



East Hamilton School

Brent Eller, Principal

Assistant Principals

Matt Thurman

Deanna Rice

Keitha Booker

Date: 6/16/25

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to offer my full support and highest recommendation for Ricky Taylor. I have had the privilege of knowing Ricky since 2008 when he first arrived at Chattanooga as a member of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga Basketball Team. At that time, I was an assistant coach at Chattanooga State. Over the years, I have come to appreciate not only his remarkable skills in sports but also his dedication, leadership, and passion for coaching. Fast forward, as the AD of a local HS Ricky was contacted to become one of our assistant basketball coaches that was very instrumental in our successes as a basketball program.

Ricky is someone who wears many hats in his ever-evolving professional life as a coach, businessman, and pastor. Whether in his personal relationships or professional endeavors, he is known for treating people with kindness and respect. His work ethic is commendable, and he approaches every task with diligence and a positive attitude.

In all my interactions with Ricky, I have found him to be a genuinely good-hearted person who strives to make a positive impact on his community and on the lives of those around him. It's out of character for him to do something wrong. He has expressed to me the remorse that he has for something that was indeed an honest mistake. I am confident that anyone who gets to know Ricky will find him to be an asset and a person of exceptional moral character.

I have seen Ricky mentor students of all skill levels, helping them to improve and build confidence in their abilities. In addition to his technical skills, Ricky is a natural leader. He has a unique ability to inspire and motivate others, which stems from his background in ministry. His positive attitude, combined with his commitment to personal growth, is exceptional.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or need any further information.

Keitha Booker

Keitha Booker (Assistant Principal/Athletic Director)

Your Honor,

I'm writing this letter on behalf of Ricky Taylor. In 2008, Ricky Taylor came on his official visit to the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga with his family. That was the first interaction that I had with his family. He left an impression that I will never forget. When I walked away from the presence of him and his family, I thought to myself 'Wow, I would love for my sons to turn out to be just like him when they turn 18. Ricky soon made his commitment to continuing his education and athletic career at Chattanooga. During Ricky's four years (2008-12) as a student athlete, I was able to really gauge and interact with him as a coach to a player. Ricky displayed how important God was in his life. At 18, he carried a bible wherever he went and preached on Sundays at the local church. Rick was a high character and low maintenance young man.

After Rick graduated from Chattanooga we stayed in touch till this day. I've seen him continue his belief and love for God. He became a local mentor in the community, basketball coach, preacher and an aspiring businessman. When I realized what his goals were, I knew he would have immediate success. Growing up my father would describe a great person as "the salt of the earth". When I met Ricky, he fit that saying based on his character and consistency. Some people can't sustain being a high character person, but I saw it firsthand on a consistent business. Based off the years that I've known Ricky, it's out character for him to do anything wrong. He has displayed consistent high character behavior.

I sincerely ask for leniency toward Ricky. Ricky has addressed to me the remorse he has for being in this situation. This young man is someone who I would have wanted to marry my daughter, but those days have long passed with time. I have always maintained staying in contact with ALL my players throughout my years of coaching, but Ricky is one kid that I've made sure to stay in contact with. Till this day his love for God has strengthen my love for God. I enjoy watching his passion in his preaching and his hunger to be a successful husband and mentor. I appreciate you taking the time to read my letter.

Sincerely,

Rick Cabrera

Head Men's Basketball Coach

Northwestern State University

I Latoya Calloway, have come to know Pastor Ricky Taylor for a little over 4 years now. One moment I can recall was when I lost my father on July,26,2023;he was there for me in support. He was there for me when I felt I lost my world he made sure I had the support of the church and that means a lot to me ♥♥

My Pastor has never rushed me to heal after my father's passing;he accepted me right where I was. I can also remember a time needing to use one of his vehicles to attend my daughters graduation where as my car needed to be serviced for a day and it ended up taking a little longer and Pastor didn't charge me for the extended time and the Lord knows I'm forever grateful as I didn't have the extra due to the cost of the work of my car.

Although no one is perfect;I find peace knowing that I have a leader who will have my back when I need him! I find him to be a very good teacher as I've learned so much from him from learning to be business minded to finding peace in the middle of storms!! I love how he loves the kids. I think it's pretty awesome to be a Pastor and a coach of many of the communities kids at the same time....Another thing that I love about Pastor Taylor is his wife to be! The sweetest person in the world;I look forward to my hugs every Sunday as even if I'm not feeling my best;her love gives me a sense of peace and acceptance. I love her for him!! Together,I see them as a power couple who will be used to be light to such a dark world.

I love my Pastor and my church as this is the only family I have right now and I'm thankful to have met Pastor Taylor as he helps me through wisdom and knowledge of navigate through this thing called life!!

Best wishes,
Latoya Calloway

Your Honor,

I am writing on behalf of Ricky Taylor, whom I have had the privilege of knowing for more than ten years. In all my interactions with Ricky, I have consistently found him to be a man of strong spiritual beliefs and Godly character. He is a dedicated hard worker with a remarkable entrepreneurial spirit.

