



STATE OF ILLINOIS
JB PRITZKER, GOVERNOR
PRISONER REVIEW BOARD

***EN BANC* MINUTE SHEET**
OPEN SESSION – January 29, 2025

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at 3000 South Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, Illinois, on January 29, 2025, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for the following individuals in custody:

R32339	Merriweather, Byron (Youthful Parole)
R58170	Garcia, Juan* (Youthful Parole)
R30867	Porter, Marlon* (Youthful Parole)
R01468	Applewhite, Samuel (Youthful Parole)

The meeting was called to order by Kenneth Tupy, Board Member.

Roll call was taken by Recording Secretary Amy Sexton.

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>PRESENT</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Mr. Jared Bohland	X	
Mr. Matthew Coates	X	
Mr. William Delgado	X	
Ms. Julie Globokar	X	
Ms. Darryldean Goff	X	
Mr. Jeffrey Grubbs	X	
Mr. Rodger Heaton	X	
Ms. Robin Shoffner	X	
Ms. Carmen Terrones	X	
Ms. Krystal Tison	X	
Mr. Kenneth Tupy	X	

11 Members Present

0 Members Absent

The Board heard the case of Byron Merriweather R32339, Juan Garcia R58170, Marlon Porter R30867, and Samuel Applewhite R01468.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL for 11-21-2024 AND 12-19-2024: TISON-COATES

Open Session: HEATON-COATES

Meeting was adjourned by: GRUBBS-TISON

Leave.



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***EN BANC* MINUTE SHEET**
OPEN SESSION- January 29, 2025

Individual in Custody's Name: Byron Merriweather

IDOC Number: R32339

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at 3000 South Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, Illinois, on January 29, 2025, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Byron Merriweather R32339.

Members present were Mr. Bohland, Mr. Coates, Mr. Delgado, Ms. Globokar, Ms. Goff, Mr. Grubbs, Mr. Heaton, Ms. Terrones, Ms. Tison, Ms. Shoffner, and Mr. Tupy.

Recording Secretary: Amy Sexton.

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

The basis for the Board's decision, at this time, is as follows:

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

Mr. Byron Merriweather was interviewed on February 1, 2023, via WebEx video at Hill Correctional Center by board Member, Mr. William Delgado. Mr. Merriweather was represented by the Illinois Prison Project. This is a rehearing Mr. Merriweather was granted from the interview conducted in February 2023.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

On June 15, 2003, Mr. Merriweather was 17 years old and went to the park in Bloomington, Illinois with friends. A group of rival gang members were present and outnumbered Mr. Merriweather and his friends. Mr. Merriweather and his friends chose to go to another park. However, they returned to the previous park to prove that they were not afraid of the rival gang. On the way back to the park one of Mr. Merriweather's friends gave him a gun and told him to hold it in case something happened, and to take care of it. Once they returned to the park a fight broke out among both gangs. Mr. Merriweather's friend told him more than three times to shoot. Mr. Merriweather shot the gun and killed the victim.

In February 2006, Mr. Merriweather was found guilty of first-degree murder by a Jury and sentenced to 70 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections. Mr. Merriweather's projected mandatory supervised release date is October 08, 2039, and his projected discharge date is October 08, 2042. In September 2019, an Appellate Court mandate was granted, and the 70-year sentence was vacated and remanded with instructions. In March 2021, Mr. Merriweather was resentenced to 35 years, with 6,016 days of time served.



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Mr. Merriweather plans to reside with his mother in Bellview, Illinois. He has employment opportunities available to him with the Tayba Foundation, and they would also provide wrap around services. Mr. Merriweather is interested in becoming a welder when he is released. Tayba Foundation wrote in a letter of support for Mr. Merriweather, as well as his siblings. In addition to a vast re-entry support of both community, academia, family and friends, Mr. Merriweather and his team again submitted a comprehensive re-entry plan that is an example of a well-rounded individual who has accomplished what the correctional system deems rehabilitated, and the re-entry plan supports that result.

OPPOSITION TO PAROLE RELEASE

There is no opposition to parole on file.

DISCUSSION

Summary of discussion for parole consideration:

Mr. Byron Merriweather's attorney, Ms. Rachel Linder, thanked everyone for the opportunity for being here and for the reconsideration of parole for Mr. Merriweather. Ms. Linder showed attention to the supporters present and acknowledged the ones watching live, stating these individuals make up a small part of a living community to support Mr. Merriweather in his release. Ms. Linder stated that she has had the privilege of working closely with Mr. Merriweather on a daily basis and he continued to improve himself. He is sincere and accepts full responsibility for his actions and behavior. Mr. Merriweather recognizes the harm that he has caused. Ms. Linder also spoke about the supplement that was submitted to the board. She also stated how Dr. Quintan mentioned this is the process in which Mr. Merriweather came to the accountability of his actions. Ms. Linder spoke of Mr. Merriweather's multiple accomplishments in the past year, stating that he had nothing to gain except personal transition. He has continued to work and remains consistent in his faith and education. Mr. Merriweather has come to terms with his actions, and he lives with sadness, guilt, and remorse. Ms. Linder stated that Mr. Merriweather let her know that she left out a certification reflecting a re-entry certificate. He also participated in a fundraiser for a youth home. There, Mr. Merriweather organized a fundraiser for foster care and raised \$1,000 in personal hygiene items. They also received \$3,500 in cash donations for the fundraiser. Mr. Merriweather's risk assessment is low and has been tested by a re-entry specialist. He has served more than half of his life in prison. Ms. Linder mentioned a program "Why wait to scare straight," which is the program that Mr. Merriweather is wanting to implement when he gets out for at risk youth. Ms. Linder stated that Dr. Quintan discussed how it would not do any justice for him to stay in prison.

Mr. Smith, Mr. Merriweather's younger brother, deeply admires the man he has become. Mr. Smith stated that he has watched Byron become the man, while in prison, that he wants to be. He stated that Byron is not the same person who walked in those gates. He has made a remarkable journey to rejoin society and has taken the initiative to build a better future for himself. Mr. Smith stated that he can speak on his behalf, and he believes that Mr. Merriweather is ready to get out and give to his community. He also stated that Byron came to him personally and admitted that he was very remorseful for his actions. Mr. Smith stated that Mr. Merriweather's family is prepared to assist and welcome him back into society. Mr. Smith is also ready to help Byron pursue a welding apprentice program.



