

**Mount Pleasant MHI**

**Letters of Support 2**

**Written by  
MHI clients**

**October 26, 2009**

10-26-09 TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN,

I WOULD LIKE TO SAY PLEASE CONSIDER THE FACT OF KEEPING THIS PLACE OPEN AND RUNNING.

THIS FACILITY HAS HAD SUCH AN IMPACT ON MY LIFE THE WAY IT HELPED ME DIG AND FIND ANSWERS ABOUT MYSELF AND MY ADDICTIONS.

I WOULD PROBABLY OF BEEN DEAD IF IT WASN'T FOR THIS PROGRAM. YOU MUST TAKE IN CONSIDERATION HOW MANY LIVES HAVE BEEN CHANGED. THE SUCCESS STORIES AS WELL.

THE COUNSELORS AND STAFF ARE WONDERFUL AND EXTREMELY CARING. I REALLY ENJOY THE TIME I HAVE TALKING W/ THEM.

I HOPE THIS CAN HELP IN YOUR ~~DECISIONS~~ DECISIONS TO KEEP THIS PLACE OPEN

SINCERELY, Brandon Parsons

Dear Task,

my name is Dave Mefford. I just wanted to let you know that this treatment program has saved my life. It saved me from losing my 3 boys and my beautiful wife, and my unborn baby. It took me from a life style of drinking, using drugs. And its putting back in society a healthy person. I really benifitted from this program. I plan on carrying my message to other alcoholics like myself. This program saved my family and I would recoment it to anyone. So please leave this program open.

Dear task force

10-26-09

I am a resident here at IRTC  
I have been here for 3 weeks now  
and this has been the best thing  
that I have done in 3 1/2 years.  
well since I was young. I never  
realized my pattern of behaviors  
stemmed from my childhood issues  
of abandonment, or that I was  
beginning to pass it down to my  
own children. After dealing with  
all of the issues that I've  
been using drugs and alcohol  
to hide from, I feel like a  
new person, I am confident in  
leaving here knowing that I'm  
a better person, mother <sup>and</sup> friend,  
I have been in treatment 1 time  
before 3 years ago. and never dealt  
with the root of my using. This  
facility is the reason for my realizing  
that I'm a good person, I've been  
a good person, and it's done that  
for ~~people~~ numerous clients. I learn  
something new here everyday and  
I'm thankful to be here.

Jessica C.

TO WHOME IT MAY CONSERN,  
IRTC HAS BEEN HELPING THE  
DRUG ADDICTED AND THE MENTALLY  
CHALLANGED FOR A GOOD MANY YEARS  
NOW. THEY HAVE AN EXCALENT STAFF  
AND THEY DO THEIR JOBS WITH PRIDE  
AND DEVOTION RATED SECOND TO  
NONE.

I HAPPEN TO BE AN ADDICT. I  
DIDN'T TAWK THERE WOULD BE  
ANY WAY I'D EVER BE ABLE TO  
CURB MY NEED TO USE DRUGS. I  
CAME HERE AND WITH THE HELP  
OF THE IRTC STAFF I CAN SEE  
A LITE AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL  
I HAVE A HOPE FOR A BETTER  
TOMMAROW. I BEG OF YOU DON'T  
CLOSE THIS PLACE DOWN OR THE  
GROWING NUMBER OF PEOPLE LIKE  
ME WONT HAVE THE CHANCE TO  
CHANGE THEIR LIVES FOR THE  
BETTER.

IF YOU CLOSE THIS PLACE  
THE REPERCUSSIONS WOULD ECHO  
THREW S.E. IOWA FOR DECADES.

SINCERALLY

THOMAS WILSON  
KINROSS, IOWA

To whom it may Concern

My name is Chelsea Gignione I am 19 years old and a Outpa at MHI. MHI Treatment Center has help me grow in so many ways. Help me come to see that I do have a problem with drug abuse. To me none of the treatment centers should be closed, you should open more. Treatment is a blessing, it's a place where people can go to get a second chance at life. MHI is a great treatment, with great IRTCS. I am very grateful for having this treatment center, for all of them for that matter. I believe all treatment centers in Iowa should stay open. Just think of the outcome of closing one, more homeless people, addicts won't get the care they need, jails will flood and crime rate will go up. We should raise taxes, like food taxes. This way we could open more, and keep the four that are open. Many things can be done to help save MHI treatment centers, and the other, treatment centers. I hope and pray that this letter reaches out. Thank you

for the time.

