

Charles Ogletree Jr.
Executive Director
Charles Hamilton Houston Institution For Race & Justice
125 Mount Auburn Street, 3rd Floor
Cambridge, MA 02138-5765

January 10, 2009

Dear Mr. Ogletree,

I just completed auditing a course on Urban Sociology that was offered through the Boston University program here at MCI-Norfolk. It is my understanding that you played a significant role in bringing about this unique educational opportunity. For this I would like to extend my thanks and gratitude for your efforts.

In 1972 I was fortunate enough to be a participant in the first-ever college credit courses offered within the Massachusetts Department of Correction. Prior to 1972, the only courses offered to an individual with a high school diploma were certificate courses, taught by Harvard students that volunteered their time. It was my enrollment in these courses that served as the impetus for my enrollment in the college program.

Since that time I have participated in Educational and Self-Help programs in an almost continuous vein as a perpetual student, as well as an instructor, tutor, or mentor. I am a staunch supporter of education as a powerful vehicle for the growth and development of a social conscience in individuals.

Education in isolation however, does not have quite the same impact as in an integrated environment. After all, isn't that what much of the college experience is built around? Bringing people of varying ethnicities, and social classes together, so that individuals may become more aware of the commonalities that make us ultimately the family of man!

My greatest learning experiences have always taken place in an environment where the incarcerated and community participants have blended. These experiences have never failed to leave me with a greater sense of self-worth, along with strengthening my sense of connection to the community at large.

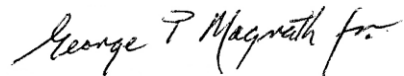
I must compliment the collective efforts, and presentations of the two professors, Kaia Stern and Bruce Western, who led this course. They were extremely well prepared for each class and every class session. Their choice of background material for the course was well thought out and collated. Their choices of visiting professors were excellent. The visitors' seminars were informative, their presentations interesting, as well as being relevant to the topics we were discussing.

Most importantly, I must comment on the caliber of the five Harvard students who participated. They were obviously bright. But, beyond that, they showed themselves to be energetic, committed, upbeat, resourceful, refreshing, and always prepared. If this group is a

cross-section of our next generation of potential leaders, then we will indeed find ourselves in much better hands than those of our last generation.

Again, thank you for your efforts in bringing this course into being. I hope this experience marks a return to greater community involvement in education, and rehabilitation, within the incarcerated community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "George P. Magrath Jr." with a small flourish at the end.

George P. Magrath Jr.
Box 43
Norfolk, MA 02056-0043

C; file