

April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Dear Alderman Robert Bauman

I am writing this letter to share my experience of being a part of the Bridging The Gap facility located in Milwaukee Wisconsin, 1017 N State street. I was a part of the original group of students that received training at the Bridging The Gap facility. Prior to my introduction to the facility, I had a very limited experience regarding how to caddie and even less about how to golf. As young individual who had no rights of his own because I was 13, I had no job, I was not in summer school, and according to my parents I played too many video games I thought that staying involved with Bridging The Gap would be beneficial for me.

My first year of attending the Bridging The Gap facility was amazing! I learned how to caddie and solidified my first paying job at the Brynwood country club. I also learned some of the basic skills in golf like how to grip and swing a club appropriately. Being apart of the Bridging The Gap facility also brought a great sense of community because many of the kids that were a part of the program were from the same area. One of the things that I learned from my experience at the Bridging The Gap facility was how to be punctual and how to be respectful of the time for other individuals. It was never easy waking up early in the mornings to start the first round of golf at 6:00am, but I was very thankful that people like Mr. Byrd and other staff members at the facility were willing to provide a ride for everyone who needed it because many of us didn't have a reliable source of transportation.

I was fortunate to have the opportunity to attend multiple golf camps in order to help me improve my golf skills and during that time I even managed to have an article written about me in the Golf Digest magazine! As I entered my high school years my reliance on the Bridging the Gap facility decreased, but my desire to continue to get up each morning and caddie never waivered. I caddied for approximately 11 years and during that time I made a lot of great friends and had the chance to meet some really amazing people. I was regarded as one of the top caddies at my country club both for my grades and my ability to caddie and for that reason I was urged to apply for the Evans Scholarship. I never thought that my involvement with the Bridging the Gap facility would transcend into a four-year scholarship with tuition and room/board paid for to the university of my choosing. I eventually completed my doctoral degree in Physical Therapy at Marquette University.

Some people will question the purpose of a facility like Bridging The Gap especially during a time like this. Speaking as an individual that benefited from the *opportunity* to be a part of something like the Bridging the Gap facility, I could not imagine how different my life would be and the countless number of patients that I have treated, students that I have mentored, and graduate classes that I have taught would be. I am happy to see that the Bridging The Gap building is still a part of my community because sometimes all it takes is for one individual to be given the right opportunity to make a change in the world.



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Thank You

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