To whom it may concern,

Since my transfer to Stateville from Menard, my life has changed and that has in large part due to the educational programs offered here that are, sadly, not offered at Menard. What I have been seeing lately is obstacles being raised for individuals to participate in these programs, whereas instead, there should be an effort to expanding them to as many individuals as possible. Having spent well over a decade at Menard, the difference is night and day. These programs help to build us up not only with education but also mentally and emotionally. I've spoken to several individuals who are devastated because of the fact that they put on alot of hard work into the application process for the degree programs offered only to learn that their applications were never received. Somehow, they were lost between the principal's office and internal affairs. Lots of applications mysteriously disappeared without an explanation, but all of the applicants fit the criteria to participate in these programs.

Not only are obstacles being raised to participate in programs, but we are also learning of threats to discontinue entire programs such as DePaul University's Inside-Out program. DePaul has played a major role in my own rehabilitation. Being clinically engaged has given me a genuine sense of citizenship and social
responsibility. Being able to see the work that is produced in this program endorsed by elected officials of the State of Illinois has been very encouraging, to say the least.

To hear that programs like Depaul will be canceled is very discouraging and directly contradicts the CDOE's mission to rehabilitate. There is absolutely no reason to cancel any of the educational programs. There is plenty of un-used space here and even more than enough centralized offices to extend class/program hours well past 3 p.m.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Concerned -
AFFIDAVIT OF AFFIRMATION

I, Geoffrey Cochran #B-50643, affiant, do hereby declare and affirm under penalty of perjury as defined in 735 ILCS 5/1-109, 28 USC 1746 or 18 USC 1621 that everything contained herein is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief. I further declare and affirm that the contents of the foregoing documents is/are known to me and is/are accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Finally, I do declare and affirm that the matter at hand is not taken either frivolously or maliciously and that I believe the foregoing matter is taken in good faith.

Signed on this 10th day of June, 2019

Geoffrey Cochran
#B-50643

Stateville C. C.
P.O. Box 112
Joliet, IL 60434
I submitted a request for the North Park Theological Seminary application. I filled the application out leaving no question unanswered. I wrote the required two essays of family background, faith background, and contributing events that lead to my decision to apply for the program. The essay dealing with temperament and personality was more descriptive when it came to my vocational/professional goals.

I also completed the essay for Art and Empire in the Ancient World.

I submitted both applications well before the deadline.

I have not received any notice of my acceptance or denial for either class.
I submitted an application for North Park's Theological Seminary Master's program on May 15, 2019. I had a disciplinary ticket on May 9, 2018. My application NEVER made it to NPTS offices due to Principal Constable opting to trash it or decide on her own that I shouldn't even be considered. The application said a year from the time of the disciplinary ticket, but she decided it would be a year from the day I was released from segregation.

*Prior to this ticket I've taken 6-7 NPTS classes, 3 Depaul Classes & 2 North Western classes without ANY incident.
AFFIDAVIT

I, Christopher Pyles, the affiant herein swears upon oath and avers that:

1). I have submitted applications for the degree programs at Stateville for Northwestern Illinois University and for North Park per the instructions to be sent to the EFA office;
2). These applications were submitted before the deadline, however they (Northwestern & North Park) never received them;
3). Upon learning that they (the applications) were never received I wrote Principal Costabile, Warden Williams and filed a grievance, but never received a response;
4). The foregoing is true and accurate in substance and content to the best of my knowledge, understanding and belief under the declaration for the penalty of perjury, pursuant to 735 ILCS 5/1-109; and
5). This affidavit is made in good faith.

Affiant further sayeth naught;

/S/ Christopher Pyles
Christopher Pyles #R-45795
Stateville Correctional Center
Post Office Box 112
Joliet, Illinois 60434
AFFIDAVIT

I, Richy Quezada, being first duly sworn upon my oath, do deposes and state, that the following statements are true and correct in substance and in fact.

1.) Per the new procedures to obtain a college application, I contacted the principle in writing and received said application.

2.) I completed said application and essays required for review prior to submission deadline.

3.) I met all of the academic and institutional requirements to participate in college programs.

4.) North Park sent acceptance, denial and waiting list responses to applicants they received applications from, of which I did not receive.

5.) I contacted Michelle, who is the North Park director concerning my application and lack of response.

6.) I was told if I did not receive a response the university did not receive my application and the institution must have withheld it.
7.) Michelle suggested I contact the principle and warden Williamson to inquire why my application was not forwarded.

8.) I contacted both principle and warden in writing and have yet to get a response.

