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Dear Honorable Judge,

As a manager of Stokoe Farms, a 211-year-old farm in Scottsville, New York, the first time I met Katie Morrison was during a particularly busy Christmas Tree season day in 2012. An emergency call had been made for more help, and Katie was happy to answer. I was bringing water and hot chocolate to the staff working outside in the cold weather when I saw this girl hauling giant trees off a wagon and into the bailer line. She was by far outworking all the boys, and she continues to do so. In fact, she was outworking most of the staff even when she was pregnant for her son.

What strikes me the most about Katie is how she takes care of everyone around her, and I mean that truly. When I was sick, she made me elderberry syrup before coming to work. She collected clothing and money for a 15-year-old staff member who sleeps on a friends couch as his mother has mental health issues. Katie also helped a new employee named Anthony, whose family is experiencing financial difficulties. She raised funds and arranged a volunteer mechanic to help get the brakes fixed on the family vehicles so that it could be inspected and registered. She does this quietly and wants nothing in return.

As with the rest of the world, the farm is a bit understaffed right now. Katie helped to make sure the staff was taken care of during our particularly busy times. She made lunch for the staff, ensured they were hydrated, warm, and dry. Katie is thoughtful in her work and gives amazing customer service to our guests. I can't stress enough how important she is to the farm, and what a joy it is to get to work with her. Her positive energy, compassion, and hard work is a great example to everyone who works with her.

Katie is an amazing mother to her two beautiful children, and an equally amazing partner to Brian. She is the mom who make wholesome food from scratch, teaching the kids to collect eggs from their chickens, she wastes nothing. As her partner works tirelessly on his family farm, I believe it would be a true adversity for her family to be without her for any amount of time. Katie is the backbone of her immediate family. She is mom, teacher, caretaker, and farm wife. For Katie to be sentenced to time away, would see ripple effects in her children's lives that would take years to overcome both mentally and financially.

I write to you and ask you to consider as much leniency as possible for Katie Morrison. I know that she meant no harm on that terrible day. I ask that you consider Katies true character that we see at work and when she is with her family.

Best Regards,

Julie Izzo Niedzwick

Julie Izzo Niedzwick
Director of Events and HR
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