During my tenure as the Associate Head Basketball Coach at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC), Ricky was one of our team leaders, consistently displaying the qualities mentioned above. His commitment and dedication allowed him to excel both on the basketball court and in the classroom. More importantly, Ricky's high character and moral values enabled him to thrive as a teammate and community leader.

After his graduation, our relationship continued to grow. I invited Ricky to speak to my campers while I coached at Chattanooga Christian School and McCallie. I have also encouraged him in his efforts with basketball camps and grassroots teams. Ricky has had a positive and lasting impact on everyone he meets.

In all my dealings with Ricky, I have found him to be forthright, honest, and a man of unwavering character.

If you have any questions or would like further information, please feel free to contact me.

IMPACT your World,

David Conrady

Director

NEST Learning Lab

dconrady@silverdaleba.org

Silverdale Baptist Academy
7236 Bonny Oaks Drive
Chattanooga, TN 37421-1099

"Engaging Hearts and Minds"

Your Honor,

Ricky Lee Taylor and I (Dr. Kim Cox) began our journey in 2016. Us crossing paths wasn't surprising, considering we're both former college athletes from schools in Tennessee. At the time, I had just received my undergraduate degree, worked as a manager, and was pursuing my studies in I.T. Mr. Taylor first visited me in Nashville for a church conference, stopping by my job. My first impression? Tall, charming, polite, gentle, sweet, very nice—just an all-around well-groomed guy.

Over the years, Ricky and I stayed in touch sporadically and always remained friends. What stood out to me was how consistent and respectful he was, always checking in to see how I was doing without ever being overbearing. While I lived in Nashville and he resided in Chattanooga, I observed him through social media. I saw his dedication to his basketball organization rooted in Christ—coaching, training, and mentoring young girls and boys, spreading positivity. He poured into the youth, and that meant a lot to me. I was on the outside looking in, watching. I didn't know he was into ministry at first, but his faith and dedication were evident. He marketed his business around God and scriptures out of the Bible. I loved that! He's been a pastor for years now, so seeing him birth and grow his own church and ministry does not surprise me.

As for me, I was raised in a two-parent household, with parents married for 39 years, and I have two older brothers. Church was a big part of our lives. Ricky and I share a lot in common: God-fearing, siblings, former college basketball players, high school girls' basketball coaches, real estate enthusiasts, into sales, tech, and administration. Fast forward to August 2021, when Ricky and I had our first official date. I was blown away by how much of a gentleman he was—reminded me of my own father. Over time, I've come to love Ricky's ways: always opens doors for me, his calm demeanor, his respectfulness, his effort, and his commitment. He's never cursed around me, raised his voice, or disrespected me or any woman. Ricky's a homebody who's focused on the Word, his work, reading, studying, exercising, and pouring into our relationship and his businesses.

Everyone has flaws and has made mistakes, but Ricky genuinely portrays great characteristics and has a BIG heart. The good outweighs the bad, and I love Ricky for never allowing anyone to change who he is. Ricky is optimistic about any negative situation. He encourages me, gives me confidence, prays for me, and has even helped grow my faith! Ricky is a true believer in Christ. "We live to not worry," and that is because of what God has instilled in Ricky, and that has rubbed off on me. I could go on and on about how blessed I am to go into covenant with Ricky. I've had no problem with Ricky being open and honest throughout our relationship. And to be frank, this is why I will be stepping into the next chapter of life with him. Ricky has been vulnerable about his strengths and weaknesses. I love that God placed me in his life as a helpmate at the right time. We are grateful for the highs and the lows because each low has only made us better individuals and stronger as a couple.

I've seen Ricky build an empire and have it stripped away with a smile on his face and still a walk of confidence. I've never seen him lower his head or give up. Ricky portrays true leadership and goes above and beyond what it's worth to make things right. Ricky has cherished his ministry and entrepreneurial endeavors. He manages and counsels' people daily, which is a very hard job. This sacrifice, in return, has saved many lives with Christ, and that is what **life** and **purpose** is all about. One of my most cherished memories is Ricky proposing on my birthday, July 12, 2024, a gesture that perfectly embodies his thoughtfulness and generosity. As we continue to build our life together, I prayerfully hope to return the same gesture on his birthday, October 10, 2025, as a reflection of our mutual love and commitment. "Would I do it all over again with Mr. Ricky Lee Taylor? With no doubt or hesitation." I love Ricky and stand beside him with integrity!

Respectfully,
Dr. Kimetrice Cox
Lead Faculty, Lipscomb University
Nashville, TN
Dr. Kimetrice N Cox

Your Honor,

Ricky Lee Taylor and I (Dr. Kim Cox) began our journey on June 21, 2016, through social media. Ricky reached out and asked me to get in touch with him. Us crossing paths wasn't surprising, considering we're both former college athletes from schools in Tennessee. I'm not exactly sure how our networks synced, but I'm SO grateful they did! At the time, I had just graduated from Fisk University, worked at Enterprise Rent-A-Car, and was pursuing Information Technology studies at Lipscomb University. Ricky first visited me in Nashville for a church conference, stopping by my job. My first impression? Tall, charming, polite, gentle, sweet, very nice—just an all-around well-groomed guy.

