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January 27, 2011

NYS Division of Parole
Cayuga Correctional Facility
Moravia, NY 13118

Re: Craig Cordes

Dear Honorable Members of the Parole Board:

I am the Senior Associate Justice of the New York State Appellate Division, Fourth Department. I am writing on behalf of my friend, Craig Cordes, and in support of his release on parole after his upcoming hearing before you.

As a former prosecutor and Monroe County Court Judge, I know first hand the struggles and heartaches of all involved in the criminal justice system. While Craig certainly made a terrible and tragic mistake, he has taken responsibility for his actions. While he can never make things right, he has taken positive steps while in prison and has used the time for self-reflection and growth. He has taken advantage of any self-help or educational program offered to him and has even succeeded in being allowed to participate in programs which initially were denied to him due to his extensive education. He also has expressed his desire to better the lives of those around him. Craig has spent much time while incarcerated mentoring and teaching English as a Second Language student inmates to help prepare them to successfully take the GED exam. He still maintains his enthusiasm and healthy respect for life as well as for the criminal justice system.

I am sure that you are aware that Craig was attending law school when this tragic event occurred. He has recently been advised of his readmission pending the result of his upcoming parole hearing. He would be a great asset to

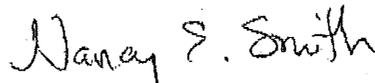
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the legal community and certainly would have an expanded perspective of many legal issues. Hopefully he will have the opportunity to finish his legal education.

Craig Cordes is a good person who did a bad thing. He has taken responsibility and has reflected on his actions and the consequences of his behavior. His insight, talent and drive will be invaluable assets as he reenters society. I am confident that Craig will spend the rest of his life atoning for his actions in this tragedy and will continue to give back to society.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter. Please contact me if you have any questions or need further information.

Very truly yours,



Nancy E. Smith
Senior Associate Justice