

**To: The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi**

**From: Anya Pozdeeva,  
Vertically Integrated Farms, Inc.  
730 Noble ave. Bridgeport, CT 06608**

Your Honor,

I know Tim Mann for at least six years as an honest, hardworking and brilliant individual who invented a better way to grow food in sustainable recirculating aquaponics systems. He is one of the few people in the world who made such systems to work on commercial scale and be profitable. It means, his innovations allow people around the world to grow organic food and make a living doing so! This helps to create jobs. Tim is one of the innovating leaders who offer simple solutions for global problems of food shortage and pollution.


This past summer we had Tim and Susan lecturing at our facility in New York, where Tim introduced us to his new design of Aquaponics green house, which can produce organic food year-round in any climate. A person like him cannot be wasted in captivity, he must stay with us and continue share his knowledge and skills. The world needs his skills and his family needs a father.

I believe that both Tim and Susan were fooled into a trap of growing Cannabis, which they regretted many times; please forgive them.

I am an urban farmer and teacher, I learned aquaponics from many sources, but I find the Friendly's design to be most elegant and simple. It is simple enough to teach to children, which I do at THEPOINT, CDC, a Community Development Corporation in the Bronx, NY

Thank you for considering my letter,

Anya Pozdeeva  
Urban Farmer @ Vertically Integrated Farms, Inc.



01/10/14

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JAN 13 2014

**Hobey Waioli Beck**

**Waikoko Farms**

**P.O.Box 371**

**Hanalei Hawaii 96714**

To: The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

January 8, 2014

Regarding: Susanne Friend

Dear Honorable Judge Kobayashi,

I have been farming taro, vegetables and cut flowers for 22 years on my family farm established in 1948. I supply over 4,000 lbs per week of taro to poi manufactures on 5 islands. My wife runs a certified preschool at our Farm (Waikoko Kids). Together we are raising 4 children ages 9, 13, 17, 19. I have dedicated myself to providing quality food, flowers and childcare to our local community and state. Without the diversity of endeavors on my farm we would not be able to continue.

I am writing in supporter of Tim Mann. I participated in his weeklong Aquaponics course in 2010. After taking the course Tim guided me through constructing my own Aquaponics food production system. Tim is always generous with his time and honest in his goal of having Hawaii become food sustainable. I wish more people in our agriculture industry could be as open and generous with their information. I use this facility to teach children how nutritious food can be produced at home on many sizes and in many different locations.

Tim is a positive contributor to our local farming and family community. Tim has been up front with the past wrong decisions. He has paid dearly for those mistakes.

After taking his course I offered to help support where I can. Please consider Tim's positive attributes of carrying, sharing and progressing Hawaii's sustainability effort when you render your decision.

Sincerely,



Hobey Beck

CC: Susanne Friend/ Philip H. Lowenthal

# SAND CREEK FARM

1552 CR 267  
Cameron, TX 76520  
Phone: 254-697-2927  
E-Mail: alysha@farm-market.net  
Web: www.sandcreekfarm.net

Jan 25, 2014

Dear Honorable Judge Leslie Koybayashi:

We are Ben & Alysha Godfrey of Cameron, TX USA. Ben and I own a sustainable farm in Milam County, TX. We provide food directly to about 250 families through varied food products produced on our farm. We provide indirectly to another 1000+ through our aquaponic and field vegetables via wholesale means of supplying larger Consumer Supported Agriculture operations that make food available direct to consumer in Dallas and Austin, TX. We also offer diverse training experiences in the different areas of our farming for young adults who wish to learn more about sustainable farming, aquaponics, pastured poultry and pastured pork, grass based dairy and beef, organic produce farming, customer service, a creamery with commercial kitchen, and learning to milk cows.

We became acquainted with Tim and Susanne through their Friendly Aquaponic Commercial Aquaponic manual. Truthfully, it is one of the best and most exciting farming techniques we have been introduced to in the 12 years we have been farming.

We built 3 aquaponic facilities before we ever met Tim Mann, and through only the purchase of his book, he answered at least 160 emails from our aquaponic manager. In the course of generously answering the enormous amounts of emails, he saved us at least \$10,000 per aquaponic greenhouse on construction cost alone.

Since that time, Ben has attended Tim's Commercial Aquaponic course in TN and the first night he called me and said "I wish I had come to class before I put the first post in the ground, I have learned enough the first day to cover the cost of the course and travel expenses". He and Tim began to get to know one another during that week and he came home prepared to teach Tim's Micro Aquaponic course. In teaching this course it solidified my husband's own knowledge about our aquaponic system, provided valuable learning for the young adults that are on our farm, and made available a profitable and economical way to help other farmers stay on their farm instead of having to take a job in town while doing something great for the local community.

One thing that you might know about farmers is that we don't normally have huge incomes, we farm for family life, for the fulfillment of doing what is right and good, and we take our jobs of growing healthy foods seriously. During the course of teaching the Micro Courses, part of the arrangement with Tim and Susanne was to bless us, without any kind of written agreement, to have their printed course materials, trusting that we would pay them for each book as we sold them as part of our class fee. Amazing, who does that these days?! It has been so wonderful to be able to have the materials ready for class and pay for them as we use them. Not only that, they provided us with all of the

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support material for free as well as the entire power point presentation so that our class would be the same material as all the other worldwide instructors. Then each time I send a payment, I get this very thankful note from Susanne, saying how much we have blessed them in sending them a check or a PayPal. It is nice to be told you brightened someone else's day but even nicer when you have brightened one another's.

Recently Tim flew to Texas to teach a Commercial Aquaponics course, hosted by our farm. Tim stayed in one of our bunkhouses for almost 2 weeks. He had every meal with us, worked with us, provided insight to our aquaponic systems for improvements, and taught us non-stop at no charge. He fairly divided up the course income and shared the expenses with us on everything. The participants had healthy meals, a clean environment to learn and a dedicated trainer. We saw him time and time again give free advice, ride off with fellow aquaponic enthusiasts to review their operation, free of charge, and just help in anyway possible. We found having Tim in our home a pleasant experience. He was mild mannered, helpful, independent, and in general just fit in.

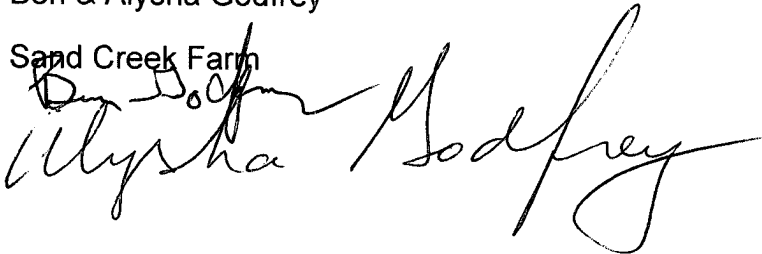
We know about the offence for which they will be in front of you to review. My letter is mostly to tell you that we know from first hand experience that Tim has changed our lives in a positive way, that he helped people in TN and in TX have the opportunity to make a better life for themselves and their families by helping others and by providing food to others. He and Susanne are helping hundreds of families with their aquaponic manuals, constant and quick answers to emails and phone calls, their congenial manner and willingness to self sacrifice to help others while at the same time mentoring on how to be sustainable, repurposing resources, and saving resources by developing and teaching "green" concepts for aquaponics.

I believe they would be a better asset to the public good if they were accessible to the public instead of being in jail.

Sincerely,

Ben & Alysha Godfrey

Sand Creek Farm

Handwritten signatures of Ben and Alysha Godfrey. The signature for Alysha is written in a cursive script and is positioned below the printed name. The signature for Ben is written in a cursive script and is positioned to the left of Alysha's signature.



October 1,2013

TO: The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobiyashi

We are writing this letter as a character reference for Tim Mann & Susanne Friend. We have known Tim and Susanne for some time and know them as intelligent, caring and hard working people. Both Tim and Susanne are hard workers and good parents, with the very best of character and integrity. Sometime good people make bad decisions, but it doesn't mean they are bad people. While we are deeply saddened by these recent troubles, as a former law enforcement officer, I do not for a moment believe that our society is in any way being protected or served by the possible incarceration of the good people and the effect it will have on their loving family

Your most profound and thoughtful consideration of this matter is very respectfully appreciated.

With Highest Regards,

Charles & Maria Flynt  
8861 E. Buckboard Rd  
Tucson, AZ 85749

520-760-6005

Jeanne Keller  
Notary Public, State of Hawai'i  
PO Box 1398  
Honoka'a, HI 96727  
808-895-6504

November 8, 2013

Dear Honorable Judge Leslie Koybayashi,

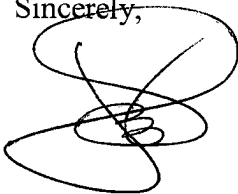
I am writing this letter to you today in hopes that it may make a difference for Susanne Friend and Tim Mann, who I have known for more than 14 years.

These two have been in my life professionally as well as personally and throughout the years have shown me integrity and stamina in their efforts to support their family, even through hard financial times, which eventually brought them to seek financial relief from the wrong individuals for support.

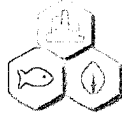
I wish to keep this letter short as I am sure you are very busy, however, I do pray that the Court releases these two from the crimes that they have been charged as I know they have learned a life long lesson to keep their integrity in tact and to work hard to keep their family together legally.

Thank you for your consideration for these two upstanding citizens in our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jeanne M. Keller', written over a circular scribble.

Jeanne M. Keller  
Notary Public, State of Hawai'i  
Honoka'a Business Association's  
Recording Secretary  
Hāmākua Youth Foundation's  
Recording Secretary  
Owner Dragonfly's Creation of Hāmākua



imagineAQUAPONICS  
3763 S Kansas Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53207  
E: [info@imagineaquaponics.com](mailto:info@imagineaquaponics.com)

Molly Stanek  
Imagine Aquaponics  
3763 S Kansas Ave  
Milwaukee, WI 53207  
November 8, 2013

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi  
c/o Philip H. Lowenthal  
33 N. Market St.  
Suite 101  
Wailuku, Maui, HI 96793

Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi:

My name is Molly Stanek. In addition to being a co-founder of Imagine Aquaponics, a cutting edge aquaponic design company I also am active within my community in many ways. I am the president of a local fiber arts guild, a local food advocate, and I volunteer my time with local schools to build educational aquaponics systems. I spent the last two years as the Midwest Regional Director of the Aquaponics Association (<http://aquaponicsassociation.org/>), and currently serve on the Aquaponics Association's advisory board.

I've known Tim Mann and Susanne Friend professionally for four years. In that time I have known them to be kind spirits who have worked generously to change the world in a positive way and solve problems that we face as a human species. Their dedication to advancing food growing technologies has already helped to put in motion an emerging industry of aquaponic growers who are feeding people all over the world. I am sure they will continue to inspire and educate for years to come. I hope you will allow them to do so by granting them a sentence of probation regarding their guilty plea.

Sincerely,

Molly Stanek  
Co-Founder, Imagine Aquaponics

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NOV 18 2013



imagineAQUAPONICS  
3763 S Kansas Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53207  
E: [info@imagineaquaponics.com](mailto:info@imagineaquaponics.com)

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi  
c/o Philip H. Lowenthal  
33 N. Market St.  
Suite 101, Wailuku, Maui, HI 96793

Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi:

My name is Jesse Hull, owner/founder of Imagine Aquaponics, LLC.

After attaining degrees from the University of Wisconsin in chemistry, metalsmithing, and psychology, I spent more than 10 years building homes, farms, flood abatement/irrigation systems and community centers throughout the US, as well as in Africa and Europe as an active member of Habitat for Humanity's Global Village Program. During this time I was also part of several natural disaster relief efforts, beginning with Hurricane Andrew in 1992. The production and preservation of food, especially in areas with depleted or damaged resources still remains an intense focus of mine.

Master Gardener & Permaculture certified, I have used my 20 years experience within the realm of agriculture and water technology to lead the horticulture and water chemistry staff on a 4 acre urban farm that included a 70,000 gallon aquaponic facility in Milwaukee, WI. I spent nearly two years as a founding officer of the Aquaponics Association (<http://aquaponicsassociation.org/>), and currently serve on the Aquaponics Association's advisory board.

To date, Imagine Aquaponics has taught hundreds of potential future farmers the lessons necessary to start up a successful aquaponic or hydroponic farm, and have consulted both nationally and internationally on several currently operating farms in order to improve food production, harvesting, and marketing. Working with the Wisconsin non-profit, Victory Garden Initiative, we have helped build more than 800 personal family raised bed gardens and have established several farming and food forests within our local community.

I have known Tim Mann and Susanne Friend as colleagues in a movement and an emerging industry encompassing aquaponics, Controlled Environment Agriculture, and permaculture which I feel holds solutions to the problems inherent in feeding the more than 7 billion people on our fragile planet.

In the four years since meeting them, I have known Tim and Susanne to hold tight to the values of generosity, hard work, and environmental responsibility. They have openly shared vast amounts of their personal experience and knowledge when working with Imagine Aquaponics in our mutually shared efforts to create alternatives to the failing agricultural structure currently in place, both in the U.S. and abroad.

Completely aware of the current situation stemming from Tim's and Susanne's guilty plea, I feel that an extended prison sentence would inflict irreversible damage on their lives and those of their family, as well as to the business which currently allows them to teach the value of growing one's own food to thousands of people each year. In light of the amazing and much needed work that they have accomplished, I would ask for you, the judge, to grant them a sentence of probation so that they can continue to benefit people and communities throughout Hawaii, the U.S., and the rest of the world.

I do not believe that they will ever repeat their offense, nor can I envision them ever knowingly committing any illegal activity in the future.

I offer below my phone number and email address. I invite you to contact me regarding any questions I may answer or any assistance I may offer in this matter.

Sincerely,

Jesse Wiseman Hull - 1.608.333.9840 - [jesse@imagineaquaponics.com](mailto:jesse@imagineaquaponics.com)

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NOV 18 2013

17891 Doe Run Creek Ln  
Washington TX 77880  
January 5, 2014

The Honorable Judge Leslie Koybayashi

Your Honor:

I am a retired business owner and small rancher in Texas. I have been reading the Friendly Aquaponics Letters for about two years now, and have learned a great deal of technical information about aquaponics from them. But more importantly, I have learned what fine and moral people Susanne Friend and Tim Mann are. They could not write such letters, full of both information and moral guidance if they were not upstanding people of impeccable integrity.

Whatever errors in judgment they were led into in the past by a con artist posing as a cleric, they have accepted responsibility for their mistakes and have strived assiduously to make up for them by helping others. Susanne and Tim are doing important work for the betterment of all people. They are far more useful to society as a whole continuing their educational efforts to improve the lives of both city and country folks, and to alleviate the looming food shortages that will be impacting all of us too soon, than they could be serving time in prison while their young family struggles without them..

Please consider all the ramification of your judgment and release Susanne and Tim to continue their highly ethical work

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amy Davis".

(Mrs.) Amy Davis

17891 Doe Run Creek Ln  
Washington TX 77880  
January 5, 2014

The Honorable Judge Leslie Koybayashi

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Please consider all the ramification of your judgment and release Susanne and Tim to continue their highly ethical work

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amy Davis".

(Mrs.) Amy Davis

Nadja Puck, Kronthalerstr. 22a 61462 Königstein  
Philip H. Lowenthal  
33 N. Market St.  
Suite 101  
Wailuku, Maui, HI 96793  
USA

*Kronberg, 21. Januar 2014*

**Please don't put Tim and Susanne into prison**

Dear Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi,

My Name is Nadja Puck. I live in Königstein, Germany and I am 23 years old. In a couple of month I will be done with being a trainee at a five star hotel in a town nearby.

When I heard that Tim and Susanne Friend were in trouble I knew I had to help them. I got to them in November 2009. The reason I came to their farm was that I found them by pure chance through the internet on a website called greataupair.com. I wanted to spend three month on their farm, watching their kids, to try out the experience of being an aupair and if it is the right thing for me to do.

When I came all the way to Hawaii, not knowing these people except through e-mail or phone, I was afraid. It was my first time being away by myself. Tim and Susanne picked me up with their Van full packed with kids, farminterns and Susannes mother. It did not take five minutes and my fear was taken by their friendliness.

They were as excited to meet me as I was to meet them, asked a lot of questions and told me about their farm.

It didn't take long to feel part of their family. The whole friend family and all who are being called family members is a chaotic loving group of wonderful individual people. I probably learned more from each of them in these couple month than I learned in my whole life before.

I was not just there to take care of their kids, soon I was helping them with their farm work. They took a lot of time explaining me aquaponics and they taught me how to build the systems and how to grow food in them.

But as I already mentioned, I was not just there to watch after the kids or work on their farm, I was being part of the family. We cooked, ate, spend our freetime together. They showed me the beautiful island.

Susanne is a wonderful loving mother. She is cheerful and almost always has a smile on her face. She tries to teach her kids as much as she possibly can. She loves the island so much and was always honoring and protecting the nature. She is incredibly intelligent and I always had the feeling that her goal in live was to make the world a better world.

Tim is more quiet but not less loving. He is a hart working man and always tries to make his wife and kids happy. He is also very linked to nature. Nature and his family is all he needs to be happy and what he would protect with his live.

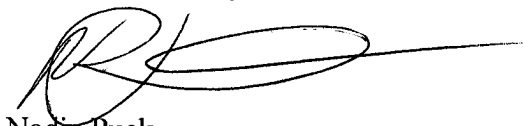
I know they made their mistakes. But if you send Tim and Susanne into prison the society would lose so incredible valuable people. They are doing so much for the environment and the people around them.

Tim and Susanne really want to help with their aquaponic project. They are spending their time growing food efficient and eco sensitive. They are thinking about protecting the environment and how to cure hunger in the world. And most importantly are they teaching others to do the same. In my opinion does the world need more people like Tim and Susanne.

Please don't put these wonderful, loving, hart working and amazing people in prison.

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this.

Yours respectfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Nadja Puck', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Nadja Puck



*Amy Bethan Geddis*

5177 B Garfield Ave, South Pasadena, CA 91030



*Summerstar00@yahoo.co.uk*

Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

My name is Amy Bethan Geddis and I am a qualified Teacher originally from Wales in the United Kingdom, 8 years ago after becoming dissatisfied with the running of the Establishment where I worked I handed my notice in. With no real plan and 3 days left with work, I believe a hand of fate happened open me, with Susanne getting in touch with me asking would I like to fly to Hawai'i to help her and Tim out with their Children. A little overwhelmed and excited but wary of the opportunity I accepted. Finishing work on a Friday I was on my way to Hawai'i by the following Monday.

I can whole heartily say it was one of the best opportunities and decisions of my life. On arrival I was very nervous and a little scared, which totally disappeared on meeting both Tim and Susanne at the airport. They were so warm and welcoming and I instantly became happy and at ease. I spent three Months living with Tim, Susanne and their wonderful children, where they welcomed my Cousin from Ireland in to the Family during the last Month of my stay. If my Visa would have allowed it I would have stayed a lot longer. I have been in close contact with them since leaving and have been back a few times to visit.

A true testament to someone's being and character is their Children, I hope you get a chance to meet them as they are all truly wonderful! They are thoughtful, confident, intelligent, happy, loving children. I learnt just as much from them as from Tim and Susanne. There is something special about this Family.

I understand that there can be some tension between native Hawaiian and non-native, but Susanne and Tim are well known and loved in and around their community, by the young and the old, no matter who they are or where they come from. They have immersed themselves in their community and are at the heart of it.

Their doors and hearts are always open, they love their people and if you're lucky enough to be one of those people, you know there will always be a place for you and someone watching out for you.

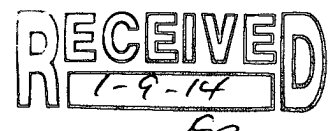
I call Susanne my Mother Earth, she seems to have lived many life's, she taught me to love me for me. I love my Parents but no one has made me feel so good about who I am. She increased my confidence and self-worth that I believe that it would have taken years to learn without her. She also taught me about people, she made me care more and to look deeper. She taught be how to listen, but also how to talk, she freed my spirit and opened up my World.

I have never seen a man work as hard as Tim, while I was there Susanne pushed for him just to have half a day of a week. He woke early to work and worked late. I also never met someone who can pretty much do everything and not to a layman's level, his workmanship is professional in every manner. As far as I'm aware he is pretty much self-taught too. He is strong, authoritative man with the biggest heart, he is a Family man and would do what it takes to provide and protect them. Tim has an infectious smile and a cheerful personality. I admired the bond of love he has with Susanne, the way he interacted with her, the whole Family would brighten up when he walked through the door. As did the men of the community, many people look up to Tim.

In terms of their momentary lapse in judgment, I in no way encourage their decision or support it. However I can say they have been totally open about it and transparent about their mistake. If anything I have learnt from them. As a Child Care professional, when Children make a mistake they do not learn from the actually punishment. They learn from the feelings and the process or steps of working through it. I believe Tim and Susanne have not only learnt a valuable lesson but their Children, their loved ones, their community and whoever hears their story.

Yours Sincerely

Amy Bethan Geddis



Dallas Texas

January 7, 2014

Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

33 N. Market St.

Suite 101

Wailuku, Maui , HI 96793

Dear Judge Kobayashi:

I am writing at the request of Susanne Friend and Tim Mann to affirm my respect for and appreciation for their innovation and responsible sharing of information in the field of aquaponics.

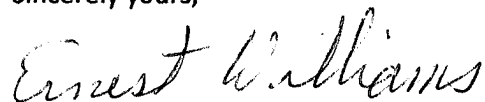
I am a 76 year old retired contractor and college administrator who stumbled on the concept of aquaponics on the internet several years ago, and then have been to a demonstration in Garland of a small household system and a 1 day seminar in central Texas at a commercial installation. Both of these seminars were presented by individuals following the example of Friendly Aquaponics and were held at were presented at a very reasonable cost to me, and the public. I have also received the weekly newsletter written by Tim which provides pointers, reports, and encouragement to the practitioners of this novel production technique. I have also purchased their book which details the necessary plant, Operation procedures, and mistakes that they encounter in the system they are running.

All this is to say that while I do not know either of these people personally, I have followed them for several years as described, and am impressed with the support that they give other producers. I view the technology they are developing as important in the grand scheme of things, as food production is and will become acutely important as the population of the world grows.

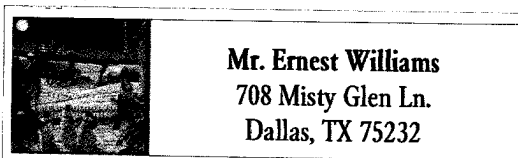
I urge you to consider the value of their contributions in deciding on a sentence for violation of a law, for which they have acknowledged, and repented of , it a time of their personal financial distress.

Thank you for your consideration of these positive contributions that this family has made to the health, and prosperity of the people in Hawaii, and through their "students" many other communities as well.

Sincerely yours,



Ernest Williams, 708 Misty Glen Ln., Dallas Texas, 75232, aceremod@hotmail.com



RECEIVED  
JAN 14 2014



The Honorable Judge Leslie Koybayashi

January 11, 2014

*corrected spelling  
sent to judge*

Judge Kobayashi,

This letter is in support of Susanne Friend and Tim Mann of Friendly Aquaponics.

We have been aware of the pioneering work of Friendly Aquaponics for several years. Our firm has been conducting research and development of technology and marketing trends in the aquaponics field since 2010 and the reputation of Friendly Aquaponics is widely known and respected. They are known worldwide for giving their all to the development of aquaponics as an industry, to the benefit of everyone.

Hawaii is among the few places in the world where this method of agriculture is taken seriously. Dr. Tetsuzan Benny Ron of the University of Hawaii is another leader in the field whom we rely on.

So we urge you to consider the value of these entrepreneurs to the future of agriculture in a world dominated by Monsanto, Cargill and the like, and where food security is an ever-increasing concern.

Your Honor, regarding this issue of marijuana cultivation: Clearly the tide is turning across the US regarding the criminalization of cannabis. I just returned from taking my son to college in Colorado, where marijuana production and sale is a booming industry. Even Mississippi and Alabama are on a track to decriminalize pot. The US government relies on the University of Mississippi to produce marijuana for its own research programs.

I understand that the federal government still classifies marijuana as a dangerous narcotic. You have the letter of the law to guide your decisions. Yet you also have the opportunity to show a spirit of compassion in this Friendly Aquaponics case. So please consider that this is a family of non-criminal human beings who made some naive assumptions about what they were doing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bevan Suits", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Bevan Suits, Owner

Aquaplanet, LLC

Cc: Philip H. Lowenthal  
33 N. Market St.  
Suite 101  
Wailuku, Maui, HI 96793

Aquaplanet LLC 1326 Fenway Circle Decatur, Georgia 30030 404 421 1894  
[www.aquaplanetonline.com](http://www.aquaplanetonline.com)

RECEIVED  
JAN 14 2014

Date: January 11, 2014

From: William L. York, Retired Engineer  
5120 Lincoln Ave.  
Cypress, CA 90630

To: The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

Subject: Passing Legal Judgment on Susanne Friend and Tim Mann

It has come to my attention that two people for whom I have tremendous respect and admiration are in front of you to be sentenced for the serious offense of growing marijuana for commercial purposes.

The offense, which they have admitted to and are extremely sorry for having committed, cannot be condoned and was a terrible **decision on their part**.

**However, in my opinion, to imprison them would be too harsh a punishment for this one time violation of the law.**

**There are legions of individuals who want to learn how to accomplish sustainable farming utilizing Aquaponics. Tim and Susanne are a team that has unselfishly provided training, techniques and 'how to'. They are showing us the best way to accomplish this relatively new and developing system. Tim has the technical and mechanical experience and Susanne has the Biology knowledge to make this system work for all of us. To lose the ongoing advice and recommendations of this team would be a significant punishment for all who are looking for and depend on solutions to sustainable, eco - friendly farming.**

**I have reviewed many other information sources of Aquaponic farming and none come close to the quality of information provided by Tim and Susanne. Their hands on experience and well - written explanations freely given to the community need to continue in order to advance Aquaponic farming. Doing this from a prison cell would be impossible.**

**I humbly request your benevolent decision.**

Sinceely,



William L. York

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JAN 14 2014

07/01/14 7:53 PM

The honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi,

My name is Monica Neven du Mont, I am an American living in France and married to a German citizen.

Through my son Patrick Simmersbach (married to Mrs. Heidi Busher, resident of Waimea) I have had the pleasure of meeting and befriending Susanne & Tim Friend during the multiple visits on Big Island.

I was touched by the loving care of Susanne's elderly mother by her family and grateful for the generosity shared towards my three sons work as musicians playing for humanitarian causes world wide.

([www.thedurgas.com](http://www.thedurgas.com))

I was immensely impressed by the "Aquaponic.s" project. My husband has worked for many years building schools in Africa, Asia and Arabia in the framework of the World-bank, the UN and the Red-Cross.

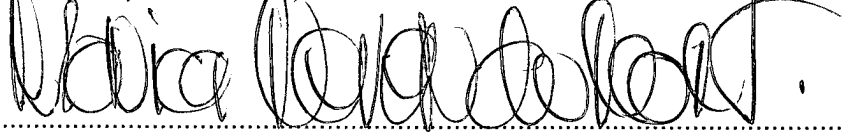
By living in some of the poorest countries of the world we have come to realize the importance of food for the survival of human beings world wide. The family Susanne and Tim Friend have contributed generously to provide positive solutions for a better future for the world.

As a mother of six children plus 20 grand children this is of major importance to me.

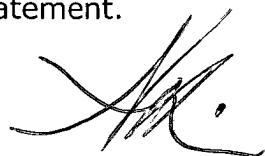
I will continue to support and defend Susanne and Tim Friend for their moral qualities and I would pray these qualities would be taken in consideration in the case raised against them.

Sincerely yours

- Monica Neven du Mont
- 5 rue Lalande, 6906 Lyon, France
- 7<sup>th</sup> January 2014

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- I, Adriaan Neven du Mont, husband of Monica's Neven du Mont fully support my wife's statement.
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January 12 2013

The Honorable Judge Lesile Kobayashi;

I am writing this letter in order to inform you what my experience has been when dealing with both Tim Mann and Susanne Friend.

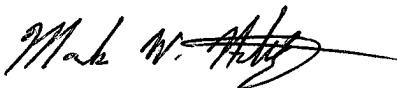
I began to move to Hawaii in January of 2009 with the plan of entering the field of farming. Not knowing much about farming it took me about a year before I meet Tim Mann who was starting, and by then running an aquaponics farm. The process intrigued me, I soon met another person who was also interested and we created a partnership and began to develop an aquaponics farm focused on growing strawberries. Tim and Susanne both made it clear that what we were trying was different from what they were doing, that was growing leafy greens. We plowed ahead anyways.

I will not bore you with the details but three years latter and 130,000 dollars we shut the farm down. During this time both Tim and Susanne were unbelievably helpful, they would give freely with both their time and knowledge, usually I would just stop by their house, unannounced, to ask questions, and they routinely stopped what they were doing and would answer my questions and give me their advice. They did this while being under extreme financial stress, and never asked for any financial compensation for their time or knowledge. Our relationship evolved from one of a student, teacher to one more as aquaponic coworkers sharing the knowledge we gained from our experiences. They were not the only people I tried to get help from, I called UC Davis, the center of strawberry research in the United States if not the world. I got better help from Tim and Susanne than UC Davis.

During this time our relationship evolved into one of friendship. I consider both of them to be good friends, I believe they are an asset to the community and would hate to lose them from our community. I hope you will see clear to some sort of penalty which will keep them in our community. I do not wish to belittle what they have done. I merely plead that removing them from our community would not be a benefit to the community, to society in general, or to their family.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter and giving me an opportunity to contribute my experiences.

Sincerely:



Mark W. Ackley  
P.O. Box 692  
Honokaa, HI 96727

Phone 1-808-775-1262

RECEIVED  
JAN 14 2014

January 12, 2014

To The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi:

In October of 2012 my wife, Leslie Sears, and I attended a multi-day Aquaponics workshop by Tim Mann and Susanne Friend at their farm near Honoka'a. We had never met them previously but had read about Aquaponics as a farming technique and were subscribing to their newsletter. It is an alternative farming technique with many pluses for any area with limited or restricted resources to produce high-quality abundant produce for market.

