he was the Dean of the School of Behavioral and Social Sciences at SF State. Then, after spending a year as an Instructor at Harvard’s Institute for Educational Management, Julian served as the Dean for Human Relations at SF State from 1995 - 1997.

As President of the San Francisco Juvenile Probation Commission, Julian now sits on the oversight body for the very juvenile hall he was locked up in as a kid. Julian is unequivocal about the impact being locked up had on him.

“You learn more about the wrong things than the right things in those places (juvenile detention facilities),” Julian asserts strongly. “I taught less sophisticated kids things they never knew, and older, more sophisticated kids taught me stuff. Kids that age are peer-oriented, not adult-oriented, so most of the lessons they learn, they’re going to learn from others they’re locked up with, not from the staff. Since we pay more to put a kid in one of these places than to send them to Stanford for a year, we need to ask ourselves what we’re really getting for our money.”

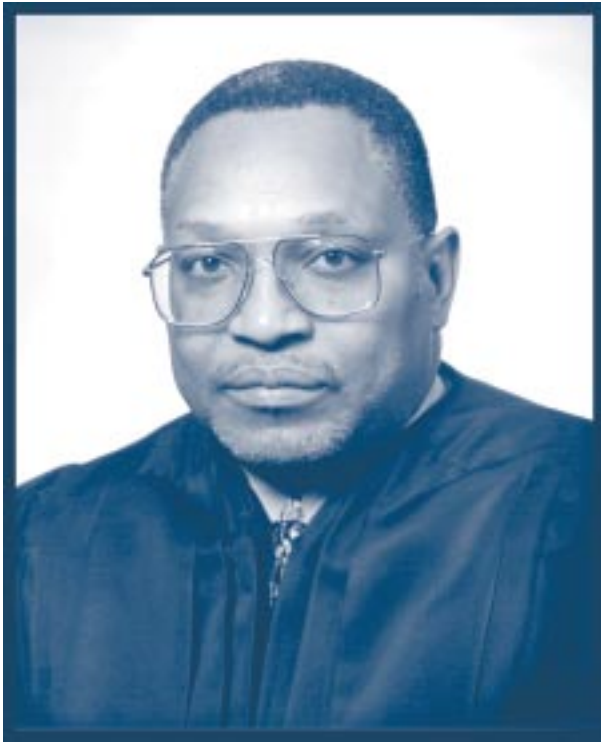
Julian recognizes that he had to overcome a lot of his problems by himself but feels that it shouldn’t have to be this way and that we can help today’s at-risk youth to turn their lives around.

“Certainly some of the things we’re doing now in San Francisco to rehabilitate high-risk kids are things that could have worked for a kid like me,” he states. “If I had those kinds of opportunities when I was getting into trouble, that might have saved me some growing up on my own.”



# HON. REGGIE B. WALTON

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**T**hey call it “the Home of Champions.” The small, otherwise obscure town of Donora, Pennsylvania is where Ken Griffey, Sr., Stan Musial and a host of other fine athletes went to high school. In fact, current star, Ken Griffey, Jr., was born in Donora and started his baseball career as a little leaguer there.

It’s also where Judge Reggie Walton - a former federal prosecutor and America’s first Deputy Drug Czar - grew up. Walton had dreams of playing professional football and even received an athletic scholarship to West Virginia State College. But not before three court appearances as a kid for fighting in what he describes as the “tough little steel mill towns” dotting the Monongahela River. One of the fights the future-judge was involved in could have resulted in the victim’s

death, and served as a wake up call, setting him on a course for a stellar legal and political career.

When Reggie Walton was born in 1949, his father, Theodore Walton, was a steel worker like so many Donora residents, and his mother, Ruth Walton, was a housewife. Walton came from an intact family, which was plunged into financial stress when the local steel mill closed in 1960, and his father was laid off.

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## HON. REGGIE B. WALTON

**Age:** 50

**Occupation:** D.C. Superior Court Judge since 1981. Former U.S. prosecutor, Deputy “Drug Czar,” and Senior White House Advisor on Crime to President George Bush.

**Residence:** Washington, D.C.

**Education:** West Virginia State, American University’s Washington College of Law.

**Delinquency History:** Convicted three times in juvenile court for fighting while a teen.

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“At first, my father couldn’t get a job, and there were no job opportunities for black females in those days,” he explains. “Besides, my parents thought it was best if my mother stayed home and raised the three of us.”

Theodore Walton was paid \$900 in severance when the mill closed, \$50 for each year he worked there. And there was no work to be had in, or anywhere near, Donora. Since these were the days before food stamps, Walton remembers his family relying on surplus food provided by the government and what his father grew on a piece of land he had cleared.

Reggie Walton was working by the time he was 10, selling newspapers on a street corner from 7:00 to 11:30. He later took a 4:30 a.m. paper job along with an after-school paper job working both from the time he was 12-years-old until he graduated from high school. Between football practice and work, “I didn’t get a lot of sleep during those days,” he says with a smile.

A few years after he lost his job in the steelmill, Theodore Walton got a job as a janitor in the Pittsburgh Gimble’s Department Store and a second job at night.

“I hardly ever saw my father when he was working those two jobs,” says Walton. “And I started to get out of control, not listening to my mother, my machoism started to take over.”

***“The principle benefit I derived from the juvenile system was the confidentiality of my record, which meant that my youthful indiscretions didn’t prevent me from getting a football scholarship to college or from becoming a lawyer.”***

Walton’s machismo manifested itself in fighting on more than one occasion. And, on more than one occasion, the police got involved.

“Those steel towns were tough little towns,” he says. “There were a lot of bars and a lot of brawls and you had to be prepared to fight, or you had no manhood. Many of my former friends are either dead, or have been, or are currently in prison, or on drugs or abusing alcohol.”

Ironically, although Walton readily admits to his involvement in the fights for which he appeared in court, his first encounter with the police was for a crime he did not commit.

“The first time I was detained was a classic false arrest,” he relates. “Some other young black male had stolen something

off a delivery truck. The guy who did it looked nothing like me. I remember being angry about being suspected of committing the crime because the actual perpetrator was one of the ugliest guys in town,” Walton says with a smile. “The only reason I was detained is because I was a young black male.”

Walton’s first two real encounters with the law - in the ninth and eleventh grades - were for fighting. Some of the fights Walton was involved in were over a girl while attending a dance.

“I didn’t go to an actual court for any of my cases,” he recalls. “They held hearings right in the police station, with no lawyers. I just represented myself. Of course, in all three cases, I did not prevail. Two of the court encounters resulted in verbal reprimands and the third a referral to juvenile probation.”

“I received nothing from the juvenile authorities by way of supervision,” Walton remembers. “But I got plenty of supervision at home, so I didn’t really need it. The principle benefit I derived from the juvenile system was the confidentiality of my record, which meant that my youthful indiscretions didn’t prevent me from getting a football scholarship to college or from becoming a lawyer.”

As a high school junior, Walton discovered his father’s guns and his straight razor and started sneaking them out of the house tucked into his pants. Fortunately, Walton was never arrested carrying the weapons. In fact, he never displayed the weapons in anger or threatened to use them.

“Back in those days, you thought you were a big man if you were merely carrying a gun and could show it off,” he says. “But if you used it instead of your fists, you were considered a punk.”

Around this time, Theodore Walton got tired of his son’s behavior and disrespect for Mrs. Walton. Reggie Walton considers it a turning point in his life when his father literally grabbed him by his shirt collar and ominously threatened that there was going to be a serious price to pay the next time the younger Walton disrespected or failed to obey his mother.

***“You ask anyone, and they’ll tell you I’m tough on crime,” he states. “And I have no problem sending someone away for a long time if I think it’s necessary. But for a great many of these kids, they need a chance and an opportunity to turn themselves around.”***

Despite his troubles with the law, and his minimal academic performance in high school, Walton continued to excel on his high school's football team as its starting halfback. His play on the gridiron resulted in athletic scholarship offers to a number of colleges, including West Virginia State College, which he ultimately attended.

But not before one final serious crime nearly derailed his career and his life, and threatened the life of another.

"We had heard that there were some guys up at the projects, messing with some of our girls," Walton remembers. "So we all piled into a truck to find them and teach them a lesson."

Walton assumed that they were just going to rough these guys up and leave it at that. But when they tracked one of the kids down and started beating him up, one of the boys Walton was with took out an ice pick and started stabbing the unsuspecting boy.

Although he was stabbed nine times, the victim did not die, partly because Walton and a friend rushed him to a hospital. The victim had nine puncture wounds in his back and a broken nose and jaw. When Walton learned that the boy's parents had no car, he drove to their home, picked them up, and took them to the hospital.

The next day, the police questioned Walton, who was deliberately vague about his involvement in the beating. At the time, his cousin, Ronnie Neal, was in town for a visit. Walton and Neal left town the next day for Middletown, New York. Walton assumed that, once the police caught the boy who committed the stabbing (who was himself shot and killed over a girl several years later) his problems were over. His assumption proved to be correct.

"I saw my whole future flash before my eyes at that time," Walton relates. "It really had a profound effect on me." Walton has never been in trouble since that time.

In Middletown that summer, Walton repeatedly locked horns with his older cousin, Julius Neal, who himself had had some troubles as a youth and who saw Walton heading down a dangerous path.

"Julius and I fought all the time about my behavior," Walton remembers.

"'You're gonna blow it if you go to college and get into this type of trouble' he would tell me."

At West Virginia State, Walton made a conscious decision to enter a scholarly fraternity, as opposed to one full of athletes. He chose the Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity because it had a reputation for turning out black leaders like Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., Thurgood Marshall, and Adam Clayton Powell.

Walton struggled at first in college, not so much due to lack of ability - as subsequent achievements would attest - but because he had never focused on academics until attending college. But he worked hard and made Dean's List in his senior year.

Still, with a poor showing on the law boards, his chance of attending law school appeared slim. Fortunately, he was enrolled in a program established by the federal government, the Council on Legal Education Opportunity (CLEO), which was specifically designed to increase the number of black attorneys, who constituted about only 2 percent of America's lawyers at that time.

In 1971, CLEO sent Walton to an intensive summer-long program at Howard University School of Law in Washington, D.C. He graduated near the top of the class, earning an academic scholarship to American University's Washington College of Law.

