



Department of Social Sciences/Human Services  
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July 6, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to write a letter in support of my student, Michael Ryel. I have known Michael for the past several years while he has been attending Rogue Community College. I had the opportunity to work with him very closely for two years while he was a student of mine in the Human Services Program. During this time, I witnessed his tremendous growth and development. This development came not only in the area of academic achievement and leadership, but in maturity and character as well. In the time I have known Michael, he has earned my trust and admiration.

Michael ascended to the top of the class, distinguishing himself as a bright, articulate, self-confident, personable, and organized scholar. He is a dedicated student, and his grades are consistently exemplary. His interpersonal and communication skills allowed him to develop productive working relationships with both faculty and other students.

Michael has overcome much adversity. When he speaks with people, he is forthcoming with his story and his candor impresses his audience. Michael dedicates several evenings to attend 12 step meetings and is actively working to better himself through his recovery. More importantly, the distance he has come, and the success he has made of his life impresses all he touches. It has been a great pleasure to observe him throughout these past years.

Michael has many strengths, he is conscientious, he is a man of integrity, he exhibits great empathy for others and has a huge heart. Michael has made me proud as his teacher, I recommend Michael be offered any leniency you deem fit without reservation, and I totally support him during this difficult time. If you have any questions regarding Michael's character or achievements, please feel free to contact me. Thank you for your time in this matter.

Sincerely,

*Manny Pacheco, M.S., MEd, CADC III, QMHP*

Social Sciences/Human Services Faculty Instructor/Department Coordinator

Course Number	Title	Grade Repeat Att	Ern	Q.Pts
<b>2023 : Winter</b>				

CG100	College Success and Survival	A	2.00	2.00	8.00
MTH20	Pre-algebra	P	4.00	4.00	0.00
PSY101	Psychology of Human Relations	A	3.00	3.00	12.00
WR115	Introduction to Expository Writing	C-	3.00	3.00	6.00

	<b>Attempted</b>	<b>Earned</b>	<b>GPA</b>	<b>QualityPts</b>	<b>GPA</b>
<b>Term Totals :</b>	<b>12.00</b>	<b>12.00</b>	<b>8.00</b>	<b>26.00</b>	<b>3.25</b>
<b>Cumulative Totals :</b>	<b>12.00</b>	<b>12.00</b>	<b>8.00</b>	<b>26.00</b>	<b>3.25</b>

**Term Pace: 100.00%**  
**Cum Pace: 100.00%**

**2023 : Spring**

COMM111	Fundamentals of Public Speaking	A-	4.00	4.00	16.00
HS152	Stress Management	A	1.00	1.00	4.00
PSY219	Introduction to Abnormal Psychology	A-	4.00	4.00	16.00
WR121	English Composition I	B	4.00	4.00	12.00

	<b>Attempted</b>	<b>Earned</b>	<b>GPA</b>	<b>QualityPts</b>	<b>GPA</b>
<b>Term Totals :</b>	<b>13.00</b>	<b>13.00</b>	<b>13.00</b>	<b>48.00</b>	<b>3.69</b>
<b>Cumulative Totals :</b>	<b>25.00</b>	<b>25.00</b>	<b>21.00</b>	<b>74.00</b>	<b>3.52</b>

**Honor : Vice-President's Honor Roll**  
**Term Pace: 100.00%**  
**Cum Pace: 100.00%**

CIS120	Concepts in Computing I	C+	2.00	2.00	4.00
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**Credit Division**

Course Number						
2023 : Summer		Title				
		Grade Repeat Att	Ern	Q.Pts		
MTH60	Fundamentals of Algebra I	Earned	NP	4.00	0.00	0.00
		2.00				
		27.00				
			GPA	QualityPts	GPA	
Term Totals :			2.00	4.00	2.00	
Cumulative Totals :		Attempted	23.00	78.00	3.39	
		6.00				
		31.00				
Academic Standing :		Academic Alert I	Term Pace: 33.33%			
			Cum Pace: 87.10%			
2023 : Fall						

HS100	Introduction to Human Services	A-	3.00	3.00	12.00
HS170	Introduction to Practicum	A	3.00	3.00	12.00
MTH60	Fundamentals of Algebra I	P	4.00	4.00	0.00

# Addiction

A major crisis that society faces today is addiction, and because of the new fentanyl problem this crisis is at an all-time high. The so-called war on drugs is nothing but a losing battle, but I believe we can make a difference if we all come together as a society of caring and understanding human beings. The following is a little part of my own life experiences in this area, and how I believe we can help fight this global epidemic.