Over the years, Ricky and I stayed in touch sporadically and always remained friends. What stood out to me was how consistent and respectful he was, always checking in to see how I was doing without ever being overbearing. While I lived in Nashville and he resided in Chattanooga, I observed him through social media. I saw his dedication to his basketball organization rooted in Christ—coaching, training, and mentoring young girls and boys, spreading positivity. He poured into the youth, and THAT meant a lot to me. I was on the outside looking in, watching. I didn't know he was into ministry at first, but his faith and dedication were evident. He marketed his business around God and scriptures out of the Bible. I LOVED that! He's been a pastor for years now, so seeing him birth and grow his own church and ministry does not surprise me.

As for me, I was raised in a two-parent household, with parents married for 41 years, and I have two older brothers. Church was a big part of our lives. Ricky and I share a lot in common: God-fearing, siblings, former college basketball players, high school girls' basketball coaches, real estate enthusiasts, into sales, tech, and administration.

Fast forward to August 21, 2021, when Ricky and I had our first official date. I was blown away by how much of a gentleman he was—reminded me of my own father. Over time, I've come to love Ricky's ways: always opens doors for me, his calm demeanor, his respectfulness, his effort, and his commitment. He's never cursed around me, raised his voice, or disrespected me or any woman. Ricky's a homebody who's focused on the Word, his work, reading, studying, exercising, and pouring into our relationship and his businesses.

Everyone has flaws and has made mistakes, but Ricky genuinely portrays great characteristics and has a BIG heart. The good outweighs the bad, and I love Ricky for never allowing anyone to change who he is. Ricky is optimistic about any negative situation. He encourages me, gives me confidence, prays for me, and has even helped grow my faith! Ricky is a true believer in Christ. **"We live to not worry," and that is because of what God has instilled in Ricky, and that has rubbed off on me.** I could go on and on about how blessed I am to go into covenant with Ricky. I've had no problem with Ricky being open and honest throughout our relationship. And to be frank, this is why I will be stepping into the next chapter of life with him. Ricky has been vulnerable about his strengths and weaknesses. I love that God placed me in his life as a helpmate at the right time. As Ricky would say, "Timing is everything." We are grateful for the highs and the lows because each low has only made us better individuals and stronger as a couple. Am I happy, satisfied? ABSOLUTELY!

I've seen Ricky build an empire and have it stripped away with a smile on his face and still a walk of confidence. I've never seen him lower his head or give up. Ricky portrays true leadership and goes above and beyond what it's worth to make things right. Ricky has cherished his ministry and entrepreneurial endeavors. He manages and counsels people daily, which is a very hard job. This sacrifice, in return, has saved many lives with Christ, and that is what life and "purpose" is all about.

A memory I will never forget is him proposing on my birthday, **July 12th, 2024**. That alone defines Ricky's heart and unselfish ways—wow! "Would I do it all over again with Mr. Ricky Lee Taylor? With no doubt or hesitation." I love Ricky and stand beside him with integrity, tenfold!

Love,
His Fiancé

June 20th ,2025

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in support of Ricky Lee Taylor Jr. I have known Mr. Taylor since I was in the 9th grade, when he began attending the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC). We attended the same church, McDowell Memorial Church in God in Christ. Mr. Taylor and I became close as he grew in the ministry. I have seen all the amazing ways God has grown him over the years, from his becoming a minister in the Church of God in Christ to him traveling and preaching the gospel. Then, after seeing him do that, he opened his church, where he grew even more loving and caring for his community by being concerned about their salvation and how they could become better versions of themselves. He truly has a heart for the people.

I have even worked alongside Mr. Taylor when it came to his youth basketball camps, where he took the time to pour into these players. These players admired Mr. Taylor and all of his efforts. Especially since he can play basketball overseas, his insight into the game and his love for investing in the younger generation are fantastic, as the wealth of skill and knowledge he possesses will help these kids reach even higher heights. Mr. Taylor is a man who always wants to see the best in the people he interacts with. Over the last 16 years of knowing Mr. Taylor, I have come to appreciate his good heart and sound judgment. This is why this letter of support is so personal for me, because of the type of respectable man that he is known to be, and how he cares for the community and everyone involved.

Thank you for your time.

To Whom It May Concern.