Law school did not come easy for Walton, who had to study 12 to 13 hours a day, in addition to the various jobs he worked to supplement his scholarship and loans. He graduated in 1974 and took a job as a public defender in Philadelphia. He left that job for a position at D.C.'s United States Attorney's office in 1976.

Walton's rise in the legal profession from that point can only be described as meteoric. He became the Chief of the Career Criminal Unit in the U.S. Attorney's Office in 1979 at the age of 30, and during his time in that post, he never lost a case. He was promoted to Executive Assistant to D.C.'s U.S. Attorney - the number three position in the office - a year later. At the age of 32, he was appointed by President

***Walton's rise in the legal profession from that point can only be described as meteoric. He became the Chief of the Career Criminal Unit in the U.S. Attorney's Office in 1979 at the age of 30, and during his time in that post, he never lost a case. At the age of 32, he was appointed by President Ronald Reagan to the D.C. Superior Court, the second youngest judge ever appointed to the district bench.***



Ronald Reagan to the D.C. Superior Court, the second youngest judge ever appointed to the DC bench.

Eight years after he became a judge, Walton was introduced to William Bennett, the new Drug Czar, by his brother Bob Bennett who knew Walton from his work in the U.S. Attorney's Office. William Bennett had been appointed by President George Bush to head the brand new Office of National Drug Control Policy, and his brother had gathered a few knowledgeable colleagues to offer their thoughts about drugs and crime at an informal get-together.

"I told him that, I don't mean to say that only minorities are involved with drugs," Walton says. "But that they are disproportionately involved. You're going to need a minority at the top level of your administration, if you want to have credibility on this issue in minority communities."

A few weeks later, William Bennett called Judge Walton and, much to Walton's surprise, offered him the number two spot in the Drug Czar's office.

Walton spent the next two years traveling over a half-million miles, spreading the Bush Administration's anti-drug message across the country. When Florida Governor Bob Martinez took over as Drug Czar in 1991, Walton was made the Senior White House Advisor on Crime to President Bush and was then reappointed by Bush to the D.C. Superior Court.

Although he's only 50 years old, Walton is already talking about the time, a few years from now, when he will be eligible for a reduced case load and senior status as a judge. But that's not because he wants to take it easy. With his new free time, he hopes to start a residential school for delinquent and otherwise at-risk youth, to work with young people who, like himself, hold promise for the future that is just waiting to be tapped.

"You ask anyone, and they'll tell you I'm tough on crime," he states. "And I have no problem sending someone away for a long time if I think it's necessary. But for a great many of these kids, they need a chance and an opportunity to turn themselves around."

"A lot of proposals have come out to just lock 'em up and throw away the key," he states. "But the vast majority of these young people are going to be back on the street sooner or later and we had better think of ways to help them turn their lives around or they're going to wreak havoc on us."

# JAY KILHEENEY

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Jay Kilheeny never had much of a childhood. When he was as young as 7 he took care of not only himself but his alcoholic mother. Everyday she'd come home in the afternoon with a bottle of whiskey and pass out. Every night, Kilheeny put her to bed. From a young age he felt that his purpose was to protect his mother from herself. His father left the family when Kilheeny was an infant. Before Kilheeny turned 16, his mother had remarried a second and third time. Rather than lend stability to a chaotic home, her husbands exacerbated existing problems with their own alcoholism. Both men physically and mentally abused Kilheeny and his mother.

Such a troubled past is hardly a precursor for a successful business career, yet, almost 20 years later, Jay Kilheeny owns and manages a \$20 million car dealership. He has a stable and loving marriage with Lori, a nurse, and three children.

As flames engulfed their mobile home, 12-year-old Kilheeny could only hope his plan would work. In a desperate attempt to stop his mother's alcoholism, he tried to jolt her into realizing she had a problem. When his mom blacked out from heavy

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## JAY KILHEENEY

**Age:** 35

**Occupation:** Owner and Manager of Jay Kilheeny Ford and Lincoln Mercury.

**Residence:** Lock Haven, Pennsylvania.

**Education:** GED.

**Delinquency History:** Stole \$2,000 from a convenience store he worked at when he was 15. Spent 45 days in the Welsboro Juvenile Detention Center before being sent to Vision Quest, a wilderness rehabilitation camp in Arizona.

drinking, Kilheeneey started a fire, which unexpectedly burned their home to the ground. It only made her drinking worse.

For a short period of time, at 13, Kilheeneey felt like he had a normal life. His mother's company, Tetley Tea, forced her to go to a rehabilitation facility to deal with her alcoholism. While there, she met Patrick Kilheeneey. The two of them were released from rehab sober and happy. The couple married and bought a house. Patrick had a good job with the Pennsylvania Gas Company, the family had two new cars, and Patrick adopted Jay. For once in his life, Kilheeneey was part of a "typical" suburban family.

The perfect image shattered, however, when Patrick started using heroin. Suddenly, old patterns began repeating themselves. Patrick physically abused his wife, beating her repeatedly. Kilheeneey would often step in to defend his mother but this only served to worsen the abuse. During one episode when Kilheeneey was 14, Patrick busted Kilheeneey's mom's head on the refrigerator. To stop Patrick, he wrapped a phone cord around Patrick's neck and pulled him away. After this incident, Kilheeneey and his mother fled.

Kilheeneey was alone and in search of direction. Even after they left, Kilheeneey kept in touch with Patrick, seeking support from the only father figure he had in his life. The relationship was more harmful than good, as Kilheeneey began trying drugs with Patrick, thinking it was cool to get high with his father. Jay's friends would all go to Patrick's and they would "get wacked" together. At 15, after getting high all the time and not going to school, Kilheeneey realized he needed help but didn't know where to find it. The counselors at school knew he was messed up, but Kilheeneey felt he had more street smarts than the counselors and didn't "connect" with them.

"I felt lost, like I was searching for something and didn't know what it was," Kilheeneey says. "The only way I could deal with my negative energy was destructive. I didn't know any better. Mom and Dad drank, did drugs . . . I began to think it was ok."

Patrick left town without any warning, leaving Kilheeneey feeling empty. He couldn't find help-until he broke the law.

At 15, he applied for a job as an assistant manager at a convenience store, knowing the job called for an 18-year-

***After working at the store for a few months, he stole \$2,000 out of the safe, went to New York, and partied for three days. Kilheeneey then spent 45 days in detention, in a room the size of a closet.***

***Jay's new confidence helped him realize that he wasn't as bad as he once thought. Vision Quest and his probation officer had made him believe he had potential.***

old. After working at the store for a few months, he stole \$2,000 out of the safe, went to New York, bought some cocaine and partied for three days. Upon his return, he admitted to the crime and was assigned a probation officer, Mike Armbuster. Kilheeneey was sent to Welsboro Juvenile Detention Center in Pennsylvania.

When Mike visited Kilheeneey at the center, he could see how scared he was to be there. In a 22-hour lock-down, Kilheeneey spent 45 days isolated in a room the size of a closet.

"I felt I hit the absolute, total bottom - the end of the road," says Kilheeneey. "I was scared, lonely, and confused."

"In the two hours of the day we were allowed to socialize during lunch and dinner, I learned more tricks and became street wiser," he says. "There was no type of rehabilitation at all, none."

Mike managed to get him out of the detention center and placed in a juvenile program called Vision Quest for a year. A horse ranch tucked away in Alfreda, Arizona, Vision Quest is an outdoors wilderness camp where kids receive counseling and ranch training. The counselors had professional degrees but came from the streets and were used to dealing with kids. "You couldn't hustle them," Kilheeneey says.

Kilheeneey thrived at Vision Quest. The program consists of several three-month "Quests," such as Ocean Quest, Wilderness Quest and Wagontrain Quest and the kids had to complete one of them. As part of Wilderness Quest, Kilheeneey was sent to Silver City, New Mexico where he underwent two months of intensive training to prepare him for the challenge. Over the course of one month, five groups of 10 would individually hike for three or four days, then make their tents and camp out for another three or four days, rationing their limited food supply, knowing it had to last until the next food drop. If one person in the group gave up on the Quest, the entire group would have to stop as well.

It was here that Kilheeneey developed leadership skills by pulling the group together, motivating them and making them feel like they could do it. Kilheeneey received an award for building a stretcher out of lumber to carry an injured member out of the woods to be picked up by helicopter. The final Quest challenge was a 10-mile run back to the main camp while carrying 50 pounds of camping gear. Several times,

***“One of the biggest problems with the juvenile justice system is that the system can’t do anything for kids until they get into trouble.”***

Kilheeneey offered to carry other members’ gear to prevent them from giving up. He still managed to finish the Quest in the top three. During a campfire after the Quest, the group selected names for the members based on their Quest performance; Kilheeneey was dubbed the “Wolf Leader.”

Kilheeneey’s new confidence helped him realize that he wasn’t as bad as he once thought. When he returned to Alfreda after successfully completing his Quest, he was made a junior counselor and helped other members train for their Quests.

“The kids I worked with were from Cabrini Green in Chicago and all over,” Kilheeneey says. “They had never seen mountains, let alone horses.”

During the last two months of his program the counselors recommended that Jay get his own apartment in the community near Vision Quest, where they monitored him and taught him how to pay his bills. At 17, he was living alone.

When the program was over, Kilheeneey moved back to Pennsylvania to live with his mom. After a month he decided he couldn’t deal with his mother’s problems anymore and moved to Ft. Lauderdale with his friends. He began selling encyclopedias door-to-door, and making a good salary. He worked everyday but partied with his friends every night, mostly with alcohol and marijuana. Vision Quest and Armbuster had made him believe he had potential and after a year of partying, he realized his friends were alcoholics and he was headed nowhere.

After calling Mike Armbuster, his former probation officer, he decided to move to Kansas City, Missouri, where his mom’s friend offered him a job as a sales representative for an office supply store. At 18, Kilheeneey started community college and received job training. After Kilheeneey developed a good relationship with one of his customers, he was offered a job to work for him at Independence Chrysler Plymouth. Kilheeneey quickly rose through the ranks, earning \$50,000 in his first year. His boss took a liking to him and proposed that he and his son run the business. By now, however, Kilheeneey’s mother was suffering from mental illness and he moved back home.