We were interested in the possibilities of this method to grow our own food and, perhaps, as an additional income source as I am planning to retire soon from my position as a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Analyst for the County of Hawai'i Planning Department. My wife is a self-employed graphic artist, printing, and self-publishing specialist running Les is More Printing & Graphics, here in Hilo where we live. Her clients include individuals, small businesses, and large corporations such as Nissan North America. We both work with community-based groups; Leslie is on the Board of Directors of the Hilo Downtown Improvement Association and is a "Vision-Keeper" for the Envision Downtown Hilo 2025 (EDH2025) committee. I serve on the Planning Department Mobility Solutions committee for EDH2025 and am an active member of Malama Kaipalaoa working on the clean up of the historic Kaipalaoa Landing area where the Wailuku River meets Hilo Bay.

While the Aquaponics workshop was professionally conducted and the information was clear, concise, and proven in concept, the real take-away from the week we spent on their farm and around their family was their devotion not only to this method of farming, but to their family, the land, and the people of this island. The happiness of their children and the obvious love they shared was an absolute pleasure to observe.

If Tim and Susanne found themselves pressed for income to service the loans they had taken, perhaps too optimistically supposing their farming methods would provide a rapid financial reward, they are not alone in letting passion trump judgment. The land has a mortgage, the equipment and supplies of their agricultural enterprise is a capital expense, raising children always demands new and usually unexpected expenses be paid out, and so on. It is easy to get behind, especially if you are plowing new ground in a new technology and learning by doing.

Roger Christie offered relief that could effectively save their situation. Neither of us second-guess them for accepting. What we can attest to is our impression of Tim and Susanne as people: they are honest, hard-working, and compassionate individualists. Marijuana is increasingly mainstream despite decades of illegality. It seems clear, with a casual glance at the daily news, a trend is underway to re-think the prohibition of marijuana.

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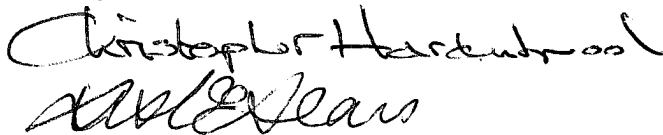
It is under this atmosphere of tolerance and acceptance that Roger Christie was permitted to openly market marijuana for years in Hawai'i. It is little wonder Tim and Susanne could be persuaded to participate in growing marijuana for Mr Christie to distribute as a "sacrament." The local powers-that-be allowed the practice to persist, effectively signaling tolerance to anyone associated with Mr Christie's Cannabis Ministry.

Tim and Susanne did mention as part of the workshop that this growing technique was inappropriate for the requirements of marijuana growing and if that was the interest of any of the attendees, they were not going to learn anything useful. No one left or expressed disappoint at this news. Clearly, their audience is separate from that crowd.

We do not believe Tim and Susanne would have engaged in a marijuana-growing experiment without this combination of circumstances. We are very sure they will not jeopardize their family's welfare and their important work developing Aquaponic technologies ever again. Intelligent people learn from their mistakes and, hopefully, may be allowed to move on. In the course of their marijuana-growing experiment Tim and Susanne were apparently unable to effectively produce marijuana, nobody was hurt, and the only victims are themselves, and by association, their children. They have been punished to the extent they have learned their lesson and that should be enough to satisfy the law. To further incarcerate them would be punishing their children and serve no good to society. On this, Leslie and I are absolutely sure.

Thank you for taking the time to read our letter. In the spirit of justice and common decency, we exhort you to show compassion and leniency to Tim Mann and Susanne Friend. Restore them to their family and to their good work in helping provide an alternative to commercial agricultural practices through Aquaponics; the work they do is important and should not be overshadowed by a lapse of judgment for which they have, in our eyes, adequately atoned themselves. Please allow this issue to come to a close without further negative ramifications to Tim and Susanne, their family, and their business.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signatures of Christopher Hardenbrook and Leslie Sears. The signature for Christopher Hardenbrook is written in a cursive style, and the signature for Leslie Sears is also in cursive, appearing below the first signature.

Christopher Hardenbrook and Leslie Sears  
1013 Kaūmana Drive  
Hilo, HI 96720



January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2014

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi  
In care of: Philip H. Lowenthal, Attorney at Law  
33 North Market Street  
Suite 101  
Wailuku, Maui, HI 96793

Dear Judge;

This letter is in reference to the pending case against Susanne Friend and Tim Mann.

In spite of the seriousness of the charges against Ms Friend and Mr. Mann, I feel leniency is in order due to the overall beneficial effect they have in the community with their aquaponic classes and workshops and their volunteer work.

In these days of food uncertainty, their knowledge and expertise is invaluable, especially to our remote island state.

A group and I were putting together a food production project for one of our grammar schools in Hilo and Ms Friend and Mr. Mann readily volunteered their services as well as offering to set up one of their systems at no charge. Unfortunately, the project did not go through due to extenuating circumstances, and red tape, but they had volunteered their services before the project fell through.

We understand the seriousness of the crime committed, but know they are repentant in their lapse of judgment and have ~~learned~~ <sup>learned</sup> a costly lesson.

We who ~~have~~ had the opportunity to get to know them hope that your decision will take into consideration their children's needs and the continuity of their aquaponic business.

Respectfully,

Anthony B. Mathis  
Sonia R. Martinez  
P. O. Box 190  
Honolulu, HI 96728  
808/963-6860  
[cubanwahine@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:cubanwahine@hawaii.rr.com)

*Sonia R. Martinez*  
*Anthony Mathis*

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JAN 14 2014

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi  
C/O Philip H. Lowenthal, Attorney at Law  
33 N. Market St.  
Suite 101  
Wailuku, Maui, HI 96793

1/9/2014

Dear Judge Kobayashi:

First let me introduce myself: I am a licensed acupuncturist practicing in Waimea on the Big Island for over twenty years. I have also taught on a private basis hundreds of Waimea's children in mathematics at the elementary through college level during that time period, as well as having been a teacher of acupuncture and Chinese traditional medicine at a school founded by Dr. Angela Longo, Ph.D.

I am well-known and respected in this community, I love Hawaii and the Big Island, and am an avid supporter of sustainable options in agriculture, energy, and many different healing modalities.

In the near future you will be presiding over the sentencing of Tim Mann and Susanne Friend for marijuana-related offenses. I would like to say a few things concerning the character and importance to the community of this married couple, whom I have known personally for 15 years.

I taught Susanne at the Traditional Chinese Medical College of Hawaii in the years 1998-2000. She was an avid student of acupuncture at that time and I remember her as being a very conscientious student and hard-working single mother.

She married Tim Mann, a local Honokaa businessman and accomplished construction draftsman, and she concentrated her efforts on raising her family and helping Tim found an aquaponics venture specializing in teaching others sustainable aquaponic agriculture, with contacts worldwide.

They undertook a project involving the feasibility of growing medical marijuana aquaponically under the auspices of a minister, Roger Christie, who persuaded them to grow marijuana for his church. Mr. Christie operated "The Hawaii Cannabis Ministry" on the Big Island for almost ten years, with the apparent knowledge of both local and federal authorities, and claimed First Amendment protection for his activities with marijuana. Their research efforts ultimately demonstrated the impracticality of this deep culture method for growing medicinal marijuana.

They regret their decision to grow marijuana deeply but their motives should be considered in their sentencing. This is not a simple case of cultivating marijuana to become large-scale suppliers for the illegal drug trade. There are no signs of a history of criminal activity in their past, they are productive members of the Big Island community, and they are excellent parents.

It would be a great misfortune for the island agricultural community to lose their input and expertise in these upcoming crucial years when more than at any time in the history of the Hawaiian Islands we need creative business people to move us in the direction of sustainable development.

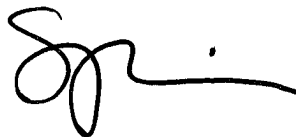
The grievous effect of an adverse sentence on their children weighs heavily on their minds, above all other considerations.

Kindly keep these considerations in mind when you sentence Tim Mann and Susanne Friend.

I can be reached at [808 987 0945](tel:8089870945) or via email [dennis.spain@gmail.com](mailto:dennis.spain@gmail.com)

Sincerely,

Dennis Spain, L.Ac.



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JAN 11 2014

# **MARVIN A. HODGES**

January 9, 2014

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

Dear Judge Kobayashi:

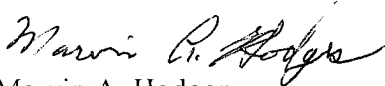
Re: Tim Mann and Susanne Friend. Friendly Aquaponics

I am 85 years of age and retired. In the past, I was an International sales director for two firms in Miami, Florida and my last salaried job started at age 70 as an Adjunct Professor at America's largest community college, Miami-Dade Community College in Miami, Florida. I am a veteran of WW II, having served in the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division. My father served in WW I, and my two uncles served in WW II. One was on duty at the naval hospital in Honolulu on December 7, 1941. My family has centuries of service, with the farm in Southern Georgia being part of the first GI Bill, a land grant in the wilderness of South Georgia after the Revolution. I realize that does not reflect on my character, but I was honored when my son stated that the greatest thing he ever learned was "character" from me. That son, who served in the U.S. Army in the early 70s, is a hospitalist at the Duke satellite hospital in Raleigh, NC. For several years, he was their Administrator of Hospitalists. My other son is a successful advertizing entrepreneur in San Diego, CA. I mention my sons because marijuana can destroy lives. I am not expressing an opinion about legality, I am thinking of the results of judicial decisions. Both my sons would have been jailed had they been charged by the local police when picked up as teenage violators of the law. Their future would have been totally different. Social Services are necessary but are not the best way to raise children. My understanding indicates that the children separated from their parents will be changed forever. I urge you to consider these points. My life as a single parent, my family, and the great benefits society has received from the work of my two boys would never have occurred had the police charged my sons.

Early last year, I started researching aquaponics for my daughter, who will retire soon. In the course of the research, I encountered Friendly Aquaponics. I recently recommended to the Departments of Health in Trinidad/Tobago and St. Maarten, and to contacts in India, where over 750,000 people die annually from malaria, to consult with Friendly Aquaponics for guidance in using aquaponics to control mosquitoes. The arrival in the West Indies of African diseases may find a solution in the Friendly Aquaponics discovery in Hawaii when combined with other common steps to eliminate mosquitoes that cause dengue fever, malaria, yellow fever, elephantiasis, and West Nile disease around the world. I mention these factors only to show the real world effect of their work and observations. Tim and Susanne's discovery may have a major impact on the world's health.

During my contact with this family, I have had no negative experience but have observed total commitment to helping people improve their lives. People can change. My sons changed. From my contact with Tim Mann and Susanne Friend, I believe they understand their error and will not make that mistake again. Every indication is they have suffered greatly and will continue to suffer.

Yours truly,

  
Marvin A. Hodges

# The Complete Biogas Handbook

The Honorable Judge Leslie E. Kobayashi

Wednesday, January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2014

Your Honor,

I am David House, the author of The Complete Biogas Handbook, Wind and Windspinners, and Journey (a book of poetry). The Biogas Handbook has been a standard reference in the field of small-scale anaerobic digestion, through three editions, for 30 years, and it was featured in The Whole Earth Catalog. Norman Cousins,<sup>1</sup> late editor of the Saturday Review, praised my poetry and requested to meet with me. I hold a patent for the ultrasonic electrical stimulation of the cochlea to achieve a sensation of hearing. I have been very happily married for 37 years, and have three strong and happy children. (My daughter, for example, is living in the Dominican Republic. She is employed to provide distance learning via the Internet at the university level to a persecuted religious minority in Iran; she has established a local lending library with more than 3,000 books; and she works locally with issues of education and literacy.) As far as I can recall, I never once told my children a lie, large or small, white or any other color.

I ran a medical device company for a decade, and have run a number of other enterprises, which obviously, among other things, required me to hire and fire people. I believe that it can be truthfully said that every former employee that I fired would list me as a friend, as someone trustworthy and concerned with justice.

In sum I am familiar, to a degree, with the world and I hope my life provides some evidence of an ability to understand myself and other people, and to appreciate values and accomplishment.

I met Tim and Susanne when they contacted me via email in September of 2009, just a few weeks after they had first begun selling their lettuce to a local Costco. Tim proposed that we work together on a USDA grant that they had recently won, to see if, together, we could not advance the state of the art in biogas by developing a kind of off-the-shelf system suitable for small farms. (We have made considerable progress, and continue to work on this project, to this date.)

Following that first contact, we developed a deep friendship, which has been limited only, in my view, because we live so far from each other.

I find that Tim and Susanne exemplify a number of strong values. Susanne, for example, is honest, with herself and others, sometimes to a fault. But honesty, to my mind, is the prince of virtues, because where it becomes habitual, it provides a constant spur to improve oneself. She has a penetrating intellect and is a person of integrity. Tim is an enthusiastic and loving man, with a deceptively relaxed persona, who somehow accomplishes as much as several type-A dynamos working together. He accepts everyone as they are.

Together, they have done remarkable things, and gained accomplishments which promise to have very important positive impacts in the future. No doubt, for example, you have heard of their work

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<sup>1</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Norman\\_Cousins](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Norman_Cousins)

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JAN 13 2014

in aquaponics. They want to develop this art into something that can benefit the poor in villages around the world, and my hope is to assist them in so doing.

As I see it, their present difficult position has been brought about, as both would fervently affirm, and indeed have very frankly said to any number of their friends and acquaintances, by foolish and very ill-considered actions spurred by the stabbing worry of meeting the burden of an enormous mortgage. The fault is theirs, no question, and they understand that.

They have told me— and I believe them— that they did not understand the serious consequences which might well follow their actions, and given that we seem to be in a time of social change regarding the way our country will be dealing with marijuana— witness Colorado— that may perhaps be understandable.

Now, by the grace of God, I have not had the misfortune to be in their position. I do not use alcohol, mind-altering or illegal drugs of any description, as a matter of religious belief (I am a Bahá'í). And I have no professional experience with the law or with current philosophies of crime and punishment.

But I can say this: If the purpose of punishment is to cause a change in behavior, then Tim and Susanne have already made that change. If the purpose of imprisonment is to protect society, then surely the imprisonment of either would not benefit or protect society in the slightest; quite the opposite. If finally, the purpose of punishment is to exact a price for the crime, then Tim and Susanne have already paid a very considerable price in terms of their professional reputation, the expense of their legal situation, the very real possibility of losing their farm and business from behind bars, and most significantly the wrenching prospect of not being with their children during a number of critical years. Rose, for example, as you know, is 8.

In sum, I would urge you, your Honor, in the strongest terms, to offer them justice, which, (it seems to me) is in this case indistinguishable from leniency. Please allow them, your Honor, to continue to develop the good works on which they are embarked and to maintain the integrity of their family, and I feel certain that both of us will see marvelous fruits from them as a result of your wise decision, and their continuing and determined efforts.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

David William House

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. W. House', written over the printed name 'David William House'.

The Honorable Leslie Koybayashi  
Judge, United States District Court  
Prince Kuhio Federal Building  
300 Ala Moana Blvd,  
Honolulu, HI 96850

Re: Tim and Susanne Friend

Dear Judge Koybayashi:

I am writing on behalf of Tim and Susanne Friend and in support of supervised release.

I have known Tim and Susanne for three years now through their aquaponics business. I have contacted many aquaponics growers and consultants, and the Friends stand out like a beacon in their desire to share aquaponics and healthy, sustainable food with anyone in the world. I have yet to ever send them any money, but still they are always willing to answer all of my questions personally and patiently. They have sent lists of plants that grow well in systems, and countless tips on how to get started successfully. After one conversation Tim even sent plans that they sell for around \$1,000 to me for free. I did not request this, but Tim knew that I was struggling financially and simply sent them. He told me to get started if I could, and take care of my family. Nobody else in the industry that I've ever contacted has ever done anything except quote prices. Tim and Susanne are genuine, kind, giving, and humble.

I have worked now for 37 years serving families and youth in both professional and volunteer capacities. I've coached soccer teams, taught Sunday School, taught at the middle and high school levels, tutored music students, participated in booster programs and spent almost twenty years as a boy scout leader, and as an advocate and therapist for autistic youth. Both of my sons are Eagle Scouts, one of whom is among the most highly decorated Boy Scouts in history, and my other son a young man with autism who was not expected to do anything productive in his life.

In my many years working with families I have seen far too many parents make stupid decisions thinking they were protecting a family business and their children. Some of those decisions, as in the case of Tim and Susanne, were not just stupid but also illegal. One thing most of these decisions have in common is that they were made in

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JAN 13 2014

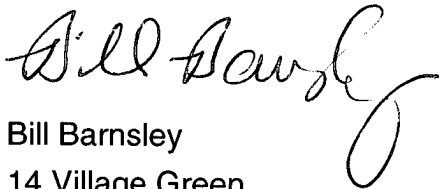
desperation and fear, hoping to protect families.

Tim and Susanne have shared with me some of the details of their mistake. They've admitted to me that they've done something really stupid and illegal, and are now realizing just how bad and far reaching the consequences can be. To be clear, I do not condone marijuana growth or use. That stated, I still support supervised release for Tim and Susanne.

Incarceration will only serve as punishment and will not serve to teach them not to break the law. I believe they've already learned that lesson, and it is reinforced every time they look at their children that are now at risk of losing their parents. Further, children cannot be simply stored away while their parents are in prison. Those children need parents and a home. Neither can the farm operate itself, or go dormant and survive.

Incarceration will not only punish Tim and Susanne, but deeply harm their children, shut down their farm and end their livelihood. It will also close a productive local business supplying healthy, sustainable food to local families. It will also take their knowledge and skills out of reach of people like me. I am working to obtain funding for an aquaponics farm in Massachusetts and am counting on their guidance to start successfully.

Thank you for your consideration,



Bill Barnsley

14 Village Green

Sturbridge, MA 01566

☐ Philip H. Lowenthal ☐ 33 N. Market St. ☐ Suite 101 ☐ Wailuku, Maui, HI 96793 ☐

# Endre Balogh

4124 Dundee Drive Los Angeles, CA 90027  
(323) 667-0309  
Strad1728@mindspring.com

January 8, 2014

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayshi  
300 Ala Moana Blvd. C 338  
Honolulu, HI 96850

RE: Susanne Friend and Tim Mann

To the Honorable Justice Kobayshi:

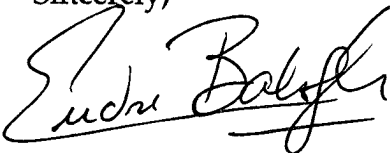
I am writing to you regarding the sentencing of Susanne Friend and Tim Mann. I have known Susanne and Tim through their work as highly respected teachers of Aquaponics for about a year, stemming from an interest my wife and I have in that subject. Setting up an Aquaponics system is quite a tricky endeavor and the ongoing help we have received from Susanne and Tim has been invaluable.

I have been a Concert Violinist and Photographer all my life. As such, I am used to being mentored in whatever area of interest I am pursuing and, in that regard, the instructional materials in Aquaponics we received from Susanne and Tim have proved to be extraordinarily helpful. It is clear from the follow-up e-mails that we constantly receive from them that they are deeply committed to helping people achieve success with Aquaponics. Since they have forthrightly shared with us the stupidity of their venture into growing marijuana, I believe that they are truly contrite and have "learned their lesson" from their misbegotten foray into illegality.

People throughout the world have been benefitted by their contact with and study of Aquaponics under Susanne Friend and Tim Mann. Clearly, they are both people of good conscience who are dismayed by their own behavior. I believe that that if they are given a chance to continue benefitting others through teaching and researching Aquaponics that the greatest justice will be served.

Thank you for your kind consideration of my thoughts.

Sincerely,



Endre Balogh

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JAN 13 2014



# Mona Balogh, MD

4124 Dundee Drive Los Angeles, CA 90027  
(323) 667-0309  
MDBalogh@yahoo.com

January 8, 2014

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayshi  
300 Ala Moana Blvd. C 338  
Honolulu, HI 96850

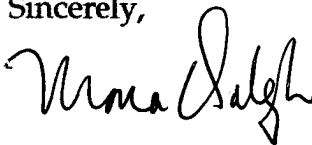
RE: Susanne Friend and Tim Mann

To the Honorable Justice Kobayshi:

My name is Mona Balogh and I am a recently retired Emergency Room doctor at Kaiser/Permanente in Los Angeles. I would like to say how Susanne Friend and Tim Mann have helped my husband and me for the past year with their knowledge about Aquaponics. They have been very kind in teaching us how to set up an Aquaponics system that works, and have been very honest about the difficulties we might encounter. It is very hard in the beginning to understand how to grow plants and fish in the same system, but Susanne and Tim have been studying this for years, and are generously sharing their knowledge with others. I know how hard it is to teach, because my husband and I homeschool our children.

I respectfully urge you to please let Susanne and Tim continue to teach others this valuable skill.

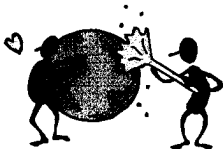
Sincerely,



Mona Balogh

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JAN 13 2014



**TENCIA CLEAN**

*Changing the way the world eats*

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kabayashi  
300 Ala Moana Blvd. RM C338  
Honolulu, HI 96850

You're Honor,

My name is Jay Lamb, I live in Carrollton, Texas. I have been a Landman for the last 5 years, I am a notary for the state of Texas and hold 3 licenses from the Department of Insurance. Six months ago I changed the direction my life was going and my career when the contract I was working suddenly ended. I started looking for a new direction to follow for the next 20 years of my life. This is when I found Aquaponics a natural way to produce food for my family and the world. My fiancé Tencia Ruiz and I decided we want to help clean the world for the people. We saw all the nutrition less food in most every store we enter. We see what major corporations are doing to the planet and do not want to leave this world as we see it today for our children and grandchildren. Several years ago I funded a fish farm in a third world country that grew plants. I always wondered if it was true and while on this quest we found Aquaponic. I started to study everything I could find from all over the world most want me to purchase a video or manual, I even built a my own system from what I had learned. One day while researching I found a link to Friendly Aquaponics a company founded by Tim Mann and Susanne Friend.

Tim and Susanne were showing a process that seemed sustainable, as I dug deeper I found a newsletter written by them I thought here they go selling something with pretty pictures. What I didn't expect was to find was they were giving the details of how they do it away for free. Each week they told what they learned and how they failed and succeeded. I have yet to find anybody that gives anything for free but it kept coming each week telling the story. I saw they were holding a class in September here in the mainland and at the last minute 72 hours before the class was to start I woke up in the middle of the night and decided I had to attend. Tencia knew I had been talking about the class but to start losing sleep over it was a whole new level. This had nagged me for so long I had to take action. 48 hours later I was in TN for a week long training class. The class was great; information was flowing and I thought this guy really does care for the world and not just about himself and the money! I also met Tim's son Lucky who was part of the training team, Lucky is 11 and to take an 11 year old on the road for a business trip said a lot about his love of family.

Today 3 months after meeting Tim in person he has held true to all the promises he made in TN. I now teach Aquaponic classes in Dallas, TX, in my last class I had a student Frank that told me a story about a man that never stopped giving back to the world, it was Tim Mann and Susanne Friend. He went on to say how he bugged Tim with email after email and without delay he had a reply to his endless questions. This was the same man leading a revolution to help the world.

I have no idea what happened in the past, what I do know you have a man and woman in front of you today that are changing the world for countless people. Any delay in this mission will be a setback for the entire world! Tim and Susanne are two who should be given a second chance; they show how people should be and what values my parents instilled in me as a child! May God bless them for years to come!

*Jay Lamb*  
Jay Lamb



1823 Chamberlain Dr. Carrollton, Texas 75007 \* 214-727-9395



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JAN 13 2014

January 7, 2014

To the Honorable Judge Leslie E. Kobayashi,

By way of introduction, my name is Colleen H. Chong and I am a chartered accountant residing in Vancouver, Canada. I work as a senior tax associate at PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, and serve as the treasurer of the Board of Directors at the Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Services Agencies of British Columbia ("AMSSA").

I am writing you today with regards to the hearing of Susanne L. Friend ("Susanne") and Timothy Mann ("Tim"). I am asking for your leniency in sentencing them and plea that your sentence be merciful and not punitive – possibly community service or other alternative sentencing. Please consider the following:

I have known Susanne since I was very young. She has been a family friend of my parents since before I was born. My family lived in China and Japan before settling in Canada, and Susanne has visited and, in some instances, lived with us in these countries. Based on these extended periods of interactions with Susanne, I attest that she is an honest person. I have also paid visits to her Honoka'a home, and witnessed how the family and the aquaponics farm function. In my opinion, she is a good mother, and has so far raised hardworking and polite children.

I have known Tim since 2006 through Susanne. Tim has been welcoming and generous (with both tangible goods and time) each time I visited Honoka'a, and he was always sincere. During my visits I have also observed that he is an exceptionally diligent worker, building his home and farm, while providing for the whole family.

The crime committed was an error on their part; however, I believe this is an isolated occurrence and one caused by extraordinary circumstances. They are truly remorseful for the actions they have taken and accept all responsibilities. They have been forthcoming and candid with me and others about what has happened before and throughout this legal process, and admit their wrongdoing. I have personally observed that they disclose, voluntarily and in as much detail as requested, their legal situation to the participants of every aquaponics farm tour. They also communicate the situation fairly and openly with their children and employees.

I ask your Honor to please consider my letter when you hand down your decision.

Sincerely,



**Colleen H. Chong, CPA, CA**

Senior Tax Associate, PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP

Treasurer of the Board of Directors, AMSSA

T: +1 604 806 7340

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JAN 13 2014



Our Ref.: 08/01/2014-03

Your Ref.:

Jan. 8, 2014

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

Dear Judge Kobayashi,

I am writing you in support of Susanne L. Friend and Timothy M. Mann that will be facing you for sentencing on Feb. 13, 2014. They have candidly informed me of their arrests and convictions for federal marijuana charges.

I am an American citizen that has been an Officer of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations based in Rome, Italy for the last 18 years. As an Officer of my organization and an international civil servant, I am held to very high standards because I represent both the UN and the USA when I provide assistance to developing countries around the world. I am therefore very respectful of international laws and justice. As such, I cannot approve or condone the circumstances that have occurred to have Susanne and Timothy facing you next month.

I have known Susanne and Timothy for some time because they are major contributors to a new publication that my organization will be releasing this year on creating small-scale agricultural (aquaponic) systems that will assist developing countries with solutions to improve their food security. In my conversations and interactions with them, I have seen genuine concern and commitment about making valuable contributions to helping people of all strata to improve their lives and livelihoods. Both Susanne and Timothy give unselfishly and enthusiastically to share their knowledge with those that are less fortunate. Personally, I find their altruism to be very refreshing.

Therefore, I wish to offer my personal support to Susanne and Timothy in a plea for leniency in their sentencing. I feel that justice would be better served if they could continue making valuable contributions to their community, nation and world.

Thank you very much for your kind consideration of this offer.

Respectfully,

**Tony Jarrett, CSM**

Fishery Data and Acting IT Officer , FIPS - F320  
Food & Agriculture Organization of the United Nations  
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla  
00153 Rome ITALY  
Phn: +39 06 5705 5964 (direct)  
Fax: +39 06 5705 2476

Malcolm Wong  
1-30-1-401 Matsugaoka, Nakano-ku, Tokyo, Japan 165-0024

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

Jan 10, 2014

Dear The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi:

I am writing in support of leniency in the case of Tim Mann and Suzanne Friend. I hope that you will take into consideration their family situation and their importance to the world-wide aquaponics community when you sentence them.

I am a video director and our family works in the art and music industries in Japan. Farming is something that I have started very recently. I have just started my own aquaponics system after taking a workshop with Tim and Suzanne in 2011. They provided invaluable information and resources without which I would not have been able to get as far as I have. I believe that alternative methods of agriculture are crucial to explore as the current mono-cropping system is proving to have far-reaching health as well as environmental issues.

While their offenses against the law are very serious, I believe that Tim and Suzanne will be models of reformation and rehabilitation.

Thank you very much for considering leniency in their case.

Sincerely,

Malcolm Wong



Andy Smith  
2227 Sycamore Cyn Rd  
Santa Barbara, Ca. 93108  
805-570-3954  
[andysmithsaddlery@gmail.com](mailto:andysmithsaddlery@gmail.com)  
[andysmithsaddlery.com](http://andysmithsaddlery.com)

To Honorable Judge Leslie Koybayashi In support of Susanne Friend and Tim Mann.

Your Honor,

Thank you for your time and attention. I felt I should share my background. I am a saddle maker and a 50-year member of the United States Polo Association, having played polo professionally in my prime. I continue to be actively involved in the sport, announcing games at the Santa Barbara Polo Club and serving as Vice President of the Santa Barbara Youth Polo Association.

Several years ago, when I was visting my son who resides in Kona, I had an opportunity to visit the Friendly Aquaponics Farm for the first time. My son was actively involved in developing his own aquaponics operation and received valuable guidance from Tim.

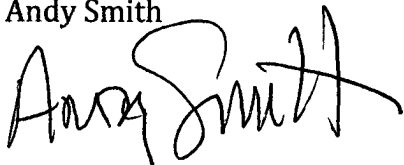
I was not only impressed with the farm but was taken by Tim and Susanne's commitment to preserving the environment and sharing their knowledge with friends and neighbors alike. I was amazed that this dynamic couple was able to run the farm, nurture and support their children, and donate their time to visitors in such a loving way.

I have subscribed to the Friendly Aquaponics newsletters over the years, which has been a beacon for me on environmental issues. As I have gotten older and hopefully wiser, I have come to realize the importance of taking care of the environment, promoting renewable energy and self- sustaining food sources if we are to thrive.

Susanne and Tim are repentant about their breach of the law and feel a deep sense of responsibility and shame about their poor decision- making. They have admitted guilt in this matter and have made positive changes. For this reason and because of their great contributions, incarceration of this couple would be detrimental -- a great loss for the children and community at large.

Thanks for your consideration

Andy Smith



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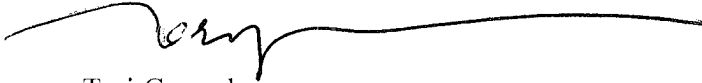
January 11, 2014

Teri Gwarek  
Box 503  
Naalehu, HI 96772

To: Judge Leslie Kobayashi

Five years ago, I had the occasion to visit the Mann's aquaponics farm for ideas about enhancing food production for the community and novel techniques for drought stricken desert, such as the one I'm living in. I've witnessed Susanne Mann to be a loving, doting, patient mother and the children adore her. Having worked closely with homeless and orphaned children, I know first hand of the importance of children raised by loving, attentive parents. I've been to the Mann's farm and have seen their young children happy and playful, under their parent's watchful tutelage. The Manns are fine, respectable people in our community and they contribute greatly to the goal of food production on this island. We'd like to see them continue to offer their skills and knowledge while being present for their children.

