

Rebba Omer
Knox County Public Defenders Community Law Office
Knoxville, TN
Gideon's Promise Class of 2014

Dear Friend of Gideon's Promise,

Thank you for your support of the important work of Gideon's Promise. Gideon's Promise is not simply a training program -- it is a community committed to sustaining its members in their important work, and it is a movement that is transforming our criminal justice system.

As a public defender, I am honored to walk alongside some of our poorest and most marginalized neighbors and amplify their voices in a system that would rather silence them. The training and support I've received through Gideon's Promise are essential to me in doing this challenging work.

Like all Gideon's Promise members, I became part of this incredible community during 2 weeks of intensive advocacy skills training, community building, and soul searching. Every six months we come back together for a weekend to further develop our skills under the guidance of an incredibly talented faculty that is dedicated to justice for the poor. We also share a sacred time together where we tell stories.

Storytelling is an important part of how we advocate for our clients, and it's also essential to sustaining our community. Some of the stories have victorious endings, and we are all lifted up in celebrating the joy of justice done or a family reunited. Other stories are still unfinished, stalled at heartbreaking moments, and we remind each other that we're never alone and never without hope. This combination of excellent skills training and community support ensure that not only are Gideon's Promise lawyers effective advocates, but that we are building sustainable careers so that we will still be fighting for the rights of the poor years from now.

The Gideon's Promise community is dedicated not only to individual representation, but also to advocating for much needed systemic changes that will stop the dehumanizing and oppressive force of our criminal justice system that too often tramples on the constitutional rights of poor Americans and people of color. Transforming our criminal justice system so that all people are valued and empowered regardless of their race or income will make our communities safer, more peaceful, and more just. Your partnership with Gideon's Promise is an investment in this future.

With deep gratitude,

Rebba

