

March 27, 2000

To: The Admissions Committee of the William S. Boyd School of Law, UNLV
4505 Maryland Parkway
Box 451003
Las Vegas, Nevada 89154-1003

From: Ms. Claudina Vespia
PMB #193
2540 S Maryland Pkwy
Las Vegas, NV 89109

Dear Members of the Admissions Committee,

I have lived in Las Vegas for thirty years. I have known Michael Distefano for nine years. I met him in March of 1991. Within that period of time Michael has become my closest and dearest friend. He has literally changed my life and my perspective on how I view the world. He has become my brother and mentor. If you knew Michael as I do, you would be amazed at the tenacity and discipline this young man has. One of the reasons that he mentioned when asking me to write a character reference letter for him, was that Admissions Dean Frank Durand had suggested to him, that someone who really and truly knows Mike's intellectual abilities and talents should write a reference letter for him. I can honestly state that I really and truly know Michael Distefano. Last year, 1999, I witnessed Michael take a total of 38 college classes, work a full-time job, and earn high grades, all at the same time. That means he took 114 credit hours last year. He earned 26 solid "A"s, and 5 "A-"s. His transcripts will prove it. It was incredible. His memory is outstanding. I have never seen anyone focus on a goal and stick to it like a magnet as he did. He brought his grade point average up last year from a 2.51 to a 3.13 in one year's time. That is unheard of. He is an inspiration and an asset to the community as a whole. This young man doesn't waste any opportunities when he sees them. He takes advantage of the opportunities offered by Nevada's scholastic system with respect and pride.

Michael is not only the most academically talented young man that I know, he is also a devoted Christian and a family man as well. When I first met Michael, I had a severe alcohol problem and my older sister had just committed suicide. I was in a state of shock and I was very disoriented. This is not your average situation but Michael knew how to deal with it. Instead of just leaving me as "another alcoholic" to society, Michael had the heart and the depth to realize that my only chance for survival was to find the Lord and abstain from alcohol. He stuck with me and never left my side. Today I am proud to say that I have been sober for nine of the most precious years of my life and I owe it all to Michael. His unconditional love for me gave me a second chance at life. He has inspired me to go to college as well. This year will be my third year at CCSN/ UNLV and I owe it all to Michael. I have been at work for a big land development company, Preferred Equities Corporation, as an OPC marketing representative, for the last seven years. I owe this all to Michael. Every Sunday, Michael and I make it regularly to church to worship our Maker. Michael knows his values and has never forgotten where he has come from.

The point I am trying to make is that Michael would not only prove to be an incredible attorney, he would also be a welcomed and beneficial asset as an attorney, to this entire community. Las Vegas needs Michael as a thriving addition to our judicial system. We can't afford not having him. Michael is not only a rare young genius, but his heart is made of gold. It is a very rare occasion when you find both of these qualities wrapped into one young man. This community is very blessed to have him. His development must continue to grow and he has made a decision to choose the very sacred studies of the law. I know this is Michael's calling and he knows it too. This is not just a career choice for Michael, it is a lifetime choice. He has chosen Las Vegas as his home. He wants so much to be blessed with the opportunity to further his studies in the fall 2000 at your fine institution. Given the chance, I know he will take every opportunity to make your college continue to shine with pride and excel to the top of his class. His future and the community's future are in your hands. Please make the right decision.

Thank you for your time and your open mind. If you have any additional questions please call me at 338-9220.

Sincerely,

Claudina Vespia
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