Yours truly,

Chelsea Griglione

To Whom it may concern:

Hello, my name is Jeremiah Collins, I am 34 years of age from Ottumwa Ia.

My life for the past 23 years has consisted of severe drug abuse / addiction. When I was arrested earlier this year, I found myself once again sitting alone fighting my way out of the abyss of meth addiction. With no hope of seeing my youngest daughters first birthday or first steps, I felt a depression that weighted me down immensely. I had been down this road several times before this, and each time the feeling got even more despairing.

Faced with 25 years in prison, the longest term I have ever faced, I knew it was time for a complete change in my life.

I was placed in IRTC and told this is my chance to show I want something different in my life.

On October 1<sup>st</sup> 2009 I arrived at IRTC, from the very start, I was given exercises that to me seemed overbearing to say the least.

I was forced to write a life story, and I couldn't see how this had any bearing on my current situation. I have a lot of bad memories that I have worked hard at forgetting, ripping through these old wounds were painful and I soon discovered that a lot of issues needed worked out, not ~~buried~~ buried.

Anger issues were next, and then came my lack of coping skills concerning grief. After all of that I had to work through relationship issues and I really did not understand what Relationships had to do with drug abuse.

On one of my one on ones with my Counselor Fred, I made the connection on why I "had" to do all these exercises.

The progression of my addiction started when I was 11 years old. My grandmother passed away and my father introduced me to IV drug use, this offered me a way to not feel. After I learned how to not feel I learned how to cover my drug use by being angry. This taught me that if I was high and angry I could get what I wanted, from anyone. Several more deaths and personal traumas occurred in my life over the span of the next 20 years. Over all this time I taught myself that the way to "Cope" with this was to stay high.

IRTC has given me a new way to live with these issues and any others that may arise.

I have been through several "treatment" programs and I can honestly say that none have made me work as deep as this program.

I feel as I have been given a new lease on life and regardless of the outcome of my current legal situation I will live.

So many people in the state benefit from IRTC, addicts, our families and our communities. In Southeast Iowa, IRTC is our ray of hope that penetrated my life time of darkness and paved the road on which my feet now walk.

There are so many stories like mine and they are all miracles in the making. Please consider my life and my children's lives and all the other addicts and families who have passed through these doors and, hopefully, the future clients of IRTC.

Respectfully  
Jeremiah  
E  
Collins

When I think about the help that I have received at IRTC I think about the work that I have done to improve who I am as a person and how I wouldn't have been able to do that if it wasn't for the environment that was provided to me not only by the staff, but by the counselors as well.

While I attended treatment here I was treated in a manner that I feel was beneficial to me and my recovery I do not feel that I was treated unfairly or that they had too high of expectations for me in what I was doing. They always seemed to have an answer for my questions even if it wasn't what I wanted to hear they would tell me anyway because it was what I needed to hear.

Many of the programs offered here are very helpful. I found out a lot about myself and the relationships I have had in the past and how to tell whether or not they are healthy or not and how to go about making them healthy from the start. I can see this treatment being very beneficial to others in the future if they are given the chance to have the same treatment experience that I was given.

When I look back at the things that were offered to me at this facility I see how it's all been given to me along my way and it's up to me to do the work I can't expect the counselors or the staff to hold my hand through life and that they have done everything that they could to help me along the way through treatment. It's my own fault if I didn't get a question answered cause I didn't ask it. The people here are more then willing to help us out if we so choose to let them. answered cause I didn't ask it. The people here are more then willing to help us out if we so choose to let them. And that is one thing I will be truly grateful for the rest of my life.

My name is Mayra Nuñez. I am writing this letter with the hope that it will help people to see how valuable and important it is to keep this facility open. I was sent to I.R.T.C on September 30th, 2009 from Polk County Jail, and I had a very negative attitude. I figured I'll go do the treatment go with the motions, get out and go back to drinking and using. I know that now from everything I've learned about myself here, and the tools that I've gained from the counselors and staff it's the best gift I could have ever been given. I can now look at myself in the mirror, and love the person staring back at me. That was impossible before. I've gained so much being here that I do not want to go I feel there a lot more to learn. We are human beings who deserve a chance at a sober, and normal life. I could not have gotten to the mind set I have now, without this place. I do not believe any center should close, we actually need more places like this one. You can't put a price on a life, and I understand the budget is tight. However this place needs to remain open.