Sincerely,



Teri Gwarek

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1-17-14



January 10, 2014

The Honorable Judge Leslie E. Kobayashi  
The United States District Court for the District of Hawaii  
Honolulu, Hawaii

Dear Judge Kobayashi                      Re: Tim Mann and Susanne Friend

I am writing to you today to offer my support for Tim Mann and Susanne Friend, who are to appear before you on or about February 13, 2014, and to encourage you to offer them an opportunity to atone for their crime under supervised release.

My name is Jim Frasc , and I operate a design/build company in Denver which focuses on urban agriculture here in Colorado, and on food security business development in Afghanistan, where I worked as a contractor from 2004 to 2007 developing opium poppy crop substitution programs through The International Foundation of Hope. We provided agricultural extension services to local farmers, and offered alternative livelihoods in fruit- and nut- tree orchard development. I have worked with farmers who have been drawn into the drug economy, and helped them back out of it by not only offering new opportunities in legitimate horticulture, but also by leveraging their new lives as role models for their farmer peers. The power of this combination of being a successful farmer growing legal crops, and publicizing that success, cannot be minimized in terms of the greater farmer community.

I met Tim and Susanne in March, 2011, when I attended a 4- day aquaponics training workshop which they conducted in Florida. Their idealism, passion, and deep appreciation for the food justice issues which drive me and my business approach were meaningful, but there was something else which stood out about them which is significant in our industry, particularly here in Colorado where marijuana has been decriminalized at the State level. Tim and Susanne were not just strident in their disclaimer of the appropriateness of aquaponics for growing marijuana, they were positively evangelical about it, and this message is pervasive in their current practice. I was not aware of the indictment against them at that time. These two people are leaders in an important and rapidly emerging technology and the application of that technology to do good- to educate, train and employ a new generation of farmers to grow and distribute locally produced, healthy and nutritious food in a sustainable and environmentally sound way. They are strong advocates against using these methods to cultivate drugs. It is an important anti- drug message to a constituency which can be susceptible to the temptation offered by "high value" crops.

Incarcerating Mr. Mann and Ms. Friend will have a severe impact on their minor children. Doing so would also result in a missed opportunity for them to continue to take a highly visible stand on this issue within the industry, based in operating a successful, consultancy based, food producing farm as an example for others. In my opinion, their continuing ability to promote this message from the platform of a successful, operating farm growing food for local markets is critical to the message.

Turn-key Aquaponics, LLC    2030 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 1202    Denver, CO 80206 USA  
Telephone: +1 720 212 6055                      email: [info@fishngreens.com](mailto:info@fishngreens.com)





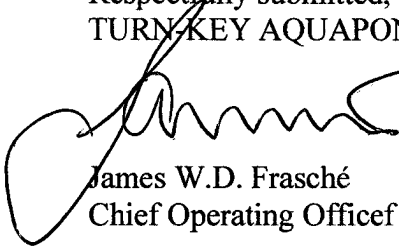
The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi  
January 9, 2014  
Page Two

Tim and Susanne have been openly contrite about their actions. They have shown, and continue to demonstrate, regret and humility in the face of their actions and this indictment. I hope you will see fit to show leniency, and spare their family the hardship that would certainly come as a result of their incarceration.

People who grow marijuana do not seem to view the threat of incarceration as a disincentive to do so. What is needed in our industry is a definitive statement and exhibition of the opportunities offered by growing food, and a continuing demonstration of why growing marijuana is unnecessary for financial success. From a professional perspective, I hope you will also help us all in the aquaponics industry to hold Tim and Susanne up as an example of the success that can be achieved by employing aquaponics systems within the scope of the law. They are really in a unique position to do so.

I thank you in advance for your consideration,

Respectfully submitted,  
TURN KEY AQUAPONICS, LLC



James W.D. Frasc   
Chief Operating Officer

January 14, 2014

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

Your Honor,

I write this letter in support of Tim Mann and Susanne Friend, requesting that you will be lenient in your judgment of their case before your bench, applying sentence that allows the family to remain physically together and for these two visionaries to continue their good work.

My understanding about the drug-related crimes for which they accepted responsibility is limited at best. Please be aware that I do not condone what I assume was a really stupid, though one-off transgression, one showing a desperate lack of sound judgment at the time.

As a Viet Nam veteran, a product of the sixties, I am unusual in that I can honestly declare that I have never used any illegal substances, even to this day. It stems from being issued pain medication in a remote location following a jeep accident and spending three days in a scary state of consciousness that I never wished to experience again, in any form. By contrast, I married a young woman when I got back, whose multi-racial family, many growing up in impoverished conditions, exposed me to drug use at every level. My brother-in-law, once a high school basketball star, chose the wrong path and died of a heroin overdose. Other relatives were in and out of prison for offenses ranging from drug possession to dealing in banned substances. I offer this background information because I have been personally touched by the ramifications of criminalizing drug use. I have helped to raise kids when parents have been incarcerated. I have witnessed the intergenerational damage done to our children and youth. As a member of Families and Friends of Prisoners in Boston during the seventies, I routinely drove the van to take loved ones from the city to visit their imprisoned family members at prisons located in far-away, rural communities.

Today, I applaud Attorney General Holder for questioning the effectiveness of the 'war on drugs' and beginning to refocus federal prosecution resources and question mandatory sentencing in certain drug-related cases. I am heartened to hear the Governor of Vermont call for much more emphasis on treatment rather than punishment for addressing the rampant use of more harmful, opiate drugs in his state. And then there is the growing sentiment among the electorate, with more states looking to decriminalize the use of marijuana and regulate (read, tax) its growth and distribution. I raise these aforementioned points to provide context and to more clearly articulate my own belief system.

In past lives, I have been an Associate Professor at a School for Human Services at New Hampshire College, now the University of Southern New Hampshire. For twelve years, I was the sole proprietor of the Institute for Community-Based Computers, a nonprofit business dedicated to bridging the 'digital divide,' before that term was coined. I returned to the academy as a Director of Computer Networking at a community college, later joining the corporate world where I am now employed as a Senior Principal Consultant with BT Americas (the former British Telecom).

For over five years, I have been exploring the subject of aquaponics, investing considerable time and financial savings in preparing a site and constructing facilities on our property in Southern Maine. My first wife passed in 1985 from a long bout with breast cancer and I have since remarried. My current wife is originally from Viet Nam. Our diet is primarily Vietnamese, which relies heavily on fresh green vegetables and herbs. We want to grow these year-round and be able to eventually sell these items to Asian markets and restaurants, as well as through farmers markets near where we live. Compare this with how, during the winter months, one local market gets their Thai basil air shipped a couple of times a week from Hawaii.

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Rameez Chenia  
155 Scraftoft Lane  
Leicester  
LE5 – 2FF  
UK  
13/01/2013

Philip H. Lowenthal  
33 N. Market St.  
Suite 101  
Wailuku, Maui, HI 96793

**F.A.O: The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi**

**RE: Susanne Friend and Tim Mann**

Dear Judge Koboyashi,

My name is Rameez Chenia and I am currently studying Politics and Economics at The University of Leicester in the UK. I have known Tim and Susanne for over 6 months from my attendance at their aquaponics internship on the Big Island in June 2013. They were kind and hospitable enough to let me stay with them for the duration of the internship (3 months.)

Before arriving in Hawaii to start my internship, Susanne was upfront about the legal problems she and Tim faced so I could make an informed decision on whether to travel to Hawaii. In spite of their predicament, it didn't stop me from attending. As it turns out this has been the best decision I have made so far. They were both dedicated and charitable individuals with their time and effort, despite the overhang of imminent court proceedings.

Tim's patience in particular was something to behold for me as he dealt with my countless inquisitions. His mentoring has taught me how to work better with people and always with a smile. What stood out for me was that he would stop his work to help and train me. He made me feel part of the family by taking me on morning surf trips with his children and including me in anything they would do.

Susanne's passion and drive to progress in all aspects of life was something which impressed me too. When I first arrived on the Big Island, she told me, "This isn't only an aquaponics internship, but an internship of life." This was true as I learnt a lot about myself on the trip and how to always act with integrity and honesty which Susanne strives to do all the time.

I am positive that Tim and Susanne would have touched other people's lives in the same way they have mine and hopefully will continue to do so. Without them I would not have been encouraged to pursue aquaponics with the ethos they both hold dearly; ultimately to become self-sustaining and to help the less fortunate.

I would hope that you could consider this letter in their mitigation and accordingly are able to give credit to them for the good work they have done for myself and others.



**Probatum Technologies, Inc.**

P.O. Box 358  
Wheelersburg, OH 45694

Phone: (740) 370-4860  
Fax: (866) 236-0519

January 14, 2014

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi  
United States District Court  
District of Hawaii  
300 Ala Moana Blvd C-338  
Honolulu, HI 96850

RE: Defendants Mr. Tim Mann and Ms. Susanne Friend

Dear Judge Kobayashi:

I am the president of a software company serving correctional agencies within the United States. My company provides case management solutions to probation agencies in Ohio and Washington, case management and fiscal management software for community-based correctional facilities in Ohio, and warehouse inventory systems for all prisons in the State of Ohio. Our client agencies support re-entry programs, drug courts, and various models of treatment within residential communities.

The mission of my company to provide tools to communities, similar to my own city of Portsmouth, Ohio, ravaged by the effects of drug abuse. This small community of fewer than 25,000 residents in south central Ohio has received national attention from the high incident of prescription drug abuse. However, all other forms of substance abuse, including meth-amphetamine, cocaine, and heroine are rampant, which creates all manner of trouble in our community.

I am also an elder of The Grace Community Church in Portsmouth, which is located just blocks from the Courthouse, and the homeless shelter. Daily, we receive multiple requests for food and "money for gasoline." We have become discerning in our benevolence ministry because we know the vast majority of these requests are meant to provide the means to acquire drugs. Furthermore, our jail ministry is a labor of love by men and women in our congregation who know the pain of their own children given over to addictions, and seek to rescue other young men and women while time permits.

I share this to underscore my understanding of the seriousness of the crime committed by Tim Mann and his wife Susanne Friend. In both my business and church experience, I see the impact of illegal drugs on individuals, families, and communities.

In early 2012, I began looking for possible projects to engage the men and women who were coming to the church doors. I wanted to find some type of enterprise where they could be productive and possibly learn skills leading to self-sufficiency. Urban agriculture and aquaponics caught my attention as prospects. Soon after starting my research, I discovered Friendly Aquaponics and I immediately discerned a very different ethic, compared to other practitioners and suppliers, embodied in postings on their website and beyond. I also discovered their conviction for cultivating marijuana. Conviction notwithstanding, I was convinced Friendly Aquaponics was the best source of reliable information and I began to communicate via email with both Tim and Susanne in preparation for coming from Ohio to Hawaii for three days of intensive, personalized training in June, 2012. I questioned them extensively on

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the matter of their conviction and pending sentencing prior to sending payment for the course in advance. I came to the home and business of Tim and Susanne with my son-in-law and spent two of the planned three days touring their operation, learning how their system worked, and getting to know Tim and Susanne better. We covered much ground in two days, and decided to use the third day to tour two other aquaponics operations, which Tim and Susanne helped "birth" on the Island of Hawaii.

Since my visit to Hawaii, I have been evaluating the economics and relative merits of various aquaponics systems as they translate to my local markets and climate. I have studied multiple systems, but Friendly Aquaponics continues to rank as the most viable system and the most trustworthy, consistent source of information to this day. For their voices to be silenced by incarceration would be a tragedy for their family, but also a great loss to the community of aquaponics enthusiasts and practitioners worldwide.

I have seen many attempts by courts and churches to restore fallen men and women after life in prison. Sadly, very few ever truly regain the lives they once knew and often the cost to society continues for years because of the economic toll. Tim and Susanne have acknowledged their wrongdoing and, more importantly, they have demonstrated by their work and lives the quality of true repentance (i.e. change in direction) for their actions. Moreover, they have become valued contributors to communities and economies within Hawaii, across the United States, and around the world.

I ask that you consider these facts in the determination of sentencing of Tim Mann and Susanne Friend.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Warner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Richard Warner  
President



February 3, 2014

To The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi;

Subject: Letter of Support for Tim Mann and Susanne Friend of Friendly Aquaponics.

Out of a desire to start my own business selling fresh produce, I began researching aquaponics in the summer of 2010. This research quickly led me to Friendly Aquaponics and Susanne Friend and Tim Mann. Just as quickly, I found out about their arrest for growing marijuana, which was unfortunate for many reasons, including a personal one – I very much wanted to attend one of their trainings but was concerned about their decisions, integrity and whether they would be around to support me.

In November 2010, and as a potential but uncommitted student, I sent an email to Susanne asking her about what she had done and how that decision might impact me as a potential customer/student long after the training was completed. Would they be around to support me and continue to provide resources for a future commercial aquaponics farmer?

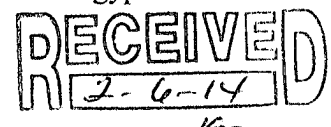
Not only did I receive a very timely response back, I was truly amazed at the candor of Susanne's words. She did not attempt to deny, hide or excuse her decisions. Rather, she openly acknowledged the stupidity that jeopardized her family and business. I was so impressed with her response that I immediately signed up for the March 2011 training conducted in Florida, committing thousands of dollars for travel and tuition costs.

During that training session, I was not disappointed at all, with the material or with the character of both Susanne and Tim. They openly discussed the foolish decision they had made and took full responsibility for it in front of dozens of students and colleagues, even imploring us not to make the same mistakes. This was heartfelt and emotional and I give them lots of credit for standing up and discussing this so openly in front of so many strangers. My only regret was that I did not wait and save up more money to attend a training at their farm in Hawaii, to see it and walk it for myself.

In October 2012, that opportunity presented itself and I was able to invest several more thousands of dollars to travel to Hawaii so I could participate in another week of training at the Friendly farm, I learned more about commercial aquaponics using deep water culture technology and I also learned more about Tim and Susanne. They truly believe what they teach (aquaponics and beyond) and share a sincere desire to see the world become a better place for many people in need.

In April 2013, I resigned from my professional management position and began building a commercial aquaponics system. In less than one year, I have sold produce at two farmer's markets and two local restaurants, I sell produce through a retail display a local coffee shop and this past week made the front page of the oldest weekly newspaper in WV, *Spirit of Jefferson*. There is also an article about Tangy Produce in a regional magazine called *Around the Panhandle*. I have a National Geographic reporter coming out this Saturday to look at my operation.

519 Morgan Grove Road, Shepherdstown, WV 25443 (336) 905-5904 [www.tangyproduce.com](http://www.tangyproduce.com)





All of this is a direct result of the efforts of both Tim Mann and Susanne Friend. They have done more for me than anything I could ever have done for myself in getting my dream launched off the ground.

I am sure there are many more stories like mine and I ask you to consider the immense impact that Susanne and Tim have had on so many people. They made a stupid mistake and have fully accepted responsibility for it. Please allow them to continue with their quest to help improve the world in some meaningful way by teaching many more people how to grow healthy produce and small businesses.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Tanguay".

Brian Tanguay  
Tangy Produce

January 21, 2014

# 14 Milford Road  
Lambeau  
Tobago

**The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayshi,**

Dear Sir/Madam,

It is indeed a pleasure to introduce myself to you and share with you my experience that I have had with the work that Susanne Friend and Tim Mann are selflessly sharing with worldwide aquaponics community through Friendly Aquaponics, Inc. I currently work in the property development/management field and I am in the process of acquiring the necessary skills in order to become a commercial aquaponics farmer.

My love for farming grew out of necessity at the time, having been raised during the 1960's and 70's in a low-income family in the Caribbean region. At that time, families produced almost all that they consumed and hence, the home economy played a pivotal role in socio-economic development of our region in that era.

My exposure to Agricultural Science in high school deepen my knowledge in the fundamentals of farming and provided me with the opportunity to generate a stream of income from the sales of my produce from my back yard kitchen garden. It is my practice even to this day to maintain a backyard garden wherever I live.

Given that land space was always a constraint, I continually explored ways to engage in more intensive farming techniques in order to derive more output from any given area. I became interested in setting up a hydroponics system and was about to start with a 'mini' system when I was advised by my cousin to consider setting up an aquaponics system instead.

In the process of researching aquaponics system I came across Friendly Aquaponics, Inc. and the work that Susanne Friend and Tim Mann are doing and more importantly, how openly and willingly they are sharing their experiences and vision of what this farming technology can do for any community.

In particular, I am impressed and have benefited in numerous ways from the following:

- Their weekly Newsletters from the time I first registered in November 2012;

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- Access to all Newsletters previously published; and
- 'The Friendly Aquaponics 2013 Outdoor MicroSystems DIY Manual' and 'How to Do Aquaponics The Easy Way', that I recently purchased.

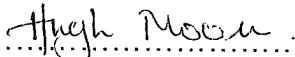
Having read these publications, I gained the confidence to acquire the materials and build a system to further my education in aquaponics.

My next stage in furthering my education in this area is to attend the Commercial Aquaponics and Greenhouse Training later this year, put on by Friendly Aquaponics Inc, in which both Susanne and Tim are the presenters. It was during the process of inquiring about this particular training that I learnt about what they did and their impending trial by the Federal Court.

Let me state categorically that I have never used drugs and certainly don't approved what they did. However, I am in support of what they are currently doing in terms of sharing their aquaponics experiences with private citizens, Community Based Organizations, Non-Government Organizations and the worldwide aquaponics community. In fact, what I have experienced through interacting with them online, it is evident to me that they have embraced **sharing and cooperation** rather than competition as a business model.

I further believe that there are consequences for every action and while I am in no way downplaying what they did, I am pleading for mercy on their behalf and that they will be granted the opportunity to continue what they are currently doing namely, - distilling aquaponics knowledge to make it simpler and easier to understand and less expensive to build and operate. In fact, I share the view that their contribution to the wider society, in terms of sharing their hands-on experiences and undertaking various training programs have the potential to contribute in some measure to one of the World Banks' current goals, namely, "To Promote Shared Prosperity: foster income growth of the bottom 40% of the population in every country".

Sincerely,

  
.....  
Hugh Moore

601 North Wild Oak Lane  
Hendersonville, NC 28791  
January 22, 2014

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

Your Honor,

My name is Ginger Christie, and I write this letter as testament to the characters of Tim Mann and Susanne Friend. First, let me state that I do not know nor am I related in any way to said Roger Christie. Never heard of him before this.

I live in western North Carolina and am currently self-employed in the financial field. Prior to North Carolina, I lived and worked in Manhattan, New York City, most recently for Tekserve, a company that has grown into the largest single-location Apple reseller in the country, offering both sales and service. As a senior member of the staff, among my responsibilities were staff training, including creating the training program and work procedures, advertising, creating in-house educational programs for our customers along with public outreach, and consulting (both sales and service) for a select group of clients. It was my privilege to work for and with some of the most brilliant people I've ever met. I include some of my customers in that group as well.

Currently, I am involved in my NC community, working with both the local food co-op and a group I helped found to teach, share knowledge and foster healthy, sustainable living in our community in every way - building practices and materials, energy creation and conservation, healthy air, water and food. Together we're creating an incredible network of people and skills, a very viable community in the truest sense of the word. I'm also a home gardener, and I'm currently taking a course in bee keeping.

This part of the country is real farming country, generations of farmers, where many products are grown, but the most important food crops are apples and tomatoes, along with sweet corn, salad greens and onions. My county produces 85% of the apples grown in North Carolina. Being such an important crop, the farmers spray their orchards with pesticides in the spring. You don't want to be anywhere near there then, because truly, you cannot breathe. As folks are becoming aware of and concerned about pesticides and fertilizer chemicals in their food and water, about genetically modified produce, they are demanding better quality and wanting more control over what goes into their bodies.

While some can supply organic produce, there are many growers in a bind because the decades of using chemical fertilizers and pesticides have so embedded those substances in the soil that they would need to remove 6-9" of the top soil to get rid of the poisons, a very costly undertaking which most cannot afford. Many of these farmers weren't even fully aware of what they were putting on their fields and crops. Many are shocked to now learn the full ramifications and legacy of their usage. There is a town close to me where the well water has become so contaminated with farm chemicals and pesticides that they have to truck potable water in. This is serious stuff. And it's not just here. So this is where Friendly Aquaponics' systems shine, offering a way to cut out the poisons and pollution using 1/10 of the water, with a much smaller area required to grow high-density, high-nutrition food. No fertilizer, no pesticides. Real food.

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aquaponics system for their needs up and running for their organization. Others were attending on full or partial scholarship. Like I said, amazing. Yes, Susanne and Tim are working to make a living with Friendly Aquaponics, but that isn't their focus. Their goal is to empower people to live better, healthier lives, and I do believe they're succeeding.

Tim and Susanne created such an atmosphere of sharing and cooperation, where all were welcome to contribute their knowledge, skills and experience. The discussions were far-ranging and varied. Some of those discussions led to refinements right on the spot. And it wasn't all nuts and bolts, but also about building and running a business. Both Susanne and Tim stressed over and over how important it is to start small so that your overhead doesn't sink you or drive you into making terrible choices, perhaps with serious consequences. It was fascinating, it was stimulating, it was challenging, it was exciting.

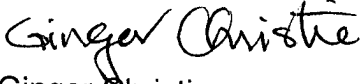
Of course, the question of growing marijuana in an aquaponics system came up. They both said unequivocally that it did NOT work with their system at all. What followed then was truly remarkable. Susanne stood in front of all of us and with tears flowing, proceeded to tell us \*everything\* about how they came to know that fact about pot and their system and what a huge mistake they had made. She left nothing out - how they got in way over their heads financially, how they entered into a dubious arrangement with Mr. Christie, aware that there was some murkiness in the legality of it but clearly with a very imperfect understanding of the consequences of that action. How that decision and association resulted in both of them being arrested. How they might not get to watch their kids grow up. How they had let fear cloud their judgement and betray their own values, how shamed they felt to have brought this upon their family and friends, especially their children, not the role models they had hoped to be. She implored us to not be stupid like they had been (yes, she said that), to not get lost, not forget who you are and what you believe in. They made a really stupid mistake, which they regret.

I hadn't known a thing about the arrests prior to Susanne's disclosure. It would have been so easy for them to not mention it at all. Instead, they used it as a profound teaching opportunity on so many levels - technical, legal, and most importantly, moral. I cannot tell you how impressed I was - by their honesty, their integrity, their sincere remorse and their courage in taking very public responsibility for their choices and actions in front of their students.

I spent only one week in the physical presence of Susanne and Tim. I wrote one letter because I know them as a team. I would welcome spending more time with them and getting to know them better, as they are two of the finest people I've ever met. I believe in their mission. I have so much respect for them. I am honored to know them. I'd be in that courtroom in person if I could. I believe they're doing incredibly important work, and I hope I've managed to convey how much good they are doing, how much good they've already done. It's just so important that they be able to continue. Please. The world needs more Tims and Susannes.

Sorry for the length. Thank you so much for your time.

Very truly yours,

  
Ginger Christie

Please forgive the exposition, but I wanted to underscore how incredibly important the work and teachings of Friendly Aquaponics are, what led me to Tim and Susanne's newsletter and classes in the first place. Living in farming country puts what's going on with the food supply \*right\* in your face. There's no denying it, no avoiding it. Conventional food production - its methods, its output, its processing - is approaching crisis point. It's why I, and hundreds of others, have taken their courses, bought their materials, built their systems.

I learned of Friendly Aquaponics In February, 2012, and signed up for the free newsletter. I had read about aquaponics prior to that, but the Friendly Aquaponics newsletter conveyed its information in such a clear, concise and easy-to-understand manner, no small feat for a complex topic. I was astounded at the amount - and depth - of information freely given in these newsletters. They literally taught how to put together an efficient - and affordable - aquaponics system through the newsletters. For free! Unheard of. Information for which others would charge hundreds, or even in some cases, thousands of dollars, Tim and Susanne were sharing for free. It was clear that they were passionate about helping people to live healthier lives and giving them the tools to do so. Everything that one needed to know to get started with a viable small aquaponics system was freely offered, they gave free tours at their farm, and further instruction and kits were offered at reasonable cost. Yes, it was their business, but most important was getting the knowledge out there to as many as possible so that all could feed themselves and others healthy nourishing food.

I jumped at the opportunity to study with them in person when they offered their first teaching in Tennessee, taking the week-long intensive of all their courses in September, 2012 - one incredible week. This series drew people from all over the country. There were about 40 of us. My classmates were an amazing cross-section of people - passionate, intelligent, concerned. Many of us were there to learn not just for ourselves, but to take it back to our families and communities, to our organizations, to other countries even - share what we learned.

Tim and Susanne were/are amazing teachers. Incredibly intelligent - brilliant even, fiercely passionate about their work and about food quality and safety, about the world we live in and how we're treating it. Their material was clear, thorough and detailed. Both were open to any and all questions, sharing literally everything that they had learned themselves thus far, including the mistakes they made along the way. Our class tuition included any and all future refinements and information with support forever. Wow. Some of their solutions and procedures were just \*so\* smart. Simply elegant in their design and execution, improving and streamlining without cutting any corners or lowering any standards - and no extravagant costs. Truly, truly impressive work. I've seen some of their competitors' offerings. They don't come anywhere near to the quality, high standards and superior designs of Friendly Aquaponics, and they cost quite a bit more, to boot - both to build and to operate. Just no comparison.

When Tim found out that there were a few people in the group who wouldn't be attending the final course, on commercial aquaponics, he immediately waived their fee, saying that they had to stay, that it was too important, that they needed to learn this information and take it back. I remember that one of those people gifted was a woman who had been sent by her group, an inner-city organization that dealt with kids. They couldn't afford to send her to all the classes, and that final course was \*exactly\* the information they needed to get the appropriate



*Exceptional Foods From Your Neighborhood Farm*

January 16, 2014

Dear Honorable Judge Leslie Koybayashi,

I am writing this letter for your consideration regarding the case of Susanne Friend and Tim Mann.

They contacted me about a year ago to learn more about my growing operations, including my greenhouse aquaponics system.

My family has been doing business for about ten years as RainFresh Harvests and we have a small farm in Ohio on nine acres of land. We operate two small greenhouses and harvest herbs, salad greens, berries and orchard fruit for sale to a number of different local wholesale markets, caterers and restaurants including both of the local Whole Foods locations in Columbus, Ohio.

I do not know Susanne and Tim personally, but only in a professional capacity. They were interested in coordinating training meetings at our farm, but I felt that I did not have a large enough facility nor was my system capable of being modified to utilize their design. Therefore I have no business dealings with them, nor do I have any financial benefits for writing this letter in their support.

However, I have maintained contact and appreciate their online Friendly Aquaponics Newsletter where they share their knowledge and experiences without charge to other interested aquaponic growers. They also offer professional training for a fee at a variety of locations and have recently published a book about aquaponics that I have not yet purchased, but it appears to be a very complete source of information for beginning growers.

I cannot personally attest to their redeeming personal traits, but from what I have read in their newsletters and learned about from their experiences, they have a lot of important information and skills to share with others. They are focused on providing others with tools to accomplish their goals for creating regional, family oriented greenhouse operations that can potentially allow for economically sustainable businesses that provide the freshest, healthiest possible produce to meet with local demand.

I also do not know the details of their legal problems other than that they have been charged with some very serious federal crimes, nor do I profess to be aware of the penalties or laws relating to their activities. I have not grown, nor do I condone the growing or sale of illegal crops. There are states that are currently allowing recreational use of this plant, but this obviously was not legal in your state at the time of their being charged and that your responsibility is to rule on the law as it was at that time and not to consider what it might be in the coming years, even as societal norms continue to change.



They have shared some of the details about how they turned their lives around to pursue a more law abiding way of life. They also have demonstrated the potential to continue to make important contributions to the developing field of aquaponics.

Their dedication to the mission of providing people with a way to grow fresh, healthy food while minimizing any negative impact on the environment is worthy of your consideration. I have been able to utilize some of the information that they have shared with the general public to improve my operations and gain a better understanding of the interaction of the systems involved with growing fish and plant crops together.

They have also learned some lessons about taking out too large of a loan and not being able to meet the payments and have advised enthusiastic entrepreneurs that would sink their retirement funds or make large loans that it is best to start small and gradually build up their business. This is similar to what I have learned over the years, as I also invested a little more to start my business up than I should have, based on the profit margins and returns on investment that I have realized, but was fortunate enough to have other income and a source health benefits to support our family over the years and have not been faced with dilemma how to make the loan payments.

From a note that they sent me, it sounds like Susanne and Tim tried their best to manage their loan load and made some bad decisions along the way when they chose to grow the wrong crop to generate income to pay off their loan and provide for their family. It also sounds like they have learned from their mistakes and that what they are doing now is moving forward in a more responsible and favorable direction.

As a judge, you have the challenge of weighing all the positives and negatives to determine the right punishment for the crime and to make sure that justice and ultimately the greater good of society is being served.

Thank you for taking time to read this letter and I hope that you will take into consideration the actions of both Susanne and Tim in recent years to make amends and move forward in a responsible manner.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barry Adler". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Barry Adler  
Owner Operator  
RainFresh Harvests

January 14, 2014

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi  
Us Federal Court  
District of Hawaii

Re: Tim Mann and Susanne Friend

Judge Kobayashi,

I have casually known Tim Mann and Susanne Friend since about 2000, when my wife and I were visiting Hawaii, and contemplating retirement on the Hamakua Coast. At that time Tim and Susanne owned and operated the Macnut factory in Honokaa as artist studio space, and Tim also had his own architectural drafting service. My wife was a high school art teacher and professional artist, and was considering renting space in the facility. Tim and Susanne seemed very ambitious and capable business owners, and gave us a great sense of encouragement in deciding to relocate to the area.

It was not until just after the October 2006 earthquake that I happened to see Tim again. At that time I was attending a community meeting in Paauilo, where we now lived, and Tim was offering his services and equipment to help any residents in the area who needed assistance removing trees and debris from their property or access roads, for free. That offer stuck with me, since it was the kind of spirit and sense of community that we were looking for, and appreciative of, in our move to rural Hawaii from Massachusetts in 2004.