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Mr. Byron Merriweather stated that he takes full responsibility for his crime and admits what he did was wrong. Mr. Merriweather stated that he is ashamed and embarrassed for what he did. He thinks about the harm he has caused and stated that no matter how much he tries, he will never be able to understand the amount of pain the victim's mother feels. Mr. Merriweather stated that he has genuine remorse and understands the impact his actions had on the community. Mr. Merriweather admitted that when he first came to prison, he was on a path to self-destruction. He sought out counseling and programs to better himself. He stated that one day he had an epiphany and wanted to change. He then started to focus on his faith and programming. Mr. Merriweather stated that upon his release, he plans to become a welder and make an honest living. He also stated that he wants to mentor children and help keep drugs and violence from his community.

Mr. Heaton questioned his future employment and education plans.

Ms. Linder stated that it is Mr. Merriweather's intention to take a job opportunity working at a hotel while becoming a welder to be able to support himself and family. His future plan is to be able to go back to school for social work.

Mr. Heaton questioned the ticket Mr. Merriweather received from 2017 and renunciation to the gang in 2019.

Ms. Linder stated that the ticket has been settled and the facts of the alleged ticket where there was a fight on the yard and everyone on the yard received a ticket. Mr. Merriweather takes accountability for disobeying a direct order for not getting on the ground, but said he was not part of the fight. Ms. Linder stated that renunciation started in 2011. Before 2011, Mr. Merriweather tried to distance himself from the gang, and in 2011 he was ordered by gang members to hurt his cellmate. Mr. Merriweather did not want to hurt his cellmate, and this is when the process of renunciation started. He continued his efforts to socially distance himself and stated that at Menard Correctional Center, it is very hard to clear your name of a gang affiliation. Ms. Linder stated that if an individual has ever had a gang affiliation, the institution has attached that to his tickets. The renunciation has been finalized after attempting to do this at 3 facilities. Mr. Merriweather has made a consistent effort to make this happen.

Ms. Globokar questioned if Mr. Merriweather received any tickets while in county.

Ms. Linder stated that Mr. Merriweather did not receive any citations while in county.

End of discussion.



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DECISION AND RATIONALE

Motion to grant parole (DELGADO-SHOFFNER). Motion prevailed with a 10-1 vote. Members voting in favor of the motion were Mr. Coates, Mr. Delgado, Ms. Globokar, Ms. Goff, Mr. Grubbs, Mr. Heaton, Ms. Shoffner, Ms. Terrones, Ms. Tison, and Mr. Tupy. Mr. Bohland dissented.

After a complete review of Mr. Byron Merriweather's case, and after giving thoughtful discussion and consideration to all factors, the Board decided and voted to grant parole to Mr. Byron Merriweather subject to conditions of parole release as set by the Board and by law. The Board hereby finds that Mr. Byron Merriweather is an appropriate candidate for parole release.

"The Board makes a specific finding that the release of victim protest letters could subject a person to actual risk of physical harm. The Board further notes that, pursuant to Illinois law, victim statements are confidential and privileged."



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***EN BANC* MINUTE SHEET**
OPEN SESSION – January 29, 2025

Individual in Custody's Name: Juan Garcia*

IDOC Number: R58170

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at 3000 South Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, Illinois, on January 29, 2025, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Juan Garcia* R58170.

Members present were Mr. Bohland, Mr. Coates, Mr. Delgado, Ms. Globokar, Ms. Goff, Mr. Grubbs, Mr. Heaton, Ms. Terrones, Ms. Shoffner, Ms. Tison, and Mr. Tupy.

Recording Secretary: Amy Sexton.

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

The basis for the Board's decision, at this time, is as follows:

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

Mr. Juan Garcia was interviewed on December 12, 2024, via WebEx video at Hill Correctional Center by board Member, Mr. Matthew Coates. Mr. Garcia is currently 37 years old and has been incarcerated for 21 years and 2 months. He currently resides at Hill Correctional Center as a minimum-security offender. Mr. Garcia was present with his older brother, Hector Garcia. Also present was Attorney, Helen Skinner, who provided a Mitigation Report that was presented at Mr. Garcia's resentencing hearing and testimony, Eric Anderson, who serves as Precious Blood Re-Entry Manager and Mr. Garcia's pre-release case manager, and Ginevra Francesconi, who is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with the Illinois Prison Project.

Mr. Garcia's interview lasted approximately 2 hours. He was put together with a blue buttoned up shirt and prepared for the interview. Mr. Garcia presented a positive attitude and demeanor for the duration of the interview. He answered every question that was presented and was a productive communicator. He also shared that he was in good physical and mental health.

On November 15th, 2006, following a jury trial Mr. Garcia was convicted of first-degree murder of Ana Mateo and attempted murder of Randy Edmonson. On December 20th, 2006, Mr. Garcia was sentenced to 50 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections for the first-degree murder and 6 years for the attempted murder, with those sentences to run consecutively. Following his original sentence, Mr. Garcia was granted a new sentence hearing pursuant to Miller vs. Alabama. On May 18th, 2023, following a full sentence hearing before Judge Lawrence Flood, the court resentenced Mr. Garcia to 27 years for first degree murder, plus 6 years at 85% for attempted murder to run consecutively for a total of 33 years in IDOC with a 3-year MSR. If parole is not granted, Mr. Garcia has an MSR date of December 30, 2035.



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STATEMENT OF FACTS

On August 20th, 2003, at 2336 W. 18th Place, Chicago, Illinois, Mr. Juan Garcia, at the age of 16, a Latin count gang member, approached his intended victim Randy Edmonson and flashed gang signs at Edmonson. Mr. Garcia then exited the car he was in, produced a gun and ran after Edmonson. As Edmonson ran west bound on 18th Place, Mr. Garcia fired his gun several times at Edmonson. Edmonson was not struck. However, one bullet did hit a 7-year-old girl, Ana Mateo in the head, killing her. Mr. Garcia was eventually caught and identified by four separate eyewitnesses. All eyewitnesses separately identified Mr. Garcia in a photo lineup.

CRIMINAL HISTORY

Mr. Garcia does not have any criminal history or arrests outside of his holding conviction.

INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

Starting with his disciplinary tickets, Mr. Garcia has received 6 tickets total during his incarceration. His first ticket occurred in 2007 for Unauthorized Movement and Disobeying a Direct Order. In 2011 he received an Unauthorized Movement and violation of rules. In 2012 he received a Drug & Drug Paraphernalia ticket, and the IDR comments stated it was for cocaine and marijuana. In 2013, Mr. Garcia received two tickets for disobeying a direct order, violation of rules, and Dangerous disturbances, fighting in the chow hall, and disobeying a direct order. Mr. Garcia's most recent and last ticket was in January 2017 for Contraband/Unauthorized property and Trading or Trafficking. Mr. Garcia abused alcohol, marijuana, and cocaine as a teenager and became sober upon arrest. He attempted to use drugs in 2012, he was ticketed and subsequently received group and individual substance abuse counseling.