Jay began working at a local car dealership near his mother. Things were going well for him: he got married and had a child, but he worked 80 hours a week and liked the feeling of success. The long hours were difficult for his wife, however. When



Kilheeneey was 25, they divorced. He started working for a large car dealer as a sales manager. His life was in a whirlwind. He began partying and hanging out at nightclubs until he met his second wife, Lori. He began filling his life with work and Lori, who was a stabilizing influence in his life. They married on March 20, 1992, when Kilheeneey was 27. A year later, Kilheeneey was promoted to general manager, making \$150,000 a year. With his growing success, he bought two cars, 30 acres of land and a big house. He soon began buying percentages of different car dealerships and became the general coordinator of 10 stores.

He now owns Jay Kilheeneey Ford and Lincoln Mercury, which employs 50 people and has as its foundation customer relations. He also owns an auto accessory store and a hotel in Lock Haven. He attributes his business success to his straightforwardness with customers and the fact that he treats people well. He and Lori have two children, Austin, 4, and Emily, 2.

Kilheeneey has tried to give to kids what he lacked growing up. Twice a year he participates in Drug Awareness Resistance Education (DARE), which mobilizes local police and community people to talk to kids about drugs and alcohol, setting goals for themselves, and staying clean. Kilheeneey does some financial work for the program and gives speeches to kids in school. When talking to kids, Kilheeneey uses himself as an example of what can be achieved if they work hard and don't do drugs.

"I tell them that there's a better way out there," Kilheeneey says. "People do drugs because they're looking to escape or hide something. Take a look at a guy like me. I came from nothing, but I worked hard and believed in people, and had people believe in me."

"If it wasn't for Mike and Vision Quest, I would've been dead, on the road to pure destruction," Kilheeneey says.

"Vision Quest taught me to be accountable for myself to survive. It really pounded a work ethic into me. Nothing's for free. You have to work to get what you want."

It took him committing a crime before he got the attention he desperately needed. Kilheeneey thinks our priority should be to get help for kids who need it when they need it - not when it's too late.

"One of the biggest problems with the juvenile justice system," says Jay, "is that the system can't do anything for kids until they get into trouble. Kids who are on the path to trouble need more than just a guidance counselor at school," says Kilheeneey.

One day, shortly after Jason Smith turned 14 he was called to a meeting of the Gangster Disciples at a home in his neighborhood in Englewood, a community on Chicago's South Side. During the meeting, a friend of his who had been caught with stolen drugs was led in and a gangleader called for a "violation." Smith and the other GDs broke up into groups of 15. The first group formed a circle around Smith's friend and beat him up. When one group of fifteen finished, the next group of fifteen took its turn.

Smith willingly joined in the beating; when his friend stumbled near him, he punched him in the face as hard as he could. After a half an hour, the gangleader called an end to the violence. Several GDs scraped the boy off the floor and drove him to the hospital. One of his arms had been broken during the melee, his jaw was fractured and he was bleeding from cuts to his face.

At the time, Smith rationalized his actions. Stealing the gang's drugs was a serious offense, a sign of disrespect and a major infraction of the gang rules. Smith knew the rules because he was a drug dealer himself. He and his older brother controlled a "spot" and had their own crew of GDs dealing drugs for them. They were raking in \$2000 a week and had grown accustomed to the cars, clothes and other nice things the money could buy.

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## JASON SMITH

**Age:** 21.

**Occupation:** College student and peer counselor, Westside Association for Community Action (W.A.C.A.).

**Residence:** Chicago, Illinois.

**Education:** Malcolm X Community College, business administration, and enrolled in Roosevelt University for Fall, 1999.

**Delinquency History:** Assaults, weapons possession and drug sales relating with his membership in a gang. Instead of juvenile detention, he was referred to W.A.C.A., an alternative program in Chicago, where he now works.

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***Jason was no stranger to the juvenile court. He joined the Gangster Disciples at the age of 12, and was first arrested at age 13.***

But shortly after his friends' beating, when he saw his battered friend on the street, he began to second guess his life of gangbanging and drug dealing. In the three years he had been a GD, nine gang friends had been gunned down, he himself had been shot at twice. He had seen countless friends arrested, prosecuted, and sent to prison. He was beginning to tire of the gang life and began looking for a way out. He might never have acted on this if he hadn't been arrested and referred to juvenile court, he says.

Smith was no stranger to the juvenile court. He joined the GDs at the age of 12, and was first arrested at age 13. Unlike many kids, Smith has a loving and nurturing family, and didn't join a gang as a substitute for a family. His mother, whom he adored, was the Head Secretary for the Salvation Army. His father, a fireman, lived outside of the home but saw Smith and his siblings almost every day. Smith joined the gang because both his older brothers were ranking members. At the time he saw only the trappings of the gang high life and none of the downside. He got caught up in "living the luxurious life" and saw the gang as a means to that end. Soon, he was dealing drugs, stealing cars and getting arrested.

His first arrest was for a gun charge. He and three friends went to the home of another friend who had pocketed some of their drug money. One of the boys was carrying a BB gun and showed the gun to the boys' mother when she answered the door. The mother called the police but later dropped the charges. The case was never referred to court.

During the next year, Smith was arrested three more times, once for possession of marijuana, once for handgun possession, and once for possessing crack cocaine. Each time, Smith was referred to court, but each time the charges were dropped or dismissed before trial.

Ironically, shortly after Smith's 15th birthday, he was arrested for a crime he did not commit - possession of a handgun. The police were watching three other boys at a train station, one of whom was carrying a gun. Smith, who did not know the boys, was returning from school when the police swooped in. Because of his previous arrests, Smith was in jeopardy of being held in custody pending trial. He qualified, however, for a new alternative to detention program offered by the court as part of

the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative. He was assigned to Pre-Trial Services and his case was referred to the Westside Association for Community Action (W.A.C.A.), a community-based program run by Ernie Jenkins, a longtime community organizer on Chicago's Westside and an experienced service provider.

W.A.C.A.'s supervision turned out to be just what Smith needed to get out of the gang life. W.A.C.A.'s program provides twenty-four hours of supervision, seven days a week. Workers picked up Smith from home, brought him to the community center, provided him with engaging programming and peer counseling and then drove the boys back home. On the weekends, they regularly checked in with the boys at their homes, gave out their phone numbers and pager numbers, and otherwise made themselves available at a moment's notice.

The goal of most pre-trial services programs is to keep children from picking up additional charges while their case is pending and to ensure that they show up for their court dates. But W.A.C.A. provides much more. First, W.A.C.A. re-enrolled Smith in school. An honor student through the eighth grade, Smith lost interest shortly after he started high school. His grades starting slipping, he began to cut classes, and was finally expelled for fighting. W.A.C.A. enrolled Smith in the Healey Alternative School and taught him about the importance of getting an education.

At W.A.C.A., Smith was exposed for the first time to positive adult role models who knew the streets, understood the lure of gang life and could show him, through their experiences, what would happen to him if he stayed in the GDs. He loved talking to Ernie and "Big James" Alexander and valued their words of wisdom. When his case came up in court, W.A.C.A. counselors even conducted their own investigation into the alleged crime and turned over the evidence to Smith's public defender. When Smith was found guilty, W.A.C.A. counselors again supported him and told the judge they'd be willing to continue working with him. After Smith was placed on one year's probation, W.A.C.A. followed through with their commitment, and hired Smith as a peer counselor.

***Workers picked up Jason from home, brought him to the community center, provided him with engaging programming and peer counseling and then drove the boys back home.***

W.A.C.A.'s investment in Smith has paid off. Smith passed his GED the first time he took the exam. After finishing alternative schooling, the "Ratpack," a group of local businessmen of whom Ernie Jenkins is a member, provided

Smith with a scholarship to Malcolm X College. He is now finishing up a two-year stint at Malcolm X where he is majoring in business administration. He will enroll at Roosevelt University in the Fall of 1999.

Smith's experiences at W.A.C.A. have led him to want a career working with troubled youth. His work counseling peers has convinced him that no child is "bad" and all can be rehabilitated if adults are willing to be patient, caring teachers.

"If I could redesign the current juvenile court, I would want to see more peer counselors involved with children from the minute they enter the juvenile justice system," says Smith. "I'd also like to see the courts refer more youths to me and W.A.C.A. instead of locking them up."

These days, Smith's proudest moments come when he returns home and is greeted by his mother's beaming smile. Now almost 21, he remembers how much it hurt to see her in tears when he had followed his brothers' path into the gangs. Her pride in his accomplishments seems also to have inspired Smith's older brothers as well. Both are now out of the gang life, finishing their schooling, and holding down full-time jobs.

***"If I could redesign the current juvenile court, I would want to see more peer counselors involved with children from the minute they enter the juvenile justice system. I'd also like to see the courts refer more youths to me instead of locking them up."***



# DENNIS SWEENY

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“We were the kind of kids on our block who would set a grass fire to see the firemen come.”

That’s how Dennis Sweeny describes himself and his brothers when they were growing up in the fifties in a working-class neighborhood in San Francisco.

“At first, we didn’t get into too much trouble, stealing candy bars, little mischievous stuff like that,” he says. “It wasn’t until I was a teenager that I moved into more serious delinquency.”

Sweeny considers himself an expert on serious delinquency from several vantage points. When he was a teenager, he was twice incarcerated in San Francisco’s “Youth Guidance Center” – the liberal city’s euphemism for juvenile hall. As an adult, he ran the place as San Francisco’s Chief Juvenile Probation Officer.

Sweeny was the third of five children born to Francis Patrick and Clara Sweeny in 1940. For as long as Sweeny could remember, his father worked two full-time jobs and went through occasional drinking binges. “My father would have seasonal bouts of drunkenness when he’d fall off the wagon, do a novena, and pray to St. Jude for forgiveness,” Sweeny remembers.

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## DENNIS SWEENY

- Age:** 59
- Occupation:** Chief Juvenile Probation Officer, San Francisco. U.S. Marine.
- Residence:** San Francisco, California.
- Education:** San Francisco City College and San Francisco State University.
- Delinquency History:** Burglary and possession of a gun. Spent time in San Francisco’s juvenile hall on and off throughout his youth.
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***“We were going to rob a few candy stores and shoot the merchants to scare them, not knowing it had real bullets in it.”***

Clara Sweeny was a homemaker for the couple’s five children, and also a foster mother for a string of emotionally-disturbed children. “Some foster kid was always living in our house, starting when I was about 5 years old,” Sweeny recalls. “Catholic Social Services must have loved my mother, because she was an educated woman, a registered nurse, who never said no to them.”

The Sweeny boys began to fall through the cracks between their father’s drinking and constant working, and their mother’s work with needy children. By the time Sweeny reached adolescence, he committed several burglaries in homes and businesses throughout San Francisco’s Richmond District with one of his brothers and some friends.