My name is Michael Ryel, and I would like to share with you how drugs and alcohol effected my life. Unfortunately, drugs and alcohol have always been a part of my life. During my early childhood both of my Parents happen to be severe alcoholics, and my mother was also addicted to pain pills as early as I can remember, she dealt with a lot of pain and probably was being over prescribed by her doctors. My parents eventually divorced, and my mother struggled with being the only parent which made her turn to booze and pills even more.

Unfortunately, my mother passed away in 1992 at a very young age of 49, and as you can imagine it was a very painful loss as she was not only my mother, but she was also my best friend. My mother and I had it really rough during my teen years, and we moved around a lot. Not having hardly any money to speak of we had to live in some rough neighborhoods, and by the time I was 16 I was using alcohol, weed, and eventually crank (methamphetamine). I was fortunate enough to clean up my act and start a family and was able to bring two wonderful children into this world.

The death of my mother was extremely hard on me, and I started to use alcohol as a crutch more and more. My children's mother also liked to drink, and as the kids got older their mother and I started using drugs again and eventually we split up and I moved to Idaho and found Meth. This Meth was different, and you could smoke it. Now, there I was single in a college town, and I landed a job at a night club. This was a very bad combination, but I thought I had won the lottery. I guess it's not a surprise to say I wasn't able to keep that job for long.

Unfortunately, I have been a drug addict and alcoholic most of my life. From 1995 to 2022, I struggled with my addiction. I am happy to say that today I am a grateful recovering addict/alcoholic and have been on my road to recovery for 15 months. During those dark years I was hospitalized many times for alcohol related illness and overdosed a handful of times on heroin and fentanyl. A little over a year ago I decided that I wanted to see my grandkids grow up and sought help. Fortunately, I got that help through the Addictions Recovery Center.

Drugs and alcohol abuse has cost me countless heartbreaks and even more very good employment opportunities. The damage that I brought on to family and loved ones is overwhelming. I am blessed to have gained some of the trust from so many people that I thought would never speak to me again. I am grateful to be around people who understand what the disease of addiction is about. I am a grateful recovering addict.

The losses from my addictions are extensive, anywhere from my career as a firefighter, to wrecking my very expensive show car and destroying relationships. Although, with a lot of hard work and believing in my higher power, this road to recovery is possible. I want nothing more but to learn from my mistakes in my past and use the knowledge gained from them and help other addicts on their path to recovery by becoming a Drug and Alcohol Counselor.

To combat the detrimental effects of drugs and alcohol on society, a comprehensive approach is required, focusing on prevention, treatment, and support. Promoting drug and alcohol education, both in schools and communities, is crucial. Programs should raise awareness of the risks and consequences of substance abuse. Accessible treatment and rehabilitation efforts must be made to enhance access to affordable treatment and rehabilitation services with ongoing out-patient services. Expanding the availability of detoxification centers, counseling services, and support groups is vital. Also, creating a supportive environment for individuals in recovery is crucial.

Moreover, society must work toward reducing the stigma associated with addiction. Stigma often prevents individuals from seeking help and support. Through public awareness campaigns, we can promote the understanding that addiction is a disease, not a moral failing. Encouraging open and non-judgmental conversations about addiction can make a significant difference in fostering empathy and reducing discrimination. We also should focus on empowering individuals and communities economically and socially. Many people turn to drugs and alcohol as a coping mechanism for underlying issues such as poverty, unemployment, or trauma. By creating opportunities for education, job training, and access to affordable housing, we can address some of the root causes of addiction. Providing mental health services is equally important, as many individuals with addiction struggle with co-occurring disorders.

Furthermore, I also believe we need to have more stringent laws and regulations to deter drug trafficking and sales while simultaneously focusing on rehabilitation and reintegrating rather than solely punitive measures. Collaborative approaches between law enforcement agencies, healthcare providers, and community organizations can yield better outcomes. Emphasizing diversion programs, such as drug courts, can help non-violent offenders receive treatment instead of incarceration, reducing recidivism rates and promoting recovery. Policymakers and our governments play a vital role in allocating resources to fight addiction effectively, increased funding for research into addiction treatment and recovery methods

In conclusion, the impact of drugs and alcohol on society today is multifaceted, affecting individuals, families, and communities on various levels. By prioritizing prevention, treatment, and support, society can work towards mitigating these issues. Through collective efforts, such as reducing the stigma, promoting economic empowerment, we can create a safer, healthier and more prosperous society for all. I am now in the Human Services program at Rogue Community College and in my second year working towards a bachelor's degree in drug and alcohol counseling. I am looking forward to continuing my education and using my own life experiences to help as many people as possible. I believe the more society is educated about addiction, the

more we as a society can help to reduce the number of individuals and their families being damaged by this relentless disease.