Mr. Garcia shared he stopped his affiliation with the gang at the age of 19. When asked had he taken steps to renounce, he shared he tried to renounce and wrote internal affairs on a few occasions, and he wanted to make a formal renouncing but was never contacted back about it. He decided to take a walk into faith and leave the gang life behind him.

Mr. Garcia has a very positive programming and rehabilitative history. Mr. Garcia began his engagement with programming almost immediately when he began his sentence. He shared in his interview he started with his education because he knew that an education was a key factor towards rehabilitation. In 2007, he received his ABE and constitution certificates. In 2009, he earned his GED. Following that, in 2014 he earned an associate degree in Bible theology. In 2015, he earned an associate degree in paralegal studies and in 2022, he earned an associate degree in business management. After counting all of his programming certificates, he has earned approximately forty-five certificates that include Bible certificates, legal, mental health, and education. The majority of his programming occurred prior to Mr. Garcia knowing he would be resentenced and eligible for parole.



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Mr. Garcia has worked a total of six jobs while incarcerated. Those roles included working in the inmate commissary, the law library, gallery worker, and inmate kitchen worker which then led to him working in the correctional officer's kitchen. His role working in the correctional officer's kitchen is impressive as that role is only given to the most trusted individuals in custody.

Mr. Garcia has a tremendous amount of support from his family and community members. His petition contained 18 letters of support from family and community members. Mr. Garcia also had 10 letters of support from individuals in custody at Hill Correctional Center.

His petition also shared three letters from correctional officers. His first letter from Kevin Sloan, a Correctional Supervisor in the kitchen shared he has worked for Illinois Department of Corrections for 25 years and he hired Mr. Garcia in the kitchen in February 2024. Since that time, he has gotten to know Mr. Garcia and shared he demonstrated a willingness to learn new job assignments and help on any shift. He started as a line worker, and he promoted Mr. Garcia to cook in the officer's kitchen due to his work ethic and quick ability to learn new things. He has shown good work ethic and good behavior. The second letter from Brian Lynne, Head Officer in charge of the kitchen at Hill Correctional Center, stated Mr. Garcia's role in the officer's kitchen as a cook is only appointed to trustworthy individuals in custody. This position requires a lot of cooking skills and managing skills. Mr. Garcia has been able to fulfill those duties. He has never had any problems from Mr. Garcia, and he is a good worker who has shown growth in his character. The third letter of support shared Mr. Garcia demonstrated good work ethic and he has made efforts to rehabilitate himself through his work environment. They feel if released on parole, he can become a part of the work force and be a productive citizen. This was signed by five different correctional officers at Hill Correctional Center.

STATEMENTS AS TO THE OFFENSE

The night of the offense, Mr. Juan Garcia was picked up by older gang members. They went to a party where he did drugs to feel less afraid. After a while Mr. Garcia was told to come with them. They got into a car, and he was handed a gun. He shared he had never held or shot a gun prior to this. He experienced a mix of feelings during their thirty-minute ride as they drove around. They did not see anyone at first. They eventually came across Randy Edmonson. They drove by him, and Mr. Garcia asked him what gang he was with, and Randy threw up a rival gang sign. Mr. Garcia was then instructed to shoot at him. Randy took off running, as Mr. Garcia began to shoot at him. Mr. Garcia shared he did not want to hit him and purposely aimed away from him. He then got back into the vehicle, and they drove back to a party. The men he was with said he did okay, and he was still feeling fear. At that time, he did not know he hit anybody. Mr. Garcia did not learn about Ana Mateo's death until he was arrested at school a couple months later. He was then taken to the police station and eventually charged with murder. Mr. Garcia shared he feels great remorse for his actions that day. He did not intend to hurt Ana, and at the age of 16, he did not realize a bullet could travel that far and it was very hard to accept the tragedy that he caused. He made a wrong decision and should have never been firing a gun. He destroyed the Mateo family and his own life and his own family. Mr. Garcia holds himself fully accountable for his actions that day and wishes he would have never made that decision.



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PAROLE PLANS

Upon release, Mr. Garcia plans to enter St. Leonard's Ministries in Chicago. This is corroborated in his petition as his file contains a letter from St. Leonard's stating he had been screened and approved for placement once he is paroled. Mr. Garcia will also receive support from Eric Anderson at Precious Bloods Ministry along with his strong family support. He will also receive vocational training support from Cara Collective Chicago, mental health support from NAMI Chicago, and job placement training and support from the Safer Foundation.

For employment, Mr. Garcia's older brother Hector testified during the interview that he had owned and operated his own construction business for the past 19 years and would support Juan in providing him an opportunity to work with him. His brother Hector also expressed he feels a great sense of shame for feeling responsible for going into gang life and having his younger brother follow him. He expressed his commitment to help support him in any way upon release. Also, Mr. Garcia's fiancé Janice operates her own business and is willing to support him with employment and in any way he needs.

OPPOSITION TO PAROLE RELEASE

Oppositions to Parole Release were discussed closed session.

ENBANC HISTORY

This is Mr. Garcia's first time appearing before this board for parole consideration.

DISCUSSION

OPEN EXECUTIVE SESSION: TUPY-TISON

CLOSE EXECUTIVE SESSION: DELGADO-COATES

Summary of discussion for parole consideration:

Attorney, Candace Chambliss introduced the number of people present in support of Mr. Juan Garcia today. She stated that there is a huge amount of support, over 50 people present to support his release. Officer Brown from Cook County, former Prisoner Review Board Member, Max Cerda, Mr. Eric Anderson of Precious Blood Ministry were all present as well. Mitigation Specialist, Helen Skinner, was also present. Ms. Chambliss stated that her youngest daughter is the same age as the victim. She stated that it is impossible to understand the grief and sorrow the family must feel over the loss of a child. She stated that not only one child's life ended but two, because Juan's life ended that day as well. Firing a gun and taking a life was Mr. Garcia's first and only crime. He was a teenager when arriving to prison, his first and only time acting on behalf of the gang. Mr. Garcia witnessed years of physical and drug abuse from his father. On the night of the crime, Mr. Garcia attempted to recruit himself into the gang and was ordered to shoot by two rival gang members. Mr. Garcia purposely shot away because he did not



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want to hurt anyone and had no idea that the bullet could travel two blocks and hit a child. Ms. Chambliss stated that Mr. Garcia was still a child himself. He made a promise to Anna, to become the best person he could be and to do anything to reduce gang involvement and violence. Mr. Garcia has accomplished a great deal in his time in prison. He earned 3 associate degrees, became a community navigator, and has the support of 6 staff members at the correctional center. She stated the Precious Blood program is created to help individuals like Mr. Garcia.

