

To whom this may concern,

My name is Jaclyn Andrea Garcia. I was born in San Pedro, California and grew up there, while I was raised and went to school in Palos Verdes, California. I was born into a huge family who always loved being around each other. I would like to start off by saying a little about myself and who I am as a person. If someone who knows me were to describe me they would say that I was a loyal and caring person. I believe being dishonest is the worst thing you can do to yourself and the worst way you can act towards others.

I played softball and soccer when I was little but soccer is the sport that I ended up sticking with. I started playing AYSO and then eventually started playing club soccer for FRAM Soccer Club. Soccer became a huge part of my life before I knew it and I continued playing up until my freshman year in college, where I stopped playing in order to get a full college experience; moreover, knowing that soccer would consume most of my time at school. I graduated from Palos Verdes High School where I played varsity soccer and ran varsity track & field. I then went to San Francisco State University the first semester after I graduated high school. I only attended SF State one semester because I did not end up liking the school as much as I thought I would and realized that my home and the place I should live was down south near the ocean and not up north in the cold and rain. Additionally, being far away from my family was hard since I was so used to having them so close to me all my life. I soon realized my choice to go to San Francisco for college was just an easy quick way to get away and live on my own after high school, and was not chosen because it was a school I really knew a lot about and truly want to go to.

Since my junior year in high school, besides the one semester I lived in San Francisco, I have always had a job. My most recent job was working at Silvio's Brazilian BBQ where I was a waitress. I just recently quit in order to spend more time with family, to concentrate on school, and be home more before my upcoming court date.

I am writing this letter today as I have court coming up in the near future. The emotions going through my mind are filled with suspense, anxiety, hope, faith, and scared to see what will happen. I have heard many different thoughts, ideas, and rumors about how people think I feel, what people think I am doing and who people think I am as a person after my accident that took place in early April, about five months ago. I feel it is necessary for my feelings to be out there and said at this point. At first I did not feel it was appropriate to say anything just yet at least, but as months have gone by and court is coming up I feel that it is a little more appropriate and imperative for me to discuss my outlook on this tragic event and what has been done in response to it all. I am writing this to clear up any rumors that are out there, but more importantly to prove to society that I deserve the chance to keep my freedom and use it to work towards my goals in graduating from college and living the successful life that I have wanted since I was a little girl. Since I was little I have always looked up to my parents and grandparents because I knew that if I did what they did and matured into the wonderful people that they are I would in turn receive success throughout life and always be happy in the end, just like them. It would break my heart and theirs if this could not happen anymore so I hope this is still possible.

On April 3, 2011, an early Sunday morning, something terrible happened. Something happened that I soon after found out would change my life and many others. To this day, I still cannot believe that it happened. I ended up being involved in an accident where two bicyclists were injured. The accident will forever be stuck in my head. One of the men was terribly injured. I sent him a letter after the accident. I have recently learned that he is still recovering from his injuries and I pray that he will hopefully be able to live a normal life again in the future. One thing that people have said about me is the fact that I was emotionless at the time of the accident. I was far from that. Every day I pray and hope this man is getting better and will recover. No matter what factors contributed to the accident, it does not change the deepest and most sincere feelings I have about the two men who were injured. I have and will remain to have the upmost respect toward the two men who were injured and their families. I could not imagine what they are going through and wish there was something I could do to take it all back and fix everything. I am truly sorry that all of them

have to go through the pain, stress, and heartache that I am sure this situation has brought upon them.