At the time, Playland – an amusement park overlooking the Pacific Ocean – was still in operation. One day, before the arcades opened, Sweeny and friends broke into the amusement park, stealing a load of watches, which were easy to carry away.

“Like idiots, we went back to the beach that same day and tried to sell the watches and other stuff,” Sweeny remembers. “That’s when we got arrested.”

Although Sweeny had been involved in delinquent behavior for quite some time, that arrest at age 15 in 1955 was his first – and he was scared. So, when the officer brought him, his brother and his friend into a restaurant to use the phone to call in the arrest, the boys high-tailed it out the back way.

The officer gave chase, drawing his revolver and ordering Sweeny to stop. This time, Sweeny was handcuffed and smacked around a bit by the cop.

Sweeny’s first arrest earned him a short trip to juvenile hall in the summer of 1955. No sooner was he released pending trial, than Sweeny and friends were back to their old ways. That same summer, the boys broke into a house in the neighborhood owned by a police inspector, stealing his gun and several household valuables.

“Word got out around the neighborhood that someone had stolen a gun from a local cop’s house,” Sweeny remembers. “My mother must have heard about it at the local grocery store or something and was a bit suspicious.”

Sweeny was put in charge of the gun, which he hid across the street in a park. One day, he uncharacteristically offered to walk the dog and asked for bread to go feed the ducks in the park.

“My mother instantly knew something was up,” he laughs.

Clara Sweeny surreptitiously followed her son across the street and saw him “dry-firing” the gun, aiming at trees and birds.

“The crazy thing is, we thought the gun was full of blanks,” Sweeny remembers. “We were going to rob a few candy stores and shoot at the merchants to scare them, not knowing it had real bullets in it.”

The next Sunday, Sweeny remembers his sister offering him an ice cream sundae in the middle of the morning. He would later come to understand the cause for this strange occurrence, but gleefully accepted it without question at the time. A few minutes later, his mother walked up the steps with two undercover police inspectors in tow who carted Sweeny off for his second trip to juvenile hall that summer.

This one would last a bit longer. Sweeny was no longer a first offender, and the theft of a gun was a serious matter. He stayed at the Youth Guidance center for two months.

Because Sweeny was up to grade level in school, could read and do math, he was immediately made a trustee. Sweeny spent some of his two months teaching his cell mate to read.

At the juvenile hall, Sweeny began to interact with some Probation Department staff – people who would some day call him boss. “It was different then, you really got to know the staff. The counselors really played with the kids and spent time with them.”

Sweeny was tall for his age, over six feet, but he weighed only about 160 pounds. A fight between the biggest white kid and the biggest black kid in the facility broke out while Sweeny was locked-up there.



***Sweeny's uncle, a Jesuit Priest with some standing in the local community, spoke to the judge on Dennis' behalf. He was promptly released on probation back to his parents.***

“I remember I was walking down the hall and two black kids pinned me against the wall,” Sweeny related. “Since the biggest white kid in the place was in a fight, I guess they figured they needed to neutralize the second biggest white kid, which was me. Little did they know that I was scared shitless at the time.”

Juvenile court proceedings in those days were nothing like they are today, according to Sweeny. There were no trials, no elaborate motions or pleadings. He was arraigned, convicted and sentenced on the same day. He then began a several month wait for a group home placement.

While he was waiting, his uncle, a Jesuit Priest with some standing in the local community, spoke to the Presiding Judge on Sweeny' behalf. Sweeny was promptly released on probation back to his parents' home.

Upon release, Sweeny entered his sophomore year at San Francisco's prestigious Lowell High School about a month after school had started. Sweeny recalls a conversation he had with a girl who sat in front of him in typing class: “This girl turned to me and asked me why I was starting school so late. I guess I paused long enough for her to guess something was up, because she said ‘Oh, I bet you were in juvie.’ I was so ashamed, I knew then I'd never put myself in that position again. I didn't want to be someone known for being a juvenile delinquent.”

From that point on, Sweeny made a concerted effort to get his life in order. He was recruited onto the varsity basketball team “more for my height than my talent,” and graduated from Lowell in 1959. Upon graduation, he joined the United States Marines. While in the Marines, his Captain asked him what he intended to do when his hitch was over, encouraging Sweeny to further his education.

In 1963, the 23-year-old finished his tour of duty and entered San Francisco City College. Sweeny's experience at city college gave him a new outlook on life. Before then, he never considered himself a good student, nor did he feel like a leader in any sense of the word. But in City College, Sweeny again played basketball and was elected Athletic Representative to the Student Government, which he later became President of. After two years at City College, Sweeny entered San Francisco State University, where he made the Dean's List several times.

“Something I never had was a sense that I could be a leader, that I was a good student, and that people could look up to me,” Sweeny stated. “My time at City College, and later at State, gave me that feeling, and I liked it.”

It was in 1968, while at S.F. State that Sweeny first returned to the Youth Guidance Center, this time as a counselor.

“I took a course in Juvenile Justice from Professor Larry Lawson, and he asked me if I ever thought of working up at Juvenile Hall. He got me an interview with Bob Foote who was director of juvenile hall at the time. I told him and the police department liaison Fred Mullens about my past, but it was not an issue for either one of them. I think they felt, if anyone can go through the Marines and come out OK, that pretty much evens the score.”

While Sweeny worked at juvenile hall, he began proceedings to get his record sealed, which would allow him to say in the future that he had never been arrested or convicted of a felony. Juvenile Court Judge Raymond O’Connor, who knew that Sweeny was working in juvenile hall and that he was a student in the social work program at San Francisco State, granted Sweeny’s request to seal his records.

Sweeny’s rise in the Juvenile Probation Department was meteoric. He entered as a part-time counselor and also worked part time in a warehouse while finishing his bachelors degree. He became a full-time counselor at the same time he entered the

Masters in Social Work Program at State. Eighteen months later, he passed the probation officer’s exam and became a senior counselor at the Department’s facility for sentenced youths – the Log Cabin Ranch School. A few years later, he became the assistant director of that facility. In the meantime, he married, finished the masters program at State, and got a Masters in Public Administration from the University of Southern California.

***“If I would have been tried as an adult, and would have had an adult conviction on my record, my life could have never turned out this way. I could have never been a Marine, and I couldn’t have become Chief.”***

In 1984, Sweeny was invited out to lunch by Presiding Judge Mike Hanlon and the Chief Juvenile Probation Officer at the time, Joe Bodka. Over lunch, they offered him a job as Chief, which for Sweeny was the culmination of his life’s work.

“I remember telling them that before they go any further, they needed to know about the trouble I had been in as a juvenile,” stated Sweeny. “‘Yes, we know, and that’s not a problem,’ is what they both told me right away.”



Oddly enough, Sweeny believes that the fact that he had a record as a juvenile and that most of his employees knew it created a bond with many of them. One probation officer told Sweeny that, when he was a teenager attending a local Catholic High School, he stole a car every morning as his regular mode of transportation to school. The probation officer-to-be got caught, but because he attended a well-respected Catholic School, the incident was handled informally. Others in the Department saw Sweeny as a symbol of what the kids they were all working with could become.

Sweeny waxes eloquent when he talks about the unmet potential for the juvenile justice system to turn kids' lives around. "I think that the juvenile justice system needs to be much more flexible than it is today, and that it's going in the wrong direction for all the wrong reasons. Not only should we not be trying kids as adults at younger ages, but we should allow some of the older kids, 18, 19, even 21, to benefit from some of the flexibility of the juvenile court.

"It's ridiculous to hold some 14-year-old just as accountable as someone who is 50. It boggles my mind." Sweeny knows all too well how important those second chances were for him. "If I would have been tried as an adult, and would have had an adult conviction on my record, my life never could have turned out this way. I could never have been a Marine, and I couldn't have become Chief."

"I hope that as states pass these laws, they make room for exceptions, because otherwise, it's barbaric."

# RON ARTHUR ASHLEY

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The courts said he was “uncontrollable.” School officials, the police, his probation officer and his mother all believed that only a military school, 450 miles away from his hometown of Boise, Idaho, could set Ronald Arthur Ashley straight. But Ashley says the Hill Military Academy of Portland, Oregon resembled a prison more than a school. A slight kid at 14, Ashley suffered five beatings at the hands of the older, tougher kids in the facility. After three weeks, he had had enough.

One morning, while the other kids were at breakfast, Ronald put a dollar and a pair of dry socks in his pocket, busted out the bathroom window and scaled his way down the side of the building. After his escape, it took him a day to make his way back to Boise.

The next morning, Ashley’s mother turned him over to the police, who placed him in an adult jail cell, by himself, for a week.

“Nobody came to see me,” Ashley sighs. “They were embarrassed, or at least, that’s what they told me later.”

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## RON ARTHUR ASHLEY

**Age:** 56

**Occupation:** Former President and CEO of Ashley Glass, a glass wholesaler in Boise, Idaho; former race car driver and winner of three National Hot-Rod Association titles.

**Residence:** Boise, Idaho

**Education:** Borah High School, Boise, Idaho, and studied two years at Boise Junior College.

**Delinquency History:** Arrested for vandalism and running away from home. Spent two years at the Idaho Youth Ranch, a residential facility for delinquent and at-risk youth. Now serves on the ranch’s board of directors.

The next week, Ashley was surprised to find a Methodist Reverend he had never met come by the Boise jail to bail him out. Rev. James R. Crowe told Ashley he could stay in jail, or come back to work on Crowe's ranch. The Reverend told him he could even continue to skip school, and could use the gun authorities had confiscated, as long as he worked.

Crowe then loaded Ashley into the back of his truck and went to see the probation officer about getting his gun back. The probation officer warned the Reverend that Ashley was trouble. Crowe stood firm. "I'm in charge of the kid now, give me the gun," Ashley remembers him saying.

"I never had anyone stick up for me before, stand behind me, and say, this is wrong," Ashley says. "I was just blown away by this guy who was suddenly sticking up for me."

Ashley says that Reverend Crowe and his ranch—now known as the Idaho Youth Ranch (IYR)—helped him turn around his life. Ever since his two-year term at the ranch - where Ashley was the first successful graduate of the program - he has scaled the walls of success. A business leader in his Idaho community, he founded Ashley Glass, one of the largest glass window wholesalers in the state. When Ashley retired in 1995, leaving his two stores and 35 employee firm to one of his kids, he rejoined the IYR as a member of its board of directors.