Ms. Helen Skinner, Mitigation Specialist, LCSW, stated that she has so many cases and she would not normally take on anymore. But, in this case, her first impression of Mr. Garcia was that he was so earnest and honest. Ms. Skinner stated that her first call via Zoom with Mr. Garcia, and there was a correctional officer not being nice to him. Mr. Garcia stated to her that the treatment happens all the time. She went on to describe how during the Zoom, Mr. Garcia spoke about the work he has done on himself. Ms. Skinner stated that she believes his childhood was wonderful in ways but also traumatic in others. She explained that if someone is living in an environment with gangs and violence, it will drag you in. Ms. Skinner explained when Mr. Garcia was growing up, he had leadership qualities, and was participating in school and sports. She stated that not only was he exposed to domestic violence, but it also started at the age of 4. It was also by his father, who was his hero, which made him confused and upset. This then gives them PTSD, but when it happens over time it becomes complex PTSD. Mr. Garcia stated to her that he watched his brother deal with mental illness and drug use. Seven months after his father passed away is when the crime took place. She stated that Mr. Garcia's mother thought that he was good kid and would not end up in a gang. She stated that we as a society feel protective over children, and we should. But a life is a life, and we should be equally upset about any life. Mr. Garcia became a paralegal and helps others to do so. He was trying to set himself up for his release and he wanted to build structure and life in the community. When the resentencing happened, Ms. Skinner believes that the judges rely on the parole board to make those decisions. Ms. Skinner stated that Juan is someone who has demonstrated that he is not someone who will go out and commit new crimes. The chance he will receive will not be wasted on him. Mr. Garcia understands how precious freedom is and how the consequences of his actions ended him up in prison.

Derrick Anderson, Precious Blood Ministry Case Worker, stated that he has known Juan since his first day at Menard Correctional Center. He stated that he was not involved with gangs in the prison system. Mr. Garcia came to prison with the passion to change his life around, engaging in programming and finding every opportunity available to him. He was a former juvenile lifer who committed a gang related crime when he was 15 years old. He stated that he had taken the life of 2 young girls, and it affects his life every single day. Mr. Anderson stated that he now uses that weight and purpose from those murders to service the community and make it better. He stated that Juan lost his brother while in prison. He stated that Juan could have gotten crushed over that, but he knows that he can offer more to the community outside of the prison. Mr. Anderson stated that Juan would need to focus on himself if he was released, he would have Precious Blood Ministry to assist him with his release. There is no shortage of work for him when it comes to helping his community at Precious Blood.

Mr. Juan Garcia stated that he wanted to use the opportunity to apologize to the Mateo family. He stated that he committed the worst act of his life. He stated that on that day he was joining a gang and had to



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prove himself. He stated that he was scared, and it was late at night. He stated that it was high members of the gang. He stated that he was scared that there was no way to get away from the situation. He stated that he shot away from the intended gang member because he did not want to hurt him. He saw him run away so that he knew he did not hit him. He stated that he saw on the news the next day that a young girl got shot 2 blocks away from where he had shot. He had no clue that his bullet would have traveled two blocks and hit someone. He apologized again to the Mateo family and that he wanted them to know that this situation with her changed his entire life.

Ms. Chambliss stated Mr. Garcia is willing and able to adhere to his terms of parole. His family wants him home because they love him, they miss him, he has a good soul, and he can do good.

Ms. Tison questioned Ms. Skinner if she was present for Mr. Garcia's resentencing.

Ms. Chambliss stated that she was not.

Mr. Heaton questioned at what request did the attorney ask the judge for at the resentencing.

Ms. Skinner stated it was for 6 years to run at 85% and 20 years at 100%

Ms. Terrones stated that the reason Mr. Garcia did not turn himself in is because he did not know that he had hit the young girl. She questioned how Mr. Garcia found out that he was the one who pulled the trigger and the one who killed this little girl.

Ms. Chambliss stated that it was the evidence at the trial. Mr. Garcia hearing the science behind how far a bullet could transfer, he started realizing that he could have been the reason of her death.

Ms. Terrones questioned if that was the start of his accountability of the crime.

Mr. Garcia stated that it was really hard for him to accept the fact that he was the one who hit the little girl when he had no intention to hurt anyone. It was hard to accept that a bullet could travel that far, and taking accountability has been a journey. He stated that he used his time in prison to work on himself. He stated that he stopped all communication with the gangs.

Mr. Delgado stated that this is a very unique situation, and that Mr. Garcia was the youngest member of the group. He stated that it appears that Mr. Garcia had no intention of hurting anyone but as a member and listening to the chief of the gang, he felt that he had to. Mr. Delgado questioned Mr. Garcia on how long he was involved with the gang at that point. He questioned if it was his intention to not hurt anyone but just impress them for the initiation.

Mr. Garcia stated that it was initiation. He stated that after this situation happened, he realized that was not what he wanted, and he stopped hanging around them.

Mr. Delgado questioned Mr. Garcia if he was a new member at that moment.



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Mr. Garcia answered yes.

Ms. Globokar stated there are clearly different ways to pay one's debts. She acknowledged those in the room who are part of the growing movement of formerly incarcerated individuals who appear to be sincerely bearing the weight of responsibility of their harms by trying to save other families from enduring the type of irreparable loss endured by the Mateo family. Ms. Globokar stated remorse is not in statements but in actions. This was truly a worst-case outcome for a crime such as this and said she wanted to commend Mr. Garcia on the efforts he has made to date, and his recognition to the young victim as the motivation behind his efforts.

Mr. Bohland stated that in the resentencing the judge took a lot into consideration and still chose what he did. He questioned what has been accomplished since the rehearing.

Ms. Chambliss stated that it is the board's decision to make if the individual will be released. The sentencing judge did expect that Juan would be able to come in front of this board for this hearing after his rehearing. He has made plans for his release and to pursue other opportunities within the institution.

Ms. Shoffner questioned his schooling and payments.

Mr. Coates stated that he went back to school and had to take out student loans. With the support of his family and commissary/income within the prison he has paid back all of his student loans. Mr. Garcia was resentenced after the schooling.

Mr. Tupy questioned how the police identified Mr. Garcia.

Mr. Garcia stated that he was identified by witnesses.

Ms. Chambliss stated that a series of photographs was given to a group of witnesses. There was a trial to determine if he was the shooter in the incident. He did not understand how he could be the shooter from 2 blocks away. During the trial is when he was educated on how far a bullet could travel.

Mr. Delgado stated that the codefendants only got 12 years, and they were the ones that pointed him out. He questioned if they got a deal for pointing the finger.