Pursuant to 28 USC 1746, 18 USC 1621 or 735 ICS 5/1-109, I declare, under penalty of perjury, that I am a named party in the above action, that I have read the above document, and that the information contained therein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Date: 6-11-19

[Signature]
Rickey Quezada
R50163
Stateville Correctional Center
P.O. Box 112
Joliet, IL 60434
THE TROUBLE WITH TRYING TO GET A HIGHER EDUCATION AT STATEVILLE.

There are many impediments to attempting to achieve a higher education while in Stateville. Initially, you have to be added to "the list." To do so, you must apply and complete a questionnaire which usually includes a short essay. Then, if you pass that hurdle, the applicant is scrutinized by first the CHIP's office, not a bad thing, and then by intrench affairs, to many a bad thing. They decide based on your past and present record and gang affiliation if they want you to go to school. Although they pass off the screening process as a security necessity, what it really does is remove people from an educational opportunity that would be commensurate to their successful rehabilitation.

If you are lucky enough to get on the list, then you have to battle to get out of your living unit to attend the class. For reasons that range from a lack of proper administrative structure to just plain laziness, many students have been denied movement to their classes. This author has suffered this dilemma numerous times trying to get to his college classes, details and even Christian service. Many times I was told that classes were cancelled when they were not and that they weren't running a class when they did. Due to the ineptness of the movement team, any person in my living unit wishing to go to a detachment has to go to the dining room for lunch at 8:30 AM and sit there until 10:30 AM just to get there because our unit...
OFFICERS WOULD LET US OUT LATER AND THE MARRIAGE TEAM WOULDN'T COME TO GET US.

IF YOU ARE LUCKY ENOUGH TO GET OUT TO YOUR DETAIL, THEN YOU HAVE TO BE HANDS UP AND TAKEN THERE WHERE YOU ARE SEARCHED AND SCRUTINIZED BEFORE YOU ARE ALLOWED IN. EVEN THOUGH THE SCHOOL BUILDING IS HOT, HAVING NO AIR CONDITIONING OR PROPER VENTILATION, ATTENDEES ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BRING BOTTLED WATER WITH THEM BECAUSE THE POLICE DON'T WANT TO DISPOSE OF THEM. EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE ALLOWED TO HAVE BOTTLES THEMSELVES. IN MY LAST COLLEGE CLASS THE SCHOOL SERGEANT FELT IT NECESSARY TO CALL THE OFFICE, INCLUDING STUDENTS FROM THE UNIVERSITY, OVER SOMETHING THAT HAD OCCURRED EARLIER IN THE DAY AT ANOTHER COLLEGE CLASS, WHICH HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH OUR GATHERING. HE FURTHER FELT IT NECESSARY TO CURSE, YELL AND DEMANUS TO SET HIS POINT ACROSS. UNFORTUNATELY FOR HIM THE POINT HE MADE WAS NOT THE POINT HE WAS TRYING TO MAKE. DISCIPLINARY REPORTS ARE TICKETS THAT ARE ISSUED WHEN PERSONNEL FEEL THAT YOU VIOLATED A RULE. THEY ARE ISSUED FOR SOMETHING AS SIMPLE AS FORGETTING TO TURN YOUR FAN OFF WHEN LEAVING YOUR ROOM OR HAVING A WATER BOTTLE IN THE CLOSET OR DISREGARDING THE HARMONY OF THE CIVIL UNIT. THESE TICKETS ARE DISCIPLINARY AND COME WITH A SUSPENSION OF YOUR SCHOOL PRIVILEGES FOR UP TO 1 YEAR ALONG WITH OTHER RESTRICTIONS TO YOUR FREEDOMS. THIS ACTION IS BASED ON STATUTES.

THEORY THAT ATTENDING SCHOOL IS A PRIVILEGE AND IF YOU GET ANY DISCIPLINARY REPEL, YOU ONLY DESERVE STILL PRIVILEGE. ACTUALLY THIS ENFORCEMENT ACTION IS JUST ANOTHER WAY TO KEEP IN CONTROL.
Citizens from settling their education which
would greatly enhance their rehabilitation which
is mandated by Article 1 Section 11 of the Illinois
Constitution which calls for the Illinois Department
of Corrections to rehabilitate incarcerated citizens
to restore them to useful citizenship.

Ironically, the Illinois Department of
Corrections is in the process of making
Stateville their educational hub of the state
Prison System. They have approved higher
education programs from DePaul, Northwestern,
North Eastern, and North Park Universities.
Lewis University also has a program there
and is looking to expand. And the District community
college is due to arrive in the fall, much to the
chagrin of the Stateville administration.

And their union, the Officers Who Believe
in Worker’s Union, is rebelling. It’s a battle.