"They taught me I wasn't worthless," the 56-year-old Ashley says. "I have to give something back."

Self-esteem was a value Ashley had to learn some place other than home. He was raised by his mother—after his father died when Ashley was three—and missed the

***"The other parents of good kids wouldn't let me come over, so I ended up with the bad kids."***

direction a male role model might have provided. He was referred to the principal's office regularly throughout elementary school and immediately started running with the "rougner" group of kids in junior high school. He recalls once, after hitting a substitute teacher with a rubber band, the principal of his junior high got two coaches together and took Ashley to the gym: "They beat my ass in with a rubber hose," Ashley says.

The punishment didn't leave much of an impression, but the beating marked Ashley as a troublemaker at a very early age.

“The other parents of good kids wouldn’t let me come over,” he says. “So, I ended up with the bad kids.”

By junior high school, Ashley was playing hookey nearly all the time and he dropped out completely before ninth grade. He ran with a group of kids who set about the town stealing gas from cars, shoplifting, driving motorcycles around the neighborhood without licenses, tipping over garbage cans and vandalizing mailboxes. After each incident, the police, store merchants and truant officers all delivered Ashley home to his mother but to no avail.

“She had no control over me,” he says. “I wouldn’t listen to her and showed off in front of her.”

When he was 14, and on probation for truancy, Ashley was arrested and charged with vandalizing a vacant house. While he admitted to stoning the empty home, Ashley denied other charges, including stealing horses and shooting chickens. Whether it was the police, probation officers or teachers, people just thought the worst of him, and when he was accused of crimes he didn’t do, it increased his mistrust and detachment from authority figures. By contrast, Ashley immediately saw that Rev. Crowe - the minister who bailed him out of jail - did not see him as a troublemaker and he eagerly agreed to work on the new ranch.

The idea of building a ranch for troubled youth on four square miles of federally owned land in the southern Idaho desert won approval in 1953, when Reverend Crowe successfully petitioned President Harry S. Truman to sign over the property. When Ashley arrived in 1958, he and another boy were put to work on the ranch bailing hay, milking cows and working to build the bunkhouses that would serve as the future living quarters for other youth. As promised, he did not have to go to school. Instead, he worked all through the spring and summer, from sunrise to sunset.

“By the time fall came around, I couldn’t get to school fast enough,” Ashley says. “School was easier than working.”

For the better part of two years, Ashley lived on the ranch with Crowe and his wife, a school teacher who tutored Ashley in the evenings. By the time he left, five other boys had come to the ranch. Ashley quickly earned privileges through good behavior, including trips into town, driving the tractors and riding the horses. Eventually he got a job

***Ashley returned home to Boise a new man. The most important part of his rehabilitation, he says, was knowing someone believed in him.***

in the nearby town of Rupert working in an iron factory. The cash he earned made him feel really independent and taught him he could take care of himself, but it was a lot of work, along with his farm duties.

“I said to them [the Crowes], the only reason you want me here is so I can just run things for you,” says Ashley. “And he said, ‘with an attitude like that, I think it is time for you to go home.’”

Ashley returned home to Boise a new man. Struggling to get through high school and then Boise Junior College, he worked odd jobs, including stacking logs in a saw mill, welding and “bucking hay.” He met his wife, Delores, at a church bowling party and her family immediately put him to work on their farm. Soon after, she got a job at the Internal Revenue Service and he worked as a sales representative for the American Tobacco Company.

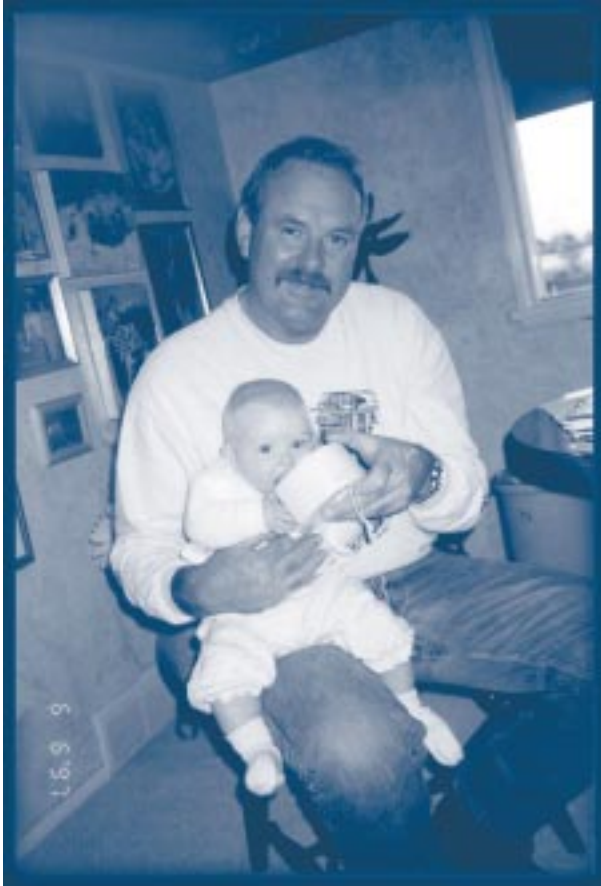
In his spare time, Ashley enjoyed a career in drag racing. In his decade of racing, Ashley set three National Hot-Rod Association (NHRA) records, meaning he was the fastest race car driver in his class in the country. He climbed the ladder of drag racing quickly, in part because he was mechanically inclined - skills he first learned working at the Ranch (“I could build just about anything,” he says). He made money winning titles but made even more with sponsors for his car. Ashley became such a successful racer that his employers at American Tobacco eventually fired him, alleging he was skipping work to race.

After a couple of sales jobs, a friend asked him to open a glass wholesale shop in Boise that would sell windows to construction firms. He and his wife put everything they had into starting Ashley Glass and the business took off. Despite the tough times in a recession, Ashley Glass eventually took over half the market in Boise. Ashley opened another store and built the firm up to 35 employees.

Ashley recently retired and his son, Shon, now runs the business. Ashley keeps very busy these days working on his home, playing with his grandchildren and helping his other son, Toby, in his car racing career. Like his father, Toby runs a store - Ashley Heating and Air Conditioning - on the side. “I carry a cell phone if they need me,” Ashley says.

***“I never had anyone stick up for me before, stand behind me, and say, this is wrong. I was just blown away by this guy who was suddenly sticking up for me.”***





In 1996, Ashley was asked to join the IYR Board of Directors, along with the Governor of Idaho and a number of other influential business and education leaders from the state. The IYR's a long way from how he left it when they began clearing the fields in the 1950s. Today, Ashley describes how they've sold four-fifths of their acreage and launched a foundation, which is snowballing in value in the booming stock market. A series of new non-profit businesses and programs allows the farm to serve more than 500 at-risk youth each year. As a board member, Ashley still focuses on the basic values that helped turn his life around.

“They still teach good work habits and how to work,” he says. “You learn responsibility from the animals and the equipment. It teaches you confidence. Once I started to feel better about myself, I started to feel better about everyone else.”

But the most important part of his rehabilitation, he says, was knowing someone believed in him. Each year, he still calls Rev. Jim Crowe, who lives in Wartace, Tenn., thanking him for turning his life around and for believing in him. He urges people to bring the same attitude to considering today's troubled kids.

“They thought I was worthless, and they wrote me off,” he says. “None of us are worthless.”



“**O**ne year, Illinois Youth Camp. Take him out,” was all the judge said as 16-year-old Brian Silverman stood before him, staring blankly.

“I almost wet my pants,” recalls Silverman, 40 years later. “I thought I was going to jail.”

Contrary to what Silverman thought, what the judge meant was he had one year to shape up. If he didn’t, the judge would order him sent to the youth facility. One more infraction, and his fear would become reality.

Silverman did not commit another offense while on probation. Instead, with the help of the counseling arranged by his probation officer, Silverman managed to take control of his life, graduate high school, attend college, go on to law school and lead a

distinguished life as an attorney. At 55, much of Silverman’s professional career has been devoted to working within the juvenile court system, representing kids and helping them receive the same sort of second chance that saved him.

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## BRIAN SILVERMAN

**Age:** 55.

**Occupation:** Lawyer, private practice; former Chief of the Juvenile Division, Cook County Public Defenders’ Office; former President of Illinois Public Defenders Association; former Chief Public Defender, Champaign County.

**Residence:** Chicago, Illinois.

**Education:** DePaul Law School.

**Delinquency History:** Auto theft and shoplifting. Placed in detention overnight, and spent a year on probation.

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Petty theft was commonplace in Silverman's neighborhood on the Southwest Side of Chicago. For the first 10 years of his life, Silverman's family lived in Lawndale Gardens, a Chicago public housing complex across the street from the criminal court building. From there, his father, a World War II Navy veteran, bought a house and moved the family to a blue-collar community on the Southwest Side of Chicago. Silverman attended Lindblom High School— one of the roughest schools around.

"I wasn't a tough kid, so I had to find my way around so I wouldn't get picked on," he remembers. Silverman quickly befriended the toughest kid in school. "I made him laugh, that's how I protected myself," he says with a chuckle.

Although Silverman, like his friends, committed his share of petty thefts and other minor infractions, he had a knack for academics. From his first days in high school, he was placed with a group of 25 kids in an accelerated program. Of the 1,000 students in his class, only 75 went to college. Silverman graduated in the top ten and was the first of his extended family to go to college.

When Silverman was 16, his father lost his job at Ford Motor Co. His father hadn't been very involved with rearing Silverman and his siblings, but when Isadore Silverman was laid off in the Spring of 1959, he started spending more time with his son. The two went for long walks and talked about girls and other things that concern teenagers.

Still, his father was under a lot of financial stress. He bought a truck and started peddling fruits and vegetables to earn a living. The stress took its final toll; Silverman's father collapsed and died from a heart attack. Three weeks after his 16th birthday, Silverman was grieving and alone.

***Two months after his father's death, Brian stole a car.***

Two months after his father's death, Silverman stole a car.

"My psychologist told me I did it because I wanted to get caught and wanted an authority figure in my life," says Silverman looking back. "It was just cold outside, and I didn't want to wait for the bus. I took a Chevrolet."

Police were surprised that Silverman simply drove the car to school and parked it in the school lot. On his way home he was stopped for speeding and the stolen car was discovered. Silverman was placed overnight in the Audy Home, Cook County's Juvenile Detention Center, where years later he would visit many of his clients.