It wasn't until several years later that I again crossed paths with Tim and Susanne. This time I became interested in the aquaponics systems that they were developing. I attended their farm tour several times, and was very impressed with this new (to me) method of food production. I strongly believed in the importance and development of locally sourced food products, and the natural integration of fish and vegetable production through the aquaponic system of theirs seemed a perfect fit for our climate and environment.

In 2009 I attended one of their first courses in aquaponic farming at NHERC. I was surprised by the professional level of the course, and materials that they had prepared for their students. The course was inspirational and motivating, and it was obvious that the other students (from all over the country and outside the country) were anxious to begin their own ventures in aquaponic farming according to the methods that Tim and Susanne had developed, and continued to perfect. Both Tim and Susanne were great mentors, sharing all that they knew, and encouraging others to be able to take on a new endeavor with confidence and the knowledge that they would always be there to help with any problems that might arise.

It was obvious from the manner in which Tim and Susanne operated that they were genuinely concerned with the success of their students and spreading their enthusiasm for

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the project. Their dedication seemed more of a "calling" than just a business, even though they also conducted themselves at a very professional level, obtaining highly coveted "organic" certification and acceptance for their produce by Costco. They involved every member of their growing family in the project, and welcomed all visitors and students into their family to share in the experience.

I was very surprised when I heard that Tim and Susanne had become involved in the legal problems that are presently weighing upon them. It really seems out of character, and contrary to their nature to put in jeopardy all that they have worked for and built for their family's future. But, I am still unaware of the specifics in this case, so I can not condone or condemn their specific actions.

It appears that lessons have been learned though, and nothing more might be gained by limiting or removing otherwise productive and intelligent individuals from their mentoring and family lives. I believe that the greater good might come from their redemption, and ability to continue on with the work that they are committed to, and nurturing of their family and community.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Goldman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Richard Goldman  
PO Box 1969  
Honokaa, HI 96727



Sascha Bartels  
Dipl. Fachjournalist (DFJS)

Kölner Straße 45  
51766 Engelskirchen

GERMANY

Engelskirchen, January, 9th 2014

To the Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

Dear Judge Kobayashi,

my name is Sascha Bartels. I live in Engelskirchen, a town near Cologne at the river Rhine in Germany and work for Buhler Group. Buhler is a global market leader in the supply of flour production plants, pasta and chocolate production lines. Furthermore I work in the city administration of Gummersbach in the Office of the Press Secretary.

I met Tim and Susanne Friend with their children in January 2011, on a journey to Hawaii.

Last month I found out that Tim and Susan have legal problems and I hope I can help them a bit.

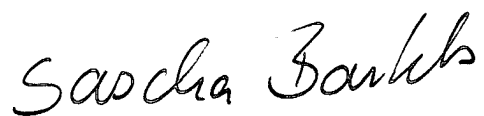
When I met the Friends I had to realize how unselfish they are. They organized meals and a place to sleep for me and my friends. I also got to know them as hard-working people for their Aquaponics idea.

They are honest, helpful, and have a strong sense for their family and children.

To make it clear: I am absolutely against drug abuse and I would like to help Tim and Susanne to find back to the legal way of life. It was wrong to grow marijuana.

I am convinced that Tim and Susanne Friend see their mistake and will go a better way, as valuable members of society.

Sincerely yours

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sascha Bartels". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letters of "S" and "B" being capitalized and prominent.

Sascha Bartels

Marshall J. Mueller  
173 Topanga Dr. Bonita Springs, FL 34134

01/09/2014

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

Your Honor:


I am a retired CEO of a publicly traded company. I developed a keen interest in Aquaponics in the past couple of years and through this I came across Friendly Aquaponics.

I have never met Susanne Friendly or Tim Mann, but I have had numerous email conversations with both of them and have purchased some of their materials. Virtually everything I know about aquaponics has come freely from them. I am very very grateful.

It is my firm belief that they are people of the highest integrity. They give unselfishly of their knowledge and know-how. Their website is full of extremely helpful material for anyone who is trying to produce food of the highest quality and they share this huge knowledge generously and without cost to anyone who wants it. They truly have people's welfare as a very high priority. Everyone I have spoken with in the aquaponics community shares my high regard for them.

They have shared candidly in their communications regarding the legal matter they face. It is absolutely clear to me that they truly repent this and I believe they are making major amends with their work in the community.

Thankyou



Marshall Mueller

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Kb

**Elanya Tracy**

62 Pivot Rock Rd #4, Eureka Springs, AR 72632

[mybestworkyet@gmail.com](mailto:mybestworkyet@gmail.com)

417-597-5171

January 17, 2014

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

Dear Judge Kobayashi:

Recently I have become aware of a situation involving Tim Mann and Susanne Friend where they are on trial for crimes related to growing marijuana for an incident that happened in 2008. This is surprising since it was part of the teaching materials I received from them that marijuana does not grow well in the Aquaponics environment. They made it clear that it is not part of their culture to use their training for that purpose.

I came across Tim and Susanne's training when looking into ways to raise a lot of food in the most inexpensive way possible. I first became aware of their training materials three years ago. I have looked into other teachings on Aquaponics and find their materials to be the best by far. Also the charge for their teaching was the most economical and practical I found.

I am a retired lady living in Arkansas. I am the mother of 8 children, with 28 grand children and 5 great grand children. I am a Girl Scout Troop Leader in Arkansas and teaching girls this valuable information. Also I'm a member of a local First Christian Church where we are teaching people how to raise their own food in a small space economically to become self-sufficient. The training from Tim and Susanne is very clear, well done for any level of expertise and will soon be used here to benefit our community in Eureka Springs.

With the cost of food going out of sight now days it is extremely gratifying to find people like Tim and Susanne! They have given us hope and inspiration! They have openly and generously given out the knowledge they have gained through years of trial and error and great expense. They have made their knowledge available with no copyright attached. They have generously told all who study their materials to share with as many people as possible.

I have been so blessed by knowing these two people and I hope that their work can continue into the future. We need them! The world needs them.

Sincerely,

  
Elanya Tracy

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Honorable Judge Lestie Kobayashi  
U.S. District Court PJKK Building  
300 Ala Moana Blvd  
Honolulu Hawaii 967

10 Jan 14

Honorable Sir:

My name is Benjamin M. Noe Jr

I am an armed forces vet have been employed at Pearl Harbor and the Honolulu Federal Bldg maint department, also employed at Kaloko Honokohau National Park. I presently reside at my farm lot out at the Makua Ag Lots in Puna. I also fish commercially out of Pohokiki boat ramp also in Puna.

Four years ago, I visited the farm of Tim Mann, Suzanne Friend and family. I attended a farm tour at the time. It was an informal gathering of people of our community to learn new ideas and technologies which are rooted in our cultural past!! I discovered another way to grow vegetables aquaponically and raise native reef fish species in captivity, fish like Aholehole, mullet, mamo, Kumu  
- over -

and such could potentially be raised like our ancestors did in the ponds!!

Later on I attended the Farms Aquaponic training course for no charge in appreciation of my serving our country. I appreciated being able to attend the training course. I discovered lots of potential scenarios for sustainable agriculture.

I sincerely feel that this family with it loving environment is not a danger to our community but rather a nurturing help to our community by sharing the ideas, possibilities that would not be shared or can not be shared with by incarceration. They have been truthful about their being in a scrape with the law. They have learned the error of their misdeed.

The work these folks've done is being built nationally as well as internationally. 11 countries have been represented (unofficially!) I honestly feel they need to be shown as much leniency as is

possible. Let them prove that they are worthy of your help.

I humbly and sincerely ask that you show kindness and mercy for people who deserve that chance. I come to know this family well in four years now I have seen how they live and breathe our Aloha spirit your honor I beg you PLEASE help sir please!

We need not traumatize these children by locking up their parents. In closing I would like sincerely thank you for taking the time to read this letter the courts patience and understanding is of extreme importance. THANK YOU VERY VERY MUCH Judge Kobayashi may his divine light give you your decision. Many mahalos, God Bless -

Respectfully  
Benjamin Onopka

BoS. Army 74-79

Hon Fed Bldg 80-82/85-86

Pearl Harbor 83-85

Presently Coan

Fisherm 02900 DLNR CMFL

# Grow Green Aquaponics LLC

Tuesday, January 14, 2014

Dear Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi,

My name is Patrick McKee Sr. I'm the CEO of Grow Green Aquaponics. We sell USDA certified organic fish food for use in aquaponics. I strive to live a good healthy life with minimal negative impact to our planet. I make a good living and I have zero debt. I believe I should try to help people in need. I have been asked to speak to the inmates at the correctional facility and aquaponic farm in Seminole County, Florida. I encouraged them to use their entrepreneurial spirit for good work and offered solutions towards a better way of life. I am a member of The Rotary Club. I wrote a grant through Rotary International to provide more than 750,000 Cordoba to build an aquaponic research and training facility in Jinotepe, Nicaragua, the poorest nation in the western hemisphere.

I am writing to you on behalf of Susanne Friend and Tim Mann. I know them through aquaponics. I met Tim at the 2007 University of the Virgin Islands aquaponic course. UVI is the foremost institution of aquaponic research and development in the world.

Tim and Susanne's company, Friendly Aquaponics, started writing newsletters sharing their understanding of aquaponics and the developments they were finding to be beneficial to this new type of farming. I admired how Susanne and Tim included their children and their family life in the newsletters. I met Susanne for the first time and Tim again at the annual Aquaponic Association Convention in Orlando, Florida in 2011.

Your Honor, just a few years back, learning this new, environmentally sustainable farming technique and trying to make a living from it was extremely hard to do; most failed. I sell fish food to the industry so I have a very in depth understanding of this.

Susanne and Tim were under enormous financial pressure and the new industry did not yet understand how to become profitable. At this vulnerable time in their lives, they were swayed into thinking the authorities were not enforcing the statutes about growing marijuana by a man claiming to be a Minister. He convinced them they were protected by the first amendment. They now understand the seriousness of their actions and take full responsibility that they broke the law. They are extremely remorseful.

I think they have learned a very important lesson from their actions and will never knowingly break the law again. I am certain they will be careful in everything they are doing to be within the letter of the law. Please don't sentence them to time in prison; it would be devastating to their children. They are very productive and provide very important organic aquaponic training and educational materials all over the world. Susanne and Tim have pioneered innovative ways to do farming techniques that are pivotal to supplying the world with enough food to feed our future generations.

Always in mankind's service,

Patrick McKee Sr.



1051 Crestview Lane Casselberry, Florida 32707 Phone 407-844-3243

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**To: The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi.**

I have become aware of the sentencing scheduled on February 13th, 2014 for Susanne Friend and Tim Mann of Friendly Aquaponics, Inc in Honoka'a, Hawaii. Susanne Friend and Tim Mann have stated the following mission for their buisness:

"Our mission is to teach people to grow organic, healthy vegetables, so that they can be vibrantly alive, independent, and free. We believe the food that we choose to eat makes a difference in our lives. To accomplish that, we provide the best information possible to show people how to build their own aquaponics systems and grow the healthiest organic food possible, by offering the most comprehensive and clearly-written DIY manuals available anywhere for aquaponics systems of all sizes."

I am retired, at this stage of my life, and have been following plans laid out by several Aquaponics organizations for the last four years. I have found the information offered from Friendly Aquaponics, Inc. to be extremely beneficial to my attempts to set up a home-based solution to my desires to have organically grown food available for my family. In fact, I follow the information provided from Susanne Friend and Tim Mann through their website almost exclusively.

I have purchased some in-depth how-to manuals from Susanne Friend and Tim Mann's website, and have been very pleased with the information contained within the manuals, as well as the professionalism followed during the transactions. I have solicited addition information from them for clarification, as well as for expansion of detail where I had questions. They followed up quickly and to the point. I was impressed with this, because of the size of their operation. They truly follow their stated mission statement.

They have openly admitted their past mistake, and go out of their way to discourage any such activity from any of their readers. I feel that I trust these people as honest, hard-working, giving people who truly are trying to help society and the planet in the struggle to provide a healthier, more sustainable food source starting at the individual home level.

If this statement by me helps in any way to encourage leniency in your view of Susanne Friend and Tim Mann of Friendly Aquaponics, Inc in Honoka'a, Hawaii, then I thank you for your consideration. I feel that these two people are good for our society at this stage of their lives.

Respectfully,

Ralph Vasel  
1607 Boy Scout Road  
DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435

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10, Coastline Villa Apt 3A; Discovery Bay; Hong Kong

January 8<sup>th</sup> 2014

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi,

My name is Chung-Tak, Song and a citizen of Hong Kong. I am the President of the Aquaponics Association of Asia-Pacific. I have known Susanne Friend and Tim Mann since October 2010 when I attended their aquaponics workshop in Hawaii.

I am an engineering by training, graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology with a M.S. degree. After my graduation I returned to Hong Kong and was involved in manufacturing, property development and investment. After my retirement I became interested in healthcare. I set up three clinics in Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong in partnership with a group of doctors restoring health to people through non-invasive Bio-energetic and Informational Medicine devices. Over three years of observation I realized that food is the best preventive medicine.

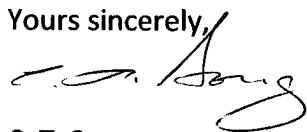
I accidentally learned about the quality of food grown aquaponically and decided to find out more about it. The trip to Hawaii was a most valuable experience in my life. Thanks to Susanne and Tim for sharing unselfishly what they know about aquaponics. I am dedicating the rest of my life to spread the knowledge of this sustainable way of farming to Hong Kong and China. I am presently working with the Chinese University of Hong Kong to grow Chinese herbal medicine organically.

My association with Susanne and Tim was a most pleasant one. After my first introduction to aquaponics, I returned for a second year to learn solar greenhouse design. Both Susanne and Tim are very frank and honest people. They have nothing to hide not only in their own trade secrets but also in acknowledging the mistakes they have made. I have come across another aquaponics workshop on US Mainland where I was asked to sign an agreement not to infringe on their intellectual rights before taking up their training course.

I have been working together with a non-profit reputable organization, The Kadoorie Farm & Botanic Garden with a 50 years of history, and we have jointly conducted four successful training courses in the past years. Several schools have already set up their own systems in their school yards. They found it an excellent teaching tool for children. I am seriously considering to invite Susanne and Tim to conduct the courses in future.

One of my friends, Shumin Wang from Shangdon Province, who attended the Hawaiian workshop in the same year as I did has already established the largest aquaponics farm in China. Previously I tried to get Susanne and Tim to visit my own farm in Wuyishan, China but without success due to their travel restriction. I truly believe that they will contribute greatly to the welfare of my country. I look forward to their visit one day.

Yours sincerely,



C. T. Song



# Alex Piano Unlimited, LLC

Phone: 808-938-9906

Email: [alex-piano@mail.com](mailto:alex-piano@mail.com)

[alexpianounlimited@gmail.com](mailto:alexpianounlimited@gmail.com)

## The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

Alexander Czerny  
P.O.Box 551785  
Kapa'au, HI 96755  
Alex Piano Unlimited, LLC - #W97924329-01

1 / 18 / 2014

-----  
Date

Dear Judge Kobayashi,

I am writing this letter in support of Susanne Friend and Tim Mann, and in order to help preventing further harm to the whole family. I know Susanne and Tim, and their children, since I moved to Honoka'a, Hawaii, from Germany in early 2008.

My name is Alexander Czerny, I am the business owner of Alex Piano Unlimited, LLC. I work as a piano tuner/technician, serving the whole Big Island of Hawaii. Furthermore I am a piano teacher at Hawaiian Preparatory Academy and Parker School in Kamuela. I also give private piano lessons in people's homes. Besides that I perform as a pianist on stage, for example with Grammy award winner Gary Washburn, or with international artists.

From 2010 to July 2013 I gave weekly piano instructions for Susanne's and Tim's exceptionally intelligent children Jack, Luck and Rose at their home near Honoka'a. (In 2013 I moved to North Kohala, about 50 miles away, which unfortunately interrupted frequent lessons. Currently I'm preparing a better teaching schedule that makes frequent trips to Honoka'a possible so that we can resume piano lessons.)

In January and February, 2012, I have voluntarily translated their FriendlyAquaponics construction manual into German language; German is my first language. During this time I learned a lot about the importance of Aquaponics for future food supply especially in dry climates or places with poor soil. Tim and Susanne are pioneers in research. I can confirm that Friendly Aquaponics Inc. is known here and in Europe to have built the first commercially viable Aquaponics system in the world. They also were the first ones that had a deal with Costco, for example. Tim and Susanne invested a lot of time and money in improving their system, and to find out which plants are able to grow in Aquaponics throughs, and which not.

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1-22-14  
12

commercially viable Aquaponics system in the world. They also were the first ones that had a deal with Costco, for example. Tim and Susanne invested a lot of time and money in improving their system, and to find out which plants are able to grow in Aquaponics troughs, and which not.


Now, I'm getting straight to the point: Everybody here knows that Tim and Susanne got busted while experimenting with growing small Marihuana plants in Aquaponics troughs. Since years they talk very openly, to everyone, about their, as they call it, „stupid idea“. Already two or even three years ago Tim and Susanne told me that they may go to prison for that. Honestly, I didn't give much about this. I wasn't much aware of differences between the laws in Germany and the U.S., so I could not believe that they actually may end up in prison for trying to grow Cannabis in Aquaponics troughs. (Since 15 years or so, growing pot in Germany usually ends up, as far as I know, with acquittance or with a rather small fine. Little did I know about Federal laws in the U.S., which I certainly respect.)

I personally, as a teacher, don't use and don't approve the use of mind altering drugs. Neither do Tim and Susanne. In more than five years I haven't seen them drinking even a glass of wine or so. Using any drugs, legal or illegal, just makes one less intelligent and doesn't go together with learning an musical instrument anyway.

As I said, the whole story with Tim and Susanne didn't seem a big deal to me – until now. I still can't believe that they may have to go to prison. This would be a big harm not only to the future of Aquaponics, but also to the whole family, and especially their kids, my students Jack, Luck and Rose. They are a wonderful family; everybody in Honoka'a will confirm that. Tim and Susanne know that they have to pay for their „stupid idea“; they certainly accept their responsibility. But you can't believe how afraid especially the kids are with the prospect of seeing Tim and Susanne in prison.

I beg you to consider that.

Sincerely,

  
Alexander Czerny

**January 15, 2014**

**The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi,**

**I am writing on behalf of Tim Mann & Susanne Friend, my name is Randy Campbell, I live in a small town in Tennessee and I operate an aquaponic farm.**

**I am aware of the legal issues that Tim and Suzanne face and I have been aware for many years; in fact I could say that their arrest had a large influence on me getting to know them better. Tim & Suzanne publically shared the story of their crime at a training event they were teaching and I was attending. I immediately recognized the seriousness of their crime and feared incarceration would end the incredibly beneficial work they were doing with aquaponics. Their public confession of their mistakes inspired me to learn more. I had been following their aquaponic work for several years and shared their passion for its importance.**

**I approached Tim and Susanne with the idea to offer the aquaponic training that they had developed, here on my farm. We agreed that we could expose more people to their food production methods if the training was held stateside. I wanted to be able to continue their teachings in the event that they lost their freedom. The hope was for me to be able to teach their program and provide them (their family) with income as they served out their sentence.**

**Since then, I have hosted several aquaponic trainings with them and gotten to know them much better. Over the past few years I have had the pleasure of not only hosting training programs but hosting each and every one of their family members for stays at my home. Perhaps the best way to get to know the true character of a person is to spend quality time with their children and family. I did get to know their family and character and proudly say that we became family.**

**I don't pretend to fully understand all of the intents of modern incarceration; perhaps it is to protect society, to create a deterrent for other offenders or to seek restitution to the community.**

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**I humbly suggest the Tim Mann and Susanne Friend have aggressively provided “restitution “to the community and I believe they will continue. Their passion, sincerity, efforts and commitment to provide the “world community” with knowledge and skill to grow food is a payment to society that cannot fully be measured as it perpetually creates dividends. Their community service has impacted thousands and has directly led to hungry people being fed both here and abroad. Their efforts have helped countless numbers achieve food independence and access to higher quality food. Their efforts are having a ripple effect that continues to grow and make our food supply less fragile and certainly healthier. I know that the character of these two individuals, will not allow them to discontinue their service to the world community if given the opportunity.**

**If incarceration is to be a “deterrent” or to demonstrate an example to other potential perpetrators then humbly I suggest the example we make of them is the powerful impact that positive people can have when committed to noble pursuits.**

**And if the intent is to” protect society” than again I humbly suggest that services they provide to the worlds society is providing more protection from hunger and toxic food than the protection society would receive by incarceration.**

**Respectfully,**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randy Campbell", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Randy Campbell**

**President**

**Today's Green Acres, Inc.**

## Sea Island, Inc.

PMB 231  
295 Palmas Inn Way, Suite 130  
Humacao, P.R. 00791  
Tel. 787-719-5515

474 E. Crystal Downs Dr.  
Frankfort, MI 49635  
Tel. 217-414-9817  
E-mail: seaislandpres@me.com

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi,

January 17, 2014

Unlike hundreds of other friends of Susanne Friendly and Tim Mann, my acquaintance has yet to enjoy a time of personal encounter. But, numerous e-mails about the emerging technology of aquaponics is a subject of very important interest to me and to millions around the world. The future of food production, with an expanding global population and an ever increasingly restrictive need for Federal, State, local and every other intervention possible to accomplish a mission of keen importance to you and all of mankind. It has to be a factor, as you consider how to implement the sentencing phase of your personal responsibility.

If you have not read any of the several hundred freely published and given total internet access "Friendly Aquaponics" newsletters from Tim Mann and Susanne Friendly, then I would happily plead for the chance for you to read any one of them to discover how food production in the world is so important. It has to meet the demand of all without causing 'global warming' or other infectious or damaging to health issues. Those that comes from eating food that is not safe enough to pass muster with future as well as present restrictive regulation by those many federal, state and local agencies is imperative. All are working so hard to save us from our own inability to know what we need to know how to escape from harm to our minds and bodies, if more proper food is not safely produced and eaten before harm can be done!

Years ago, here in Puerto Rico, I bought a 400 cuerda (almost 388 acres) farm with intent to help an inventor grow fish in captivity using SW U.S. type concrete channels. The fish farming patent for tilapia system is patent #4516528 1985 and J. Phillip Jones was the inventor. Although the government of PR failed to payout any of the Secretary of Agriculture's letter promising the financing to grow 5-10 million pounds of tilapia per year and establish a new industry for PR, I did finance the option purchase action and now both own and manage the Sea Island, Inc. activities.

In looking for ways to find alternative ways to feed hungry people everywhere, I came 4-5 times to visit Prof. James Rakosy, Ph.D of the University of the Virgin Island, in St. Croix. He taught one of my associates in one of his many annual courses for visiting farmers. Yes, I know why this mission is shared by me and my PR company as well as my U.S. mainland Tryon Technology, Inc.

Among his students a few years ago was Tim Mann and his wife Susanne Friendly. For at least five or six years they have published what they have learned since taking that course in their quest to find a way to improve the Rakosy technology to make it most practical elsewhere and I am one of their thousands of readers and hundreds of students who have learned together with Friendly Aquaponics.

I call upon all of the good people of Maui to petition you with the thought that like General Motors, which was favorably treated by our Federal Government in 2008, Maui needs to treat both Tim Mann and Susanne Friendly to the idea of being allowed in your sentencing to be able to continue their very important work. Of course, no mere citizen is immune to punishment for breaking any law, especially when they have pled guilty. But, I am aware that you have power to consider mitigating circumstances.

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1-24-14

LARANKELO VENTURES LLC,  
2945 ISLAND DR.,  
BOULDER, CO 80301  
PHONE 303-588-9273, FAX 303-417-9603

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To: Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi  
United States District Court  
District of Hawaii  
300 Ala Moana Blvd C-338  
Honolulu, HI 96850

Date: 21-January-2014

Subject: Suzanne Friend and Tim Mann

Dear Judge Kobayashi,

My name is Dr. Rajan Kapur and I am President, Larankelo Ventures LLC, and Vice President of Development at Solar Land Partners, Inc. I work in the field of sustainable development with technologies ranging from utility scale Solar Electricity to Aquaponics, in the USA, India and Papua New Guinea.

I came in contact with Suzanne Friend and Tim Mann about a year ago, as I was researching training material on Aquaponics for commercial deployment in the developing world. The field of Aquaponics is young, and there is no clear methodology for commercial deployment, nor a track record of business success of such undertakings. I have spent much effort in reviewing the material from sources all over the world. The publications from Tim and Suzanne are some of the best in the field.

Their work over the last several years reflects something quintessentially American: manual skills, scientific rigor and persistence. While there is no guarantee that theirs will be the uniquely successful path, efforts such as theirs make the world a better place.

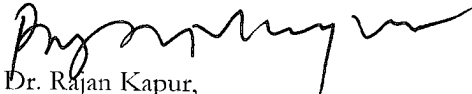
I do not know Suzanne or Tim personally. They requested I write this letter. In their letter to me, they acknowledged they were wrong in what they had done. They took unconditional responsibility for their mistakes.

I have written this letter for two reasons

- 1) Suzanne and Tim are working in a field that could improve how we grow what we eat. They are working hard to do good for themselves, their family and society.
- 2) They appear to genuinely acknowledge their mistakes.

I pray that you will take this into consideration.

Respectfully,



Dr. Rajan Kapur,  
President,  
Larankelo Ventures LLC

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RECEIVED  
1-24-14

## C. T. SONG

10 Coastline Villa, Apt. 3A  
Discovery Bay, Hong Kong  
Tel. (852) 2987-8356  
e-mail: [ctsong32@gmail.com](mailto:ctsong32@gmail.com)

March 13, 2012

Hon. Leslie E. Kobayashi  
United States District Court Judge  
300 Ala Moana Blvd.,  
Honolulu, HI 96815

Honorable Leslie E. Kobayashi,

I, Chung Tak Song, a long time resident of Hong Kong, now retiring and moving to Wuyishan, Fujiang Province, China, attended the excellent Friendly Aquaponics Training in October, 2010, held by Mr. Timothy Michael Mann and Ms. Susanne Lenore Friend. Upon returning to Hong Kong, I have built an aquaponics system in Wuyishan with the help of Friendly Aquaponics Intern of one year, Mr. Xiao Chen Wang, who went to the Friendly Aquaponics Farm on a J1 visa, between October, 2009 and October, 2010.

Because in winter, it is very cold in my area, I returned to Hawaii in February, 2012 to attend their Solar Greenhouse Training. I am now seeking the help of Mr. Mann and Ms. Friend to assist me in the refinement of my system, and in the training of my employees, and the initial design for my Solar Greenhouse, to be built around my existing aquaponics system. I will offer them all expenses paid, plus a consulting fee of \$5,000.00 USD.

I offer them my personal invitation for one week with dates to be determined. The following flights represent their tentative itinerary, if you will permit them to travel:



Flight **UA 201**  
Depart 03-May-12 (Thu) 02:30p **Honolulu, Oahu (HNL)**  
Arrive 04-May-12 (Fri) 06:00p **Guam (GUM)**  
Flight Time 7hr 30min | Economy



Flight **UA 147**  
Depart 04-May-12 (Fri) 06:45p **Guam (GUM)**  
Arrive 04-May-12 (Fri) 09:45p **Hong Kong (HKG)**





Flight **UA 78**  
Depart 12-May-12 (Sat) 10:15a **Hong Kong (HKG)**  
Arrive 12-May-12 (Sat) 03:20p **Tokyo, Honshu (NRT)**



Flight **NH 7024**  
Depart 12-May-12 (Sat) 07:25p **Tokyo, Honshu (NRT)**  
Arrive 12-May-12 (Sat) 07:29a **Honolulu, Oahu (HNL)**

We will travel by domestic flight to Wuyishan, where Mr. Mann and Ms. Friend will stay at the Wuyi Ramada Hotel, The National Tourism Resort. The address is Mount Wuyi National Scenic Area, Wuyi Shan, China 354302. The phone number there is 86599-5252472, fax is 86599-5256508.

Please allow Mr. Mann and Ms. Friend to obtain a passport. Their work is critical to the success of my project.

Since Wuyishan is the tea capital of China, the climate there is excellent for growing any kinds of vegetable. I intend to introduce Aquaponics farming to assist the city to diversify its agricultural export and improve the local economy. Ultimately I will work with the university there to include Aquaponics as part of their curriculum. Mr. Wang will be responsible to teach the students under the guidance of Mr. Mann and Ms. Friend whose experience in teaching is invaluable.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Wang".

# DESERET PEAK AQUAPONIC

---

Sandra Stapley  
661 West Cherry Street  
Grantsville, Utah. 84029  
801-680-2208  
Sandrajstapley@gmail.com

January 21, 2014

Honorable Judge Lesile Kobayashi  
State of Hawaii

Dear Judge Kabayashi,

My name is Sandy Stapley. My husband and I are the independent owners of Deseret Peak Aquaponics. We are the parents of five grown children, and fourteen grandchildren. Being a parent and grandparent gives one first hand experience with the cause and effects of human behavior in relation to justification, pride, regret and humility. We have retired from the corporate world and are realizing our dream of truly becoming self sufficient.

I hold a Bachelor of Liberal Arts Degree, and will soon be enrolled in a Masters Of Natural Law Degree program. This study is to deepen my understanding of the effects of natural-laws upon human behavior- the actions of men, their relationships to other men, and the world in which they live. With this being my intent, I was very surprised and pleased at the Friendly Aquaponic training in Tennessee, which I attended in January, 2013, when Tim openly shared the predicament he and Susanne were in over *trying* to grow Marijuana in their aquaponic system .

Surprised, because man will normally avoid sharing such wrong doings unless he is motivated by a recognition of higher moral obligations. Pleased, because man will only willingly and openly admit the error of his ways when he is truly remorseful for his wrong doings and has become sincerely repentant. And, from my perspective of *what makes men do what they do*, I feel Tim was truly sorrowful for his mistake and is making restitution in the most influential way he can. The bench mark by which I make this assessment, is his willingness to sacrifice personal time to teach others what he has learned.

My husband and I personally, have been greatly influenced by the work Tim and Susan Mann have done and are currently doing, in the field of Aquaponics. In fact, it was because of their pioneering efforts in Aquaponics that influenced us to follow their example and convert our dirt greenhouse into a system modeled after the one they have in Maui. And we are now enjoying the benefits of what I learned in my experience with Friendly Aquaponics, Tim and Susanne, by growing greens and harvesting fish in our personal-eco-balanced aquaponic system.