This letter is in reference to Mr. Ricky Taylor. My Name is I and I have known Ricky Taylor for 17 Years. Ricky has been an asset and vital key Person in the city of Chattanooga since he arrived here as a student. Ricky and I met in church , he also worked for years at the school that my kids attended. I've seen him go out of his way in a selfless manner to make the lives of families better. My sons attended his basketball camps and I have partnered with Ricky in ministry endeavors dozens of times. Not once has Ricky done anything That was dishonest or lacked integrity. Ricky has been a model in terms of education, sports , and ministry and interactions with him are always inspiring and impactful. To me , Ricky is the best of what the future of our city and churches represent. We need people that care , who can reach and teach the next generation. I am confident that Ricky will continue to make a difference for years to come. Ricky has the full support of my family and my Church. And we will continue to pray for , and partner with he , his church and his ideas for the betterment of people and the Kingdom of God. We sincerely ask for the consideration of Ricky Taylor's contributions to our city and his efforts to positively impact families. We also appeal for Leniency in this matter based on his character and commitment. Ricky is a good man , I know this from experience. We are looking forward to what's ahead.

Clesslie B Foster.
Pastor of The Glory House

Your Honor,

Thank you for allowing me to speak on behalf of my dear friend, Ricky Taylor. I have known Ricky for twelve years now, since 2013. I met Ricky while he was coaching at a local travel basketball facility near Dalton, Georgia. I have three children who all played under Ricky for basketball skills and drills. I was so impressed with his ability, knowledge, kindness, and genuine concern for the development of the children both athletically and spiritually that I recruited him to coach our middle school girls basketball team at Christian Heritage School. He did not disappoint! Ricky was such a blessing to our school and our kids during his time there. He poured into our children much more time and energy than he was ever compensated for. Ricky has a genuine heart for the welfare of others and a special gift of making all of those around him feel loved and important. He made incredibly lasting impressions on our children with life lessons about Christ, discipline, sportsmanship, and teamwork that they have carried with them throughout high school, college, and beyond. I am thankful for my friendship with Ricky and I look forward to seeing how God uses him moving forward. There are people that are placed in our lives that we know we will always maintain a friendship with, and Ricky is one of mine. Thank you again for allowing me to speak on his behalf.

Sincerely,

Dawn Idom, M.D.

Reverend K. Solomon Killiebrew Jr.
Harvest Missionary Baptist Church of Rossville, GA

June 18, 2025

To Whom This Correspondence May Concern,

It is with great respect and integrity that I pen this correspondence in reference to Ricky Taylor. Rebecca Fox says: "To make a difference in someone's world, you don't have to be amazing, rich, talented, or perfect. You have to be you and care. The purpose of this communication is to speak to the character, drive, and dedication of Ricky Taylor. Ricky exemplifies the definitions of hard work, perseverance, and resilience.

Over the last several years, I have had a front row seat in watching Ricky become what I find to be a respectable, impeccable young man. Ricky, a Chattanooga native, a University of Tennessee Chattanooga basketball sensation, a local pastor, a basketball coach, a basketball tournament event host, accomplished student, mentor, scholar, and a consistent male role model for so many youth within his community and church, has made a significant impact in Chattanooga. I am sure that his future will continue to be centered on service, hard work, dedication, and excelling beyond what is required.

I have had the privilege of seeing Ricky's dedication in hard work at his church, and in his community. Ricky operates with a spirit of pride and excellence. I have witnessed his diligence, unwavering intelligence, and his commitment to serving others and mentoring our future generation is amazing to witness.

This former stand-out athlete desires to better himself and those around him. This is what speaks to his character the most and the man that he is and will become. I fully understand that none of us have reached perfection, but Ricky is an example of how even areas of growth can be used to mold us into better and more honorable human beings. There are so many young people who look up to him and I know that he never wants to let them down. Every week he shows up for others. This speaks to his faith and who he is at heart. I would also like to extend my sincere gratitude to you for taking the time to review this communication.

Kindest Regards,

Pastor K Solomon Killiebrew Jr.

Your Honor,

My name is Bailey, and I am a senior dual-sport student-athlete at Kentucky State University. I am writing to offer a character statement on behalf of Ricky Taylor, someone who has played an instrumental role in my personal and athletic development over the past eight to nine years.

I first met Mr. Taylor as a freshman in high school. From our very first interaction, it was clear that he saw potential in me—not just as an athlete, but as a young person with promise. He took me under his wing, training me twice a week while also inviting me to join his AAU basketball program. His mentorship marked the beginning of my journey toward collegiate athletics.

Mr. Taylor's influence extended far beyond the basketball court. He introduced me to the recruiting process, challenged me to elevate my game, and more importantly, instilled in me values that have shaped who I am today. His program was rooted in faith, discipline, and character. We weren't just taught how to win games—we were taught how to live with integrity, lead with purpose, and carry ourselves with respect and humility.

Even after I departed from his AAU program, Mr. Taylor continued to support me. He stayed in contact, regularly checking in on my well-being—not just my athletic performance. He continued to advocate for me with college coaches, which played a crucial role in helping me secure opportunities at the next level.