Ms. Chambliss stated in exchange for his testimony one individual was not charged at all.

End of discussion.



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DECISION AND RATIONALE

Motion to grant parole (COATES-DELGACO). Motion prevailed with a 9-2 vote. Members voting in favor of the motion were Mr. Coates, Mr. Delgado, Ms. Globokar, Ms. Goff, Mr. Grubbs, Mr. Heaton, Ms. Shoffner, Ms. Terrones, and Ms. Tison. Mr. Bohland and Mr. Tupy dissented.

After a complete review of Mr. Juan Garcia's case, and after giving thoughtful discussion and consideration to all factors, the Board decided and voted to grant parole to Mr. Juan Garcia, subject to conditions of parole release as set by the Board and by law. The Board hereby finds that Mr. Juan Garcia is an appropriate candidate for parole release.

"The Board makes a specific finding that the release of victim protest letters could subject a person to actual risk of physical harm. The Board further notes that, pursuant to Illinois law, victim statements are confidential and privileged."



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***EN BANC* MINUTE SHEET**
OPEN SESSION – January 29, 2025

Individual in Custody's Name: Marlon Porter*

IDOC Number: R30867

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at 3000 South Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, Illinois, on January 29, 2025, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Marlon Porter R30867.

Members present were Mr. Bohland, Mr. Coates, Mr. Delgado, Ms. Globokar, Ms. Goff, Mr. Grubbs, Mr. Heaton, Ms. Terrones, Ms. Tison, Ms. Shoffner, and Mr. Tupy.

Recording Secretary: Amy Sexton.

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

The basis for the Board's decision, at this time, is as follows:

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

Mr. Marlon Porter was interviewed on December 5, 2024, via WebEx video at Menard Correctional Center by Board Member, Mr. Rodger Heaton. Mr. Porter was present along with his attorney, Ms. Karen Ramos. The interview lasted approximately 2 hours. Mr. Porter was cooperative, polite, attentive, engaging, and articulate throughout the interview.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

Mr. Marlon Porter is serving what is now a 38-year sentence for the offense of Murder, for an offense that occurred on October 24, 2000, in which a 12-year-old boy was shot and killed by Mr. Porter. The circumstances of this shooting are reported in the file, as follows:

A 21-year-old woman, named Lakisha Woodard, had gotten into a dispute with a boy and another young male who were fighting with each other, and in the process of that fight they banged into Ms. Woodard's car. She got out of her car and put one of the boys into a headlock. Then a teenage sister of one of the boys got involved as well. The police responded to the incident, and Ms. Woodard successfully fled from the scene. Ms. Woodard went to a friend's house and got a baseball bat and returned to the area of the fight to confront the teenage sister who had intervened. Ms. Woodard struck the girl 3 or more times with the baseball bat, and the sister then cut Ms. Woodard's face with a boxcutter.

Ms. Woodard then was taken by friends (not an ambulance) to a hospital for treatment of the facial injuries, and at the hospital she gave varying accounts about how she had suffered the injuries. After release from the hospital, Ms. Woodard began plotting her retaliation and she approached Mr. Porter (age 17), who had been selling drugs for her, about shooting the boy and the sister. Mr. Porter agreed to do it. Ms. Woodard provided a handgun and her car to Mr. Porter, showing and explaining to him where the intended victims lived, and told him to shoot whomever of the two victims he saw first. Mr. Porter saw a



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12-year-old boy who closely resembled the boy from the fight. The boy was playing tag with some of his friends, who were within sight, and Mr. Porter pointed the gun toward the boy's upper back area and fired it. The boy died from the gunshot wound. (As it turned out, this was not the boy who had been involved in the incident with Ms. Woodard, after all.) By way of clarification, in his petition, Mr. Porter reports that he initially did not want to shoot the boy as directed by Ms. Woodard, and argued with her about it, but eventually Mr. Porter drove to the described location, but did not proceed to shoot the boy as directed. Instead, he waited around awhile and later reported falsely to Ms. Woodard that the boy and other kids had gone inside, and he was not able to shoot him. Ms. Woodard was dissatisfied with that result, so she drove Mr. Porter back to the area of the boy's location herself and pointed out the boy to Mr. Porter and again directed him to get out of the car and shoot the boy. He did so this time, but Ms. Woodard had driven off before the shooting had occurred and Mr. Porter fled on foot and hid for about 8 days until the police finally found him and arrested him.

CRIMINAL HISTORY

Mr. Porter has one prior conviction for possession of a stolen vehicle, from 1999, and his sentence was to attend AM, which he did. He explained that the offense was for his involvement in joyriding in a stolen car with a friend.

INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

Mr. Marlon Porter was transferred to Menard Correctional Center on March 14, 2022, and has had no major or minor IDRs since. He has worked in the ICI program since 2016. Prior to that, Mr. Porter worked in the inmate kitchen from 2008-2010, then in floor maintenance from 2010-2012, then in the employee kitchen (2013), then in floor maintenance again from 2014-2016. In terms of education and programming accomplishments, Mr. Porter earned a GED in 2003, an associate degree in Bible theology in 2014, a bachelor's degree in theology in 2021, and is currently enrolled in a master's degree program with the International College of Bible Theology. The history of this Bible college is reported as follows: The school was founded in 1990. It operated in Norris City, IL as an affiliate of the Golden Grain Bible College in Ventura CA in 1990-91. In 1992, the College office for the Degree Program moved to Sikeston, MO, as King's Word Bible College. In 1994, the college became an international entity, and the name was changed to the International College of Bible Theology (ICBT). As of January 2008, ICBT has school locations in 26 state, and 91 countries. It is reportedly accredited with the Accreditation Commission International in Beebe, Arkansas. Pursuant to the regulations set forth by the Coordinating Board for Higher Education in the State of Missouri, ICBT does not grant degrees in the arts or sciences. Mr. Porter successfully completed courses in real estate appraisal (2014, with highest honors 90%, 400 hours), and business management (2014, with highest honors at 92% (300 hours)) with the Stratford Career Institute. He took a writing workshop with the University of Chicago in 2021 and enrolled in a heavy machinery operation training course. Mr. Porter also took IDOC courses on victim impact (November 2013), T4C (November 2014), and fatherhood (Inside Out Dads 2013).



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There are also certificates in the file reflecting:

- 12 units of correspondence instruction, Emmaus Correspondence School July 2014.
- Passing a constitution test in March 2003:
- A Biblical Foundation for Faith program in May 2003, and numerous Bible related classes in 2014.
- Math 1 & 2, & 4, & Fractions with the Outreach Christian School, which is an educational ministry of Chicagoland Prison Outreach (undated); and
- An Ordination Certificate with the Universal Life Church, Oct. 2014.