These past four months have been more than a challenge. My situation put my life on a rollercoaster ride of work, school, classes, meetings, tears, anger, happiness, faith, and the opportunity to mature and grow up a lot faster than many people do and will at my age. One thing that I have been working on in attending and completing is the DUI program that I chose to enroll in almost immediately after my accident. I would like to place emphasis on the fact that I chose to partake in this program. Never once was I forced to do so by my attorney or parents. There are two sections involved in this program. I am done with one section. This section was the part of the class that us students would share and take part in group discussions. It was interesting to hear from people of all ages. This is where I learned that maturity does not just come from age, but it comes from experience. I say this because there were some people old enough to be my grandparents that were in the same class as me, some first time DUI offenders, but some that have had multiple DUI's in their pasts. Some of these people have finally learned from their mistakes but after hearing some of them talk, it seems as though nothing has changed in their lives, which is so hard for me to understand and relate to considering my life has been changed for good and put on hold because of this situation. In addition, there were also other young adults around my age. When these other students heard my story it was interesting to see the shock come from them because just like I thought before my accident, they had no clue there could still be alcohol in their systems after going to bed and sleeping. For me, it took one huge wake up call, but whether it takes someone one wake up call or five; maturity is what is most important and is what will keep people of all ages out of trouble. It's the big picture that a lot of people do not see or get. For the most part, most of us were told or taught at some point that drinking and driving is bad and we all should know that considering it is a law and something that it is not "allowed," but it's the big picture and being able to see and know yourself while being able to see and know all the factors that contribute to every situation. This goes for all life situations, not just drinking and driving. For example, I knew it was wrong to drink and drive so I stayed the night at a friend's house, but if only I knew that alcohol could still be in my system the next morning none of this would

have happened because I would have never gotten in my car and driven that morning. A lot of people do not realize how strong of a drug alcohol is and how dangerous it could be to people of all ages, regardless if one is legally old enough to drink. I am thankful I learned this at an early age as opposed to continuing on with my life like I see many people do every day not knowing or realizing that about alcohol. I know something tragic has happened to someone that does not deserve it, which is why I am more than willing and would love to tell my story to and talk to people about it; whether it be at high schools, in alcohol education classes, and/or DUI programs. Whatever I can do to help teach people what I had to learn the hard way would be a pleasure of mine and am more than willing to do so.

The past four months of my life have been very different than what I had expected that Sunday morning in April. At first all I could do was think about the negatives. I could not possibly make anything positive and that is where I realized I had to change that immediately. I started seeing a therapist who helped me and let me talk about everything that was going on. I finished up school and continued working. I was working about 40-50 hours per week most of the time, which left me a minimal amount of time to continue going to the DUI program I am enrolled in, attend A.A. meetings weekly, exercise, and spend time with my family. Work also taught me responsibility and maturity. It was nice being around people that have similar goals and people that remind me I am still a good, caring person. That helped me keep the courage and faith to not give up during this arduous time in my life. My work was like a second home to me for a while. For the first time in my life I loved my job and learned new things everyday there as well. As this case proceeds I am more than willing to continue going to more classes and meetings and to do whatever it takes to have the chance to keep my freedom and continue on with school in less than a month, when the fall semester will commence. I will then be close to receiving my A.A. degree, which in turn will open new opportunities for my future. I have never once thought that going to school was a privilege and something I would have to pray that I get the opportunity to continue until this all happened. I was previously enrolled in school going down the path of a business major, but have recently decided to switch my major to psychology. It is a subject that really interests me and would like to have a job in the future with something

having to do with this major. For example, being a school guidance counselor, therapist, etc are all jobs that I have interest in exploring.

Lastly I would like to thank all the family and friends that have given me the support I needed to make it through this thus far. I could not have done it without them. There is a lot of talk about how bad of parents my parents are and how it is partly their fault. I would like to correct that assumption about them; my parents have given me more support throughout my life than I know most parents do. They have opened up many opportunities for me throughout my life; such as, giving me the ability to play sports and train for these sports to be the best I could be, put me through school my entire life, teach me good morals, etc. Moreover, not only were they there for me financially but they were at every single soccer game since I was five right there cheering me on. I would not change a thing about my family and pray everyday that we can all get through this. I feel terrible for putting my family through this because this type of situation is so unlike anything my family has ever gone through; but, it is good to know that they are here for me regardless and would never judge me for it no matter what happens.

I would like to conclude by saying that my desire to write this letter was to show what I have learned this far and how I would like to continue living my life in the mature, responsible, and caring way this tragic situation has taught me to live. I believe I am still a trustworthy person, as I was never one to be known as dishonest; furthermore, every word I have said has been sincere. Although this situation has changed my life into one that I would have never thought of living like in the past, I would not change a thing about the person it has made me become. It has only made me that much wiser, mature, and responsible, and those are the reasons that keep me going everyday and help me to see the light at the end of this dark tunnel I am trying to get out of.

Thank You For Your Time,

Jaclyn Andrea Garcia