

Ohio Justice and Policy Center

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://ohiojpc.org/2020/05/05/welcome-home-alexis/>

Public Facing Advocacy Writing

by [Marais Jacon-Duffy](#) | May 5, 2020 | [Blog](#), [News](#)

When Alexis KeErica Martin walked out of prison, she was overjoyed and so were many others. Her step into the prison parking lot marked a major step toward true freedom, after a life of human trafficking and incarceration. Alexis was ready for the next chapter of her life. Ke (short for KeErica), as she is now nicknamed, is ready for the next chapter of her life.

I was so honored to be there with Ke, along with my colleague Tyra Patterson, several close supporters, and my co-counsel Jennifer Kinsley (a private attorney working on the case pro bono) when she was released from prison. We wore masks and couldn't hug because of social distancing rules, but we could feel the joy and love resonating through the air. In her first moments outside of prison, Ke expressed her gratitude to Governor DeWine for granting clemency and for everyone who supported her on her journey to freedom.

Even though we had to limit who could meet Ke outside the prison walls, I am confident that, in the future, the many allies, mentors, and supporters who joined Ke in her fight for freedom will be able to come together. Ke looks forward to that day, and meanwhile is excited to explore phone and video communications.

Ke expressed that **she is truly excited to begin a new chapter of her life as a victor, not a victim**. She is presently residing in a nationally-acclaimed program that specializes in treatment, case management, and trauma-informed care for survivors like Ke. She is thriving, healing, and learning there.

In the future, Ke plans to enroll in college to study business administration and to create a nonprofit organization that prevents human trafficking and supports survivors. She is saving for driving classes and a car, for continuing education, and for a down payment on a new apartment when she can live independently.

Ke has an exciting journey ahead of her and a great team of supporters behind her.

Thank you to the wonderful people who advocated for Ke alongside OJPC. This includes Megan Mattimoe (Executive Director of Advocating Opportunity), Dezaray Gantlin, Dr. Dana Harley, Viann Barnett (Managing Director for Anna Louise Inn and Off The Streets), Jessica Wright (Director of Employer Engagement at Cincinnati Works), Marianna Bettman, Ohio Public Defenders Kids in Adult Prison Working Group, Prof. Kimberly Jordan, Prof. Sharlene Boltz and multiple other professors who signed support letters, Allison Reynold-Berry (Executive Director of IJPC), Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati, Kim Kardashian (who featured Ke's story on her recent documentary), and many, many others. And, thank you, especially, to Jennifer Kinsley for her years of dedication to justice and to this case.

Written by: OJPC Deputy Director Sasha Naiman, one of Alexis Martin's attorneys

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