The Audy Home didn't intimidate Silverman. He was used to being around tough kids. He remembers sleeping in a large dorm room and a guard smacking the kids with a stick at night. What he remembers most, however, was the disappointment he caused his mother.

The next morning was his court hearing. He never got an attorney. In 1959 juveniles didn't have a right to an attorney, only a probation officer who advised him to plead guilty. He did, and Silverman was given a year of probation and referred to counseling.

Silverman believes the juvenile court indirectly found him the help he needed. He met with his probation officer twice that year. Each time the probation officer was more concerned with who was involved in drugs at Silverman's high school than he was in helping Silverman. What Silverman believes did positively impact his life, however, was the counseling his probation officer arranged.

"The two years of counseling really helped me grow up a lot and shape my future," says Silverman. "Without the counseling, I probably would've committed more offenses. . . . In therapy, we met once a week and talked about everything, including losing my father. It helped me get control of my life."

After high school, Silverman went on to college, scored in the 95th percentile on his Law School Admission Test and later graduated from DePaul Law School. Most of his law career has been spent working in the system that helped him to mature.

In law school he began taking juvenile court cases. Upon graduation, he became an assistant public defender in Cook County. His first assignment was in the juvenile court.

"Juvenile Court was considered Siberia in those days," Silverman recalls.

In 1978, he became the Chief of the Juvenile Division of the Cook County Public Defender's Office. After 18 months, he was hired as the Chief Public Defender of Champaign County, where he served for eight years. Unlike his predecessors, Silverman assigned more experienced attorneys to juvenile court, rather than recent law graduates. Additionally, he served as President of the Illinois Public Defenders' Association for five years.

***Brian did not commit another offense while on probation. Instead, with the help of counseling arranged by his probation officer, Brian managed to take control of his life.***

Silverman doesn't like the direction the juvenile court has taken in the last ten years.

"It's becoming almost like the adult court in that punishment is becoming more important, when it should be secondary to rehabilitation," he says. "To make the juvenile court like the adult court is a step backwards. We're getting away from the original idea of family court, which was to rehabilitate. The idea was to place juvenile offenders in programs and counseling to prevent them from becoming repeat offenders."

***"Each child should be treated individually to determine whether they should be handled in juvenile or adult court."***

Silverman believes another problem with current juvenile justice trends is the decreasing discretion judges have to keep kids in juvenile court. Current mandatory transfer provisions give more authority to prosecutors and prevent judges from basing their decisions on a personal assessment of the child before them, he claims.

"Each child should be treated individually to determine whether they should be handled in juvenile or adult court," he says. "It's easy for politicians to run on a platform of 'I'm tough on crime.' The public has no tolerance for leniency, because the media perpetuates the drumbeat of violence. Getting harsh on juveniles has been popularized by the media."

Silverman speaks from political experience. A fiscal conservative and social liberal, Silverman is active in Republican politics, and is well known in the state legislature. In 1986, he ran for State Representative from Champaign-Urbana, and in 1994, he ran for the University of Illinois Board of Trustees.

Since 1987, Silverman has had his own law practice. He offers his clients the unique perspective of seeing the juvenile justice system from both sides. Few attorneys have spent a night in the Audy Home. He understands where his clients are coming from, because he's been there.



# BRANDON MAXWELL

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“**E**x-gangbanger who wants to give something back” – this is how 19 year old Brandon Maxwell, a former member of the Chicago gang the Traveling Vice Lords, describes himself.

Maxwell first became involved with the gang at 14. His parents, both drug addicts, were incapable of providing for the family requiring Maxwell to take care of himself and his two younger siblings. Without many options for fast cash in the impoverished West Side of Chicago, Maxwell turned to drug dealing. His “profession,” at 14, paid all of the household bills and provided the family with food and clothing. The gang also offered Maxwell something his parents didn’t - people he thought cared about him.

Maxwell’s parents separated when he was young. He would alternate staying with his mom one year and his dad the next. When he was 10-years-old, he came home from school one day and found his dad unconscious in the bathtub, soiled by his own urine and feces, surrounded by heroin needles and guns. The next day his father left. Too scared to tell anyone, Maxwell was left alone in the house for two days, until his aunt found him. It was four years before he saw his father again, when he suddenly realized that he had sold his father heroin without recognizing him.

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## BRANDON MAXWELL

**Age:** 19

**Occupation:** Peer counselor, Evening Reporting Center, a program for Chicago-area youth that diverts them from juvenile detention.

**Residence:** Chicago, Illinois.

**Education:** GED and student at Harold Washington College.

**Delinquency History:** Drug sales and possession, in relation to his participation in a Chicago-area youth gang.

After his father left, Maxwell lived with his aunt in Maywood for four years where he went to school and played on the football team. When he moved back to Chicago, however, his priorities changed. His cousin was already immersed in the Traveling Vice Lords, and it was easy for Maxwell to follow his lead. Soon, the gang became Maxwell's sole activity; school was secondary to drug dealing and making money. As a young teen, Maxwell put in 14-hour workdays - selling heroin for older gang members and pocketing \$300 a day.

***Maxwell was suddenly stunned to realize he had sold his father heroin without recognizing him.***

When Maxwell had just turned 15, he was on the street selling drugs when a rival gang member from the Gangster Disciples surprised him by coming down an alley and firing seven shots at him. Maxwell managed to walk away unscathed. He rushed to a fellow gang member's home nearby to report the shooting and let the gang know who did it.

"If anybody in our gang got into it with anybody else, there was always something we had to do," Maxwell says. The gang protected its own. At one in the morning, they retaliated, shooting at six rival Gangster Disciples who were caught off guard standing on the next block. The next morning, they regrouped to laugh and brag about their accomplishments.

Tired of all the violence, it was at this moment that Maxwell thought, "I didn't want to be a part of it anymore." Unfortunately, his family depended on the drug money Maxwell brought in.

Maxwell was lucky to avert another near fatal gang incident. That same year, he was walking through a vacant lot with his cousin when the same Gangster Disciples ran through the lot and shot at them 17 times. Again Maxwell walked away without a scratch; again his gang retaliated.

By 15, Maxwell had two drug possession charges. Four months later, Maxwell picked up his third charge and appeared before Judge Carol Kelly in Cook County Juvenile Court. Judge Kelly told him she didn't want to see him in her courtroom again and referred him to the Evening Reporting Center, a program for kids that serves as an alternative to detention and is based at the Westside Association for Community Action (W.A.C.A.).

Even at this early stage in his life, some of Maxwell's friends were locked up for drug possession and some were in the Illinois Department of Corrections.

Seeing the options that lay in wait for him, “I took the judge seriously,” Maxwell says. “I stopped being involved with the gang. This was my chance to be straight and put myself in school.”

Every evening, the Reporting Center kept kids off the streets and offered group therapy sessions, counselors, and activities. The program enrolled Maxwell in school; for the next two years, he attended the Academy for Learning to get his GED.

“They showed me I don’t need to be selling drugs and be involved in a gang to make it,” Maxwell says. “I felt I had to do it to get by - it was just a phase I went through. I matured - the things I went through were kinda petty. . . . I realized the street is not where it’s at.”

Another important influence on Maxwell was James Alexander, the Supervisor of the Evening Reporting Center. James, like Maxwell, was a former gang member who came up through the streets of Chicago. Maxwell felt he could really open up and talk to him about what he was experiencing on the streets - the worries about being shot, the police harassment and the drug dealing.

“He got it into my head that this wasn’t the way to go. I was headed for jail or the cemetery,” Maxwell remembers.

Maxwell was enrolled in the Evening Reporting Center for 18 months but stayed on to work there after his time ended. He talks to the kids and acts as a peer counselor.

***“I took the judge seriously. I stopped being involved with the gang. This was my chance to be straight and put myself in school.”***

“I tell them being in the street is not worth it,” Maxwell says. “You’re here for a purpose and it’s not for being on the corner, gangbanging, and dealing drugs.”

Although Maxwell started taking classes at Harold Washington College, he was forced to stop when he realized his mother was taking the family’s income and using it for drugs, leaving his two young siblings without food, clothing and rent.

“I had to work full-time at the Evening Reporting Center to pay the family’s bills,” Maxwell says. “But I made a promise to myself that I’d get back in school.”

Although Maxwell left gang life without physical scars, emotional marks remain. Three of Maxwell's friends were killed by a rival gang. Maxwell's older cousin who first influenced him to join the gang, is now in prison. Maxwell still has a lot of friends who are in the gang, and he sees them daily on the street.

"The younger ones, I tell them to make a change or pretty soon it'll be the end," Maxwell states. "A lot of these kids, if they could get a job, they wouldn't be doing this. Parental influence has a whole lot to do with it. My parents didn't influence me in a positive way."

Maxwell has seen his father three or four times after the encounter on the street. His father is now in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in a veteran's hospital suffering from an emotional breakdown. Maxwell sees his mother - she's still a crack addict.

Maxwell can clearly point to the ways the juvenile court intervened in his life.

"I would still be in a gang, I wouldn't have gone through the Evening Reporting Program and I wouldn't have gotten my GED," he says. "I'd be on the corner, dead, or in jail. I see guys 20 or 30-years-old still involved with gangs. I don't want to be on a corner 10 years from now." Instead, Maxwell's goal is to be a firefighter.

When reflecting upon juvenile justice policies, Maxwell cites life circumstances as the cause of many youths' problems.

"I had to be out there to survive. Someone who picks up three drug cases probably has a reason - they have families to care for. A lot of kids are like me. A lot of kids can turn their lives around if given the chance."





All of the crimes Andre Dawkins committed occurred within just a few blocks of where he grew up, where he now lives, and where he has lived his entire life - the Parkland section of Southeast Washington, D.C. They also took place not far from where Dawkins was recently shot - the inadvertent victim of a drive-by. The shooting left him hospitalized for three weeks with a broken hip, and put him in a wheelchair for our interview.

“Some lessons you gotta just keep learning,” the delinquent-turned-stockbroker philosophizes. “Like staying away from places where guys are still into the action.”

While Dawkins convalesces from his injuries, his 8-year-old son, Andre Dawkins, Jr., has gone to live with a relative. A single father, Dawkins is all the more motivated to get out

of the wheelchair and back to his financial planning business so that his son can come home and he can start earning a living again.

