7. Sample Character Reference Letter: Family Friends

Date

The Honorable (name of your judge)

United States District Court Judge

(Name of your judicial district)

(Address of your judicial district)

City of your judicial district, state, zip

Regarding: U.S.—v—Your name and case number

Dear Judge (last name):

Our names are X and Y and we have known XX for 23 years. We know her through the XXXXXX Christian School, our XXXXXX Church, and as dear friends and traveling companions. We were shocked and saddened when our believed friend came to confess to us that she had violated the law. We are proud that she has taken full responsibility for her mistakes.

Please accept this letter as our way to tell you about XX.

Upon our arrival in XXX, we met XX at the XXXXXX Christian School where she worked as an administrator. Immediately we saw her open, dedicated, and all-embracing love for other people. That first impression was exactly right. Over the years, we have seen XX work tirelessly and joyfully to be of service to others.

Both of our children attended the XXXXXX Christian School. For a while, X taught math and chemistry there. While at XXX, X saw firsthand how XX devoted herself to the students. She handled the most challenging discipline problems in ways that inspired troubled students to change their attitudes and behavior. She saw to it that every needy, college-bound student received financial aid. XX was instrumental in our son’s successful application to the United States Military Academy, also known as West Point.

If a person is in need, XX leaps into action. She does not ask for applause or anything in return. She treated every child at the XXXXX Christian School like one of her own. She is an incredible woman, and a true angel.

XX and her husband, XXX, are two of our very best friends. Together, we travelled to XXXXX to participate in a mission to build a new church. As soon as her feet hit the ground, she was off and running to organize healthcare services for the local population. Like always, she was a magnet for small children. She is a bright light. Even when she did not speak the language, children her loving heart and open arms drew children to her naturally.

When XX was in the process of selling the XXXXXXX, we could see that she was stressed. For a period of time, she was not herself. We know now that she was going through a season a struggle. We are grateful that this court gives her an orderly process for atonement and restitution.

We are blessed to know XX. It is a gift to see her beautiful capacity to share God’s love with others. Since this legal process started, she has been honest about her illegal actions and about her commitment to help the victims that were hurt by her crimes. She is serving as an excellent example of how to accept consequences with humility and grace. We hope that you will keep our words in mind as you decide upon the appropriate sentence to hand down in this case.

Sincerely,