Since his re-sentencing in December 2021, Mr. Porter reported that he has earned a food handler's license (10/26/22 certificate in file), completed a 10-hour business management course (5/6/24 certificate for How to Start Your Own Business: Prepare to Launch), and has been receiving excavator training since 2022 within Correctional Industries. He noted that he cannot actually get certified in excavation while at Menard Correctional Center.

Mr. Porter also has letters in the file reflecting many days of EPSC, for which he is ineligible to get effective credit for because his murder sentence is served at 100% time. The total number of EPSC days appears to be 534 days, including: 54 (1/10/20) (possibly doubled – two identical letters in file), 61 (7/15/19), 80 (10/8/19), 74 (4/1/19), 57 (1/7/19), 81 (10/30/18), 87 (7/30/18), and 40 (4/12/18).

Mr. Porter had 7 IDRs described as major tickets, between 2008 and 2013, but none involved acts of violence, and it has now been more than 11 years since the last of those. There is one outlier ticket that was issued on February 24, 2024, involving possession of contraband (a watch which was not sold in the commissary), and drugs or drug paraphernalia. When asked about this incident, Mr. Porter explained that the inmate in a neighboring cell to his was caught with tobacco and a letter that had a CS infused into the paper. The investigating IDOC officials wanted Mr. Porter to identify which CO had provided the contraband items to that other inmate, and Mr. Porter told them that he did not know. As a result, he was issued a ticket too. Though he was found guilty, and initially reduced to C grade for 3 months and given 3 months in segregation, the discipline was adjusted to be no reduction in grade and no segregation time. Mr. Porter is currently designated as no escape risk, A grade, and low aggression level.

STATEMENTS AS TO THE OFFENSE

There is a letter of support in the file from Ms. Lakisha Woodard, the person who provided the gun and car to Mr. Porter to commit his holding offense. Ms. Woodard, wrote a letter stating that she manipulated him to commit the murder, despite him not wanting to do it. She convinced him to start selling drugs for her at age 16, and she ensured that he understood that she could and would take care of him financially so long as he did whatever she told him to. She stated that she had been a carjacking victim and that led to a dispute in which her face was cut with a boxcutter, purportedly requiring over 3,000 stitches. She wanted revenge, so she enlisted the assistance of an "underage kid." She asked for Mr. Porter's forgiveness for what she got him involved in, and for that of his and the victim's families. She stated that if she has to remain incarcerated for life, as a consequence of admitting what she did to Mr. Porter and helping seek his release on parole, then that is what she will do. Letter is dated October 3, 2024. Ms. Woodard is currently incarcerated at Logan Correctional Center, with an MSR date of 10/27/62. She got



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65 years for her role in this murder/murder solicitation crime.

PAROLE PLANS

Mr. Porter would like to be paroled on an IC to Tennessee, where he has an offer to work for his cousin and his cousin's mother in their company – Four K Construction and Demolition, LLC. The reason he enrolled in the heavy machinery operating program is that this will help prepare him for the work in that company's construction/demolition related work. There is an extra home built on the company property where they have offered to let him live, and in addition to his wages, his family has offered to help him pay for continued education in plumbing and electrical work. Mr. Porter also stated that he most wants to be an advocate on behalf of at-risk youth. Alternatively, if an IC is not approved, Mr. Porter has been offered the opportunity to live with his sister, Lesetta Porter, in Carol Stream, IL. She is a school bus driver, and he would live with her, her husband, and their 3 children. Mr. Porter has reported that he is prepared to work with the Safer Foundation, the Chicago Urban League, Roosevelt University's Life Skills Reentry Program, Woodlawn Community Reentry Project Chicago, Chicago Coalition for the Homeless' Reentry Project, and the Chicago Department of Family and Support Services Community Reentry Support Center.

OPPOSITION TO PAROLE RELEASE

There are no objections from the States Attorney's office or the victim's family on file.

ENBANC HISTORY

This is Mr. Porter's first time appearing before this board for parole consideration.

DISCUSSION

OPEN EXECUTIVE SESSION: HEATON-TUPY
CLOSE EXECUTIVE SESSION: HEATON-TISON

Summary of discussion for parole consideration:

Ms. Karen Ranos, Attorney, stated that Mr. Porter was being held at Cook County Jail (CCJ) during the COVID19 pandemic. During the pandemic, he was provided the opportunity to become a cleaner at CCJ. He was trusted having the free movement in the facility. Mr. Porter did not receive any disciplinary tickets while at CCJ. Ms. Ranos stated that Mr. Porter received a ticket in 2024, filed a grievance, and the ticket was expunged from his IDOC record. She stated that she talks to Mr. Porter's daughter and him once per week for the last 8 years. She stated that he has learned how to be a good father on his own, and he is mentoring other people around him. She stated that he would help his daughter with her homework from Menard Correctional Center. She stated that when his mother passed away, he was given a small inheritance, and he used that money on programs to make his life positive. She stated that she started representing him during his post-conviction hearings, and before his resentencing. If approved, Mr. Porter plans to move to Tennessee working for his cousin's construction company. He would have to be released



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before he could be certified. If he was released in Illinois, he has the support of the Safer Foundation and would have employment within 48 hours.

Mr. Anthony Lowery, Safer Foundation, and Mr. Porter's uncle stated that his confession was one of the most honest things he has ever seen. He stated that after seeing his confession he told himself that he would help his nephew do what he needs to succeed. He stated that he has always maintained the kindness and helpful attitude while incarcerated. Mr. Lowery stated that Mr. Porter is now a 40-year-old man that takes accountability. He stated that his nephew sets up individuals within his facility with the Safer Foundation and tries to help them. Being a parent behind bars is challenging, but he decided to not see the bars as smothering him, rather as a life to live and help his daughter get through school.

James Swanson, a former juvenile who also advocates for incarcerated individuals, stated he has known Mr. Porter for 20 years. They have continued to stay in touch over phone conversations and through his family. He stated that he has now been out for 4 years, and that Mr. Porter consistently demonstrated good behavior and took the positive move to rehabilitate. Mr. Swanson stated that Mr. Porter has shown deep remorse and has grown matured and ready to contribute positively to society.

Mr. Porter admitted that he takes full responsibility for his actions. He stated that he understands he is responsible for a lost life, and he feels bad for his mother. He also stated as a kid you only see the immediate impact. When you grow, you see how it impacts people differently. He stated that he did not complete all of his accomplishments just to be able to have a chance to be released. He stated that he did those to better himself. He stated that when you are young you do not have an identity and you are looking for someone to guide you and tell you who are you.