There is a disconnect between the State and
Stateville which has caused the Stateville
administration to find a way to contain the
state’s wishes, all in the name of security.
I ask you, should a man be removed from his
educational program for a year just because
we forgot to turn his fan off? Stateville
says yes.

Those of a certain FCM would ask why is
the union, and ultimately Stateville opposed to
educating these men and restoring them to
useful citizenship. In the words of one of
our State Representatives, “Don’t get it twisted,
guys, you are a petty check, a commodity to the union.”
In simple terms, the more bodies that are in STATENILE the more correctional officers are needed, which means more money goes to the union which allows them to prosper. In theory, post to evict a whole system in Illinois, it was said that the union would have to be sold on the fact that they would lose any correctional officers if they started to parole rehabilitated citizens. Without the support of the union and its constituents, a bill of this type would have a hard time becoming a law.

The other issue the union has with facilitating in unlicensed citizens is that it challenges the maximum security designation of STATENILE. Hence the plotting of major disciplinary reports for minor infractions. In the past STATENILE was a rough and tumble maximum security facility where murders and assaults were common. According to correctional officers, it earned their UHILAPITY. The STATENILE of today is at least a medium security facility where obtaining an education, maintaining a job, or fighting to prove your innocence is the norm. If there is no longer a discipline problem then why are so many officers needed? Even the union has their people who are trying to make this facility look like a maximum security institution through statistics with out actions to support them.

If you compare and contrast the unions need to STATENILE's needs and discount the Illinois
State Constitution as just a piece of paper with some writing on it, much to the disarray of the numerous Idaho official citizens who are working diligently to rehabilitate themselves into useful citizenship. You will see the problem with trying to get a higher education here at Stateville.

I have to go turn off my few new Audios to work. God bless you all.
Testimony About Education in Stateville.

The school principal and Warden Miles are making decisions that are very toxic mentally for people here that want to change our life and be educated. Everybody has been talking about it but no one is doing anything about it. I can only speak for me. Being kicked out of P-WAP made me feel like I've been trying to change for nothing because I have been doing good and because all it takes is a petty ticket now to get kicked out. For example, if I need to sit down on the toilet and my cellie is sleep on the bottom bunk, the toilet is right by him so if I hang a sheet between us from my top bunk to respect him, I can get a ticket. Some officers want because they see me using the toilet but some will -- Now if I don't hang a sheet down my cellie will think it is disrespectful because he don't want me to wake up to see me using the toilet. This always cause problems with cellies. There is no reason to write tickets for stuff like this because as long as the S/O view is not blocked into the cell they should not write a ticket. For every ticket they write like this when they walk by and see a sheet up they also give people a disobeying a direct order charge when 9 times out of 10 they don't say anything. They don't say take the sheet down but now you have a "Major" ticket. And can't work on your rehabilitation for 4 years. That is not right. It's stressful now on top of stress. But they don't want us in these programs. They want to see us fighting and doing stupid so they can continue to look down on us instead of build us up. If anybody reading this
Can help, please help us stay in the programs unless we actually commit a major infraction.

Thank you.
Prisons are a hotbed for education throughout the nation. However, here at Stateville, the biggest adversary for inmates taking classes are the guards and their powerful union.

Even though this is the Department of Corrections, where prisoners are supposed to be getting rehabilitated, the staff seems to want us to stay in the mindset that brought many of us here.

The main focus of the educational programs here at Stateville is to make us better citizens so we can leave here and help build up the disenfranchised communities that we helped tear down.
There's always a problem for the cellhouse guards to key us out for classes. Most of the time they will lie and say the class was cancelled. Only to find out later that day or night it wasn't. Guards are not disciplinarian for making us miss classes. Even writing a grievance on it is a waste of good paper.

The movement officer harass us on the way to school. They act like we're disrupting their day by sitting on their butts, doing nothing. They complain that if we wanted to go to school we should have stayed on the outside. Or, why didn't we go to school on the outside? Guards are paid good for us to escort us, where we have
be. However, their mindset is we should be locked in our cells 24 hours a day. That would make their jobs easier.

The staff has created backless to try and impede the educational system. This is done by writing bogus tickets of petty offenses on students. So when the student is caught, he gets kicked out of the educational program or class. Where in America does a college student get kicked out of school for a parking or gay walking ticket?!

For the past few years the education building has been filled with a sergeant and guards that are anti-peer. Where it creates a hostile environment that is toxic.
to learn in. We're insincerely yelled at and cussed at like we're little kids. Such verbal abuse makes it hard to learn and stay focused on the lesson plan.
To whom this may concern:

The educational dynamic within the prison institution have been particularly challenging, especially within minimum security Trust and problems getting escorted to class when you are a student and your schedule conflicts with other life issues, i.e., health care, family visits, etc. Even if there were a few minutes late, even though there are escort policies with which it is their duty, still potential issues arise. In many instances, disciplinary issues have become a problem for students. Now, even a minor violation can result in you being removed from an educational program.