“This [the shooting] is not gonna stop me,” he proclaims. “What this is gonna do is show me I gotta be workin’ more. I’m gonna get back to work, and take care of business.”

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## ANDRE DAWKINS

**Age:** 28

**Occupation:** Financial consultant, PRIMERICA (Travelers Group) former financial specialist, Riggs Bank.

**Residence:** Washington, D.C.

**Education:** Earned a GED while in juvenile detention center.

**Delinquency History:** Carrying a concealed weapon, drug sales, unauthorized use of a vehicle, and assault. Served two years in D.C.’s Oakhill and Cedar Knoll youth detention centers, and three years in a federal prison (though adult conviction was ultimately overturned).



***“The judge asked me what I was doing with that knife. I tried to tell him that I can't walk through Shipley Terrace or even parts of Parkland that are someone else's territory without a knife.”***

Dawkins grew up in a single-parent family in a tough part of D.C. and came of age at the height of the cocaine epidemic. His mother, Janice Harrison, has worked at the Pentagon conducting security clearances since shortly after Dawkins was born and always provided reasonably well for him and his sister, according to Dawkins.

Dawkins' father wasn't in the picture much and had little role in raising him.

“I haven't seen my father in too long,” Dawkins states. “My grandmother, his mother, is the one who really introduced me to my father's side of the family and who tried to take his place for me.”

Dawkins turned 12 in the mid-1980s, when drug dealers were occupying most of the street corners around his home. With his mother working full-time, it was easy for Dawkins to find trouble.

“We never went without food or anything, and my mother did her best,” he remembers. “But she bought all our clothes at Mortons and we never wore nothing but jeans. She didn't understand what that meant, that walking around like that, all the other kids would ‘jones’ on us. Most of my stealing and other stuff I did when I was younger was to fit in and look good.”

His very first arrest was a perfect example. In 1983, Dawkins was arrested after he got into an altercation at a local mall for trying to steal a pair of “Michael Jordans” Nikes from some other kids.

“It's funny because I'm wearing Michael Jordans right now but they're my first pair ever and I paid for them,” he laughs. “I never did get those Jordans back then because I got arrested.”

When the arresting officers found a knife on the 12-year-old, it made his offense more serious.

“The judge asked me what I was doing with that knife,” Dawkins relates. “And I tried to explain to him how it is here but he couldn't understand. I tried to tell him that I can't walk through Shipley Terrace or even parts of Parkland that are someone else's territory without a knife. I tried to explain that even if you try to avoid it - say

your mother sends you to the 7-Eleven - you gotta have a knife to protect yourself. I tried to tell him that you gotta have a knife if you want to go out for ice cream. But he didn't understand, and he locked me up."

That arrest earned Dawkins his first trip to juvenile hall – the Maryland Boys' Village (the mall where he was arrested was over the city line into Maryland). He was there for a week until his initial hearing but was then ordered into a 30-day evaluation because his mother told the court she could no longer control him. Dawkins was so mad at her for letting him stay locked up that, when the 30 days was up, he told the judge he didn't want to go home with his mother. He wanted to live with his father instead.

"I got another 30 days for that but then when I got out, I was sent to my grandmother's house," Dawkins says.

After his trip to detention and a move to his grandmothers' neighborhood, Dawkins became more unruly. He was moved to his aunt's house a few blocks from his grandmother's but he spent most of his time in his old Parkland neighborhood, "hustling" on the streets.

"At first, I was just holding," Dawkins says, explaining how he would hold heroin, while the 19-year-olds made the sales. "After I got a little older, maybe 13 or 14, I started to actually make the sales myself."

***Patti Puritz, Director of the ABA Juvenile Justice Center: "I saw leadership qualities in Dawkins and he hadn't had a lot of opportunities to succeed. A little praise with Dawkins went a long way."***

In 1986, Dawkins began selling cocaine, making about \$5 for every \$50 "package" he moved. He was pulling in about \$150 to \$200 a day, spending most of it on clothes and a girlfriend.

"I never did use cocaine or even smoke cigarettes," Dawkins relates. "It was always about the clothes, the money and the prestige I got from hanging out with older guys. 'Dre is on!' my friends would say."

Dawkins says that he "caught my first drug charge" at 15. By this time, he had graduated from selling drugs for local dealers to working for "the New York guys" - cocaine dealers from New York City muscling in on the local action. Dawkins also began hanging out with neighborhood friends, stealing cars and joy riding.

“I caught a UUV (“unauthorized use of a vehicle” – car theft – in the street-adopted lexicon of the court) before the drug charge was even resolved,” Dawkins remembers. “The New York guys didn’t like me stealing cars and fooling around with my friends. They said it got in the way of business and was going to mess me up because I was going to start catching too many charges.”

Sure enough, before either the drug or car theft cases were resolved, Dawkins picked up yet another charge.

“We saw this guy from Northwest in our neighborhood,” Dawkins relates. “And I knew him from when I lived over there. So me and my friends got into a fight with him and caught another charge.”

With the three cases bundled together, Dawkins was sentenced to two years at D.C.’s Oak Hill juvenile detention facility.

“Right away I got into a fight there, like all the new guys do when they come because all the other guys test you,” Dawkins recalls. “I got a split lip. You can still see it today,” he says, pointing to the scar on his lip.

Dawkins describes a scene of unbearable intimidation for new kids coming into juvenile detention.

“You can’t walk away from a fight on the inside like you could on the outside. If you walk away inside, you’re a sucker, everyone gonna think you’re soft. I wasn’t gonna bow down to no guy.”



“New people come in, and if people think they’re soft, they get lit matches between their toes when they’re sleeping. Or someone takes a bar of soap, puts it in a sock and whacks ‘em with it. If you’re soft, people steal your food or clothes, they just take what they want because they know you’re not going to do anything.”

When he arrived at Oak Hill other guys from Parkland found out about him and took him under their wing.

“This guy told me, ‘I’m Big Parkland, you Little Parkland’ He told me if I run into anybody bigger than me that was trying to mess with me, he’d take care of ‘em, but if he ran into someone my size and he told me to fight them, I had to fight them. So I did. We took care of each other.”

Dawkins frequently ran away from Oak Hill. Once, he picked up another drug charge and got another two-year sentence.

“I spent my whole juvenile life at Oak Hill,” Dawkins relates.

Dawkins admits that some good things came out of his time at Oak Hill, particularly in terms of the people he met. In addition to getting a high school equivalency diploma while he was there, he also met two women who influenced his life. One woman was JoAnn Wallace – a public defender who worked at Oak Hill, who is now Director of the D.C. Public Defenders’ Office. The other was Patti Puritz who taught street law at the facility and is now the Director of the American Bar Association’s Juvenile Justice Center.

Dawkins beams as he recalls, “I met some of the best, most loving people in there.”

“I saw leadership qualities in Dawkins and he hadn’t had a lot of opportunities to succeed,” Ms. Puritz states. “People were always afraid of the big kids, the strategy was to clamp down. That’s not what Andre needed, he never got to be treated like a “cute little kid” because he was so big. A little praise with Andre went a long way.”

“That whole group of kids in Oak Hill, all of them had amazing abilities,” she remembers. “The tragedy is that of the whole crowd of kids Andre was in Oak Hill with, he and one other kid are the only ones left alive.”

***As a loan specialist, Dawkins was consistently among his branch’s best performers. “I never had a bank account before,” says Dawkins.***

Dawkins repeatedly escaped from Oak Hill and Cedar Knoll during his four years there. Towards the end of his sentence, when he was 18, he skipped out on a pass. He was AWOL for several months, during which time he moved into an apartment with his girlfriend - Katrina McEachin - who became pregnant with Dawkins' only child, Andre, Jr.

“Me and my girlfriend had an argument one day and she called the police on me and told them I was dealing drugs,” Dawkins relates. “They came and arrested me and charged me with dealing.”

That began a four-year ordeal for Dawkins which resulted in an adult conviction and a three-year stay in a federal prison. Dawkins' lawyer appealed his conviction, which was ultimately overturned and he was released in 1994.

“When I came out of prison, things were rough at first,” Dawkins relates. “I was 23 and had been mostly locked up since I was 15. But I had people that helped me, like my grandmother, my mother and Miss Patti. I had my son. I had devoted my life to Islam while I was in prison and I committed myself to not doing any more crime. And so, I was able to get myself through that early time and do OK.”

At first, Dawkins went from job to job, and things looked rocky. He got a job working for “SmartCart” at the airport, collecting luggage carts. Then he worked for a car rental company, transporting cars between airports.

Meanwhile, through the years, he had kept in touch with Patti Puritz, who referred him to a friend who helped Dawkins get an entry level job at Riggs Bank.

“I had one shirt, tie and jacket, which I wore to all three interviews before I got that job,” Dawkins laughs.

Dawkins quickly rose through the ranks at Riggs, receiving four promotions in 30 months.

“I never had a bank account before,” he remembers. “Never knew anything about savings or checking accounts or none of that stuff before I starting working at Riggs. But once I got that job I started wearing a shirt and tie and working hard at a regular job every day. It felt real good.”

As a loan specialist, Dawkins was consistently among his branch's best performers. As a result, he was approached to become a Financial Specialist, a job which would require him to pass a “Series 7” stockbroker's exam. Dawkins failed the stockbroker's



exam, which can only be taken three times, twice before finally passing.

“You needed to get 135 questions right to pass and I got 135 questions right on the third try,” Dawkins remembers. “That’s when all hell broke loose.”

*“I’ve got my priorities straight now and I know what’s important. Andre, Jr. is 8, and I’m not gonna let him grow up like I did, wondering whether his daddy loved him or not.”*

During the security clearance process required to obtain his stock broker’s license, his adult charge, which had been overturned, erroneously turned up as a conviction. Although he proved the case had been overturned, Riggs Bank fired him for lying on his job application.

So, for a while, Dawkins collected unemployment and looked for work. He ultimately found a job as an Independent Financial Consultant with PRIMERICA, part of the Traveler’s Group. Since the job is completely paid on commission, Dawkins has had no income since his shooting several weeks ago. And Dawkins, Jr., who is being raised solely by his father, has gone to live with his grandmother, while Dawkins, Sr. is in a wheelchair.