After my freshman year in college, I decided to pursue coaching. I reached out to Mr. Taylor again, and he welcomed me back—this time as a coach in his program. It was a full-circle moment. The same man who once believed in me as a young player now trusted me to lead and mentor the next generation. With his guidance, I was able to coach while passing on the same lessons in faith, accountability, respect, work ethic and leadership that he once taught me.

Mr. Taylor's belief in me helped shape my purpose. Today, I am committed to being a coach who emphasizes personal growth, not just athletic achievement. The opportunity to work alongside him has been one of the most defining experiences of my coaching career.

Ricky Taylor is a man of integrity, faith, and unwavering dedication to the development of young people. His impact on my life—and on the lives of countless others—has been profound and lasting. I am forever grateful for his mentorship and the example he has set, both on and off the court.

Respectfully,
Bailey Lee
Senior, Kentucky State University
Dual-Sport Student-Athlete

Greeting Your Honor, my name is Tarel Kenneth McClurkin Jr and I'm writing on behalf of Ricky Taylor Jr who will stand before your judgement to face sentencing soon.

Your Honor, I have known Ricky for going on ten years now in a variety of capacities to include client, advisor, mentor, and friend. I first met Ricky through his Christian Youth Basketball organization, Ricky Taylor Basketball (RTB) where he trained and coached my then 12-year-old son through high school AAU Basketball.

Ricky, through RTB had an immeasurable impact on so many boys and girls in the Chattanooga area not only due his passion to share his immense basketball skills with young people, many that other AAU clubs would not consider super talented, but his ability to instill the confidence in them that they could achieve their goals if they had the desire and the committed to do the worked.

My son, now 22, recently graduated Magna Cum Laude from the University of Tennessee is a direct beneficiary of how Ricky impacted him as are numerous others that Ricky inspired.

Your Honor, I got to know Ricky on a more personal level when I served alongside him as a member of RTB Board of Directors. He was doing so much to accomplish his goals and he was so proud of what he was accomplishing at such a young age, but it was a lot for him to do by himself, and I was honored when he sought me out for advice and mentorship.

Your Honor, like me, Ricky is what I would call a "Bootstraps" achiever, someone who comes from very little opportunity to beat the odds and prove to himself and other that he could be successful. I also know this can be both a Blessing and a Curse, because often the world and all it offers can cause us to steer off course.

Your Honor, I believe this is the case with my good friend Ricky Taylor.

Your Honor, I have always known Ricky to be a man of great character and faith, and I was in total disbelief that he found himself in this situation. As a man of faith, I know that scripture teaches us that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God and there is none righteous no not one.

Your Honor I know Ricky knows this scripture all too well and I know in my heart that Ricky will remain resolute in his faith by accepting the outcome seeking forgiveness and restoration for his offenses.

Your Honor, I know that Ricky knows that he is saved by Grace, that Unmerited Favor of God, but now Your Honor, I pray that you can find some grace when you are considering Ricky Taylors sentencing.

Your Honor, in closing, I hope that when you read this letter you get some sense that Ricky Taylor is a good man that made a bad decision but that there is still plenty of good in him and that there is opportunity for him to continue the path that has already been set before him for God's purpose on his life.

Prayerfully and Respectfully Submitted on June 19, 2025

Tarel Kenneth McClurkin Jr.

Your Honor,

This letter is in support of Pastor Ricky Taylor. After visiting the Arena of Praise Church numerous times, my wife and I were in awe of Pastor Ricky and his ministries. We enjoyed sitting under him until I was called to Pastor my own church. Ricky became like a son to me and we interacted with each other, shared pointers, and tips about pastoring a church. We have supported each other ministries in different capacities, because we have one thing in common and that is our love for the Lord. I have known Ricky since 2018 and this is totally out of character for him. Per our recent conversations, I do know that he sincerely regrets the space that this has put him in. However, he still strives to give back to the community. He loves being a blessing to many. We love him and we are praying for God to continue to be his guide.

Sincerely,

Bishop Richard O Morris Sr.

Your Honor.

I am writing this letter on behalf of Pastor Ricky Taylor. I have known Ricky for seven years. We met during a time that my husband and I were searching for a new church home. We heard positive things about Arena of Praise, Pastor Taylor, and his ministries. We visited his church and we found ourselves being lead there to praise and worship with his church for close to a year. We went faithfully until my husband was called to Pastor his own church. During this time we grew close to Pastor Taylor and we leaned on one another spiritually. He became a son to us and a friend. Ricky is a smart young man, who loves the Lord. This situation does not define or identify with his character at all. Whenever I speak with him since this has taken place, he expresses deep regret and remorse for being in this position. He is very caring and he loves giving back to the community. Just to mention one of the things that he does. He annually host a back-to-school bash giving away school supply to students in the community. He loves being a blessing to others. We love him and we are praying that this letter shows forth the Godly man that I have known him to be. We need more people like this in society to make this world a better place. Thank you for your time sir/madam. Have a nice day.

