



Testimonial

To: Sebastian Rucci <sebastian@caliparc.com>

To Whom It My Concern,

My name is [REDACTED] am thirty-six years old and I was born in Greensburg, PA. I am a single father of four young men and a daughter that lives with her mother in Florida. I dropped out of High School when I was seventeen to begin raising a family. I enlisted in the U.S. Army at the age of twenty in May 2003. I was enlisted until 2015 when I became a single father. During my enlistment I did three combat tours, two in Iraq and one in Afghanistan. After my enlistment I went to college earning an Associate degree in Specialized Technology with a Major in Welding and Fabrication Technology. I went directly to work as a welder/machinist and Stanko Products Inc following graduation.

I started drinking alcohol after my first deployment in Iraq. In the Army drinking was typical behavior and was expected. My drinking continued heavily through my entire enlistment and got worse as I transitioned into civilian life. At peak of my drinking I would start as soon as I woke up and would drink until I ran out of beer or past out. Drinking a 12 pack a day during the week and up to a case plus a day during the weekend. On average I would spend about \$500-\$700 a month on alcohol. I have been drinking for almost sixteen years but has gotten worse in the last 10. I have quit drinking in the past and my longest sobriety period was about 3 months with in the last year.

I was diagnosed with PTSD from my deployments however it was never treated. I have attended some counseling that was mandated while I was going through the VA disability process. Other injuries I sustained while in service are a left knee injury, right knee injury, right shoulder injury, and a lower back injury. The VA has my current disability rating at 60% but I am in the process of getting an increase for my service related injuries.

I quit drinking on my oldest sons Birthday October 9th and decided to make a change in my life. I made sure that I had everything prepared before I went to the Pittsburgh, PA VA for detox. Before I went to Pittsburgh I had researched treatment facilities around the United States to find a program that would meet my needs and benefit my family. I signed temporary custody of my sons to my family members and split up my four sons. I went to the Pittsburgh, PA VA hospital on the [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The VA tried to get me to commit to their facilities but they had nothing that treated both PTSD and substance abuse like California Palms.

My treatment at the California Palms Addiction and Recovery Center started on the [REDACTED] When I got to California Palms I had my initial assessment and started to develop a treatment plan that fit my needs. We start small groups in the morning with other Veterans with similar struggles. In the groups we discuss topics that addicts often find themselves struggling with from codependency issues to effects of addiction and family. We discuss health concerns often associated with addiction. In the afternoons I have individual sessions with counselors addressing issues that were a concern to me and my family. Coping with social anxiety, avoiding unhealthy situations, learning to deal with stressors that made me want to drink and much more.

Since I have been at the California Palms I have had time to learn new hobbies to keep myself busy. Using physical activities to maintain a health balance and lifestyle. Tae Kwon Do and meditation classes to reduce stress. While focusing on my addiction first I have been able to maintain a healthy relationship with my sons in an environment that is both safe and healthy for all of us. Having them be a part of recovery has been amazing. My support system is now in place and I can now focus on what is most important to a successful recovery.

My recovery is not just important to my success but the success of my family as well. This is a process that we are all need to be involved in. I am even more comfortable knowing that the California Palms are still actively following the Veterans that left their facility. I have had the honor of meeting a few successful men that have gone back to work and started families because the effort of the California Palms staff. Knowing that I always have a support team here after I leave is going to make my transition back home that much easier.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]