As the notable author and theologian, G.K. Chesterton, intimated in all his writings about the lasting reformation of man; let the censorship of moral society and ones peers work their effect upon the behavior of men, and it will have a more lasting effect that chains and bars.

In my humble estimation, Tim and Susan have proven they have learned a very reforming lesson about ignoring the effects of law. I feel their experience will make them better citizens of a greater community by working among their peers rather than being taken from them!

Sincerely,  
*Sandy Stapley*  
Sandy Stapley

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JAN 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014

To:

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi,

I am writing on the behalf of honoring Tim Mann and Susanne Friend during Their recent episode at Their Farm involving The possible growing of cannabis in Their aquaponics system.

I have been coming and going to Hawaii since 1975 and most recently had a stay There from Sept 2010 until June 2013.

My primary return back to Hawaii was to learn and build a aquaponics system with a friend of mine, Gary Shields, who had prior to my return, just taken a aquaponics class from Tim & Susanne. He said The class was A number 1! and shared with me his knowledge of The glass and we began to build a great system.

About a year after That I Then built another system after discussing with Tim Mann and purchasing one of his online Do It Yourself manuals. The manuals were precise and informative and without Them I would of been completely lost.

I even visited Their Farm on several occasions to purchase building products, ie, liners, pots, fish, and all The while Tim answered any and all questions I had about aquaponics. They are truly pioneers in This field and Their diligence and hard work to provide healthy vegetables to The community and beyond are second to none.

Another thing I noticed while visiting Their farm was how even Their children were involved. It is a true blessing to see young kids get involved in such a healthy practice.

Whatever transpired with Their involvement with Mr. Roger Christie was a bad decision on Their parts

but I truly believe They have learned Their lesson  
and will never step that way again.

Believe me - Their desire + hard work to teach others  
and to grow great healthy veges are one awesome  
trait that They both have. Not only does The  
Big Island need Them to continue Their work, The  
rest of The world does too.

may God Bless,

Sincerely,

Peter A. Pleban  
(Peter A. Pleban)

current address:

2777 E. Jamison Ave  
Centennial, CO 80122

January 15, 2014

**To the Honorable Judge Leslie Koybayashi.**

My name is Bart Boyer. I am writing you concerning your pending penalty judgment against Susanne Friend and Tim Mann of Friendly Aquaponics Inc, Honoka'a, Hawaii.

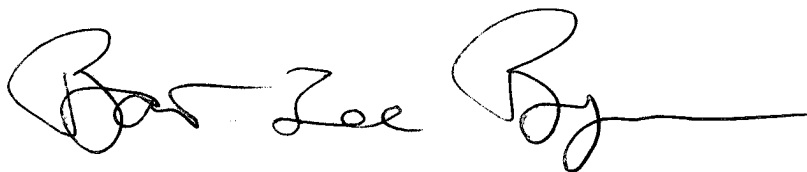
I have been married to my wife Audrey for 28 years and have 2 wonderful daughters. Up until last year I was General Manager of Hobby Products International (Foothill Ranch, CA) where I worked for 16 years. I left my position there to pursue my own business in organic aquaponic gardening. I searched and studied the concepts and practices of aquaponics for years prior to making this move. I had quickly discovered Susanne and Tim of Friendly Aquaponics which became one of my primary sources of knowledge and inspiration. I was fortunate to make their friendship during one of their commercial aquaponic courses and have gotten to know them as truly good people.

Tim and Susanne are a well known presence in the global aquaponic community and have a stellar reputation as reputable business people. I know them as honest, kind and intelligent people who love and care for their kids, community and their many friends. I see that it pains them to no end that their years of good work are now tainted by their conviction.

I know Tim and Susanne greatly regret their decision to cultivate marijuana and the damage it has caused to their life and the strain it has put on their family. I don't believe you could have two people more contrite and full of regret for their crime than Tim and Susan. I have seen the kind of good and tender parents they are and hope no further damage comes down on their kids. In forming your judgment I urge you to consider a path that will not remove Tim and Susanne from their home and their wonderful children.

Thank you for your consideration, warmest regards, Bart.

Bart Tee Boyer  
4600 Beatty Drive  
Riverside, CA 92506  
onebartee@gmail.com

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bart Tee Boyer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

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1-18-14

Donna Mitts  
Clear View Farm  
PO Box 344  
Pa'auilo, Hawaii

January 10, 2014

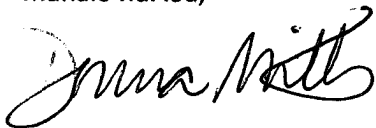
Dear Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi,

I have known Tim Mann and Susanne Friend for over ten years and would like to share with you my reasons for supporting them and their family despite unfortunate legal trouble. I have been involved with farming and agriculture education in Hawaii Island for many years. As Coordinator for a series of classes and farm tours called Practical Agriculture for Hamakua, I have had the pleasure of having Tim and Susanne present several times on the Friendly Aquaponics systems. They have always been eager to support the greater agricultural good of our island and their talks and farm tours have been well attended. I have been to their farm many times and am always impressed with their integrity, honesty and willingness to share knowledge with others.

Tim and Susanne are first and foremost family oriented people. I know they love their children dearly and this is apparent in all they do. Their children are treated with great kindness and respect as the intelligent individuals they are. They also love their community and this is also obvious through their actions within the rural Hamakua community. They are always open to sharing knowledge for others benefit. They want us all to succeed.

It is my hope and prayer that the legal system of Hawaii will be lenient in their case as their offense, in my opinion, was not a hazard to residents or violent in any way. Please take into consideration the benefit to us all that they remain free to continue their valuable work in our community.

Mahalo nui loa,



Donna Mitts

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U. S. DISTRICT JUDGE

JAN 14 2013

at \_\_\_\_\_ o'clock and \_\_\_\_\_ min. \_\_\_\_\_ M.  
DISTRICT OF HAWAII

CORRESPONDENCE

**The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi**

**January 11, 2014**

Judge Kobayashi,

This letter is in support of Susanne Friend and Tim Mann of Friendly Aquaponics.

We have been aware of the pioneering work of Friendly Aquaponics for several years. Our firm has been conducting research and development of technology and marketing trends in the aquaponics field since 2010 and the reputation of Friendly Aquaponics is widely known and respected. They are known worldwide for giving their all to the development of aquaponics as an industry, to the benefit of everyone.

Hawaii is among the few places in the world where this method of agriculture is taken seriously. Dr. Tetsuzan Benny Ron of the University of Hawaii is another leader in the field whom we rely on.

So we urge you to consider the value of these entrepreneurs to the future of agriculture in a world dominated by Monsanto, Cargill and the like, and where food security is an ever-increasing concern.

Your Honor, regarding this issue of marijuana cultivation: Clearly the tide is turning across the US regarding the criminalization of cannabis. I just returned from taking my son to college in Colorado, where marijuana production and sale is a booming industry. Even Mississippi and Alabama are on a track to decriminalize pot. The US government relies on the University of Mississippi to produce marijuana for its own research programs.

I understand that the federal government still classifies marijuana as a dangerous narcotic. You have the letter of the law to guide your decisions. Yet you also have the opportunity to show a spirit of compassion in this Friendly Aquaponics case. So please consider that this is a family of non-criminal human beings who made some naive assumptions about what they were doing.

Sincerely,

Bevan Suits, Owner

Aquaplanet, LLC

Cc: Philip H. Lowenthal  
33 N. Market St.  
Suite 101  
Wailuku, Maui, HI 96793

Aquaplanet LLC 1326 Fenway Circle Decatur, Georgia 30030 404 421 1894  
[www.aquaplanetonline.com](http://www.aquaplanetonline.com)

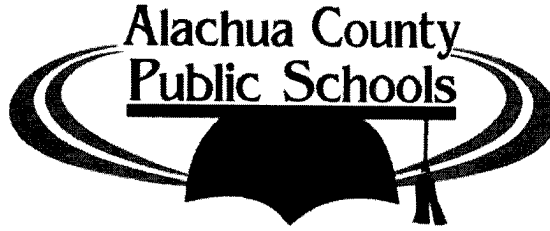
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**BOARD MEMBERS**

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Leanea McNealy, Ph.D.  
Carol Oyenarte  
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Eileen F. Roy

**SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

Hershel H. Lyons, Interim Superintendent



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*We are committed to the success of every student!*

**January 9, 2014**

**The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi,**

**My name is David Banes, ESE Transition Specialist for Alachua County Schools in Florida. I oversee Job training sites and opportunities for High School Special Needs Students in Alachua County. I have been in the School System for 28 years as a PE Teacher, Dean, ESE Teacher, Baseball Coach and now District Level.**

**We are starting a District Level Agriculture Program in Alachua County to give real and meaningful job training and employment opportunities for people with Special needs so they can feel like they are a positive and meaningful part of our Society. Gardening has many levels of task that meet the needs of our Students. We are being helped by Brian Donnelly from Sunstate Organics in planning this project. He has given us the best contacts around the United States that may be able to help in their respected expertise field.**

**One area we wanted to explore was Aquaponics and we were given Tim Mann and Susanne Friend's name with Friendly Aquaponics. I approached them with the idea of starting an Aquaponics area for our Project and how we were trying to empower Special Needs Students. They both were very honest up front and explained their entire situation with the courts because they wanted me to know before we came involved with them. With that being said I am not here to judge people we have all made mistakes and that's how we learn. Their level of expertise can be so positive to the lives of our Special needs population here that is more than worth it to us. They offered us plans for their system only for the cost of printing.**

**My job is with children and giving them opportunities to succeed. Tim Mann and Susanne Friend's level of expertise can help a lot more people than just ours. The only ones that stand to lose their opportunity are their children.**

**Thank you,**

**David Banes  
Transition Program Specialist  
Job Development  
Alachua County Public Schools  
620 E. University Avenue  
Gainesville, Florida 32601  
(352) 955-7671 ext. 263  
Fax: (352) 955-7129**

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1-16-14  
K10



Attention:  
Philip H. Lowenthal  
33 N. Market St.  
Suite 101  
Wailuku, Maui, HI 96793

January 10, 2014

TO: The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi,

My name is Keith Kelsch. I am a general contractor for residential construction in St George, UT. You can see my business at [www.kelschconstruction.com](http://www.kelschconstruction.com). I am also the president and founder of [www.hotzing.com](http://www.hotzing.com). This is a community service engine with one additional technology in development for small organic farmers to place their vegetables and produce for sale to local restaurants, grocery stores and local residents.

I know Susanne Friend and Tim Mann from their free online help they offer in trying to get an aquaponics system going. I found them at [www.friendlyaquaponics.com](http://www.friendlyaquaponics.com). They are caring, informative and very helpful, very much like the business name they are. Tim was kind enough to reply to my email queries promptly. Having tried to get information from literally dozens of aquaponics growers, they were the first to be open enough to help me. Some of the research Tim has done I have downloaded and saved. His post on Bio Security in Aquaponics and how not to use duckweed in feeding fish was very helpful. Not many growers are freely giving like this. This says something vital about their character, that they are naturally service oriented. This may also account for how they got pulled into a bad situation. Bad things like this happen to the best of us. I know from personal experience.

I am well aware of their legal issue with growing marijuana for "The Hawaii Cannabis Ministry." This was a mistake that I am certain has impacted their lives greatly. We all can easily get pulled in by some of the best persuasion and all it takes is one time and we are changed forever. I made such a mistake myself no knowing of the ethical issues. I lost \$50,000 of my own money from the mistake and it nearly cost my marriage. I am also giving and driven by being of service to others. I am a former high school teacher and I worked in the non-profit sector as well. I can easily identify with Susanne and Tim. Please consider who they really are.

Susanne and Tim are in the same boat I have seen many like them get into, and my heart goes out to them. I know of a couple trying to raise money for their business through the online platforms available. They were contacted by an overseas investor and before you know it they were importing illegal items with the understanding this is proper protocol and they were coaxed into doing something wrong. Even in our hearts we know it is wrong but the persuasion is overwhelming the first time you see in your life. After the mistake, we are all so much better prepared to handle it again.

Tim and Sussane have so much to offer small and hopeful farmers like myself. They are a resource to the community of aquaoponics growers. If you wish any additional testimony, please feel free to contact me.



Keith R Kelsch  
154 S 100 W  
St George, UT 84770  
435-705-4767 Cell  
[keithkelsch@hotzing.com](mailto:keithkelsch@hotzing.com)

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January 14, 2014

Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi  
c/o Philip H. Lowenthal  
33 N. Market Street  
Suite 101  
Wailuku, Maui, HI 96793

Re: Tim Mann and Susanne Friend

Dear Honorable Leslie Kobayashi,

My name is Laurie Komeiji, I am Pastoral Assistant to Ken Silva, Executive Pastor at New Hope Oahu. Previously I was Pastoral Assistant to the former Judge Elwin Ahu and current Senior Pastor of New Hope Metro.

This letter is in support of Susanne Friend and Tim Mann. I enrolled in their aquaponics class in 2011. They tailored the class for our needs, and were instrumental to designing the system our team leader set up at an orphanage and a school in Africa. Without their knowledge and custom designing the system, it would not be the successful program it is today. They send out informative newsletters free of charge, which teaches us the latest techniques and products available.

They are also very honest with the mistakes they made in aquaponics, most recently with the growing of marijuana for Mr. Roger Christie. I honestly believe they feel repentance for their decision to grow marijuana, and will never do it again. If given a chance to share their knowledge of aquaponics, they will help many more groups like ours in a positive and life changing way.

I humbly ask for your consideration that they be granted supervised release instead of serving a prison sentence. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call me at 808-842-4242 x116.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laurie Komeiji". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Laurie Komeiji

# Henry A Perry

January 15, 2014

**The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi.**

Dear Judge.

I understand from the Mann's that you will be considering their case in the near future. I also understand the circumstances surrounding their case as the Mann's have been very upfront about their circumstances.

Normally I would not write this kind of letter as I am typically a 'law and order' type of person and feel people should be accountable for their transgressions. In this case however, I think the positive things that the Mann's have done outweigh the past sins and would ask you to consider this when taking your judgment.

In a field full of goodhearted but not necessarily qualified people, the Mann's have brought a rigor to the field of Aquaponics that has been totally refreshing and, for those of us who are using this technique, invaluable. The amount of time they have saved people is immeasurable. Their approach of sharing their intellectual property with the world instead of coveting it has translated into making this Aquaponics world a considerably better place. If you believe that Aquaponics can, as we do, become a huge benefit to the availability of good food to many places on the planet, their contribution will be widespread. They have created a unique blend of coming up with new ideas and research while grounding their activities with an actual working farm, with a close eye on the economics and practicality. In their courses they put on, they do this with an integrity that is rare. In addition, their willingness to work with people and follow up is commendable and rare

My background is one of being a successful serial entrepreneur. I have started over 20 businesses in fields as varied as automobiles, real estate, medical, and communication as well as subsea engineering and finance. In each one of these fields I have found that a few people have dominated the activities of those industries and their advances. The Mann's are one of those people in the rapidly growing field of Aquaponics.

I first ran across the Mann's when I attended one of their conferences in northern Florida. I was contemplating getting into the AP business but was having a hard time making sense of the myriad of details that get thrown at the uninitiated newcomer. Their conference put all of the pieces together and got me started. If I were not for them I would still be foundering instead of setting up a system. I am partnering with a local farmer to put in a system in the Bahamas, which is in desperate need of quality food that can be produced on a consistent basis.

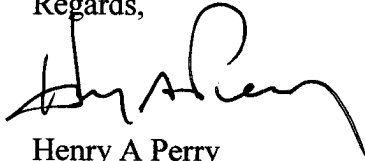
C/O Lyford Cay POA, PO Box N-7776-363  
Lyford Cay Drive, Nassau, Bahamas

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Our program is coming on line as we speak. The Mann's have been very generous with their time and feedback in counseling us along the way.

It would be a great detriment to us if they cannot continue their activity. One of the key drivers of their success and advice is their presence on their working farm. It is easy to dispense advice from afar but not nearly as effective. If they are in prison instead of on the farm it will not be good for the rest of us.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Henry A Perry". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail that extends to the right.

Henry A Perry

Timothy Williams  
20299 Yarbrough Rd  
Athens, AL 35613  
January 21, 2014

**The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi**

Re: Tim Mann and Susanne Friend

Honorable Judge,

I have known Tim Mann and Susanne Friend for several years. I became interested in growing organic vegetables, and their expertise became very useful for me. They have deeply impressed me by their genuine desire to help others. When I had the opportunity to take their training course in my area, I was unemployed and unable to pay the full tuition. They waived their fee, and insisted it was more important for me to build my own aquaponics starter system and gain experience than it was for them to be paid for the training. While others in this business charge high fees, and ask their students to sign non-disclosures, Tim and Susanne ask us to spread the word to help as many people as possible.

During the training, they made a point to share their experiences, both good and bad, for us to learn from their successes and failures. I was amazed to hear them share their story of the mistake they made trying to grow marijuana! They explained their faulty reasoning at the time and assured us what a huge error it had been. It takes a great deal of courage to let others see one's mistakes.

I have a great deal of respect for them both and believe them to be genuinely helping improve the world by teaching how to produce healthful food.

It is my sincere hope that you will show leniency to them and allow them to continue their good work.

Sincerely,



Timothy Williams  
Engineer, Student, Friend

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Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi  
c/o Philip H. Lowenthal  
33 N. Market Street  
Suite 101  
Wailuku, Maui, HI 96793

Re: Tim Mann and Susanne Friend

Dear Honorable Leslie Kobayashi,

Please allow me to address this letter to you on behalf of Tim Mann and Susan Friend. I have been a recipient of their hospitality and knowledge while attending an Aquaponics training at their facility in 2011 which was very beneficial to me in my work as Agricultural Programs Administrator with Mercy Ships. Mercy Ships is an International Charity who serves the poorest of the poor around the world.

It has been brought to my attention by Mr. Mann that they have made a grave mistake to grow marijuana for a Mr. Roger Christie. Make no mistake, I by no means condone this activity in any manner and believe they need to be reprimanded for their actions. I am however reminded of numerous decisions I have made in my life that have had adverse effects.

In representing this decision to me to conduct this activity Mr. Mann and Ms. Friend have voiced their regret and remorse for their action. I am therefore asking that you consider a penalty for their actions that would not include serving prison time. I believe this would be a drain on society and restitution may be better served in another manner. May I be as bold to suggest them teaching free seminars or helping to set up food producing systems for a needy organization, maybe the food bank or a like organization. This would allow them to be productive assets to society, continue supporting their family and potentially train others that will be able to make a positive influence in the lives of others in Hawaii and potentially around the world.

Deep down I believe them to be good people whom have made a bad decision and am asking that you consider using their skills to improve society at their expense.

Thank you for your consideration in this issue.

Sincerely,

Kenneth L. Winebark

Agriculture Programs Administrator

Mercy Ships



Jan. 23, 2014

To The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi,

My name is Susan Mann, and I work at Oracle Corp. in Santa Clara, Ca. as an IC Layout Designer (this is the drafting step in the production of the fabrication patterns used to manufacture an integrated circuit, or "microchip"). I have been in this field over 30 years.

Tim Mann and Susanne Friend are my brother and sister-in-law respectively, and I know them to be honest and possessing of a degree of integrity unmatched by most individuals. I've been familiar with their aquaponic farming operation for a few years now. Though I do not condone their having broken the law, I am fully convinced if they remain out of prison and continue their efforts, they will be an asset to both the local community and beyond. They have provided the public with "how to" workshops, farm tours, and other types of educational experiences which have enabled people from all over the world to build and run their own aquaponic systems, thereby giving needed access to nutritious, inexpensive food.

I hope you will consider these facts in your judgement.

Respectfully yours,

*Susan Mann*

124-A Flynn Ave.  
Mountain View, Ca  
94043

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4706 Sleeping Indian Road

Fallbrook, CA 92028

January 24, 2014

To The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi,

Re: Tim Mann and Susanne Friend

After several attempts at writing individual letters in support of Tim and Susanne, I have come to the conclusion that it's impossible to talk about the one without including the other. They are a team – Tim always says that Susanne has the brains and the beauty while he is the one who implements their ideas – and are both passionate about their family and their work. There is just no separating them, either from each other or from these two passions. Over the years I have come to know and greatly respect both Tim and Susanne.

Because their aquaponic systems actually work, and very well at that, Tim and Susanne could have patented and become wealthy but, as I have come to recognize over time, that is just not who they are. Tim is one of the most unassuming people I have ever met and I really doubt that he would do anything with the sole intention of making money. Sure, I know he was very proud of a fine, relatively expensive pair of cowboy boots he owns but I think that was largely due to the fact that he got them at a bargain price (I seem to remember he found them at a thrift store but it may have been on eBay) and the cool sound the heels made on the floor. He has owned some beautiful boats but only because he lovingly crafted each one of them; he wasn't motivated to own an expensive asset but to make something wonderful, usually by denying himself all sorts of other things in order to be able to afford the materials. For most of his life Tim has deliberately chosen to live simply, close to nature. So, I can categorically state, if Tim decided to grow pot it was never because he wanted power or wealth but only because he was trying to save everything he cares about.





If I were privileged to sit on a jury as a peer of Susanne and Tim, I would recall the times that I have been between a rock and a hard place and some of the regrettable decisions I have made under pressure. The reason I can live with myself after some of those decisions is that I made the wrong decision but for the right reasons. Susanne and Tim are good, hardworking family people. Misguided they may have been but there is no doubt in my mind that their motive was purely to save their family and their farm.

I truly believe that Susanne and Tim have already served a sentence of many years with this hanging over them, punished by uncertainty and the dread of losing everything they hold dear. They are not and never will be hardened criminals; they are parents of young children and caretakers of elderly parents who depend on them. I cannot envision any way that society would be best served by incarcerating either of them or by punishing them further. Not only will their loved ones suffer – I think, especially, of their children – but who will care for their family, especially if they are not there to tend their farm and lose their means of support. Their family will go from self-supporting to dependency. (Something I know that Susanne would absolutely abhor as it goes against all her deeply held principles and their goals of creating self-sufficiency for all.)

If Susanne and Tim lose their farm their research into scalable aquaponics systems will cease. Years ago I became interested in aquaponics in order to grow pesticide-free food for family and friends.

Fortuitously, I came across Tim and Susanne's website back when they were first getting started. What immediately impressed me was that they were passionate about what they were doing, backing it up with science (grounded in Susanne's biology background) and real-time experience. Most astonishing to me, they were willing to freely share their knowledge. (I later learnt that this is because of their deep personal conviction that no-one should go hungry and they want to develop and share knowledge of aquaponics as it offers the potential of revolutionizing sustainable food production.) At that time I was calling and writing for information from all the aquaponics developers that I came across but, without fail, developers wanted a large, upfront investment and the purchase of a full system. Which is all well and good but all were very cagey about actual results and system specifics. Most systems are patented and very technology intensive and not scalable. But, as Susanne and Tims' hard won experience shows, starting out small is critically important, particularly if you have to take out a loan to build a system. If you have a loan, it's a race to profitability, from the day you sign the loan papers to the day the loan money runs out. If time runs out, and you cannot make the loan payments, you will be under the kind of pressure they were.

In stark contrast to all other companies I have come across, from the start Tim and Susanne have been motivated to share their discoveries in order to maximize the potential of aquaponics to feed people across the world. What I have since found is that knowledge shared is knowledge multiplied and everyone benefits. From the beginning I noticed on their website that they regularly gave farm tours where the public could walk through their property and Tim actually describes to them (with great delight) how everything works. Let me be honest, this is probably not something I would have been generous enough to do. (I.e., openly share my hard won knowledge plus have people tramping through all my stuff.)

My background is in accounting and IT which led me to pursue a Master's degree in Information Systems after my two children and I immigrated to America when I was in my forties. In April, 2002, I was able to leverage my degree and years of experience in the business world to become the Branch Administrator for the San Diego Branch of Ludwig Cancer Research, supporting an international community of distinguished scientists dedicated to preventing and controlling cancer. Our scientists, clinicians, and support staff in countries around the world focus on multiple aspects of basic and clinical cancer research, including cancer genetics and genomics, tumor immunology, and cell growth and differentiation, pursuing breakthroughs to alter the course of cancer. The Ludwig Institute conducts its own research and clinical trials, making it a bridge from the most basic questions of life to the most pressing needs of cancer care. Since its inception, the Institute has invested more than \$1.5 billion of its own resources in cancer research, and has an endowment valued at \$1.2 billion.

I expect to retire from Ludwig one of these days, slow down a little and be able to devote myself to spending more time with family, focusing on my four beloved grandchildren, sharing my values of honesty, simplicity and self-reliance, teaching them to farm, and sharing our love of animals and nature. Who could ask for more!

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dianne Peacock." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a period at the end.

Dianne Peacock

Denise Everett  
244 Dufferin Street  
Fort Erie, Ontario L2A 2T6  
Canada  
shortnsweet244@gmail.com

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi  
C/O Phillip H. Lowenthal  
33 N. Market St.  
Suite 101  
Wailuku, Maui, HI 96793  
January 20, 2014

Dear Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

I am writing in support of Tim Mann and or Suzanne Friend, Friendly Aquaponics. Tim and Suzanne wrote to us and candidly about their legal problems of being arrested and charged criminally. I do not approve of what they did and they are guilty of and responsible for their own actions.

I would like to introduce myself to you. I am a Canadian citizen and connected with Tim Mann and Suzanne Friend, four years ago pursuing an interest to develop international educational partnerships in aquaponics and sustainable organic food production. I have strong interests in sustainable organic food production, leading others to dig up grassroots' organic food growing initiatives, getting back to basics and preserving our own local food for optimal health benefits.

I am Registered Nurse having worked in Canada and have training in both traditional medicine and alternative medicine. I have worked in medicines frontline practicing both western and eastern medicine for the past twenty two years. I have been a distributor of a variety of natural health and wellness products, including the largest herbal/vitamin company in Canada, emotional tree essences, holistic remedies and iridology. I have strong interests and strive for local or Canadian organic food movements especially within our youth, aquaponics, agricultural, and recently light emitting diode (LED) light therapy. For twenty three years I have been a board member, assistant chair and secretary for Celebrate Canada Celebrations every July 1. For fifteen years I have been an active parent on two parent school councils and for the last three years a parent representative on the Niagara District School Board. I have over 20 years experience in a family owned heavy construction business, participating in all aspects of



*Lettuce Grow Aquaponics Denise Everett R.N. (289) 696-5391 shortnsweet244@gmail.com*

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the business, hobby animal farm and gardening. I am living passionately and motivated with the ability to share knowledge and intuitive skills enhancing the wellbeing, empowerment and spiritual wellbeing with all humankind. I am happily married with two beautiful children and very family orientated.

You see Friday, January 13, 2006; eight years ago I was working as a Registered Nurse in labour and delivery. An injury occurred at work this day that prompted me to look at a different aspect in life. Five years ago it was recommended I further my education. I enrolled in an advanced self expression, transformational leadership program. I had to create a community project in something that I was passionate about and to have this project be sustainable once complete. The ability to alter the environment to which you truly express yourself in that your family and community welcome and further your contributions is a huge breakthrough. I had no idea what or how I was going to create this community project. I have always been a huge advocate for organic, home grown healthy food, preserving, live juicing, herbs, herbs for medicine, spices, using food and anything from nature as your medicine.

In the spring of 2009 Bill 8, Healthy Food for Healthy Schools in Ontario Canada became a new policy. For the community project in this leadership course I wanted to convert the defunct greenhouse at the high school and make it operational and alive with food production. There was no funding provincially, no Funding federally and no school board funding available and a dilapidated building with some lighting, running water and a heating system that needed to be cleaned up. Fifteen years previous to this there was a horticulture program at the school for special needs and the program was cut by the ministry of education. Since then the light has been in pilot mode flickering. This kind of reminds of the song from Girl Guides Canada in the Brownie division "Brownies" called "This Little Light of Mine".

As a young person I was always fascinated with greenhouses, cold frame gardening, hydroponics and being able to purchase food locally in the winter sub zero conditions or off season. The idea of chemically feeding organic produce for your table has always sat a little uncomfortable with me. I can remember my grandmother asking if you're driving out near the Muliboom hydroponic farm could you make the detour and stop in for me. She loved there tomatoes and cucumbers.

As an active parent on the school committee I was googling ideas on how to transform this greenhouse organically. Though Google and the internet I found Friendly Aquaponics and Tim Mann and Suzanne Friend. Without Tim and Suzanne's support and dedication to sustainable aquaponics food production and their dedication to enabling others to do the same is



extremely empowering contribution to the environment. In assisting the organic food chain possibilities in others lives and in making sustainable food possibilities happen globally is commendable.

I had this ingenious brainstorm to transform the existing partially used greenhouse to aquaponics. I wrote to Tim and Suzanne they wrote back and offered their training manual for a fee that I was unable to purchase financially. I introduced the idea and a community fund competition idea to the school principle. I received the principles permission. We entered the Aviva Community Fund Competition under the title Project Green Falcon <http://www.avivacommunityfund.org/ideas/2011/acf11172>.

We created alot of community involvement and was blessed with media coverage, a connection with another secondary school in Ontario that has aquaponics. The project brought alot of conversation and public awareness of safe food sustainability and possibilities. Community gardening is slowly blossoming here. We found another Aquaponics farm in Buffalo NY and are networking with them. Unfortunately we did not obtain funding. During the entire four month competition we raised awareness in the community and we shared the assistance of Tim and Suzanne and the possibility of international networking and partnerships. We were eager to find someone in Ontario with the same interests and at the time this innovative idea occurred to me people kept telling me I was running an uphill battle and this would never materialize. Too expensive, too many regulations, and comments similar to "and you think you are going to live off the land" and laugh and stating that we would need millions of dollars in financial and in-kind support. For these reasons many people expressed this innovative idea would cost more than what anyone ever would profit financially, essentially not feasible. It occurred these people making statements probably have never taken the opportunity to see where there food really comes from. As long as food is on the table who really cares?

With the assistance of Tim and Suzanne we had the ability to develop our aquaponics system and to alter the environment in our family greenhouse. Tim and Suzanne are an enormous contribution to the environment. Tim and Suzanne have provided us with the best information possible and showed us how to build our very own aquaponics system and better yet how to grow healthy organic food for our tables. Tim and Suzanne's DIY manual is worth its weight in gold, which has been an immeasurable gift.