To whom it may concern,

Mt. Pleasant has been a life changing experience for not only myself but my husband also. This treatment center has saved our lives. I was in outpatient for 8 months before I came here. When I first got here I thought I would just do what I had to do to get out of here, but since coming here I have learned a lot about myself and my addiction. This whole facility does everything they can to help everyone who walks through these doors. If Mt. Pleasant were to close it would definitely be a great loss to people like myself who owe our lives to this place.

Sincerely yours

Janet Burch

With the help of IRTC I am learning how to change my life. Since I have been here I have learned a lot about myself. You know 90% of the problem we have is ourself and only 10% is our addiction? I didn't until I came here.

I learned through "self work" assignments my problems are a result of my childhood and poor decision making. My counselor has helped me look back and work through these problems instead of continuing to run.

Every counselor here makes an effort to be sure our needs are met. They interact with us on a day to day basis. They are willing to do what it takes for us to better our lives. They give us the information and resources we need – and then it is up to us what we do with it. Without the help and support of them, the director Kollin, and the RTW's I wouldn't be where I'm at today.

They have helped me to take a look at my life and address the problems I have been running from for so long. I also have a plan for what to do when I am faced with conflicts in my life again. I have gotten in touch with my feelings and know how to deal with them now thanks to the help and support of everyone here and all of the work I have done. I realize now I am able to live my life on life's terms. I will forever be grateful for the help and support I have received at IRTC.

Sincerely,

Paige McCarty

Dear Rita

10/25/09

This is MORICE J. I'm writing this letter because I want you to know how I'm feeling and to thank you for giving me a chance to see my ways of wrong doings, and I now see that when I show people the "G-is-ME" attitude, then some people take it for granted, and all kinds of things seem to come my way. I'm not a victim, so I need to not act as one. One other thing is that I don't smile that much, But I'm not trying to intimidate NOONE at ALL. I have been talking to alot of staff members over the weekend and have received alot of good advice from the following; (4-T's) Tom.

TRACY.

TAMMY.

TALISA.

Tom is the one who told me about the way I look, and said that if I smiled more it would help the way people think of me. You and the other women are the ones who told me not to do the victim role, by not talking, and staying to myself, cause that's not me. Now I know I have along way to go because I do have a SELF-Esteem problem, and I'm working on it... One day at a time. Thank You

Dear Task Force

10-25-09

I'm writing this letter in support of keeping the Mental Health Institute of Mt. Pleasant Iowa open so it can continue to rehabilitate people from all over Iowa.

I'm almost thirty three years old and I became addicted to Cocaine three years ago. Before I had ever used drugs I was living the American Dream. I had a successful professional career, husband, & three wonderful children. I was a trusted & respected member of my community and avid volunteer.

Since June of 2008 I have been thru four rehab programs trying to save my life. I've lost my career, my family, & all the respect I worked so hard for. I was left broken and lost my will to live.

When I walked thru these doors six weeks ago I was looking for help & hope. What I have received is a transformation inside me that I never expected.

This program is showing me what it will take for me to keep my sobriety once I leave this facility. The intense daily schedule begins at 6am and ends after 9pm ~~daily~~ and teaches us discipline. Everyone has a job to do everyday & we elect a peer Council to govern these daily tasks teaching

responsibility. We are required to be engaged and accountable for all roll calls at all times.

There are many structured activities that we must participate in and can be incorporated into our daily routine once we get home.

Most impressive to me has been the library & the MHI employees. The library has extensive material relating to Chemical dependency as well as interpersonal & Social issues. I have read many books and watched videos on how to deal with guilt, shame, codependency as well as Cocaine addiction. Every night ~~night~~ I listen to audio cassettes relating to achieving goals & self improvement.

Its hard to put into words the knowledge that the counselor's, staff and public speakers imparted to me in class and one on one conversations.

I have never in my life experienced a group of people who care so much and work as efficient as they do here. The wealth of knowledge and commitment that resides with the employees inside this building cannot be replicated in any other setting. It would be a detriment to all of Southeast Iowa to lose this facility.

In my opinion the state of Iowa needs to spend more money on rehab programs along with early childhood prevention programs in our schools. I know first hand ~~about~~

Programs like this are critical for people who suffer from alcohol & drug addiction as well as mental disorders to be rehabilitated and able to function in society again.

