

Kevin M. Whitfield
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Gideon's Promise Class of 2015

Dear Friend of Gideon's Promise,

I could never have imagined how dear Gideon's Promise would be to me before attending the Summer Institute last year. At a distance, the Summer Institute looked like a typical training program. And, in fact, we devoted significant time to improving our craft. From the initial client meeting to closing argument, the faculty taught us everything we needed to know to win.

But we will not always win. Between the crushing caseloads, the judges and prosecutors unsympathetic to our clients, and the state of the law itself, we fall short in providing the representation to which our clients are constitutionally entitled. That realization takes its toll. So while many lawyers come to indigent defense with a burning zeal, far too many see their fires die.

Gideon's Promise is the kindling for a new era of public defense. By bringing public defenders across the country together, Gideon's Promise has become so much more than a training program. It is a resource its members can call on for continued instruction. It is a movement whose participants are devoted to the transformation of indigent defense across the country. And it is a family of public defenders who can share in our successes and comfort us in our losses.

I began work at the Richland County Public Defender's Office in October of last year. In that time, the lessons learned through Gideon's Promise have proved invaluable. My experiences with Gideon's Promise—the training, the community, the much-needed support—would not be possible without your generosity. Thank you for your donation. Thank you for keeping our fires alive.

Sincerely,

Kevin M. Whitfield