Tim and Susanne's support to us and to the school programs has been overwhelmingly fantastic. They both have offered beyond more than any measurable guidance all in a timely manner. We have spent a lot of money to build our aquaponics farm and have not yet



*Lettuce Grow Aquaponics Denise Everett R.N. (289) 696-5391 [shortnsweet244@gmail.com](mailto:shortnsweet244@gmail.com)*

generated any income. The dedication to emails and farm updates are a valuable share of information and continue to inspire us and keep our interest pursuing and sharing aquaponics. Their passion to share genuine knowledge and talents is exemplar and these we all truly grateful.

The demographical region we live in is one of Canada's largest cancerous populations. Many people have concerns with food industry and presently there are increasing concern levels within our youth. An enormous part of our food growing and industry has migrated overseas to Asia, Mexico, and Europe or to the USA. When I was a child just to name a few industries in this region were Delmonte Canada, Aylmer, E.D. Smith, Green Giant, Bick's and Heinz they were Canada Grade A Fancy. None of these companies exist today in Canada. The rich land from these growers has been developed.

Presently we are volunteering at two schools in Ontario and are working on partnerships with Two School Boards, Food Banks Canada, Ministry of Education, Canadian Wild Life Federation, Vineland Research Center, Niagara College and Guelph University. I have had the opportunity to participate and have had family support in transformative learning courses and seminars. If the injury didn't happen eight years ago, would any of these possibilities transpired? Tim and Suzanne are excellent examples in teaching and in leadership commitments.

Tim and Suzanne are two ordinary people honestly focusing their minds and hearts to teach families, individuals, and communities to grow organic, healthy vegetables, so that they teach others how to live vibrant, independent and free lives. It is easy to go off your shining path and get swallowed into the mission of another and this is what clearly occurs to have happened to Tim and Suzanne. Tim and Suzanne have promised and stated in writing to us that this is clearly a naive and unintelligent mistake and now realize the seriousness of their actions and will never let this happen ever again. This is something they both genuinely whole heartily regret. This is clearly an example of human actions lacking or being out of integrity and the lessons in life one can learn at an enormous sacrifice. However, I still do not approve of what they did and they are guilty of and responsible for their own actions. Tim and Suzanne cognizance and understanding is clearly evident that they were wrong in their actions. We have all made mistakes and wrongful decision in thinking we are doing good for others. Instead of minding our own business and going about our own ways we become quilted or swayed into aiding other people's missions. I believe Tim and Suzanne are vibrant good parents, family and community orientated individuals that are simply striving to do well, teaching their children and community member's good morals and values of all things.



Tim and Suzanne's ability to welcome others and their contributions globally contributes to successful global organic food sustainability. This opportunity is exemplar! The ability to empower individuals locally and globally to discovering what it takes to develop or to alter the environment in which you express yourself, so that your environment welcomes and furthers your contribution is by far truly exemplar. Tim and Suzanne are crucial to the success of programs in that organic food sustainability is clearly the paramount in education, feeding the mind as hungry minds cannot learn. I entrust that you find yourself lenient and discover what it takes to further contributions and to envelope the ability to enhance organic food sustainability, encompassing experiential education.

If you wish to contact me at the above address you may do so. My family and I are very interested in your feedback and thoughts.

Sincerely,

*Denise Everett R.N. and Family*

Denise Everett R.N., Doug Everett, James (19) and Erica (17)



**Lettuce Grow** Aquaponics Denise Everett R.N. (289) 696-5391 [shortnsweet244@gmail.com](mailto:shortnsweet244@gmail.com)

# THE CHURCH IN AUSTIN

2530 S. Congress Ave.  
Austin, Texas 78704

Phone (512) 443-0078  
Fax (512) 443-0188

1-27-14

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

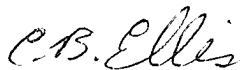
Touching Authority

Your Honor, I hope that Tim Mann and Susanne Friend are given supervised release for their abysmally stupid decision of trying to grow marijuana on their property several years ago.

Thirty-three years ago I was a 20 year old pot smoker. One day while walking home from a community college class I was picked up by a car that had 4 police cadets in it and given a ride home. Although they could have hauled me in for possession, they didn't. In fact, all they did was talk about normal human things and then wished me a good day when they dropped me off. Shortly thereafter, I dropped out of the drug culture and continued to pursue my studies. Later that year I started meeting with a local church and after a couple of years began serving as the church's property and maintenance manager. After 32 years I am still serving the same church in the same capacity.

In my experience, simply touching authority was adequate to set me back on a proper path. Similarly, I feel that Tim Mann and Susanne Friend have touched Federal authority and that that touch alone has set them back on a proper path. I sincerely hope you feel the same way.

Sincerely,



C.B. Ellis

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1-28-14  
FP





# Georgia Department of Corrections

Georgia Corrections Academy  
1000 Indian Springs Drive  
Forsyth, GA 31029  
Telephone: 478-993-4450



Nathan Deal  
Governor

Brian Owens  
Commissioner

TO: Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

FROM: Tim Metzdorf  
Public Safety Training Instructor 1 - Retired

RE: Tim Mann and Susanne Friend

DATE: January 27, 2014

Judge Kobayashi,

Greetings and salutations from Southern USA! Thank you for taking time to read my letter. I find myself in uncharted waters, as this is the first time I've used this letterhead in an unofficial capacity. To be clear, I voluntarily brought my career to a close after 15 and ½ years with the Georgia Department of Corrections as a Public Safety Training Instructor in December of 2012. I tell you this so we are clear that I am no longer representing that agency but also to ensure you that I left in good standing and on my own terms. I thoroughly enjoyed both my work and those I partnered with throughout my years in law enforcement but that chapter in my life is now closed.

You see, Judge Kobayashi, what causes me to write to you all the way out there in the middle of the Pacific ocean from my home here in central Georgia is a couple of people whom I have never laid eyes on, nor had the courtesy of speaking to on the phone or even exchanging text messages with in real time. I know of Tim Mann and Susanne Friend only through their training manual that I purchased, quite literally, within a week and a half of setting my 15+ year career in law enforcement and training aside. It would be fair to say that Tim and Susanne are completely unaware of my existence, as well, outside of an order confirmation email from their corporation Friendly Aquaponics and their subsequent email newsletters that are delivered to my Gmail account automatically.

This all may sound very bizarre but please, bear with me. I am a man of great faith. My father was a Clinical Chaplain with the Georgia Department of Corrections and retired after close to 25 years of service. I like to think that I was able to view and understand the law from both its point of origination (God/my own father's teachings and career) and its point of application (my career) during that time. To be sure, Judge Kobayashi,

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1-29-14

the world is no fan of accountability with regard to the law. It's an old cliché' but EVERYONE in prison is innocent. You and I, of course, know better.

This brings me back to our relationship with both Tim Mann and Susanne Friend. The same faith that led me to quit my job also led me to purchase their training manual. At first, I had no idea why. I had some passing knowledge of aquaponics but not enough to speak intelligently on the subject by any means. My academic studies focused on constitutional law, self-defense policies, weapons training and deadly threat assessment practices. Again, I had no idea why I was being led to purchase this training material offered by Mr. Mann and Ms. Friend. Over the course of 2013, my faith continued to be rewarded (my wife and I were able to graduate a 12<sup>th</sup> grader and our oldest daughter is currently attending college, out of state) and God continued to grow me as a person, outside of who I had been behind a badge for the previous decade plus. I have no reservations at all saying I believe that I had a true "Saul to Paul" conversion experience during this time. No longer would I be enforcing or equipping others with the tools to enforce/adjudicate the law but rather I would be demonstrating through my talents why the very *spirit of the law* is and should be our target goal in dealing and living with one another. To love, protect, provide for and equip others with the ability to help themselves for no reason other than they are suffering and need help. I believe with the proper training and insights, that I can affect that very change in my local community. I believe it so much that I've bet my life, family and career on it, Judge Kobayashi.

The charges against Tim and Susanne are very serious. I am a very firm believer that the punishment should indeed fit the crime. I also am a very firm believer in second chances, given the right environment and circumstances exist to ensure success for all involved. I believe these conditions exist with regard to the both of them. Their livelihood, or rather, their life's work produces fruit, both figuratively and literally, to be sure. If not, I would not be writing you now. Tim Mann and Susanne Friend could not have coerced my actions because they don't know me. No, Judge Kobayashi, I am writing because my faith moved me to do so. I seek neither favor nor reward for my words here. I seek only to follow God's will for my life. That may sound fanatical to some but it is my truth and it is all I have to offer you. I simply believe that with their expertise, their caring approach to their craft and their ideals of sharing what they know, how they've learned it and what it can bring to humanity as a whole, that I can bring God's will in my life to it's fullest realization.

Based on your decision I will seek to attend Tim and Susanne's Internship Training Program in Hawaii over the course of two months as soon as I can arrange my funds and receive their acceptance into the program. Obviously, if they are incarcerated for any length of time, my plans must be altered and I would go back to the proverbial drawing board insofar as what direction God desires me to take. I believe that direction to be with Tim and Susanne and in what they can teach me so I, in turn, can teach others. That is, after all, what I was born to do. My service and my career (all of which I would gladly verify for you upon request or you could confirm through your own research) are testament to this. I do not think any of this is coincidence. I believe there is a reason I feel moved to write to you. To reach out to you and humbly request that

you thoughtfully consider a verdict of probation time that can be served while both Tim and Susanne continue to grow and learn from their missteps in judgment while simultaneously being a teaching instrument to others.

An excerpt from Tim and Susanne's website reads:

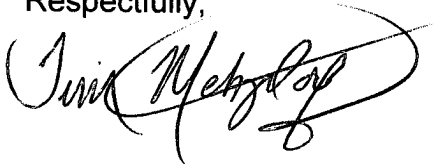
*"We are looking for people who want to change the world, and who are willing to change themselves first. We are looking for people who want to help others by pouring from a full cup, not an empty one. We are looking for family and friends we have not yet met."*

These words ring so true to me after the year that I and my family experienced in 2013. I find myself at a very interesting crossroads. Your decision, I believe, stands to serve as the culmination of the very idea that the law is a human institution pre-ordained by God to grow us closer to Him. By allowing these two people to serve their sentence while still working at their craft, justice can be served both to the law and to the spirit.

I believe it with all my heart.

Thank you for your time, Judge Kobayashi.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Metzdorf", written in a cursive style with a large loop at the end.

Tim Metzdorf

**PETER ROSTI**

Phone: 818-383-0364 • 4045 Vineland Avenue #324, Studio City, CA 91604 • [alulag2@yahoo.com](mailto:alulag2@yahoo.com)

January 13, 2014

To: The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi.

My name is Peter Rosti. I am an ocean scientist, with a degree in Ocean Engineering, (MS, University of Hawaii, 1991). I work in ocean sciences, as well as software development as it applies to environmental sciences. My recent work focuses on software in support of alternative energy systems, especially power-generating wind farms. I have also done significant work in aquaculture systems design, the study of ocean waves, distillation of fresh water from seawater, and various other areas of ocean-related science and engineering.

I have known Tim Mann for over thirty two years. During that time I have grown to appreciate his focus on environmentally beneficial development work. During the last few years his focus, together with his wife Susanne Friend, and their family, have been on the development of aquaponics. Aquaponics is a hybrid technology combining the growth and production of land-based food crops such as vegetables, together with raising fresh-water fish for human consumption. Aquaponics is likely to have a very significant worldwide impact as the efficiency of growing food becomes an ever-increasing issue. Aquaponics simply provides a lot more for a lot less than many other food production systems. It would not be a stretch to say that Tim Mann's and Susanne Friend's work stands at the very forefront of scientific and operational development of aquaponics techniques. From my perspective as an ocean scientist, their invaluable contribution to this technology will surely have a global impact.

I have known Susanne for only a much shorter period of time, but have come to understand the value of her contribution as well.

Further, Tim and Susanne have taken a critically valuable step: Teaching their techniques to others, through intensive seminars held in various places around the USA. Their focus on spreading the knowledge about this valuable technology will serve to propagate it rapidly throughout the world. Their techniques have already reached even China, where aquaponics farms are being built modeled on Tim and Susanne's designs.

I know Tim to be of uniquely caring character - caring about his family, his friends, the environment, and the global situation.

I believe the unique value of that the work of Tim and his family bring to the world should not be forestalled or interrupted by confining him or his wife Susanne to prison. In light of their practice of teaching about aquaponics in many places remote from their home, I would further urge that they not be restricted from traveling at will.

Respectfully yours,

Aloha,

  
**Peter Rosti**

RECEIVED  
4-30-14

190

January 20, 2014  
The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi  
c/o Phil Lowenthal  
33 Market Street, Suite 101  
Wailuku, Hawaii

Your Honor,

This letter is to let you know the good that Tim Mann, my son-in-law, is adding to this world. His aquaponics work is reaching most of the planet. Sincerely, the trainings he leads with my daughter, Susanne Friend, and manuals they have written together have taught many people all over the world to grow food. In growing food with aquaponics, less than two percent of the water is used, with plants growing twice as fast. You may have received letters of respect and support for him, from many places.

He is honest, and very hardworking. He keeps striving to show how to build aquaponics systems that are economical. His former business was drawing house plans for home builders. In their manuals, there are included detailed AutoCAD plans for building systems to provided fresh food.

He is the most focused person that I have ever met. He is very intelligent and diligent. He wants many to learn how to raise their own food, practically.

I am an elementary school teacher with a Masters Degree in English from the University of California, Long Beach. I taught 27 years in the California public school system. Additionally, I taught in American Schools overseas in Pakistan, India, Indonesia, China, Cameroon (West Africa), and Japan. I have been home-schooling my grandchildren for the past seven years. I have never committed a crime, not even a traffic ticket. I know that Susanne and Tim have great worth to the world, and are not a danger to society.

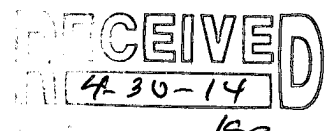
They made a terrible mistake that I know they will never make again, and they have been very open and honest in sharing this mistake with their students all over the world, to make sure no one makes the same mistake. Tim and Susanne will continue to do good work, and learn new ways to help many. They will never break the law again.

Please let them continue their work, out of prison. Tim loves his children, and is happy with his wife, and children, and even me, at 88 years of age.

Sincerely,



Isabelle Friend



January 20, 2014  
The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi  
c/o Phil Lowenthal  
33 Market Street, Suite 101  
Wailuku, Hawaii

Your Honor,

My name is Jack friend, I am twelve years old and I am the son of Tim Mann and Susanne Friend. They are the best parents in the whole world. They have told me that they made a mistake and it was the biggest mistake of their live, and that it will never happen again.

My life will not be the same without them I do not want my parents to go to prison.

I love them with all my heart. I love my mom for teaching me to always tell the truth no matter how hard it may be. I love my dad for always teaching me the things I need to know. He's taught me kendo, blacksmithing, and boat building. And they taught me aquaponics. I built my own system when I was nine, and I started growing food for my family.

My entire family plays, laughs, and go to the beach and we're always are there for each other and I hope that we will still be able to do all of those things together.

I go with my mom and dad to Buddhist retreats in Maui, with Uncle Alan, who used to be a Buddhist monk in Burma, and they take me and my brothers and sister to martial arts. We study aikido and jui jitsu, for over three years now. I have a yellow belt in jui jitsu, and a green belt in aikido.

Please do not put my mom and dad in prison. The world is a better place because of them and they will never do this ever again.

Sincerely,

Jack Friend

Jack Friend

RECEIVED  
4-20-14  
BO

Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi,

My name is Daniel Nolan and I have been an intern at Tim Mann and Susanne Friend's farm for the past three months. After I graduated college I wanted to start my own aquaponics farm and when I looked into getting certified organic I came across Friendly Aquaponics on the web. After doing some research I applied for their internship program. While applying for their program they let me know of their legal situations and the wrongs they have done and are in the process of paying for. After some consideration and looking at all the things they have accomplished in the realm of aquaponics I decided it would still benefit me greatly to do the internship even with the sentencing date looming in the future.

In these past three months I have gotten to know both Tim and Susanne rather well. Tim has been willing to help me through any questions I have and has mentored me on many things, like metal working and welding, after the work day is done. He is a very generous man with his knowledge and he has a lot to share. Susanne has been equally as generous with her gifts since I have been here. She is very loving and compassionate to her family and has extended this love to me since I've been in the house.

With the many talks I have had with them, both on how they came to try and grow marijuana to talks on life in general, it seems they are just as confused as I am how they once justified growing marijuana. It does not line up with any of the character traits I have seen shine through them and when they speak of their acts you can see their regret for putting their family and their accomplishments in such an undermined position. They have brought to light repercussions that actions like growing marijuana create that I never have even thought of.

Thank you for taking the time to read what I have witnessed with Tim Mann and Susanne Friend the past months.

Sincerely,

*Daniel Nolan*

Daniel Nolan  
Stone Aquaponics  
stonaquaponics@gmail.com

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4-30-14  
K

To Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi,

Your Honor, my name is Brandon Lorusso. I am 18 years old and this is my statement about Susanne Friend.

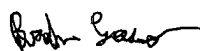
I've known Susanne and Tim for over 3 years. At first they were just Victor's mother and father who owned the big farm near Honoka'a, but as time went on Susanne decided that she liked me and offered me a job. Taking that job in July 2012 would lead to the best chain of events in my entire life. Susanne and Tim have both taught me so much, not just about Aquaponics and sustainable living. Susanne and Tim taught me how I can change the world with what I can do.

I'm currently living with Susanne and Tim and I am the farm manager. I clearly see their vision. Aquaponics is currently the most sustainable method of food production the planet has and the world-wide community needs to embrace sustainable and ecofriendly living.

I see how many good deeds Susanne and Tim do every day, in my own personal life and for people worldwide. To put either one of them in jail would be detrimental to society, for all forward motion on the farm would stop and it would become my full time job to keep the household up and take care of Susanne and Tim's 3 children and Susanne's 88 year old mother with the help of Victor (her 18 year old son).

Susanne and Tim say all the time how breaking the law was a huge mistake and that they will never do it again. And with everything that Susanne and Tim have taught me about honesty and integrity, I truly believe them. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Aloha,



Brandon Lorusso

brandonlorusso@gmail.com

(808) - 937-9426

RECEIVED  
4-30-14



26 January, 2014

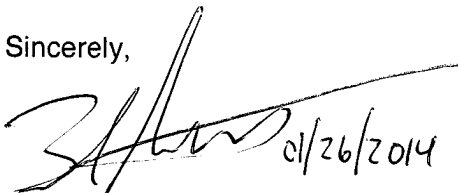
The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi,

My name is Zachary Smith (26 years of age) and I am currently and intern at Friendly Aquaponics. Prior to my arrival five months ago I was a government contractor doing Information Technology (IT) Architecture that required certain government/military clearance in order to complete my work. As of today I have an active Secret/Top Secret/Secured Compartmentalized Information (SCI) clearance. After graduating college I started working as a junior architecture analyst moving my way up until I became a senior architect with a workload spread over many different military projects. After three years it was time to start something else that I deemed more beneficial to my time and the world around me. This lead me to Friendly Aquaponics a company ran by Susanne Friend and Tim Mann.

I first spoke with Susanne over the internet exchanging emails about the internship program and what would be required of me if I choose to participate. After a few emails she informed me about their Federal Indictment and how her and her husband Tim might have to spend time in jail for their actions. At first I was surprised that someone I haven't even met in real life was so forthcoming about their personal life and issues at hand. Very few people these days are so honest with complete strangers. This made me want to learn from Tim and Susanne even more. Openness and honesty are traits that I look for when I want to learn something from somebody. They will give you the knowledge or answers to your questions straight up no matter how ugly the answers might be.

Once I met Tim and Susanne in person I could tell from the very beginning how much changing the world means to both of them. The stories and the lessons I have learned since then have changed my life for the betterment of myself and society. This doesn't even include the wealth of knowledge they have instilled in me about aquaponics. Teaching people how to feed themselves, at least to me is one of the greatest life lessons someone could learn as they journey through life and they teach this on a daily basis to me and people all over the world. Great teachers are very few and far between and I consider myself extremely lucky that I get to live with and learn from not one but two of the better educators of my time on a daily basis. The world we live in is truly a better place because of them and their unselfish hard work approach when it comes to teaching other people.

Sincerely,



01/26/2014

Zachary Smith

RECEIVED  
4-30-14  
K2

April 29, 2014  
The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi  
c/o Phil Lowenthal  
33 Market Street, Suite 101  
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

Dear Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi,

My name is Victor Friend I am 18 years old and Susanne Friend and Tim Mann are my parents. They are good people who made a terrible decision that has been felt throughout our family with severity. My parents have helped me with everything I have ever done, supporting me in working in Alaska and San Francisco. I could have done none of this without the love and succor of my Mother and Father.

My parents have done so much good in this world teaching people how to grow food for themselves and how to live healthier lives because of it. They have impacted the Hawaii community with the involvement of people who truly care with Aquaponics technology. They have changed lives with their actions, one of my best friends Angelo Gonzalez attempted suicide twice in January and his family did nothing about it. My parents offered Angelo to live with us, and to take him to therapy, and support him when others would not, all of which has happened.

My Mother and Father are the best people I know and I love them with all of my heart. Please do not send them to federal prison. They will never break the law again.

*Victor friend*

Victor Friend  
victor@hawaiiantel.net  
(808)937-6998

RECEIVED  
4-30-14

150

To: The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi  
RE: Tim Mann and Susanne Friend  
DATE: 1/21/2014  
FROM: Yana West  
41633 Canal Road, Ronan MT, 59864  
(703) 626-5987

My name is Yana West and I am the founder of the 501.c3 non-profit corporation, Food Freedom International, an organic farmer, and specialist in early childhood education. Food Freedom International and its mission to support local, sustainable, and community based food security would not have been possible without the generosity, time, and expertise of Tim & Susanne.

In the short time that I have known Tim & Susanne I have come to trust, admire, and respect them as incredibly generous and caring people who are very quick, perhaps too quick, to place their trust in individuals they believe have their best interest at heart. This may be simultaneously their most admirable, and largest failing, as individuals, because placing their trust in those with less honorable, and selfish, motivations led them to make a terrible mistake in cultivating Marijuana.

To their credit Tim & Susanne have been completely forthright and honest with me regarding their legal troubles, the magnitude of their mistake, and ultimately their culpability in making a choice to break the law. In my psychology education we were taught that there are 2 basic personality types when dealing with aberrant behavior, those who make mistakes, blame others, and continue to repeat the same anti-social patterns, and individuals such as Tim & Susanne who make mistakes, analyze their own failings, learn from them, and never repeat offend.

Your Honor in coming to know and love Tim & Susanne it has become apparent to me that they fully accept responsibility for their behavior and its consequences. They have dedicated themselves to helping others and have spent considerable time and effort to this end and I am confident that if they are given a chance to remain free from incarceration they will continue to make substantial material contributions to society through our non-profit, their own educational mission, and continued development of their Aquaponic food production technologies.

Respectfully,

Yana West



1/21/2014

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4-30-14

RO

**The Organic View™**  
*...educating the world, two ears at a time!*

January 27, 2014

To The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi:

My name is June Stoyer. I am the Executive Producer of The Organic View Radio Show which is an internet based educational program featuring industry experts and scientists and explores topics based upon the environment, renewable energy, and well-being. The show has a global audience of over three million listeners and has featured some of the world's most renowned scientists, educators and leaders.

I first connected with Susanne Friend and Tim Mann because of several recommendations from my audience who felt that their approach to aquaponics was unique because they gave so much information and instruction to their students. Many people who talk about aquaponics simply seek a platform to sell equipment that they manufacture or sell.

Although aquaponics is not a new method for growing food, over the last few years, many people are exploring this method as an option due to limited resources for growing clean, healthy food. If you would like to listen to the interview, you may do so by visiting:

<http://www.theorganicview.com/environment/concerned-about-unfriendly-gmos-try-friendly-aquaponics/>  
The article for the interview received over 3,000 retweets on twitter, which is very good, considering that the average article for most websites receives under 50. My listeners were genuinely interested in the advice that Susanne and Tim offered. They clearly are very good mentors as far as helping people learn.

Susanne and Tim informed me of the legal issue that they were dealing with because of a mistake they made when using aquaponics to grow marijuana. They made it a point to also tell people who were interested in learning about aquaponics that this was not something they should ever do. It is my opinion that when someone makes a huge mistake and then uses that mistake to prevent others from suffering the same consequences, that is valuable contribution to society. Please bear in mind that I do not use drugs nor approve of them for recreational means and am also a law abiding citizen. I have devoted my life to public service and am very involved in the betterment of society, especially through education which I believe can result in a more productive, peaceful society. As a role model, I take my responsibility quite seriously and try to be a good person for young people to look up to. I feel that when someone makes a grave mistake and has shown remorse, not by simple words but by multiple and various actions, this person has proven his or her worth as someone capable of contributing to society instead of becoming an appendage. I therefore ask that if it is indeed possible that the court show mercy on Susanne and Tim by issuing a punishment that would allow for their sentence to benefit society in a way that their skills as educators can further contribute to society instead of being a drain on the court system.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 917-740-8439 or you may email me at [info@theorganicview.com](mailto:info@theorganicview.com)

Sincerely,

June Stoyer



RECEIVED  
4-30-14  
10 -

1/28/14

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi  
c/o Phil Lowenthal  
33 Market Street, Suite 101  
Wailuku, Hawaii

To The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi,

My name is Case Glascock, I am a high-school graduate who is currently staying at home taking care of my 87 year old grandmother with dementia. I've known Susanne and Tim for thirteen years of my life and have never --and I suspect that I will never-- meet a more accepting or kind family.

I know Susanne and Tim because of their son, Victor. I befriended Victor in kindergarten and have been part of his family since. Susanne has something of what can best be described as a child adoption addiction, what I mean by that is that she is the hanai mother of more kids than I can count on both my hands.

Susanne hasn't ever tried to keep her mistakes to herself, especially the mistake that lead to me writing this letter. Instead, she learns from her mistakes and passes on the knowledge. She is a wellspring of all types of advice, often helping people through times of extreme personal strife. Earning her the title: "The Conductor of the Feel Train".

Susanne is an extremely loving person, always seeing the good and potential in people even when that good or potential is invisible to the person in question and because of his personality has helped save the life of one of my good friends, Angelo Gonzales. Tim is the little genius engine that does. This man is the hardest worker I have ever met and does his best as a father. As I am typing this letter Tim is off island on the mainland working to support his family. Tim built the house, aquaponic system, and countless other things for this family.

I understand that being good person doesn't cut one loose from the crimes that one has committed and I am sure that the Friends understand that. The Friend family has come to terms with their actions and I believe that should count for something. Please feel free to call me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Case Glascock  
O'okala, HI  
(808)333-2381



RECEIVED  
4-30-14  
1012

January 24, 2014

To: The Honorable Judge Leslie Koybayashi,

I am writing on behalf of Tim Mann and Suzanne Friend. I have known both of these individuals through their aquaponic farming efforts and as extremely involved and supportive family members of Suzanne's mother Isabel.

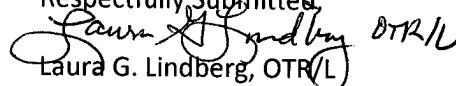
I am an Occupational Therapist at North Hawaii Community Hospital and treated Suzanne's 88 year old mother in 2010. Whenever I prescribed a home exercise program to further her injury recovery, the entire family (4 children), organized by Tim and Suzanne, took turns going through her exercises and massage with her. When something needed to be fabricated to promote her range of motion, Tim made it as soon as requested. They are a respectful couple who value family teamwork and the family unit.

During these therapy sessions, I was able to talk with Suzanne about their aquaponics farming and later learned more as I toured the farm and on occasion have discussed the farming process with Tim and Suzanne. They are passionate about their farming and being able to promote a healthy technique to raise good food in a small space for many people both locally and globally.

Since their arrest, Tim and Suzanne have been putting their entire beings into raising their family, teaching others about their farming techniques and giving back to their Hamakua community. They acknowledge they made a very big mistake and realize they were going down the wrong path. Recently I was talking with Suzanne and she related how much of a gift this terrible experience has actually been. She and Tim have been able to see with clarity how very much they wish to teach others about aquaponic techniques, give to their community and society. I have witnessed their ability to turn "lemons into lemonade" with very stressful events unfolding. They are committed to promoting aquaponics farming techniques, committed to raising their family and committed to their community. I believe they will not repeat the behavior that led to their arrest.

Tim and Suzanne are extremely hard working, strongly committed to family, are good parents and children/caregivers to Isabel, Suzanne's mom. They are enthusiastic teachers who fervently wish to help the community with farming needs. They have opened their home and helped me with home planting when I have needed their expertise. I have seen them go above and beyond for friends with health problems. I support how they have turned their lives in very positive directions in spite of many stressors during the past several years. They are on a good and positive path. I encourage you to consider their positive direction when considering their case.

Respectfully Submitted,

 DTR/L  
Laura G. Lindberg, OTR/L

RECEIVED  
4-30-14  
K

January 23, 2014

Your Honor Judge Kobayshi,

My name is Rose Friend. I am eight years old. I love my parent's more than ANYTHING in the galaxy and I want them to stay out of prison. My Mother helps me in my hard times. I love her. My Father is so silly and makes me laugh. I love him, too. Without them I could not live to laugh or smile. They told me that what they did was very wrong, and that they would never do that again and they would never lie to me again. The only time my Mother ever lied to me was when I was four years old and she told me that the bad plants were lilikoi plants. I understand that she was trying to protect me, but it still hurts me that she lied to me. I love them and they are good people that made a very bad mistake.

Please Antie don't put my parent's in prison. They will NEVER EVER do anything like they did before again.

Sincerely,

Rose Friend.