There are too many issues to list here, but those posted above seem to serve as a document to those who may want to pursue education. I have been incarcerated for twenty years, and I can attest that receiving an education is the best way to reorient thought processes toward positive and beneficial (more rational, more responsible, and less impulsive and unemotional) behavior. Thought is all but abolished among those who are fortunate enough to receive an education. Yet it almost feels like you are left diminished if you attend school. This should not be.
If good behaviour is celebrated and should be promoted, then negative obstacles should be removed from those who seek to educate themselves and become a positive asset to the institution they reside, and their community if released.

Anonymous
To Whom It May Concern:

6.28.19

I'm currently incarcerated at Stateville C.C., and I've been a student/participant in educational programs provided by the following institutions: 1) DePaul University; 2) North Park University/Theological Seminary; 3) North Western University; 4) Prisons and Neighborhood Arts Project; 5) and various programs taught by non-university affiliated volunteers. These programs have been an invaluable asset in contributing to my rehabilitation and in transforming my life. I've been participating in these programs since 2014, and now I'm earning a Master's Degree in Christian Ministry and Restorative Arts.

There are several concerns that I have. The first is that there are plans in place to eliminate nearly all programs unrelated to the Northwestern Bachelor's Degree Program and the North Park Master's Degree program. The problem with this is that the collegiate program offered by DePaul and P.N.A.P. actually play a major role in preparing students for programs that offer degrees. It is absolutely necessary for these programs to continue because they help to rehabilitate prisoners and it reduces the probability of prisoners engaging in activities that break prison rules.

The second concern that I have concerns in two parts: 1) The restrictions placed upon prisoners to communicate with the volunteers who teach the classes 2) The restrictions upon prisoners when released to have any contact with volunteers for the purposes of further education. The importance of communication with the instructors comes from questions that we as students may have regarding homework, research,
rescheduling, and so on. Some of these programs offer college credit, and the universities often work on deadlines to have everything graded. Many prisoners upon release want to further their education and the only resources they have for that opportunity are the very people who taught them in prison. It only makes sense to allow communication between prisoners and volunteers for the purposes of rehabilitation and to prevent ex-prisoners from coming back to prison.

Lastly, currently there is no policy in place that prevents students involved in these programs from getting transferred while they are active students. The programs are not state-funded, and the volunteers/institutions that offer these classes lose out on their funding when students are abruptly transferred in the middle of a semester. Not only that, but the transfers disrupt and hinder the rehabilitation process taking place in the lives of the students.

Thank you for considering my concerns. As a student-prisoner I have to say that the programming offered by all of the volunteers has been life changing in a positive way. There are many more concerns, but I think the ones that I mentioned are a good place to start addressing so that these programs can remain successful.

Sincerely,
Concerned Student.
Before coming to Stateville correctional center, I had never taken a college course in my life. In 2018 I was able to experience my first college class in Depaul’s inside-out law, politics, and mass incarceration course. The opportunity to participate in this class from Depaul was life changing for me. Not only did I learn things I never knew before, but it gave me the confidence I needed to continue my education. Depaul’s inside-out allowed me to see that it was more to life then what I’ve been condition to believe growing up. Depaul’s inside-out gave me the necessary tools to transform myself into the education hungry individual I am today. I am grateful for that opportunity I experience being a Depaul inside-out student, and to strive it has given me to want to continue a college education while incarcerated and upon release.

Stateville cancellation of the Depaul inside-out classes will result in many incarcerated individuals lack of opportunity to participate in a program that could also become life changing in the same way it was to me. Education is a key element to achieving rehabilitation. The education Depaul university gave here at Stateville correctional center cannot be replaced. In fact, any cancellation of this program presents a grave injustice to people like me who want to change, but might need that certain enlightenment that Depaul offers to their students whether incarcerated, or not. That could assist in that change Stateville correctional center Warden, and other employees who has engaged in the averseance of the cancellation of Depaul university inside-out program has committed an grave injustice to the incarcerated individuals here at Stateville who wants to learn and
a part of something so positive, and bigger than any one individual.

If Stateville is going to be about rehabilitation, and assisting all incarcerated individuals in their aim at self rehabilitation, then Depaul university inside-out program has to be part of that incarcerated individual opportunity at rehabilitating himself. I am walking living example of how important this program can change person life for the better, which contributes to lowering the recidivism rates of individuals upon release who has experienced college education. Therefore, Depaul university inside-out program is a greatly needed educational program for those like myself incarcerated at Stateville correctional center looking for tools which they will assist them in their positive transformation, and help restore them back to useful citizens in their communities once released.
CHALLENGES TO APPEARING IN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS.