End of discussion.

DECISION AND RATIONALE

Motion to grant parole (HEATON-GOFF). Motion prevailed with a 10-1 vote. Members voting in favor of the motion were Mr. Heaton, Ms. Shoffner, Mr. Terrones, Ms. Tison, Mr. Bohland, Mr. Coates, Mr. Delgado, Ms. Globokar, Ms. Goff, and Mr. Grubbs. Mr. Tupy dissented.

After a complete review of Mr. Marlon Porter's case, and after giving thoughtful discussion and consideration to all factors, the Board decided and voted to grant parole to Mr. Marlon Porter, subject to conditions of parole release as set by the Board and by law. The Board hereby finds that Mr. Marlon Porter is an appropriate candidate for parole release.

"The Board makes a specific finding that the release of victim protest letters could subject a person to actual risk of physical harm. The Board further notes that, pursuant to Illinois law, victim statements are confidential and privileged."



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***EN BANC* MINUTE SHEET**
OPEN SESSION – January 29, 2025

Individual in Custody's Name: Samuel Applewhite

IDOC Number: R01468

The Illinois Prisoner Review Board met in open *en banc* session at 3000 South Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, Illinois, on January 29, 2025, at the 9:00 a.m. session to discuss and deliberate parole eligibility for Samuel Applewhite R01468.

Members present were Mr. Bohland, Mr. Coates, Mr. Delgado, Ms. Globokar, Ms. Goff, Mr. Grubbs, Mr. Heaton, Ms. Terrones, Ms. Tison, Ms. Shoffner, and Mr. Tupy.

Recording Secretary: Amy Sexton.

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

The basis for the Board's decision, at this time, is as follows:

PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW AND FILE

On December 3, 2024, Samuel Applewhite was interviewed by Board Member Ms. Julie Globokar via WebEx at Western Illinois Correctional Center. The interview began at approximately 9:25am and ended at 12:45pm. Also present was Mr. Applewhite's counsel, Joslyn Sandifer.

Mr. Applewhite is 41 years old and has been incarcerated since 2001, nearing 24 years. He was 17 years old at the time he committed the offense of murder. He was very engaged in the interview and lent an impression of candor.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

On August 19th, 2001, Mr. Applewhite and co-defendant Marcus Merrell were shooting dice with several others. The two left to retrieve a firearm. Mr. Applewhite and co-defendant Merrell put masks over their faces and returned to the dice game, where they demanded money. Victim Marshall Young crouched down and began to stand up when Mr. Applewhite shot him in the chest, killing him. Two other victims, who were in the vehicle that Mr. Young had driven to the dice game, heard the gunshots. Mr. Applewhite then shot at them several times but missed. Mr. Applewhite and his co-defendant left the scene. Mr. Applewhite was arrested approximately two weeks later and has been in custody since. He was originally charged with 34 counts, including armed robbery, aggravated discharge of a firearm, attempted murder, and murder. He entered a fully negotiated plea to one count of murder for the death of Marshall Young and one count of aggravated battery with a firearm for a separate shooting that had occurred a month prior to the murder, during a robbery of victim Lamar Smith on July 11, 2001. The remaining charges were dismissed. The trial court imposed the mandatory minimum of 20 years for the murder with an additional 25-year firearm enhancement, and 12 years for the aggravated battery charge, to run concurrently for a total sentence of 45 years. It was later discovered that the sentences to which Mr. Applewhite pled guilty were legislatively mandated to run consecutively, in discord with the agreed terms of his plea. He filed a pro se petition arguing that he should be allowed to go to trial, but the trial court agreed with the State's



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suggestion that the matter be addressed by throwing out the aggravated battery charge. Mr. Applewhite appealed, but the trial court's ruling was affirmed. A pro se petition later challenged the 45-year sentence on the grounds of new case law pertaining to youthful offenders. The case progressed to the Illinois Supreme Court, where he was represented by the State Appellate Defender's office; the Court issued an order to vacate the 2016 sentence and remand for a new sentencing hearing. His current sentence is 45 years for the murder of Mr. Young.

CRIMINAL HISTORY

Mr. Applewhite had one prior adult conviction for a UUC case at the age of 17, for which he received one year of prison. He was released from his custodial sentence on February 23, 2001. Juvenile records were discussed in closed session.

INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

Mr. Applewhite was raised on Chicago's Southside. He was involved in church and helped with responsibilities for his siblings while growing up. He experienced many hardships, including exposure to household violence, substance abuse, negative influences, and traumatic experiences in the community, including witnessing a young child's fatal fall from a window. He was victimized several times, including being robbed at gunpoint at the ages of 12 and 13, and being pistol-whipped in 1998, resulting in an injury that necessitated 14 staples. His parents divorced when Mr. Applewhite was young. He switched schools frequently and had been placed in special education. He learned to fight to defend himself from the bullying of others. Many around him were deeply embedded in the gang culture. Mr. Applewhite joined the Gangster Disciples and sold drugs and worked security for them. When he was quite young, others would pay him to scout potential robberies. He would come to find robberies easier than drug sales, and target known drug dealers and gang members who would not be inclined to report the crimes to the police. He tried to leave the gang at times during incarceration but found it difficult to remain neutral in navigating the environment, particularly at Menard. As his victim held status in the Blackstone's, a bounty was placed on Mr. Applewhite's head, making it advantageous to use the status he had developed within the Gangster Disciples for his own protection. Mr. Applewhite has had a mixed adjustment to IDOC. He has incurred approximately 12 tickets through 2018, including an assault and attempted assault in separate incidents in 2005 and several intimidation/threats tickets in 2017 and 2018. He attributes most of the tickets to his efforts to navigate prison life, where he faced many "fight or flight" scenarios. He expressed the greatest remorse regarding his last intimidation/threats ticket from 2018, for a letter to two wardens expressing hate and threats of physical harm. He states that it was not a sincere threat, but rather an effort to acquire a disciplinary transfer due to concern about inadequate medical care where he was housed. He did have a gap of tickets during several years during which he was in protective custody, which he had pursued as a means of securing his own safety while staying out of segregation to be able to maintain contact with his family. The Board notes that it does not have access to his disciplinary records from Cook County, where he was held from 2020 to 2023 due to his remand for resentencing. Mr. Applewhite has had limited access to programming due to the length of his sentence, but he has held some jobs throughout the years, including in the employee dining room, as a protective custody worker, in the dietary department, and elsewhere. IDOC records document that he was a Life Skills student in



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2016 and a SURE foundation participant around 2018. He reports participating in culinary arts during his time at Pontiac. While at Cook County Jail, he worked on the sanitation tier, and in April 2023, he earned 17 certificates for various cooking classes. When he was re-admitted to IDOC he was assigned to school. He states he has helped others with legal paperwork over the years as a “jailhouse lawyer.” He states that he now tries to stop and think more about the consequences of his actions, and he knows to walk away from situations that are not conducive to the life he wants to live.