*Rose Friend*

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4-30-14

*RD*

3/11/2014

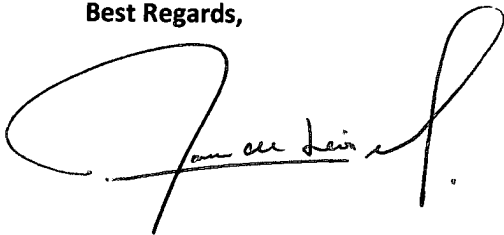
Paul Ponce de Leon  
6 Nightingale Cres  
Whitby, Ontario L1M0H2  
Canada

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

**Hello Judge**

My name is Paul Ponce de Leon, I live in Toronto Canada. I'm the Regional Sales Manager for a wide printer manufacturer from the USA. I have been working with Tim for over 5 months now on what I think is an amazing way to feed people and also be a productive member in society. Tim has taken the time to show me ways in which I can produce amazing quality produce and be able to feed my family, friends and also make a profit. It is because of his help that I will be setting up a commercial aquaponics business here in Canada. I believe he made a mistake and he has admitted to making this mistake, we all do at one point or another. I simply think Tim and Susanne would do more good teaching and helping people how to be successful and become a productive citizen in society than being inside an institution wasting time and a knowledge/experience that few have. I have a family which I adore and being with Tim in the course for a week gave me the sense that his family is the most important part of his life. I don't agree with what he did and yes I did ask him about it and his answer to me was, "We made a mistake". We all have ways that we can improve our lives and Tim certainly has a gift when it comes to Aquaponics and I would love to see it shared. Thank you very much for taking the time to read my letter and if you have any questions please let me know and I would be glad to answer them

**Best Regards,**

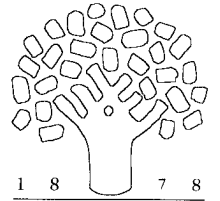
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Ponce de Leon". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "P" and a long, horizontal stroke.

Paul Ponce de Leon

RECEIVED  
MAR 24 2014



# Ethical Culture Fieldston School



ETHICAL CULTURE  
FIELDSTON LOWER  
FIELDSTON MIDDLE  
FIELDSTON UPPER

FIELDSTON LOWER

February 7th, 2014

To: The Honorable Judge Leslie Koybayashi

I have known Tim and Susanne Friend through their advocacy work with Aquaponics for a number of years. I have eagerly followed their informational postings and have been consistently impressed with their level of care and concern that the information is helpful and useful. They have taken the time to share their learning curve with people they have never met in the hopes that they (we) can learn from their mistakes and be successful at Aquaponics. It was a surprise, then, when I learned of their legal difficulties.

I am not at all condoning what they did in growing a plant that is currently illegal, but I feel compelled to write that I have no doubt about their integrity and character as individuals. These are not people with ongoing criminal tendencies or people who disrespect law enforcement, but they clearly got themselves into a predicament they will never repeat.

I urge you to make your judgement on the gifts they have given to the growing number of people who are taking control of their own food production through the emerging science of Aquaponics, and allow Tim and Susanne to continue their work in the field. They are leaders in this industry, and if they are prevented from their work it will be a loss to a great many.

Respectfully yours,

*Blake Rowe*

Blake Rowe

Faculty, Music Dept.

Ethical Culture Fieldston School



March 5, 2014

TO: The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

Dear Judge Kobayashi,

My name is Debbie Love from Maysville, GA. My family and I own and operate a working farm as well as own and operate a bowling and family entertainment center in Gainesville, GA. My husband and I have been married twenty-three years and we have four children and one grandchild of which three of our children are internationally adopted. All of our children work in our family businesses. I am also a youth basketball coach and a worship leader at our Baptist church.

I am writing this letter to you on behalf of my friend and also mentor in our aquaponics business, Tim Mann. I have known Tim personally for about six months, but I have followed his and his wife, Susanne Friend's teachings and selfless service to this amazing field of being able to grow healthy, nourishing, safe, delicious food for my family, friends, church, and customers for several years. I was originally introduced to them a little over two years ago through word of mouth that was extremely favorable about their work and success in commercial aquaponics. At that time, I had just returned from attending an aquaponics seminar that was considered the best of the best with the "father of aquaponics", Dr. James Rakocy, as the head instructor. We had been searching for a farming business to replace our poultry farm operation which had been closed due to our integrator, Pilgrim's Pride, Inc, filing bankruptcy and cutting us out as a grower. After a tremendous amount of research, we decided that we could convert our now vacant poultry houses into an amazing aquaponics business. This is why I went to the course mentioned earlier to learn how to get started. Much to my disappointment, the seminar was so very scientific and overwhelming and costly to get started in, it wasn't realistic for us to do. It is at that point that I found Tim Mann and Susanne Friend and Friendly Aquaponics. The more I studied them and read their FREE newsletters and information, my hope was rekindled that this really was a doable venture for us. When I found out that Tim Mann was going to have a five day intensive workshop in Tennessee, I immediately made plans to attend.

It was at this point that I got to know Tim Mann on a personal basis. I began to converse with him through emails and then got to know him and became friends with him at the Tennessee workshop. I along with some really nice, great people met, talked, and learned with Tim for an entire week. He is amazing. He is kind, soft-spoken, incredibly intelligent, honest, and genuine. He genuinely cared and wanted to help every person there specifically and individually. Even when some people would sort of be irritating in their redundant or off subject questions, Tim was so thoughtful and helpful because he knew that every person there had a passion to learn aquaponics and the knowledge to successfully do it for our families and businesses. All of his hard earned knowledge he shared generously, always taking however long each person needed for their specific purposes. He genuinely cares about us and the world and our future food supply. He and Susanne give their hearts, knowledge, and time to help spread the great news and value of aquaponics for our world's future, and they continually reiterate to teach and share with everyone who is interested to help others. I have never run across any people in business that were so passionate and free with their knowledge as Tim and Susanne.

Do you remember I mentioned our vacant four poultry houses that started our search in this aquaponics direction? At the other workshop that I attended, I left feeling hopeless and helpless for many reasons. After finishing my training with Tim Mann, I understand exactly what to do and how to do it. He took a whole section out of our training one today to actually draw out on paper retrofitting our four empty poultry houses to convert into commercial aquaponics greenhouses. That is how much he cares. That was just for me. No one else there had empty poultry houses. That turned my family's financial future around and at a cost and level that we can do. Now we are going to have fantastic produce for our family, for the needy in our church, and to sell to the public year round. We don't have year round fresh, delicious produce even here in Georgia. We are taking Tim and Susanne's call to share the knowledge by making plans to do tours for area schools and offer to help them set up their own small aquaponics system to teach students to do this for their families. We are also planning to build a small system for our church to offer fresh produce to the needy and homeless families in our area. This is what Tim and Susanne teach. Share and help and everyone can benefit.

## LOVE FARMS

375 Dixon Bridge Road  
Maysville, GA 30558  
706-652-3408 office

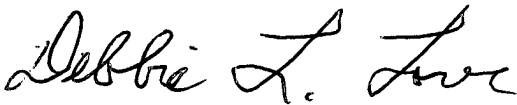
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I do want you to know that I am aware of the mistake Tim and Susanne made several years ago, foolishly agreeing to grow marijuana. Tim and Susanne made this known almost in the very first letter I ever read from them. They also tell everyone at their workshops the whole story. They are embarrassed and ashamed of what they did. If we live long enough, we all make many, many mistakes, and some are much worse than others, but I believe that Tim and Susanne have committed their lives to doing good by sharing and teaching aquaponics. Sometimes in rare instances, even when a crime is committed, the guilty can actually repay their debt to society by doing something great for society that will benefit an infinite number of people by giving back in help and knowledge rather than unproductive time spent incarcerated. I know it is against the law to grow marijuana, and I am in support of that. I know that they have to answer for their transgressions.

My humble plea to you for them and for the many that depend upon them for lifelong support and questions to continue our participation in aquaponics, and for the many, many thousands more that could benefit from their wonderful knowledge and willingness to share so freely the benefits of feeding our families and our world, is to have mercy and leniency on Tim Mann and Susanne Friend in their punishment for their crime as much as the law will allow. Please allow them to continue the good work that they have been doing the last five years rather than incarceration for the good of man, and we as their friends and students, will also be able to multiply their good works and teach others the many, many good things that they have shared and blessed with me and so many others.

Thank you for your time, Your Honor, and for your willingness to consider my plea for leniency for Tim Mann and Susanne Friend not just for them, but for the many people they can help with their knowledge to feed the world. We have been blessed beyond measure by knowing them, and it is my sincerest prayer and hope that they will be able to continue helping others as they have helped us and so many more do something that is truly good.

Respectfully and sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Debbie L. Love". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the typed name.

Debbie L. Love

375 Dixon Bridge Road

Maysville, GA 30558

706-652-3408

Monday, March 3, 2014

Jamie Romani & Brian Haentze  
414 Carpenters Cove Lane  
Downingtown, Pa. 19335

To The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi,

I felt the need to write this letter due to our recent experience with Tim Mann and Suzanne Friend. My husband Brian Haentze and myself had the opportunity to meet Tim while he was teaching a Friendly Aquaponics class held from January 24, to January 28, 2014 in Fayetteville TN. Thanks to Tim, his experience ,knowledge and dedication to making a difference in the world of Aquaponics we have found our next profession.

Tim gave both of us the knowledge and the tools we needed to make our dream of a commercial aquaponics farm viable. He and Suzanne have been available for support and guidance via email 24-7 offering us their opinion on the plans that we sent to them for the design to the amount of growing space we should have on our farm. I have never experienced a teacher and his supportive wife who are so dedicated to making a difference in the world of aquaponics, farming and energy conversation.

My husband is self-employed, owning a landscaping company which is on his parent's fifteen acre farm, and I am a Buyer for The Philadelphia Inquirer. One day in the near future we were hoping to go into business together putting to use the fifteen acres of farm land that has been sitting there for years unused. We can now start an Aquaponics business knowing that we have Tim Mann and Suzanne Friend there helping us every step of the way, to make sure that we become successful.

The only thing that has put a damper on our success is the fact that Tim and Suzanne made a very bad decision growing an illegal crop, which has come back to haunt them with legal problems. We feel like we finally made the right decision and are moving forward with our aquaponic farm but may lose the support that we are and have been receiving from both of them. It's almost like we are losing our "lifeline" and has made both of us feel a bit lost.

It's sad to say that Tim and Suzanne will not be the only ones paying for their mistake, we and the rest of the students who were fortune enough to have taken the Friendly Aquaponics class in TN will be suffering as well if indeed your verdict does not come out in their favor. I hope that is not the case as both Tim and Suzanne have become irreplaceable to MANY of us.

I do hope that this is taken in to consideration when making your final decision.

Regards,  
  
Jamie Romani and Brian Haentze



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February 27, 2014

Dear Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi,

My name is Troy Holmberg. I am the director of Engineering Good at a multi-million dollar manufacturing company on the mainland. I am a father of 5 children and travel all around the world in my capacity here at US Synthetic to improve lives through our company and foundation. One of our focuses has been creating sustainable employment and self-reliance in Kenya, particularly with food security and housing. This focus was the reason I became acquainted with Tim Mann and Susanne Friend of Friendly Aquaponics. A couple of us from US Synthetic attended a week-long training with Tim and Susanne at their family farm in Honoka'a last year. Our purpose was to learn about Aquaponics as both a business opportunity as well as a way to build individual food security for the rural people of Kenya. We found the training very enlightening and helpful and we were very impressed with both Tim and Susanne with what they have built and their ability to teach and share this method with others around the world. I admit I have only known them for a short while and in a limited capacity, but I got to know their family and got a good sense for who they are as people and as parents and as responsible citizens in the community and the world.

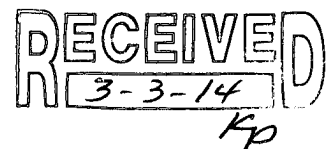
I understand that they are in very difficult circumstances based on their past dealings on the farm with illegal growing of marijuana. I have to tell you that in the training session we had they were very forthcoming about their past history and the mistakes they had made. They expressed remorse for their actions and regretted their poor decisions of the past. But I believe they were determined to move forward and learn from their mistakes and try to make a positive impact on society. Since that time they have done so. Their system is very unique and has potential to revolutionize food security in countries like Kenya. They are dedicated to their vision and to their family and creating a system for anyone to grow nutritious, organic and healthy foods so that families can become more self-reliant. That is important here at home or across the world. I felt Tim and Susanne's dedication and passion for their work and could see they cared deeply about their family and the earth. They deserve to make amends for the mistakes they have made. They were certainly inexcusable and frankly very poor decisions to make at the time. They should not be let off the hook but I think it would be a mistake and very unfortunate if they were not allowed to continue in the work they are doing now, and I believe it would be a tremendous detriment to their children. Tim is a hard-working, very bright person with great engineering instincts. Susanne is intelligent, warm, caring and passionate. It would be a disservice to the community to have them serving time. I hope my letter has been helpful in providing some insights from my perspective.

Thank you for your time,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Troy Holmberg", with a long, sweeping underline.

Troy Holmberg

Director Engineering Good



January 2014

Dear The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi,

My name is Alexandra Marino, and I am currently a graduate student attending St. Georges University in Grenada, West Indies. I am studying Public Health with a specialty in Environmental Health. I have known both Susanne Friend and Tim Mann since 2010. So it has been almost four years of friendship.

I came to their family's farm in the summer of 2010 for an internship in Aquaponics and to learn more about sustainable farming. When I had the opportunity to go I didn't hesitate and immediately booked a flight from NY where I am from to the Big Island of Hawai'i. That internship ended up having an everlasting impact on my life thus far and being unforgettable! They took me and a few other interns in with warmth. We all immediately bonded with their four amazing children. They are all smart and have so much personality it's hard not to fall in love with these children. Susanne and Tim were able to teach us so much about the aquaponics system and still include their children in the learning and to parent and provide not just the necessities but experiences and good times for their children while I stayed in their home.

Even though I had a lot of fun in Hawai'i I learned so much. It basically was the beginning steps that led me to where I am today...getting my masters in Public Health. I saw how fresh food could be grown in a sustainable manner for a community. Susanne and Tim taught us not just how to grow food but the inner mechanics and how to have a successful system. While there we visited many other people's homes on the island that started their own system due to Susanne and Tim's workshops. So we saw how it can work small scale for a family's needs, and how it can work large scale to make a profit for a family and sell locally for fresh food with no worries of harmful chemicals being added to the food. This is one of my main aims with public health and I am doing a presentation on Aquaponics for a convention in March for international visitors, and this topic is only known to me because of the experience I gained on the farm!

While staying with Susanne and Tim they were very honest to us interns about their legal issues. We had many group talks at night about this, they wanted to teach us about making mistakes and about correcting them. Susanne is a very honest person with a lot of passion and integrity and love for her work, children, husband, and family. This is why I believe once she realized what she did wrong and that's not the path she wanted to lead her family she was able to fully admit her wrong doing and is ready to move on positively. Tim is a very gentle, talented hand crafter, and thoughtful man. He wants nothing more than to correct his mistakes and continue his goal of always improving an aquaponics system, for more affective growing of food, and using sustainable methods so it can be brought any where in the world.

So all in all I fully support Susanne Friend and Tim Mann. I believe they have paid the consequence and will for a long time internally and socially. Anything more will just set back their impact they are having globally on cleaner and sustainable methods of growing food for humans. I know there is lots of potential for their future and I truly hope to work with them again in the future!

With great sincerity,



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January 29, 2014


The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

I met Susanne Friend when she moved to Portland Oregon in the early 1990s. She was an active member in the Portland Macintosh Users Group for about three years. She helped with our monthly newsletter, and our twice a year weekend retreat for learning about Macintosh computers and applications. During that time, we also spent time on weekends getting together for dinner or shopping or computer games.

Susanne is creative and outgoing. We did not stay in close contact after she moved to Hawaii, but I have heard about the development and growth of the aquaponics business. It took a lot of research and hard work for that to support their family. I am glad that she has been able to share that knowledge with other people.

I hope that you see that she and Tim have learned from this experience and that you will allow them to stay at home with their children.

Sincerely,



Janet DeVore  
14967 NW Farmstead Court  
Beaverton OR 97006

503-641-4510

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February 9, 2014

To the Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi:

My name is Mitchell S. Okuma and I am writing on behalf of Susanne Friend and Tim Mann requesting leniency in their upcoming hearing on February 13.

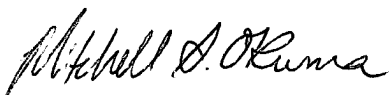
I am a Academic Specialist working at the Hawaii Community College. I only met Tim and Susanne through their work in aquaponics last year. I was planning on working on their farm to learn more about aquaponics prior to getting my job at Hawaii Community College. When Hawaii Community College hired me, I cancelled my intent to be an "intern" on their farm.

I spent a lot of time reading about them, their family, and their business online <http://www.friendlyaquaponics.com/about-us/>. I even attended one of their Farm tours.

I was not aware of their initial support and association with the Hawaii Cannabis. Ministry. But they seemed to have a strong desire to promote their aquaponics ideas for sustainability to grow food for their family and as a business. At no time did they promote to me the cultivation of cannabis as a means of income or consumption.

They have recently advised me of what has brought them to your attention and do confess that they were in error. Please have leniency in determining their punishment. They seemed to me to be a struggling farming family with high ideals in promoting sustainability via aquaponics and not drug production or it's distribution.

Sincerely,



Mitchell S. Okuma

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Scott Granan  
32 Ahles Circle  
Hyde Park N.Y. 12538

February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2014

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi,

Your honor, I am writing to you today on behalf of Susanne Friend and Tim Mann. I must say, that I have never done this for anyone in the past. In this particular case I do have to make an exception.

I have been a subscriber to their "Friendly Aquaponics" news letter for the last year or so. I chose to patronize their business above all others because of their approach to this growing method and because of our shared values of personal reliance, independence and food security. I also liked the fact that their business is a family run operation in the largest sense of the word. For Tim and Susanne family extends to their employees, interns and seminar students.

Last June I was lucky enough to attend their "Commercial Aquaponics" seminar in New York City. The class was comprised of individuals with exceptionally diverse backgrounds. From retired military to former Wall Street financier to inner city activists. We each took turns in front of the class introducing our selves. When it was my turn, I minimized my background introducing myself as a traditional farmer. While that is true, I did not go into any details of my day job in law enforcement or my past Army Special Forces background. At the time, I didn't see the need. So in addition to my small scale farming operation in New York, I am a police sergeant with the Briarcliff Manor Police. I have worked in law enforcement for 25 years. During my career, I have worked as a drug task force agent for the local district attorney's office as well as a narcotics investigator. During the seminar, I was impressed that Tim and Susanne were candid about their legal problems. They accepted responsibility for their mistake and made it quite clear to the class that aquaponics was not for marijuana production.

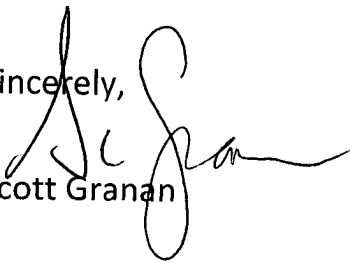
Through their work at Friendly Aquaponics, Tim and Susanne are doing a lot of good for their community. I would estimate that 2/3 of our "Commercial

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Aquaponics” class was from the inner city. Imagine that, teaching people to grow their own food in the middle of New York City. What a novel idea. I have no reservation that given the opportunity, they will continue making a positive impact through their website and with their seminars. I would respectfully request that the court consider supervised release so that their work will be able to continue.

Sincerely,

Scott Granan

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Scott Granan', written over the printed name.

40D Belcher's Hill  
9 Rock Hill Street  
Hong Kong.

Dear Honorable Judge Leslie Koybayashi,

Re: Case of Tim Mann and Susanne Friend

My name is Angela Chan and I am a diving instructor and a guest house developer in the Maldives. I found out about Tim and Susanne's situation and hope that this letter would give you more information on the two of them.

I have come to learn about Tim Mann and Susanne Friend in September 2012: Mid August 2012, I stumbled upon a link to Friendly Aquaponics. The information on the website not only aroused my interest in this technology, but the clarity and willingness to share their skills led me to the decision to fly all the way from the Far East, namely Hong Kong, to Big Island, Hawaii; to stay there for 10 days and to do all the courses they offered end of August to early September.

I signed up for all the 3 courses they had at that time: 1 day Commercial Aquaponics training; 1 day Commercial Aquaponics Solar Green House training and 2 days private Aquaponics Technology training. As I was late for the intro course to aquaponics, I had to take private lessons from Tim and Susanne.

Tim and Susanne were both very understanding and supportive of my endeavours. Having lived in the Maldives for over 10 years, I saw and experienced first hand the difficulties in finding fresh, quality produce. I saw this to be a good opportunity to provide cheaper alternatives for the islanders, for myself and for my guests.

Since I would miss the group training on Aquaponics Technology, I read their Table Top system workbook from cover to cover. Even though the 1 day Commercial Training was my first class, I was amazed at the knowledge they have meticulously listed out in their workbooks as I had no problems understanding any of the topics they were covering: they have poured out into the notes what they had learned in aquaponics, the do's, don't's and the don't try's.

When I first met Tim and Susanne in the Commercial Aquaponics Training class, I was struck by their friendliness, their knowledge and the way they made a technical subject easy. They were considerate in all aspects of the course that they even tried out different methods in building the solar green house. Susanne did all the research in complying to the food industry standards and Tim made certain that all materials and structure met building requirements and were economically feasible and sound.

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During class, they made sure that I was following them and that I was not too tired due to jetlag. Their children Rose and Jack were helpful and welcoming: that tells you a lot about their parents.

I was fortunate that I missed the group training on Aquaponics Technology. The Maldives is like no other places on earth: the country is made of 1,120 tiny islands in the middle of the vast Indian Ocean. They rely only on rain water for consumption purposes and ground water is merely good for cleaning and washing as the salt content is too high for aquaponics or even drinking. With all these constraints to deal with, I was happy that I chose Friendly Aquaponics as my trainer. Tim not only answered all my questions, but he also anticipated the difficulties which I might have in implementation. He kept nothing for himself and suggested that I, being in a salt water environment, should try growing seaweed, which is healthier and in big demand. Seaweed cultivation was completely new to them but Susanne, a fast learner and excellent researcher, offered their unlimited support and help in my venturing into this new technology.

Seeing the inquisitive nature and their readiness to help others, I understand how they got involved in the problems they are facing right now. They have written me about their situation in detail and realized how and where things went wrong. They cannot but blame themselves for the decision they have made, but the worse was setting a wrong example for their children. They deeply regretted the outcome but life must go on especially when they have dependents and a large aquaponics community - or I should better use the word family - to tend to. Tim and Susanne gave their all to the students and trainees.

Your Honor, I do understand the gravity of the case and that everyone should take responsibility of their own actions. However, I do hope that you would take into consideration their efforts and contributions to the aquaponics industry. Without their untiring pursuit and their generosity in sharing their findings, our careers in this new technology might not have even realized!

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Angela Chan', with a stylized, flowing script.

Angela Chan  
February 8, 2014.

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

Your honor, you have the solemn duty to deliver a verdict on a case affecting a couple that has become very dear to my dreams, Tim and Susanne Mann. As you consider and weigh the issue before you regarding their cases, I wish to humbly share with you what this couple means to me and why I am pleading with you to consider imposing a non-custodial sentence on them (if the law provides you with such an option) instead of sending them to jail

First, let me introduce myself. I am also a law abiding person. I am 51 years of age, married for 24 years and have 4 children, 3 boys and 1 girl. I was born and raised in Africa, but have lived and worked in the USA the last 18 years. Currently, I work in a bank in as a Vice President responsible for monitoring online and mobile customer experiences to ensure we can provide them with the very best banking experience possible. As a young boy growing up in Africa's country side, my parents were farmers. My father was also an agricultural officer responsible for teaching other farmers good agricultural husbandry methods immediately after Kenya's independence. It is that type of a rural farming childhood that bequeathed me with a love for farming and eating fresh well grown food. It also made me keenly aware that the role of farming educators like Tim and Susanne play is critical in families and entire communities overall improvement food security. It may mean whether a family will have food and live or none and starve to death; whether a family will harvest a crop and live peacefully with its neighbors or fight to death for the few crumbs of bread available. A family with the knowledge and technology that Tim and Susanne advances and shares have a better chance to come on the right side of these two vastly different possibilities. As a young boy, I lived with my late dad in an small urban settings for 2 years. I joined the wrong crowd and was smoking cigarettes at a tender age of 12. I failed my elementary exams twice. I learned my mistakes through a lot of pain and turned the corner. 4 years later, I passed my secondary school exams with distinction, was admitted to a premier new school started by Kenya's 2<sup>nd</sup> President. I proceeded to university and graduated with upper 2<sup>nd</sup> class honors in Economics, Statistics and Computer Science. I quit smoking and never did any drugs. The turning point for my life was a father who never gave up on me and a teacher who gave me a second chance. I pray you do the same for Tim and Susanne. They have learnt their lesson of their stupid action; please give them a chance to proof it

In late 2006, I had just returned to USA after my mother's funeral in Kenya. While grieving her loss – I read a story from our local newspaper, the Winston Salem Journal, about water-based, soilless farming method known as hydroponics. This farming required no weeding which is a major activity and concern for crop farmers. I visited the featured local farmer and was thrilled to find how it is done. However, I found it is difficult for hydroponics farming to to be scaled downwards to a family size or horizontally to adapt in poor country like Kenya with minimal technological footprint. It is the search for an alternative soilless farming that led me to "meet" Tim and Susanne in the internet, and later in person in Tennessee in 2012. After reading and comparing hundreds of articles in the internet, I found they had done the best adaption of Aquaponics. They had come up with solutions would for useful to me here in USA and to poor uneducated poor farmers back in Kenya. They had developed a scalable and adaptable fish-based soilless farming technology known as Aquaponics. However, as I read some of Aquaponics articles and comments from the Aquaponics farming community, I started picking comments Tim and Susanne had been indicted on a "pot" related case. Initially, I thought it was a "smear campaign" from their competitors, but later confirmed that they had indeed broken the law. I also noticed that this couple was deliberately and actively dissuading others reading their newsletters from trying to grow "pot" in Aquaponics. Their response to their mistake and legal predicament was to do all in their power to ensure society have less of their shortcomings and pain; and more of what makes them so special to me and others

In 2011, I wrote my first email to Tim and Susanne. I was inquiring whether they had scheduled any Aquaponics greenhouse training in mainland USA. Susanne replied, and in the process of discussing the mainland training schedule, volunteered the information that they had pending federal case related to growing "pot" – and that its outcome had introduced some uncertainty on their training planning and scheduling. Susanne was very candid about their crime, the prevailing circumstances and most importantly, that they both took responsibility for their actions, they were very sorry and regretted their stupid dumb actions. I expressed my strong disappointment. My hope and prayer is, if the law provides for a non-custodial sentence, that you will consider impose such a sentence to them instead of sending them to jail. I believe they have accepted made a mistake, they have apologized and have undertaken to never again violate the laws of the land. My hope and believe is the society will be better served with them being out of jail and warning others and teaching so many others to do the right farming, than with them serving their time in jail.

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2-10-14

In 2012, Randy Campbell hosted Friendly Aquaponic's first Aquaponics solar greenhouse training in Tennessee. Tim and Susanne delivered the training. I spent a week (at least 10 hours per day) with this couple listening and interacting with them up close. This training session had about 30 other attendees who had travelled from across the USA (IA, NY, TX, NC, GA, TN etc). Tim and Susanne's Aquaponics knowledge was deep and freely shared, their solutions were well thought out, simple and cost effective to implement, their passion about healthy foods was almost palpable. Most importantly, I came out of that training with one enduring view of this couple – they are hard working, they have a generous spirit, and they brutally forthright, even when discussing their personal struggles (even though it was not part of the training package) and they have learned a valuable lesson on good citizenship and the importance of the rule of law in a free well functioning vibrant society like USA. On the last hour of that week, out of their own violation, they brought up the "pot story" in front of the entire group. Right upfront, with sheer embarrassment and regret, they clearly stated they made a mistake, that it was wrong and dumb on their part, it was stupid idea done when they allowed the fear of losing their home and business to overwhelm them and that they were really sorry for having done it. I could clearly see the emotional toil this mistake, the arrest and legal process has taken on this couple. Since their alignment, they have suffered a lot of emotional pain for their crime already. It was one of the most painful, really humbling experiences of all the time we spent together that week – to watch such talent and passion shattered by a crime was very moving to me. I believe they have a lot more societal value and utility when they willingly share their story about their "pot" mistake in the open and in the internet, not as heroes or something they are proud about, but as fallen, repentant and fallible human beings. We all can learn from their mistakes and desist from repeating them. Please, if the law allows you to consider a non-custodial sentence, I humbly implore you not to send them to jail. Their crime, story and expertise in a jail will be not heard by free people with the freedom to act and implement Aquaponics to feed themselves or others. Their story when shared in their well attended Aquaponics training sessions openly and when they warn others to not ever try dumb, illegal activities while doing Aquaponics farming is vastly more effective. They have accepted they were wrong, they are very sorry about their actions

This couple is really a key part of the adoption and growth of Aquaponics to a lot of people, not just in USA. Personally, I intend to take their technology to Africa. Others have already taken their technologies to such their countries like China and Honduras in S America. Please, for the sake of Americans adopting their Aquaponics technologies and learning to grow and eat fresh foods grow in their balconies, for the sake of the many hungry and poor Africans who will benefit from the knowledge and research that Tim and Susanne have been doing, for the sake of their young family, please don't send them to jail, if the law provides for you to consider an alternative sentence. Please consider giving them a non-custodial sentence for their crime.

I know some communities in Kenya who fight seasonal deadly wars whose main cause is the shortage of water and food. Aquaponics uses very literal water and produces both fish and crops in a naturally symbiotic manner. Aquaponics is the ideal solution to these Kenyan communities' ever present hunger and famine threat. A significant number of Kenyans are ravished by abject poverty, some have eaten or feed their children dead animals due to famine, and some have died of starvation due to famines. Only last month, a grandmother in a place called Kakuma fed her grandchildren dogs due to hunger – that was the only "food" she could find to sustain the precious lives of her grandchildren. Technology and business is my vocation, but farming is my avocation. Aquaponics offers me the hope and chance to align both my vocation and avocation into one dream. Tim and Susanne are the best Aquaponics innovators and teachers that I have found over the years. They have a generous spirit to share their knowledge very freely – they can help make my dreams come true if they are not in jail. They can help me play a small but important role to make food available to some of the people that need it most - and in cheaper, easier and sustainable manner. If this couple must goes to Jail, I will humbly accept your verdict, but my dream will most likely be delayed and maybe even derailed; my dream of taking this awesome Aquaponics farming technology to my starving fellow Kenyans may be delayed by the length of the term this couple serves time in jail. Please allow them to be "free" to raise their family and contribute to the continued growth and adaption of Aquaponics farming technology that they are so good at researching, adapting, documenting and sharing. Their work will benefits people that though they will never know of personally. Please consider my humble request.