Kind Regards,

Donna Morris

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Terry Readus and I am writing to you in regard to Ricky Taylor. I have known Ricky Taylor for over seven years. I was looking for someone to provide Basketball training to my son and several people in the Chattanooga and North Georgia areas recommended Ricky to me. Ricky talked to me about wanting to pour into the youth of the community, and his plans to build a Church and AAU Basketball program for the area. I can honestly say that Ricky has worked tirelessly doing things for the kids. I have seen Ricky give the kids rides to and from practice and games. Ricky has paid or waived joining fees for kids to play AAU basketball. Ricky has had the kids out in the community helping feed the homeless or packing up food boxes at different Churches around the holidays. Ricky has had many kids in his basketball program over the years. Some of the kids in Ricky's program have gone off to play college basketball (including 2 this year), thanks to the guidance and training from Ricky. Each year the graduating seniors in the program receive monetary scholarships (typically a hundred dollars for each year in the program) and gift baskets containing many items needed for going off to college. He has employed many of the kids in the program and taught them to be respectful and responsible. Ricky has also been known to have trunk or treats at his Church, which has been free to anyone in the community, not just his Church members. He provided free food, candy, and bounce houses for kids. I have also seen Ricky pour into many adults in the community as well. He has helped people with resumes for jobs, and/ or get their business license to start their business. I have only seen positive things from Ricky in the community. I can honestly say this is out of character for the Ricky that I know. I humbly ask for leniency for Mr. Taylor and that you consider all the good things Ricky has done and continues to do for the youth in the community.

Thank you,

Terry Readus



City of Chattanooga Office of Community Health
Community Safety & Gun Prevention Division
6098 Debra Road Chattanooga, TN 37411



June 13, 2025

Dear Judge

I am writing this letter in full support of Mr. Ricky Taylor, a man whose life and work exemplify strong moral character, servant leadership, and a deep commitment to uplifting others. I respectfully ask that you take into account the positive impact Ricky has made on his community as you consider any matters concerning him.

Ricky is the definition of a servant leader, someone who consistently puts others before himself and leads with both compassion and conviction. He has dedicated countless hours to mentoring youth through sports and education, using these platforms not just to teach skills but to build character, discipline, and self respect.

His work in the community goes far beyond the playing field. Ricky has used sports as a gateway to teach life lessons, promote academic achievement, and create safe spaces for young people. He has organized programs, volunteered his time, and walked alongside many youth who simply needed someone to believe in them. His efforts have changed lives.

What makes Ricky stand out is that he doesn't seek recognition; he simply shows up, consistently and humbly. He leads by example, carrying himself with integrity, accountability, and purpose. Those who know him, including the young people he mentors, see him as a role model and a source of steady guidance.

In my role, I regularly engage with individuals and organizations working to build safer, stronger communities. Ricky Taylor is one of those rare individuals whose presence makes a tangible difference. He embodies the values we need more of in our neighborhoods: commitment, compassion, and consistency.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration of this letter. I believe in Ricky Taylor and the continued value he brings to the lives of others.

Sincerely,

Chris Sands

Chris Sands
Executive Director, Community Safety and Gun Violence Prevention
Office of Community Health
615-542-0494

Your Honor,

I am writing this letter in support of Ricky Taylor. I met Ricky in April of 2008 in Brownsville, Tennessee while recruiting him to play basketball for the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. He met me at the door for the first time, wearing a purple suit, having just come from church with eyes full of hope and life. Ricky was a proud young man who had come from a very tough environment. We were fortunate to have signed Ricky to our program where he became a great player, student, and an even better leader. In his time at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, he helped us to win championships and became an important member of the community.

Ricky was raised in the church and always had a capacity for speaking and preaching the gospel. As a coach, I always encouraged him to follow this path because I felt he had a real gift for preaching and serving others. I know that Ricky has been involved in coaching, logistics, and the real estate realms. But to me Ricky always belonged in the church, and in addition to his other endeavors he has been doing so. Operating his own church like he has, is the path that I would personally choose for him because of his gift for impacting those around him.

Ricky Taylor is a great kid that knows right from wrong. Having known him during his collegiate years, if you would've told me he had gotten into trouble I would have been truly shocked. During his time at Chattanooga we had some knuckleheads but Ricky was always a stable leader. He earned good grades, always attended church, and was loved by those around him.

I appreciate and love Ricky and that is why I can write you this letter in support of Ricky Taylor and asking for your leniency in this matter.

Thank you,

John Shulman
Head Men's Basketball Coach
University of Central Arkansas



GREATER COMMUNITY CHURCH OF CHATTANOOGA

CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST

June 12, 2025

Your Honor,

I am Dr. J. Anthony Taylor II, and I serve as lead pastor of the Greater Community Church of Chattanooga Church Of God In Christ (COGIC). The purpose of this communique is to submit to you a letter of support and witness to the character of Mr. Ricky Lee Taylor Jr (no relation).

