Gunner Madsen

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Explanation of charges

## Third Degree Theft – 2008

On October 24th, 2008, while between classes in high school, I was involved in an incident that resulted in a charge for Third Degree Theft in Spokane County. I was walking to second period when I encountered an acquaintance. We were talking about BMX biking as we left the front doors of the school and headed towards the bike-rack. As we continued talking about bike parts, he walked over to a bike that was locked up on the rack, pulled out some tools and began taking the wheels off of the bicycle. We walked towards the back of the school, when a school resource officer drove by, stopped us, and took us into his office for questioning. In this situation, I was charged with Third Degree Theft. This incident happened because I was in the wrong place at the wrong time. I did not realize the individuals would attempt to steal the wheels, and I even pleaded with the school officer to understand that I was ignorant of the individuals’ intentions, but simply being with the individual constituted complicity.

I was very naïve at the time of the incident. However, given the severity of the incident, I grasped the idea that being at the wrong place at the wrong time can influence unwanted outcomes. This incident taught me to evaluate situations to determine whether they have the potential to escalate into a serious matter. The associated theft charge could have been mitigated had I simply walked away from the individual. During future instances, I know when to apply this decision making to mitigate potential risk and criminal charges.

## After the incident, I felt that even my closest classmates did not trust me. It felt humiliating, embarrassing, and I was ashamed that I let this happen; when considering that this type of behavior did not reflect how I was as a person, and how easy it was to walk away. The situation eventually blew over and I slowly rebuilt trust with friends. When considering the totality of the situation—including the civil and social damage to my reputation—it is easy to see how this incident can hurt my future. For this reason, I ensured that a situation under these circumstances would not happen again.

## Drug Paraphernalia-Use or Possess With Intent to Use – 2013

On July 5th 2013 while at a party in Hayden Idaho, I was involved in an incident that resulted in a charge for Drug Paraphernalia-Use or Possess With Intent to Use in Kootenai County. When my party and myself were just leaving, the police had just arrived and one of the officers smelled marijuana on my person. I emptied my pockets and revealed a marijuana pipe with used product still inside the pipe. In that instance, the officer wrote me a ticket for Drug Paraphernalia-Use or Possess With Intent to Use.

In spite of the charge brought against me, this incident taught me an important lesson: The individuals that I associate myself with will directly impact my success. This incident helped influence me to reevaluate and terminate individuals in my social circle; which was necessary to facilitate this transformative process. I learned that by terminating personal connections, I would stop wasting time and energy on individuals that predisposed me to high risk situations. Since terminating these relationships, I had more time to myself to focus on personal development, in particular the skills needed in my Information Technology career.

I have seen first-hand how the wrong relationships and influence can affect the outcomes for an individual. Even for an individual—whether highly intelligent or with a predisposition to an adverse socioeconomic background—their relationships influence their success. With respect to my own situation, I have realized that the individuals I associate myself with help influence unfavorable outcomes; which is why I set out to abstain from this behavior.