IT IS MY EXPERIENCE THAT THERE ARE TWO MAIN
CHALLENGES TO APPEARING IN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS.
ONE IS GETTING THERE, THE OTHER IS WHAT HAPPENS
WHEN YOU GET THERE.

IN GETTING THERE THE CHALLENGES BEGIN WHEN YOU
ARE TRYING TO GET OUT OF YOUR LIVING UNIT. THE
CITIPLANS OFFICE COMPiles A BOOK OF ALL THE DETAILS
FOR THE MONTH AND WHO IS APPROVED TO GO TO THOSE
DEPARTMENTS, AND THAT BOOK IS PRESENTED TO EVERY LIVING
UNIT AS WELL AS NUMEROUS COPIES TO THE MOVE TEAM.
SOMEHOW THE BOOK ENDS UP "MISSING" ON THE
PERSON WHO IS ON THE LIST AND TRYING TO GET OUT IS
TOLD HE IS NOT ON THE LIST EVEN THOUGH HE IS. THIS
JUST OCCURRED IN MY INSIDE/OUT TRAINING CLASS WHERE
CLASS MEMBERS WERE TOLD THEY WERE NOT ON THE LIST BUT
WHEN WE CALLED THE "MASTER LIST" AND THEY WERE.
IT IS UNKNOWN WHETHER THIS IS THE FAULT OF
LAZY STAFF, A WAY TO CONTROL MOVEMENT OR A
COMBINATION THEREOF. BUT IT OCCURS IN EVERY HOME.
LAST SUMMER AS I WAS TRYING TO ATTEND MY 10:30
NORTH WESTERN CLASS I WAS TOLD TWICE THAT MY
CLASS WAS CANCELLED ONLY TO FIND OUT THAT IS.
WASN'T TRUE. UPON INQUIRY AS TO WHY THEY
CANCELED THE STATUS OF MY CLASS AND WHY THEY
WON'T LET ME OUT I WAS TOLD THAT IF I WANTED
TO GO TO MY CLASS THEN I HAD TO GO TO OUR 8:30A
CLASS AND JUST WAIT IN THE DINING ROOM FOR
MY CLASS TO GO OUT. THIS HAPPENED RECENTLY WHILE
TWO OF US WERE TRYING TO GO TO CHURCH. EVEN THOUGH
THE CHURCH LINE GOES RIGHT PAST OUR HOUSE WE WERE
LET OUT LATE AND THEN TOLD TO WAIT IN THE BALLPIE
Until they were "free" to take us even though we missed half the service. After we were told to go to the church hall and wait for the church line to leave from there again at 10:30.

As you can imagine this lack of proper approved movement is a huge impediment to attending on classes. As if we try to make our own way to class we could be subjected to unauthorized movements and, and if they don't let us out, as authorized, and we miss class we will be removed from the retail.

The second difficulty to attending class is what happens when you show up to the school for class. Understanding that there are rules and regulations that must be followed both for stateville and the university that sponsors the class, new rules are enforced by the Sergeant that runs the house that we are not aware of because they don't "officially exist" and if you "violate" them, he will kick you out of school building or not let you in at all. There was one occurrence where he would not let me in because he couldn't find the list with my name on it. Even though the instructor had the valid class list in her hand.

Another incident, the Sergeant allowed water bottles in the school because "my posters are complaining about elevating them up." But we were not informed so all of us that showed up with water bottles were searched and threatened with disciplinary reports and school expulsion for the infraction. Twice I was told that I wasn't dressed properly for school even though I was in my proper state uniform. Attempts to withdraw this harassment and more does is disgusting...
US FROM GOING TO SCHOOL TO FURTHER THEIR EDUCATION, BY FEAR OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION, SCHOOL EXPULSION OR BEING REMOVED FROM CLASS, SCHOOLS SHOULD BE A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT WHERE PEOPLE ARE EASIER TO GO TO CLASSES AND ENJOY THE PROCESS OF LEARNING. THIS IS IMPORTANT TO CIVILIZATION AND THEIR TRANSITION TO SOCIETY.

I recently, as I was writing this, I watched my neighbor try to get out of his room. For his 10:30 North Park Class only to be told that they had to list with his name on it. And when the list started appearing, but they didn't want to take him. They in turn told him that he should have come out with the 8:30 lunch line and waited in the dining room.

I greatly appreciate your attention to our dilemma.