My sixteen (16) year relationship with Mr. Taylor began in 2009 as I served as his pastor, mentor and spiritual father. As a young college student and preacher, he was eager to learn and grow in the things of God while having a penchant to excel academically and in life. I was honored to license him as a COGIC minister subsequently appointing him as the Young Adults & College Students Pastor. It was in this role that he served faithfully, winning many souls to Christ, assisting me in my pastoral duties and serving the ministry in every possible way. It was also my pleasure to facilitate his ordination into the gospel ministry as an Elder in the COGIC church. As any young man trying to navigate life and find his way, I was able to assist and mentor Mr. Taylor in some of his major life decisions and choices. Though some of those choices may have resulted in unfavorable outcomes, Mr. Taylor never neglected or negated his responsibilities nor shifted the blame to others but took ownership of his choices with humility and penitence. I am proud to say that Mr. Taylor has exemplified what it means to be a Christian young man that sets goals, aspires to them, achieve those goals and then creates opportunities for others to do the same. The countless number of lives Mr. Taylor has touched through the gospel ministry, basketball camps and mentorship programs, are too innumerable to articulate. His contribution to society and the world at large far outweigh anything of the contrary.

In closing, allow me to say that I have seen growth in him as a young man to becoming one of the leading pastors in the city of Chattanooga. His congregation and members of the Arena of Praise Church can all attest to the self-sacrificing spirit Mr. Taylor possesses. In my time of mentorship and in our father/son relationship, I have endeavored to impart into him the need for the shepherd to always be there, for the sheep and with the sheep. And as his pastor and shepherd, I unequivocally stand with him and support him in this season of his life. With this in mind, I respectfully and humbly ask that you consider these things as you render a fair and just decision concerning Mr. Taylor. I pray that the God of all Peace and Comfort will guide you in your rendering.

By His Grace & For His Glory

J. Anthony Taylor II, DMin., PhD (candidate)

Pastor, Greater Community Church Of Chattanooga COGIC



June 12, 2025

Your Honor,

I am writing to provide a letter of support for my brother, **Ricky Taylor**. I have had the privilege of being Ricky's sister and growing up in the same household for all 35 years of his life, and I can confidently say he is one of the most kindhearted, dependable, and hardworking individuals I have ever known.

Throughout our lives, Ricky has consistently demonstrated his unwavering commitment to family, friends, and community. As the eldest sibling in our family, he often took on a leadership role, supporting myself and my son in times of need. His natural ability to provide guidance, coupled with remarkable patience, has always been a source of strength for our family.

Ricky is not only a loving family member but also a responsible and dedicated professional. His ability to remain calm under pressure and solve problems effectively has earned him the trust of his colleagues.

Beyond his professional life, Ricky is deeply involved in working with the youth to provide mentorship within the community. His commitment to helping others speaks volumes about his character and the positive impact he has on those around him.

In conclusion, I say with certainty that Ricky is a person of exceptional integrity, compassion, and dedication.

Sincerely,

Vetrica Taylor

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter on behalf of **Mr. Ricky Taylor**, whom I have had the pleasure of knowing for **seven** years. During this time, I have come to know Ricky as a man of integrity, reliability, and unwavering commitment to excellence in all he does.

Ricky and I first met in church and have participated in several community events together. He has always shown outstanding character and respect to everyone. He has been excellent in his coaching clinics with youth and in other endeavors.

Ricky consistently demonstrates strong moral values, humility, and a respectful attitude toward others. He is well-regarded not only for his positive outlook but also for his willingness to help those in need. Whether in a professional setting, in the community, or among friends and family, Ricky conducts himself with dignity and grace.

He has proven to be a person of outstanding character—dependable, honest, and responsible. I have observed him handle situations with wisdom and maturity, always aiming to make the right decisions, even when they are not easy.

He is a man of his word, and I believe he will be an asset in any endeavor he undertakes. I believe Ricky to be a great, God-fearing man who seeks to uphold godly virtues in every possible way.

If you require any further information, please feel free to contact me directly.

Sincerely,

Dr. E. Jonathan Thomas
World Restoration Center Church
Phone: 423-756-3327
Email: pastorj@wrcministries.org

Greetings Your Honor,

I had the opportunity to meet Mr. Ricky Taylor in 2017 as I served as the Principal of Orchard Knob Elementary School. During that time, he was looking for a place to start his Church, Arena of Praise. I allowed him to use the school, after approval from the district office, to begin meeting each Sunday for Church and Wednesdays for Bible Study. However, during the COVID pandemic, the school district prohibited any use of the facilities that was not directly related to school.

Mr. Taylor and I purchased a property with the intentions of flipping the house to later resell. However, we both decided that it needed too much work and sold the property “as is” to recoup some of our shared investments. Mr. Taylor and I became good friends and often treated each other to lunch or spent time enjoying each other’s company at our homes or other events in the city.

Mr. Taylor has remained a dependable friend. During the death of my father in 2023, Mr. Taylor extended the use of his church to provide a repass for the family. Words cannot express the gratitude and appreciation of his acts of kindness.

