



November 12, 2016

EDWARD RHINE, Ph.D.

PROJECT DIRECTOR
Parole Release Project

Letter of Recommendation for Michael Santos

To Whom It May Concern:

It gives me great pleasure to write a letter of recommendation on behalf of Michael Santos in support of his application to become an administrator of a Residential Care Facility for the Elderly. I am a Lecturer at Ohio State University where I have served in the Sociology Department for nearly twenty years. I currently direct a national parole project for the Robina Institute of Criminal Law and Criminal Justice at the University of Minnesota's Law School having retired in 2013 as the Deputy Director over the Office of Offender Reentry for the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction.

I first met Michael in 2011 at a time when he was confined in the federal prison system. He was finishing a chapter for a book co-edited by Joan Petersilia and Kevin Reitz entitled *The Oxford Handbook of Sentencing and Corrections* that was published the next year. His chapter – "Living Life Behind Bars in America" appeared alongside a related chapter I wrote called "The Present Status and Future Prospects of Paroling Authorities and Parole Supervision." We began a conversation over issues of mutual concern that quickly evolved into a shared professional relationship and a friendship.

Though I found Michael's chapter striking in its content, even more, I value the quality and richness of insights that inform the whole of his publication track record, much of which he completed despite the challenges of doing so while incarcerated. Over the course of several years, he has written 10 books, and authored numerous journal publications. I have used his chapter above and assigned one of his books on several occasions for my OSU students. Last Spring, Michael skyped in to my "Prisons, Jails, and Community Corrections" class. He delivered a presentation on the prosocial and employment-focused pathways he has taken in reintegrating into society.

The activities mentioned thus far cover only a small modicum of what Michael has accomplished before and since his return home. With respect to his overall capabilities, Michael earned a B.A. and M.A. while serving time. This is an extraordinary achievement that very few individuals subject to incarceration ever reach in confinement. In moving from his notable academic portfolio to post-release employment, here again Michael has demonstrated a unique work ethic and an expansive set of skills that have served him well since 2013. Whether teaching at San Francisco State University, or working with the MSG Group, or as a "Prison Professor" Michael has taken the initiative to embed himself seamlessly in the labor market. These opportunities did not just happen. They required planning, foresight, self-discipline, and once on-the-job, a talent to produce. Michael has displayed remarkable entrepreneurial assets in all the occupational niches he has elected to pursue and a sincere desire to improve the welfare of others in all that he does.

There is more to say. As alluded to above, I have been fortunate to serve as the project director for a national parole initiative that was launched in 2014 by the Robina Institute of Criminal Law and Criminal Justice. Michael was appointed as a member of an Advisory Council that was formed at the start of the project. In this role, he has provided wide-ranging expertise and sound guidance ever since. His contributions have been incisive throughout the twice-yearly meetings of the Council. Of equal note, the members themselves have found Michael to be an invaluable participant and valued colleague.

The comments above, I believe, are more than sufficient to demonstrate the strength and moral fiber of Michael's character. They also furnish evidence of his full rehabilitation. He has long ago and continues even now to express remorse and ownership for the crimes for which he was convicted. I have worked in senior executive positions in corrections in New Jersey, Georgia, and Ohio spanning three decades. During the course of my career, and experiences with men and women who have "done time," I can say Michael stands out above everyone I have ever encountered in his incredible commitment to becoming a contributing and law-abiding member of the community. He is not just an exemplary citizen, but the embodiment of someone who has earned redemption.

I offer my highest endorsement of Michael Santos for your consideration. Michael is fully trustworthy and well qualified to become an administrator in a Residential Care Facility designed to provide services for the elderly. In addition to his remarkable skills and strong ethical compass, he will bring both compassion and caring to each and every resident his facility serves. As he has demonstrated convincingly and repeatedly, he is committed to paying forward to those who need the assistance of others.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Edward Rhine". The signature is fluid and elegant, with the first and last names clearly legible.

Edward Rhine, Ph.D.