In the peak of my drug use, right before I hit bottom I broke the law by committing petty crimes to support my drug habit.

People who cannot stop using drugs are burdens to the state and taxpayers until they get the treatment we need to regain control. Drug use out of control bleeds the welfare system, causes lost wages to tax paying employers, overpopulates prisons, & clogs our legal systems & corrupts societal values and morals.

Many people who suffer with addiction want to change and be free of drugs and we deserve a chance. That's what this program did for me. It's giving me the knowledge and skills necessary to rebuild my life and become an asset to my community once again. Which in turn resolves the economic burdens that are placed on this state by chemical addictions. Because of MHI in Mt Pleasant, I know what's broken inside me that I have to fix, I've learned coping strategies to keep from backsliding

into a relapse and I have made new hopes and dreams that can't be counted in state dollars. Because of MHI in Mt Pleasant it will take me a lifetime of giving to others to payback what I received here in six short weeks. It is a gift that to my children, my family, myself and to society is priceless.

Sincerely

Lisa Orth

Task Force,

10-25-09

I would like to let you all know what a wonderful place this is with wonderful staff. I just got here Wednesday and have only been here 5 days but I already feel welcomed. The staff here from admissions to teachers, to counselors are wonderful people with big hearts. They are fully treatment focused and here to help us all as individuals. I would be heartbroken if this place closed and the future patients that will need to come won't have the opportunity.

Thanks,  
Brandi S.

So my support letter is going to be straight to the point.  
This place this program saved my life. I owe this program  
my life. my sobriety. its completely changed my point of  
view on life. to shut it down would shut down opportunities  
for many men like me who need not want but need this program  
because there life depends on it.

Jonathan P.

To Whom it may concern:

When I first came here I really didn't know what to expect. But having been here I realize what a godsend it has made in my life. This facility teaches how to deal with issues that will help us lead healthy & productive lives once again. Our minds have been sick for a long time & IRTC helps us understand what's happening. They provide us the tools & it's up to us to work & use them wisely. To shut us down would hurt so many. Not only the clients but their families as well. I hope this helps. This place is great!

Sincerely,

Benée Jagan

OCT 25

To whom this may concern:

I am a Client at IRTC in Mt. Pleasant at this time and would like to put my two cents worth in as far as closing this facility. There are many individuals who need this sort of treatment and require it to maintain full recovery for their addictions. The counselors have been really helpful toward my recovery and the staff is doing a great job too. I have learned a lot from the treatment that I have received here and I would hate to see anyone that is requiring treatment to miss the opportunity to have a full recovery. I would like to see this facility continue to do so.

Thank you,  
Helen G.

To Whom It May Concern  
I've only been here 3 weeks and  
I can notice a change in myself  
already. And I talked to Mother  
and my sister this past weekend.  
And both of them can notice the  
difference also.

I think it would be a huge  
mistake to close this facility. Be  
cause the way they help all of the  
people that come through here. I  
don't think I have ever met a  
more helpful group of people.

Sincerely  
Ronald M.

Oct 26<sup>th</sup> 2009  
Brent Smith  
Anna

I think it would be a shame to shut down the IRTC. Since I've been here I've learned so much about what makes me tick, I've dealt with feelings deep inside that I've needed to deal with for years. As far as I'm concerned this place has maybe saved my life and saved me from going to prison. It has made me take a look at my life and I really needed that to remember what was important. This place makes a difference, there are good people here that just need a little help getting things back on track. Don't take that away. Closing down the IRTC would be a tragedy for many lives. Please think about the lives you will not save and positively ~~be~~ affect. Make the right decision, please.

"Save IRTC"

Brent Smith

To Whom it may Concern:

I'd like to tell you what I.R.T.C has done for me. It has given me hope when I had none. It's helped me find a person like I spent 31 yrs looking for yet running from at the same time and I'm OK with her/me. I'm learning how to feel - something I've avoided for 10 yrs and I'm doing it Sober.

The Staff here care about my future they want me to <sup>90</sup>succeed as much as I want to succeed and because I know what this program has done for me it makes me sad to think this program may not be available to others in the future. What a loss that would be.

This is a life or death matter to us and without this program and the staff here it's scary to think of where the majority of us would be.

Khrista Edman