STATEMENTS AS TO THE OFFENSE

Mr. Applewhite gave statements to both the aggravated battery conviction that has since been vacated, and the first-degree murder conviction. Regarding the battery of Mr. Smith, he stated he was the “stick up man” who would rob drug dealers; on that day he was heavily intoxicated and went too far. He was remorseful about the incident and has communicated that remorse to the victim and victim’s family. On the day of the murder, the victim came to buy marijuana with some individuals in the car with whom Mr. Applewhite was at war. Mr. Applewhite felt it was a set-up, and a matter of who catches who first. He decided to stick up the dice game, which had been moved to an alleyway which he further interpreted as an effort to set him up. When Mr. Applewhite and his co-defendant initiated the robbery, he indicated the victim reached for a gun, and he was scared and shot first. The victim grabbed at the co-defendant’s feet, so he shot him again. He then heard the car start up, and he did not know what or who was in the car, so he shot at the car. He and his co-defendant got what they could in the robbery and left.

Mr. Applewhite takes full accountability for his offenses and wishes that he had simply stayed home on the day of the murder, which is the only thing he feels could have prevented it. He indicates that once he sobered up and had time to reflect, he understood the crime as akin to participation in self-genocide and struggles with that knowledge. He is aware that he cannot change the past and wants to dedicate himself to being a guiding light to others.

PAROLE PLANS

Mr. Applewhite plans to remain close to his family and reside with his mother until he can afford his own apartment nearby. Long-term he is open to pursuing interstate compact to start fresh out of state. He indicates he is self-taught in a lot of areas, and has expressed interest in opening a food truck, starting a clothing business, being a barber, or buying a plot of land and renting out tiny houses for legitimate income. He understands the need to change his circle to get different results. He indicates he would enjoy the small pleasures of free life and stay out of compromising situations. He recognizes that his family looks up to him as a counselor and peace maker and would like the opportunity to strengthen his relationship with his stepchildren and grandchildren and be closer to his other relatives. Mr. Applewhite’s siblings wrote strong letters of support, describing him as a protector while they were growing up and sharing their desire for him to be released for involvement in the lives of his nieces and nephews. He also wants to be there for his son, who was born after he was taken into custody for the present offense. Mr. Applewhite also indicates that he could find some support in a couple of people he has known from his time in prison who have since been exonerated, and that he has some other family connections who work in the reentry field.



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OPPOSITION TO PAROLE RELEASE

The Board has not received any objection from the State's Attorney's Office to Mr. Applewhite's release. Any opposition received by the Board from individual parties was introduced in closed session.

ENBANC HISTORY

This is Mr. Applewhite's first time being considered at en banc. If not granted relief, he would next be eligible subject to the terms of the Youthful Parole Act.

DISCUSSION

OPEN EXECUTIVE SESSION: GLOBOKAR-TUPY

CLOSE EXECUTIVE SESSION: HEATON-TUPY

Summary of discussion for parole consideration:

Ms. Joslyn Sandifer, Attorney, Mr. Samuel Applewhite learned the art of stick up from his cousin. She stated that he had a very strained relationship with his father, and he was abusive. She stated that he was responsible for ensuring his siblings safety was okay. Mr. Applewhite was doing things that fathers should do and took pride in being the leader of his family but was not ready at that age to take those responsibilities on. He spent years unaffiliated with the Gangster Disciples but did work for them. Ms. Sandifer stated that all of the men in his life were gang affiliated, and he did not have the understanding that, that life was harmful for him. She spoke about his resentencing and the deciding factors that the judge discussed at the resentencing. He had not been given the proper tools to handle his mental health needs. Regarding a ticket, Mr. Applewhite was in a space of frustration, and he thought that the prison was diminishing his health issues. He has had a 10-year span of no physical violence. She stated that he took all the classes necessary for his GED but was ineligible for the actual GED test but plans on completing that when he is paroled. Ms. Sandifer stated that his mother, brother, sister, cousin, and aunt are present to show their support for him. They are willing to help Mr. Applewhite when he paroles with housing and finding a job.

Mr. Applewhite stated that he appreciates this opportunity. He stated that he is very remorseful about the decisions that he made in life. Mr. Applewhite stated he grew up brainwashed and he was not proud of that. He stated that he wished this had never happened and hates that he allowed anything to cloud his judgement in a circumstance like this. He stated that he wishes he could change what happened that day, but he cannot. He stated that all he can do now is show others that this is not the path to take. He stated that it was hard to ask for help and would figure things out on his own. Mr. Applewhite stated that he wants to save his nephew from growing up the way he did and to show him self-discipline. He stated that hates that he hurt another mother and understands because he is a father now and sees the tears in their eyes. He sees the victim's side and it hurts him to the core. He knows that he has others watching him and he tries to lead the way. Mr. Applewhite stated that it took him years to hold his head up. Last time



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he put his hands on anyone was 2005. He stated he knows he cannot go the same route that he has before, and he is ready to show the Board his dedication and determination. Mr. Applewhite stated that if he could take it back, he would.

Mr. Heaton questioned if there was an appeal to the resentencing.

Mr. Applewhite stated that he currently has a pending appeal for the 45 years. He stated that the judge gave him extra years for a ticket while incarcerated.

Ms. Terrones questioned if he is presently involved in any mental health programming.

Mr. Applewhite stated that he was enrolled in a MH group, but when he was transferred to Western, it has not been made available to him at that facility. He stated that he believes he can help his own mental health problems, such as his anxiety.

Ms. Sandifer stated that he has made the efforts to be in programs and has not been added to them at this time. He has also worked on his own coping mechanisms.

End of discussion.

DECISION AND RATIONALE

Motion to deny parole (GLOBOKAR-BOHLAND). Motion prevailed with a 11-0 vote.

After a complete review of Mr. Samuel Applewhite's case, and after giving thoughtful discussion and consideration to all factors, the Board decided and voted to deny parole to Mr. Samuel Applewhite. The Board feels that parole release at this time would not be in the interest of public safety, as there is a substantial risk that Mr. Applewhite would not conform to reasonable conditions of parole and that parole release at this time would deprecate the serious nature of the offenses and promote a lack of respect for the law.

"The Board makes a specific finding that the release of victim protest letters could subject a person to actual risk of physical harm. The Board further notes that, pursuant to Illinois law, victim statements are confidential and privileged."