“I’m not gonna let it set me back though,” the 28-year-old affirms. “I’ve got my priorities straight now and I know what’s important. Andre, Jr. is 8, and I’m not gonna let him grow up like I did, wondering whether his daddy loved him or not. I’m not going to put him in the position I was in, where his friends will all be telling him ‘We love you and we take care of you. We family. I got your back’ and havin’ him believe that, because his daddy ain’t around to show him otherwise. When he does well in school, I’m gonna be there to praise him and when he messes up in school he’s gonna have to answer to me so both ways, he knows I care about him.”

# CARLETTA NICHOLS

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**F**rom her first days on the earth, and her first contact with the juvenile court, it seemed like Carletta Nichols was going to fall through the cracks. She was only 6 months old when police found her abandoned in the Hill District of Pittsburgh. Years later, when she had a chance to look through her confidential court files, Nichols found reports from the caseworker who processed her case that described her as having “monkey-like features.” In another report, she read that the underweight infant was “failing to thrive.” Another document Nichols’ read described her as “developmentally delayed.” The reports put into context something Nichols’ foster grandmother heard from a caseworker when she was lobbying to have the child put in her care, “You don’t have to keep her.”

Fortunately, Mrs. Mattie Dixon, Nichols’ foster grandmother, didn’t take the case workers’ advice. Instead, the then 57-year-old grandmother turned to the social worker and said, “she’s mine.” Throughout her 17-year placement, Nichols said Dixon treated her as if she were one of her own eleven children. Looking back, Nichols believes that the disciplined family structure and unconditional love she received in the Dixon home allowed her to build a successful life. The former U.S. Army Second Lieutenant has just completed almost a decade-long tour of duty as a

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## CARLETTA NICHOLS

<b>Age:</b>	34
<b>Occupation:</b>	Currently an outreach representative for Medicaid HMO. Former Juvenile Probation Officer. Second Lieutenant, U.S. Army Reserves, Pennsylvania Army National Guard.
<b>Residence:</b>	Pittsburgh, PA.
<b>Education:</b>	California University of Pennsylvania.
<b>Court History:</b>	Referred by courts to seventeen years in foster care.

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juvenile probation officer, returning to the very juvenile court in Allegheny County that initially placed her with Mrs. Mattie Dixon. She credits Dixon for helping her develop the skills and empathy to successfully intervene in the troubled lives of Pittsburgh's inner-city kids - talents which earned her the title of Allegheny County Juvenile Probation Officer of the Year in 1996.

"I kept seeing myself in these kids," she says. "You never know when what you do will make a difference."

All that Carletta Nichols knows about her biological parents comes from word of mouth and the court records she sifted through as an adult. She knows that when she was 6 months old, the City of Pittsburgh police found her home, alone. Her parents appeared once in Juvenile Court. At the point where she was placed into an infant care shelter, her father reportedly showed up drunk. Her parents never tried to get her back from County Youth Services (CYS). She and her older brother, Dwayne, were placed with foster parents, Joan Nickerson and Charles Williams. A year after they were placed there, court documents showed marked improvement in Nichols' condition: "This child has certainly responded to the loving attention she has gotten...and has gone from a child who appeared to be completely lethargic and withdrawn to one who appears to be extremely well adjusted and happy."

When Williams and Nickerson divorced a year later, Nichols was sent to live with Nickerson's parents, John and Mattie Dixon in Elizabeth Township, Pennsylvania. The Dixons loved her as if she were one of their own 11 children. But Mattie Dixon had to struggle with CIS to keep Nichols in the family when John suddenly died of a heart attack, shortly after Nichols' sixth birthday. Declaring that Mrs. Dixon was too old, the court tried four times to take custody of Nichols. The grandmother won the judges over by taking the whole family into the court hearings; a row of Dixon children would sit quietly, all day, on the benches, as Nichols' future was determined. (Nichols remembers Judge Livingston Johnson, who presided over her case, as describing the Dixon children as the "best behaved kids, whose feet didn't ever touch the ground.") Dixon won each case and Nichols remained part of the family.

*Years later, she read her confidential files. She found reports from a caseworker which described her as having "monkey-like features." Another report said she was "developmentally delayed."*

When Dixon was in her 70s, Nichols remembers her foster grandmother constantly praying for her because she had started hanging out with a “bad” crowd. For a time, she rebelled against her grandmother and several times came close to being arrested. In the end she straightened up because she was afraid of disappointing someone who had given her so much love, she says.

Nichols struggled through school. She vividly remembers that her high school guidance counselor once told her that she could not pass the military entrance exam, and that she should go to work at McDonald’s. After that, she began to study hard and played hard on the school basketball and track teams. She graduated out of the “special ed” classes she was placed in and started to excel in school. At 17, just when she started to gain self-confidence and to succeed academically, the child welfare system abruptly dropped her from its caseload. That meant that Dixon would no longer receive financial assistance for Nichols, and, in theory, the teenager was on her own. But her foster grandmother continued to support her financially throughout her teens.

After high school, Nichols joined the U.S. Army, earning the rank of Second Lieutenant, becoming a member of the Pennsylvania national guard. Along the way, she earned her undergraduate degree at the California University of Pennsylvania. Though she received scholarships through her military service, she ran into financial trouble halfway through her degree and found herself suddenly homeless. She mustered up all the nerve she had to call Dixon. Her grandmother told her, “As long as you leave home the right way, you are always welcome to come home.”

***After her first foster care placement, CYs reports showed a marked improvement in Nichols’ condition: “This child has certainly responded to the loving attention she has gotten.”***

As soon as she graduated from college, Carletta Nichols started working with kids. She worked as a caseworker, a counselor and a mentor for kids in various agencies before she joined the Juvenile Court of Allegheny County as a probation officer. For nine years, she worked in the very building where Mattie Dixon lobbied the court to keep her.

As a probation officer she worked for nine years with youngsters from both inner-city Pittsburgh and rural Allegheny County. Remembering the ridiculous turnover rate of her caseworkers during her childhood, she devoted herself to the youth in her care and tried to be a constant in their chaotic lives.

“You never know what people you might’ve helped if you give them a little bit of time,” Nichols says of her caseload. “That’s why I’m here.”

At her grandmother’s urging this spring, she made a painful decision to leave the probation office and move onto other things. She is planning to go back to school, possibly to pursue a masters in social work, or law school. In a moving and powerful cycle of completion, Nichols’ last day as a probation officer at Juvenile Court occurred the day before her grandmother’s death.

“She got me from the system,” Nichols says. “I was put out of the system. I came back to the system. When I finally left the system, she could leave me. And she did.”

On her deathbed, Mrs. Dixon whispered, “Carletta, I love you. Let me go.” Nichols, about to start a new phase of her life, promised her foster grandmother that she would be all right.

Because Carletta Nichols returned as a professional to the identical juvenile court system that had been her legal parent, she eventually had access to her own family files. Reading the painful descriptions written about her as a baby, including that she had “monkey-like features,” she realized that the court could have condemned her to a harsh future had she not been placed with Dixon.

“Realize what you write,” she cautions people in the field. “We can read. It’s bad enough you are in system because your mother and father don’t want you. And then, the people who are supposed to take care of you say bad things about you.”

Without the determined care of a foster grandmother who believed in her, the opportunities Nichols now seeks to help other kids like herself may not have been possible.





# AFTERWORD

by Marian Wright Edelman

President and Founder of the Children's Defense Fund

## **Children's Court Centennial Communications Project** *Lessons Learned*

Children are not adults, and for 100 years the juvenile court system has reinforced that message. During that time it has taught us many lessons about children. It has taught us that children do not have the life experience or wisdom that adults are expected to possess. It has taught us that children are constantly learning, and in the process they sometimes make mistakes, because that is how they learn. It has taught us concepts such as forgiveness and perseverance, and that we should never give up on our children.

In this book, these points are eloquently illustrated in story after story about how successful people who made mistakes as teenagers were given a second chance. The juvenile court, by not criminalizing these children, by creating a separate system of justice where they were not treated as adults, by keeping juvenile records confidential and not equating them to adult criminal records, gave these young people a chance to become productive, contributing members of society.

We have also had to learn lessons the hard way – lessons about how dangerous it is to hold children in jails with adults. I witnessed this firsthand when, in the early 1970s, the Children's Defense Fund visited adult jails in nine states across the country and found children there subjected to horrible conditions. Many of these incarcerated young people were accused only of property crimes or non-criminal offenses, such as running away from home or skipping school. Yet, these children were being routinely physically, mentally, and sexually abused while in jail. They were not there learning from their mistakes; instead they were learning to be serious criminals.

The stories in this book show that an integral part of the success of the juvenile court is its ability to provide children in trouble with individualized services to help steer them in the right direction. More often than not what changes a child's direction in life is a person. And it frequently takes only one nurturing adult to make the difference and put a child back on the right path.

Despite numerous lessons of the past century, lawmakers seem to believe that the solution to our problem with troubled youths is to lock them up as we do adult

offenders. While the juvenile justice system has been unable to cure all the ills of our younger generation, turning the clock back to a time when troubled children were abused, is not a solution. Policy must be based on reality and not on media coverage. We as a society must devote the time necessary to understand what is causing our children to resolve conflict with violence. Responses which call for increasingly punitive treatment do not address the underlying causes of this behavior.

The young people of today will become the leaders of the next millennium. But they will not be able to fill those roles unless we provide the guidance and compassion they need now. We see from these success stories that many children who have had problems in the past have grown up to become leaders in this century. We cannot afford to throw young lives away. We must take responsibility for the future of our children and make sure they feel connected to their schools, their families, and their communities. We must keep guns out of the hands of children, so that a school yard fistfight does not turn into a deadly incident that ruins or ends children's lives.

During the next century young people will be confronted with many new challenges, and a world very different from the one in which we were raised. Yet century after century, children continue to have the same needs: a loving family, a nurturing environment, a sound education, and the imparting of spiritual and moral values. As this book demonstrates, there are many children who have been able to rebound from unbearable circumstances to grow into successful, caring adults. Let's not give up on any child, because every one of them deserves the chance to succeed in life.

*Marian Wright Edelman*  
*President and Founder*  
*Children's Defense Fund*

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## *About the Organizations*

### **The Children and Family Justice Center of the Northwestern University School of Law's Legal Clinic**

The Children and Family Justice Center is a holistic children's law center. The Center provides legal representation to children and families, research and policy development, and advocacy, training and community organizing around issues affecting children and families.

### **The Justice Policy Institute**

The Justice Policy Institute is a policy development and research body which promotes effective and sensible approaches to America's justice system.

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