



SL24: UNLOCKE THE LIGHT

DEDICATED TO UNLOCKING STUDENTS' LIGHT BY
PROVIDING RESOURCES FOR THOSE STRUGGLING WITH
DEPRESSION, ANXIETY, SELF-INJURY AND SUICIDE

Mary Ellen Gray
Planning and Development Director
City of Newark
220 South Main Street
Newark, Delaware 19711

July 8, 2019

Re: 136 West Main Street

Dear Ms. Gray,

On July 18, 2018 my life changed forever when I received the phone call that my son, Sean at the age of 23, ended his life. My son and I were very close, we spoke everyday about business, sports, and his bright future. However, we did not speak about the most important issue facing Sean, his battle with depression and anxiety.

Sean suffered in silence with this disease for at least three years. Sean, like so many facing depression have to deal with the stigma of mental illness, so often they have no place to turn to talk to someone about their disease. They are paralyzed to seek the help they need and desire.

After we lost Sean to this insidious disease, my family and our friends decided to create a foundation to help those with depression and anxiety. As a result we created SL24 UnLocke the Light. It has three missions, educate assist and support. Our education mission is fulfilled by visiting high schools and colleges to speak about Sean's story and to help remove the stigma and to provide information from professionals about mental health. We assist parents and children who are dealing with this disease by helping them find professionals to provide the services they need. We provide support by creating a place available 24 hours a day where students from the age of 14 to 24 can come free of charge to speak to peer support specialist and professionals to get the assistance they need to find their voice to get the help they need. We call this place Sean's House.

SL24: UnLocke the Light Foundation

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Sean's House will be located at 136 West Main Street. This was the house Sean lived in during his time at the University of Delaware. It is a place perfectly situated to help those students who we strive to support. Currently, the house has a three- person rental permit that we propose to allow on site residents who will be doctorate students from the Psychology Department of the University of Delaware. They will be supervised by a licensed clinician to provide support to those students who need it the most. In addition, we will have a robust peer support specialist group to support students in their journey with depression and anxiety. This is a revolutionary - way of handling the mental health crisis plaguing our young people.

To make this dream of Sean's House a reality, I respectfully request a conditional special use permit for a professional office in a residential dwelling. The special use Council approved condition is the services we will be provided free of charge to the community youth age 14 to 24 that it would only be effective so long as SL24 Foundation is using the premises as Sean's House and that three on site 24 hour live-in UnLocke the Light doctorate students will serve as resident-owners.

I have lived in this City for 45 years. I have raised all of my seven children in this community. Sean was a Newark boy, he was born here, he lived his entire life here. Sean was a talented athlete he had many colleges looking at him to play either baseball or basketball for them. He decided on the University of Delaware because he wanted to represent his hometown. He was honored to play in March Madness and when his name appeared on National television it said hometown; Newark, Delaware. He was a local boy that made good.

His death was a tragedy to all who knew him and loved him. However, his death will not define who he was because we hope with your approval his legacy will be that he helped countless other Sean's in our community to get the help they need in dealing with mental illness. He will be remembered as a local boy that made good.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christopher R. Locke". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "C".

Christopher R. Locke