Although, due to our schedules, we do not see each other as often. Yet, we remain in regular contact and are always willing to help each other should the need arise. Therefore, I am submitting this reference on his behalf. I kindly ask that you consider these as you consider sentencing.

Respectfully,

LaFrederick Thirkill

Community Activist,
School Administrator

Ricky Taylor

My Dad

August 2017

The House

Support

Your Honor,

Good morning, My name is Antravis Turner I have known Ricky Taylor for over 30 years. Ricky and I grew up in a small town in West Tennessee known as Brownsville, Tennessee. Ricky and I met at the age of six or seven years old. Ricky's parents lived behind my grandparents, which made them neighbors. Ricky and I considered ourselves childhood bestfriends growing up. Ricky and I did almost everything together. We attended school together up until junior high. We played backyard basketball, football, and even played video games everyday. Ricky and I also went to church together sometimes. Growing up Ricky was very intelligent, spiritual, and very talented. Ricky always had a vision to be successful in life and to help people. Ricky was an honor roll student throughout grade school. Before going outside to play, Ricky would finish his chores as well as his homework first. Ricky always believed in taking care of his responsibilities, before doing anything else. Homework that I needed help with or didn't understand, he would always help me or break it down, so I would understand. Ricky is a person of integrity and always had a listening ear. I cannot think of a time that Ricky wasn't there when I needed him. Ricky always had the right answer and was there to help. Ricky was always truthful and was a man of his word. I always knew Ricky would be a preacher or pastor growing up because he was always preaching to me and our other friends. Ricky attended church every Sunday and would come home to preach to me, if I did or didn't go to church that day. Ricky always had a vision of bringing people closer to God and wanted his family and friends to be saved. When Ricky became a minister and started his own church, I was very proud of him because he was living out his vision and dream of saving people. Ricky loved basketball growing up and was a star player throughout grade school. Ricky and I played in many leagues growing up. We played in YMCA and Christian leagues throughout our childhood. Ricky also played pro basketball across seas. Ricky started a basketball camp, after finishing up with playing pro ball to help train and mentor the youth in the surrounding areas. Ricky was always knowledgeable about the game of basketball and wanted to give that knowledge to individuals, who loved the game as much as him.

Judge I really care about Ricky. I love him as if he was my real blood brother and blood could not make us closer

Judge please consider Ricky as a good person. Ricky is a person who demonstrates positive qualities and contributes to the well-being of those around him.

Sincerely,

Antravis Turner

Honorable Judge,

I pray this letter finds you in good health and strength as you prepare to weigh matters of great consequence. I am writing today in support of Pastor Ricky Taylor of the Arena of Praise Church in Chattanooga, Tennessee, not to excuse any decisions he may have made in the past, but to offer a sincere and personal character reference on his behalf.

As the Senior Pastor of the historic Mount Zion Baptist Church in Nashville and a spiritual mentor to Pastor Taylor, I have walked with him through the highs and lows of life and ministry. Over the years, I have come to know him as a man deeply committed to his calling, his community, and most importantly, to transformation. Pastor Taylor has never pretended to be perfect, but what sets him apart is his willingness to take full responsibility for his actions. He did not run from accountability—instead, he ran toward it with a contrite heart and a sincere desire to make amends.

What has impressed me most is not just his remorse, but his resolve. Pastor Taylor has intentionally used his platform to educate others—particularly young Black boys—about the consequences of decisions and the redemptive power of truth and integrity. He has spoken publicly about his journey, not for sympathy, but to spark awareness and provoke growth in others. That kind of courage is rare.

I have watched him pour into the lives of others even while navigating his own challenges. His efforts to restore trust and rebuild his influence have not gone unnoticed. He understands now more than ever that leadership is not just about elevation, but about humility, honesty, and the ability to rise again with purpose. He is mentoring young men, helping them break generational cycles, and empowering them to see a future bigger than their surroundings.

Pastor Taylor has a bright future ahead of him. He is a gifted communicator, a compassionate servant, and a man who, even through personal failure, has not lost sight of the calling on his life. I believe in redemption because I've seen what God can do with a heart that is submitted. Pastor Taylor is that kind of heart—wounded, yes, but willing. Broken, yet still believing.

Your Honor, this is not a letter asking for dismissal of accountability, but a plea for mercy that makes room for redemption. I believe the same grace that gives someone a second chance can be the very thing that allows them to be a source of transformation for others. Pastor Taylor is ready to continue that work, not just behind a pulpit, but in the trenches—where his story, his scars, and his sincere repentance can change lives.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this heartfelt appeal. I remain prayerful that your decision will not only be just but merciful, and that it will help continue the redemptive path that Pastor Taylor is already walking.

With respect and sincerity,
Dr. Joseph W. Walker, III
Senior Pastor, Mount Zion Baptist Church
Presiding Bishop, Full Gospel Baptist Church Fellowship International