Yours Faithfully

  
John Gathara

2/6/2014

# BIG MEDIA HOUSE

A PRODUCTION COMPANY TO BRING YOUR IDEAS TO LIFE

Date: 01/30/14

Letter No: 2014/0004

**Subject:** Character support letter on behalf of Tim Mann and Susanne Friend d/b/a Friendly Aquaponics. PO Box 1195, Honoka'a, HI 96727

**To: The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi - United States District Court, District of Hawaii  
c/o Thomas Otake 345 Queen Street Suite 600 Honolulu, Hawaii 96813**

Will Richards  
Big Media House

**Dear Judge Kobayashi,**

My name is Will Richards. I am the owner of Big Media House and Celestine Gardens in Texas. One being a media production company, and the other, an organic market garden. My wife Samantha and I first came into contact with Tim Mann and Susanne Friend through their business Friendly Aquaponics in the Fall of 2012. We signed up for a seminar of theirs in Summer 2013 to learn more about a new system of growing food that could greatly increase our production, lessen our environmental impact, and help to achieve more sustainability and self-sufficiency in our market garden and personal lives. While at the seminar, Samantha and I were able to get to know Tim on a more personal level. The one thing that stuck out to me more than anything, was how he interacted with his son Lucky he had brought along as a teaching assistant. He gave and taught him how to take responsibility at a young age, learning how to not only operate an enterprise, but also how to be a respectful man and interact with other men and women in helping them to achieve their dreams. If all of us could have been so lucky to have had a father like that to take such an interest in raising a child in such a hands on manner.

Over the past year and a half, Tim and Susanne both have been available to answer myriad questions from myself and others in the aquaponics community, going above and beyond their obligations to help make sure that the revolution of how we feed our communities lives on and prospers in others they have taught. I've had experience with others in the industry that are only interested in making a buck; Tim and Susanne have proven beyond a shadow of a doubt that they are more interested in promoting healthy food, a healthy environment, and putting family first, whether it be their own, or the community they consider part of their family also. Sitting here, I realize that out of all my clients, industry partners, and business associates, there might be three I would write a letter such as this for. I am gladly taking time out of my day to help in anyway possible to make sure that Tim and Susanne, continue to have the opportunity to be a positive influence in our community; taking care of and providing for their family, Victor (18), Jack (12), Lucky (11), Rose (8), and Isabelle (88) Friend, their employees, and their hundreds of associates that need them to lead us as we provide for our communities as well.

(continued next page)

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2-10-14  
199

# BIG MEDIA HOUSE

1000 Kalia Road, Suite 100, Honolulu, HI 96813

Date: 01/30/14

Letter No: 2014/0004

**Subject:** Character support letter on behalf of Tim Mann and Susanne Friend d/b/a Friendly Aquaponics, PO Box 1199, Honoka'a, HI 96727

**To: The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi - United States District Court, District of Hawaii**  
c/o Thomas Otake 345 Queen Street Suite 600 Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Will Richards  
Big Media House

When I received the letter from Tim and Susanne telling us about their legal issues, frankly it came as a shock, but I must say that I was impressed at how open they were in letting Samantha and I know exactly what they had been involved with, how they were taking responsibility for their actions, and how they were truly repentant for making a mistake that can affect a great many number of lives they are responsible for.

My wife and I have never been in trouble with the law: between the two of us, we have only ever had two speeding tickets, both of which are decades behind us, so we do not know what it is Tim and Susanne are going through; we can only imagine how frightening it must be to know that their fate lies with the decision that you make in their sentencing. From what I've been able to learn about you, you are known in the legal community to work with people and get them to resolve matters. And being a Federal Judge, I've seen recently the statement that Attorney General Eric Holder made in regards to sentencing of individuals in such matters, "By reserving the most severe penalties for serious, high-level or violent drug traffickers, we can better promote public safety, deterrence, and rehabilitation – while making our expenditures smarter and more productive."

In regards to this specific case, we know that Tim Mann and Susanne Friend are neither violent, nor high-level drug traffickers. They are simply two individuals that got caught up in what they believed to be a legitimate instance of them helping their community.

According to the United States Department of Justice, the time spent in prison does not affect recidivism rates.

Low-level and mid-level drug offenders can be adequately prosecuted by the states and punished or supervised in treatment programs, as appropriate. Research has shown that community-based drug treatment is more effective both in economic and social terms than incarceration. Studies have estimated savings from \$10 to \$18 for every \$1 spent on community-based treatment.

I am not a lawyer and I apologize if my bringing these items up are offensive in any manner; I am certain you know all of this. The point of me bringing these items up is that they make sense.

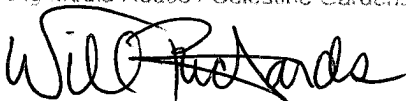
What Tim and Susanne did are wrong in the eyes of the law, and they are not attempting to deny this. The item in question is their sentencing, and to place them behind bars will not help them, will be detrimental to their family, their community, and to all of us who depend on them to help us achieve our dreams which are to bring healthy food and socially just businesses to our communities as well.

House arrest, probation, mandatory drug classes; these are all things that will show others in the community and the voting population that your court does not take these offenses lightly, that what Tim and Susanne did was and is illegal, and will help prevent recidivism just as well if not better than a prison sentence would do, and at the same time, still allow them to be productive members of society.

I greatly appreciate your time with this matter.

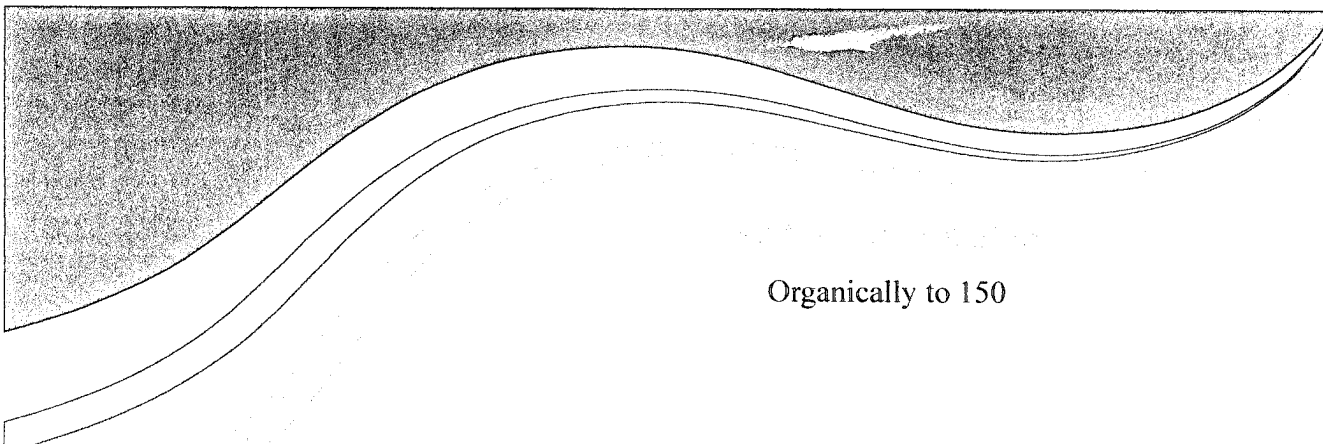
Respectfully,

Will Richards  
Big Media House / Celestine Gardens



01/31/2014





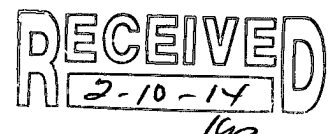
Organically to 150

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi:

This letter is in response to a request by Tim Mann and Susanne Friend of Friendly Aquaponics, Inc. concerning their upcoming hearing before you on February 13, 2014 for the illegal growing of marijuana.

I have known Tim and Susanne since late 2010 when I discovered their website [www.friendlyaquaponics.com](http://www.friendlyaquaponics.com) while searching the Web for information on the subject of Aquaponics, of which I knew very little. While going through the archived newsletters to learn as much as possible about Aquaponics, I was struck by how much emphasis there was on the fact that they kept saying “that you cannot grow marijuana in an Aquaponics system” period, “don't even try”. Since I wasn't interested in growing marijuana, I couldn't understand why they were putting so much emphasis about it in their newsletters. It wasn't until over a year later that I discovered why when I happened to come across an online article in a Japanese magazine, of all places, about the background and history of Friendly Aquaponics which included their legal problems that came about with trying to grow marijuana.

After inquiring and learning about the circumstances with regards to the reason that they tried growing marijuana, I can relate to the panic that you feel when you are faced with the possibility of losing what you have worked so hard to achieve. Sometimes reason gets thrown out the window and you try to rationalize your inappropriate decisions and actions. I fell victim to the same panic trying to save my business and, although I did not do anything illegal, my bad judgement and decision making resulted in the short-sale of my house and the loss of most of my net worth several years ago. The effects of those decisions test your character and forces you to examine your values and find out what is most important to you. It has taken me much pain and suffering to recover from those bad decisions but recovering I am, in part, due to Tim and Susanne's help even though they may not know it. This is why



I felt compelled to write this letter.

I very much believe Tim and Susanne when they say that they have remorse for their “stupid” decision to try and grow marijuana. In fact it was really stupid and they should be punished for that decision. However, punishment can come in many forms.

It comes from the shame that you feel when you have let your family, friends and loved ones down for the decisions that you have made. It comes from the extra hard work that you have to do to recover from those decisions. More importantly, with Tim and Susanne, it can come in the form of the anxiety you feel of not knowing, for an extended period of time, what is going happen to you when it comes time to go before a judge to learn your fate that will affect you and your family for the rest of their lives.

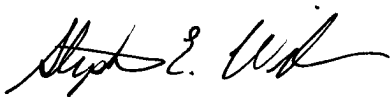
From my standpoint, I can attest to the fact that Tim and Susanne have shared their knowledge about Aquaponics freely and openly and have been a tremendous help not only to me, but to perhaps thousands of others in the education of Aquaponics farming. Through their “open source” website and the training programs, they have enriched the lives of many people so that they can grow organic food either for themselves or do it on a commercial basis for their livelihood. They have been pioneers in the development of Aquaponics farming and have shared that knowledge without reservation so that this world can have a better chance of food sustainability. In California, where I live, they say we are suffering through a drought not seen in 500 years. Aquaponic farming uses 98% less water than “soil” farming and any help that we can get to better lessen the demand for water is critical for us and elsewhere in the world.

I also believe that Tim and Susanne are very much family oriented and are extremely hard working people. They know what they have done was illegal and they are extremely remorseful for their bad decisions.

The question then becomes, what is the appropriate punishment not only from a legal standpoint but possibly from a societal one as well. I can't answer the legal question because that has to be the decision of the courts. However, from a societal standpoint, I believe society would be much better served if Tim and Susanne could be allowed to continue to do their work to further Aquaponics farming. Perhaps, this contribution to society can be considered when making the legal decision.

Thank you for your valuable time in consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,



Stephen E. Wilson  
President, S2N Incorporated

# Kathio Valley Farm

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41915 Timber Trail Road Onamia, MN 56359

To The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi.

"Please don't put Tim & Susanne in prison"

Your Honor,

Though I have never met Tim & Susanne in person, I have read all of their very educational newsletters that they have written on aquaponics. I was so impressed with their work, that I purchased the complete set of "Do It Yourself" business manuals & CAD drawings that they have produced. I feel that I have gotten to know them quite well after studying so much of their writing.

The way that they have been able to do the research & development in the fledgling aquaponics industry, and then clearly & freely teach it to the rest of us, has advanced sustainable food production world wide.

They are good, honest, hard working parents who have admitted the mistake they made. They will continue to benefit the world-wide aquaponics community if they are given Supervised Release sentences instead of jail time.

Thank you!



Herbert J. Wall, owner



**COMPANY**Michelle Thomas M.D.  
G Food 4U LLC611 Pennsylvania Ave. SE  
Suite 254  
Washington DC 20003

February 10, 2014  
The Honorable  
Judge Leslie E. Kobayashi  
District of Hawaii C-338  
300 Ala Moana Blvd.  
Honolulu, HI 96850

Aloha Judge Kobayashi

I am writing to request leniency in the sentencing of both Susanne Friend and Timothy Mann who have acknowledged guilt in growing marijuana on the island of Hawaii. I have known both Susanne and Timothy since 2010. I first met Ms. Friend and Mr. Mann and their family when I came to Honokaa Hawaii to attend a "Friendly Aquaponics" Commercial Aquaponics Course offered by these two respected farmers. There were approximately 100 individuals who attended this course coming from Hawaii and the continental US to learn how Friendly Aquaponics "valued engineered" Dr. James Rakocy of the University of the Virgin Islands design of recirculating aquaponics system. During the course I remember that both Ms. Friend and Mr. Mann on more than one occasion during their instruction stated that aquaponics should be employed to grow food and discouraged any attempt to use their designs to grow marijuana. I knew nothing of the legal transgressions of Ms. Friend or Mr. Mann at the time of our first meeting and thought their anti drug advocacy sincere. I was impressed with the family farms success in lettuce and taro production. The family unit also left a favorable impression on me. I observed a farm family full of love, all the children had farm chores but also seem to have other educational and recreational vocations.

I am a physician and an entrepreneur engaged in the integration of aquaponics into urban farms, commercial real estate and urban re development. I have returned to Honokaa Hawaii with contractors employed by my company G Food 4U LLC in 2011 and 2012 for additional training with Ms. Friend and Mr. Mann at Friendly Aquaponics Farm. During these private training sessions I gained increased respect and appreciation of the intelligence, hard-work applied by Ms. Friend and Mr. Mann that has resulted in contributing fresh nutritious vegetables and fish to the local food shed.

I eventually learned from Mr. Mann and Ms. Friends, of legal challenges the couple faced as a result of their having illegally grown marijuana in Hawaii. I heard unsolicited their admission of guilt with remorse for this illegal activity and the impact that it had on their family and farm. Friendly Aquaponics Farm is currently having relative commercial success in growing food, assisting hundreds of individuals to learn aquaponics in Hawaii and around the world. I believe Ms. Friend and Mr. Mann have relayed a message against illegal growing of marijuana by their open acknowledgement of their errors.

As a physician who has treated many injured individuals due to the consequences of illegal and legal drugs use, I am not an advocate for recreational, or religious use of marijuana.

I've come to know the Friend-Mann children Victor, Jack, Lucky, Rose and I fear that there could be irreparable harm to the family, if their parents were to be sentenced to prison. I am an advocate for the Friend-Mann children and the Friendly Aquaponics Farm.

I ask your Honor, in your evaluation of the crimes committed to sentence Ms.Susanne Friend and Mr. Timothy Mann to supervised release and community service, not to imprison either defendant. I believe that restitution to the community directly affected by their crime can be accomplished with community service that will continue the rehabilitation of Susanne Friend, Timothy Mann and retain the dignity of the Friend-Mann family.

Respectfully,



Michelle Thomas M.D.

Diplomat of the American College of Surgeons

CEO G Food 4U LLC



Ideal Farm, LLC

Aquaponics \* Gardening \* Landscaping

Property Maintenance

P.O. Box 11249 \* St. Thomas \* Virgin Islands \* 00801

Phone 340-514-9018

Fax 340-775-6111

February 4, 2014

Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi,

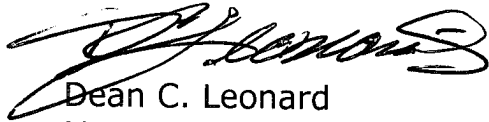
My name is Dean C. Leonard; I was born and raised in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands of the United States in the eastern Caribbean islands. I am a sixty-two year old entrepreneur who have developed many business ventures here in my home town and took a short course in Aquaponics at the University of the Virgin Islands, St. Croix campus, on our sister island. I was in the process of developing a business plan to start an aquaponics farm when I came across the name of Friendly Aquaponics, who were offering a course in commercial aquaponics there on the Big Island.

I had the opportunity and privilege to study commercial Aquaponics with Tim Mann and Susanne Friend at one of their trainings on the Big Island of Hawaii in 2010. At that time I was traveling from the other side of the world and they didn't know me from Adam but were willing to take me into their home for room and board to help me reduce the cost of my travel expense while attending the training. They also treated me as part of their family when it was time for breakfast, lunch and dinner. That to me exemplified a level of generosity and helpfulness that is rarely seen in today's world. I had a bird's eye view of how they interacted with their children and interns they also treated as family, demonstrating good parenting and family traits. Tim and Susanne were up at the crack of dawn working the farm, leaving there to go to the training for at least six hours per day and return to the farm for tours and or demonstrations before retiring for dinner. And after dinner they were always willing to sit and allow me to drain their brain with questions of the information they had presented that I did not always grasp at first till wee hours of the morning at times. They did this with such patience and both Tim and Susanne made me feel so welcomed and as a result knowledgeable of the methods to this relatively little known process to farming. They are the hardest working people I know with such a drive to share these farming techniques throughout the world offering valuable information in their newsletters.

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160

Tim and Susanne have been honest and candid with their error in judgment experimenting with growing marijuana in their aquaponics system and steering others away from considering or engaging in such activity. I appreciate this honesty and ask the court to consider the vast contributions they have made to their community and the aquaponics industry through the world.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Leonard", written in a cursive style.

Dean C. Leonard  
Managing Member

C. William Hider  
260 Rippling Lane  
Winter Park, FL 32789

Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi  
c/o  
Philip H. Lowenthal  
33 N. Market St.  
Wailuku, Maui, HI 96793

February 2, 2014

Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

I have learned that Tim Mann and Susanne Friendly have run afoul of the drug laws in Hawaii, and that their trial is eminent. I know only that they have been charged with growing a regulated substance, that they have acknowledged their involvement and that they recognize their responsibility. I also have learned that they could potentially face a lengthy prison sentence.

My knowledge of their personal lives is limited only to my experience of them as promoters of an innovative food production system known as Aquaponics, and how they have helped promote my own involvement in Aquaponics. I feel lucky to have come across their experience as producers in this blossoming industry.

I had spent a couple of years investigating Hydroponics and Fish Aquaculture following the collapse of the financial industry in 2007-2009 and was looking for an opportunity to enter the food production industry as it was developing with a local focus. I became fascinated by Aquaponics, which is a joint venture between Hydroponics and Aquaculture, and I eventually landed on their site, Friendly Aquaponics.com.

I felt they had developed an actual model for entering this emerging local food production model and I began a series of communications with them, speaking with Tim on the phone and through a series of emails. I eventually purchased from them last Spring a plan for building and operating my own Aquaponics system, totaling 256 sq ft. I have met numerous people involved in this industry, and it seems they have all had some very positive experience with Tim and Susanne. I have met and been in touch via phone with numerous people who have actually developed their own Aquaponics systems with the direction and support of Tim and Susanne.

Not every individual in this country feels that our near and long term success will depend on the localization of food production. But for many of those of us who do, we recognize our dependence on Tim and Susanne, and people like them. It would be a crushing blow to me personally, and I believe to many others, if their knowledge, support and encouragement were to be ended by their incarceration for their mistake.



C. William Hider

RECEIVED  
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162



# WARREN N. ANDERSON, JR.

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February 3, 2014  
Tirana, Albania

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi:

My name is Warren Anderson. I am currently the Executive Director of the Albanian International School in Tirana, Albania. I am compelled to write a letter of support on behalf of Tim Mann and Susanne Friend to repay only partly all the information, support and encouragement they and their work with Aquaponics have meant to me.

I first read about Tim and Susanne after arriving in Albania six years ago. I read an article about Aquaponics and looked on the internet for more information. Their website and expertise was featured prominently in Aquaponics circles. It was obvious that they were eager to help, explain and mentor those just learning about this new way of sustainable farming. Unlike many of the others, they knew what they were doing from trial and error and were not motivated by the almighty dollar. From the beginning my goal was to attend one of their week-long training opportunities.

My first direct contact with Tim and Susanne was when I attempted to order one of their system manuals. Due to an internet glitch I was unable to complete the transaction, so I called them and left a message complaining. Susanne responded right away, returning my call within hours and the problem was solved with a free manual for my inconvenience.

I continued reading their weekly newsletters while experiencing one of the most difficult times of my life. I had gone to Dubai three years ago to teach only to find that the school really did not want teachers but rather baby-sitters that catered to every whim of spoiled brats. That is NOT how I teach. I left the school and stayed in Dubai due to a friend from college. His promises of starting a business together were just words followed by movement in that direction then nothing.

I was stuck in Dubai with little money, no life and seemingly getting nowhere with no way to leave. What sustained me – seriously – were the weekly Friendly Aquaponics newsletters and the dream of putting their system to work for the good of others but also for profit for myself. I explained the Friendly Aquaponics system to people from Pakistan, the UAE and Myanmar. All were eager to learn more. I also wrote plans for NGO's on how to use the Friendly system for benefit of destitute and starving folks in various Third World countries.

Finally, in June 2013 I was able to attend a Friendly Aquaponics training week in Tennessee. That trip and experience was one of the best I have had in over 20 years. At the training I met great folks from all over the U.S. with a similar goal, to take control of what we eat and how it

# WARREN N. ANDERSON, JR.

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is grown and to provide others with the quality food they need and deserve for both profit but also as a service to others. It was very inspirational!

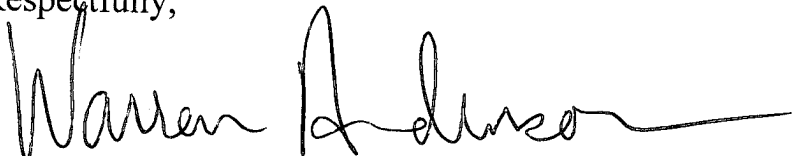
Tim was the trainer at that week-long event, with the assistance of his young son Jack. It was obvious to all that the active and supportive family portrayed and described in the newsletters was the real deal. The way the two worked together, the way Tim talked about Susanne and the rest of the family made evident that this was a family that enjoyed working together and was happy and unified in the Friendly family business. It was a natural team effort.

I am writing because I believe that in this case before you, in my humble opinion, taking either or both Tim and Susanne from their biological family as well as their world-wide Aquaponics family would be a punishment that does not fit the crime. I had read about their legal difficulties and their acceptance of responsibility from Tim and Susanne as well as denigrating remarks from competitors disparaging their work and looking for new customers. Tim and Susanne admitted their actions and clearly warned others not to make the same mistake.

If a punishment must be meted out might I suggest community service. So many more in their local community and throughout the world would benefit and justice would be served as well. It is obvious that their past mistake in judgment has taught them a lesson and that example serves as a warning to anyone else that might be headed the wrong way.

After reading nearly two hundred of their newsletters, corresponding by email and meeting one half of what is obviously a loving and committed family team I believe their commitment to helping others, their integrity in the business and in admitting mistakes – both personal and professional - as well as their love for their children and their desire to be positive examples warrants leniency. I respectfully request the Court to take all the good they have done and can do into consideration.

Respectfully,



Warren Anderson

Executive Director

Albanian International School

Address: Rruga Elbasanit #24, Tirana

Website: [www.ais-tirana.org](http://www.ais-tirana.org)

Tel: +355 42 273 488

Mob: +355 67 416 0637

*I am sending 3 copies due to questions about  
All ...*

The Honorable Judge Leslie Koybayashi :

My name is Wang Xiaocheng. I am now live in Beijing China, working as a brand manager in a Chinese digital map Company , all the iPhones in China using our Company 's digital map. And I work with others in China to get the idea of Aquaponics spread.

In Oct. 2009, I went to Hawaii for a whole year internship program that is when and where I know Tim and Susanne. And I left Hawaii in Oct. 2010 that is when and where I recognize them as my parents, cause the whole year I was living there, they treat me as their own son. I live with them , eat with them, go to the beach with them, celebrate all the festival' s with them, I really enjoyed my life with the family and I love everyone in the family. So, I am writing to ask please let the lovely family till be a family, do not take the Mam and Dad away from the family and put them in the jail, left kids and mamaya outside.

And, not only the family need them to be a lovely whole family, the Aquaponics community need them desperately too. They

are really the pioneer of this area; they take a big risk to embrace the idea of Aquaponics and tried the best to make it happen before everybody that needs courage. They have a big influence in the Chinese Aquaponics community, they not only teaches most of us how to operate and helped us separate our own system, they also helped to connect the Chinese Aquaponics community, most of us know each other through Tim and Susanne' s introduction. Aquaponics is a new area, we really need them to be around to give us ideas with their long-term Aquaponics system operating experience.

In the last, I want to say that I was there when they made the big mistake. We talked a lot about this, they really regretted for what they have done. They were really candid about their mistake and tried to share their experience with me, their kids and others to help us get away from the mistake they have made. Instead of putting them in the jail, I wish you can give them another chance to stay outside to share this experience.

In all, I do think if you can give them another chance to be free, they can do more contributions to the society than being in the jail. If we do not have them free, we will have four young

kids and mamaya without taking care of, we will lost a happy family. If we do not have them free, someone like me will never have their chance to learn Aquaponics with them and to experience a American life in a lovely family in Hawaii. If we do not have them free, we will lose someone to help others not get involved in the same mistake they have made. So, please let my American parents free and give them a chance to contribute, not a chance to just regret.

Yours

Wang Xiaocheng

王曉成

2014. 1. 28

**Jerome Jorda  
Nouméa, New Caledonia  
January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

**To the Honorable Leslie Kobayashi,**

**RE: Timothy Michael Mann and Susanne Lenore Friend**

**This letter is a letter of character regarding Timothy Michael Mann and Susanne Lenore Friend.**

**My name is Jerome Jorda, (I am farmer from New Caledonia, I hold an MBA degree from Beijing as well as a Bachelor from LMU in Los Angeles, I work and live in New Caledonia on my farm, an aquaponic farm dedicated to producing organic vegetables). I know Tim and Susanne through a 2 months internship at the Friendly Aquaponics farm on Big Island, and have been familiar with them and their work for a couple of years ever since I started being familiar with Aquaponics.**

**I know them to be very generous, honest, hard worker, friendly oriented and people friendly. During my stay with them on the farm, we had many people visiting, from friends to family to other interns working on the farm. They are also people who believe in second chances, which for me is a very respectable attribute because it shows their trustworthy character. Tim and Susanne are also very community minded, they like to work with other farmers and they love to share their knowledge and their intense experience in aquaponics. This can be felt in Hawaii since almost everyone on big island knows what Aquaponic is! They are people who are concerned about world events and who want to make a difference by teaching people from the whole world how to grow organic food through sustainable techniques.**

**I am aware of the events regarding Tim's and Susanne's guilty plea, and I am aware of what has transpired in the restitution they have made in their field of aquaponics, and in their home community, since the day they were arrested. They are publicly very outspoken against breaking the law in any manner, and freely share with others the trouble they have been in because they did not stay on the right side of the law. I truly believe that they have already suffered extensively for their actions. They have lost credibility in the public eye, and I know them to be truly despondent regarding what they have put their family through. They have a good family: they have three children, Jack (age 12), Lucky (age 10), and Rose (age 8), and I know their children to be well-behaved, good-natured, actively working with their parents on the family farm, teaching aquaponics**

**to other children and very respectful to new people staying in their house. Their children and Susanne's 88 year-old mother are certainly not deserving of what they have been through. Susanne is the sole surviving child for her aging mother, and it is my belief that an extended prison sentence will cause significant harm to the health of her aging mother, Isabelle, who depends upon both Tim and Susanne to take care of her and their home so that Isabelle can live at home instead of moving to a nursing home.**

**I believe that an extended prison term will serve as a tremendous hardship for their business, which is currently allowing them to teach around 2000 people each year how to grow their own food. They work with churches and non-profits all over the world, and they actively campaign for the care of the poorest among us. They are working very hard on the relocalization of our food supply, especially in Hawaii, where, as I understand, over 90% of all food is shipped in.**

**Because of the significant difficulties that will be faced by Tim's and Susanne's family, who themselves were blameless in their crime, and because of the great work Tim and Susanne are doing in the world, I would ask for you, the judge, to grant them a sentence of probation so that they can continue their much-needed work, both in their Hawaiian community as well as the broader community of the United States and the world. I believe that the damage to their reputation, and the loss of respect in both their local community, as well as in the worldwide aquaponics community, as well as those freedoms that they were afforded prior to their felony conviction, may have taken a bigger effect than keeping them out of the work force. They certainly will never repeat their offense and, quite frankly, I cannot imagine that they will ever repeat any illegal activity.**

**Thank you for your consideration. Please feel free to contact me directly if you have any further questions, or if I can be of any further assistance, at [jorda.jerome@gmail.com](mailto:jorda.jerome@gmail.com).**

**Sincerely,**

**Jerome Jorda**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jerome Jorda', with a stylized flourish at the end.

To: The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

February 4, 2014

Your Honor,

Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Ron Neufeld and I currently live in Washington State. I presently work as a Congressional Liaison for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, at the VA Regional Office (VARO) Seattle, Washington. I have been employed with VA for just over six years, to date. I am 39 years old. I have a two year degree from Tacoma Community College and a four year degree from the University of Washington. I am soon to embark upon a self-financed project to bring aquaponics to Kenya, East Africa.

I was born the son of career missionaries who worked in Togo, West Africa from 1976 to 2012. I lived a total of 13 years in West Africa. I spent 11 of those years in Togo, and an additional 2 years in the Ivory Coast (Cote d'Ivoire), where I attended boarding school for my last two years of high school.

My girlfriend and her family were born and reared in Hawaii. Together we own several acres of land on the Big Island. We are planning to develop the land for sustainable farming, to include aquaponics. We are leaving for Kenya, East Africa, on March 10, 2014, to help friends over there develop an aquaponics program of their own. The project in Kenya will be built using materials created by Friendly Aquaponics. After we establish a foundation in Kenya, we will be traveling to the Big Island to begin aquaponics there.

Although I have never met Tim Mann and Susanne Friend in person, I have had multiple interactions with them over the internet, as they assisted me in purchasing the Friendly Aquaponics e-book for friends in Kenya. I researched many other aquaponics websites, prior to finding my way to Friendly Aquaponics' site, and prior to making contact with them. I chose Friendly Aquaponics as the company with which I'd like to do business. I made this determination based upon their mission as stated at their website, and the reviews I read of others who have worked with them in the past.

A small business is often a reflection of the character of the people who are building the business. Friendly Aquaponics seeks to empower others to provide for their own needs in an environmentally conscious manner, thus minimizing the individual's dependence upon an already overly burdened State. They are working on developing aquaponics methods for use in developing nations- a subject near and dear to my heart. Their compassion for humanity is evidenced through their website and the prompt and courteous responses I received from Tim and Susanne. Each time I emailed them, their responses reinforced the positive impression that I obtained when I visited their site the first time. I am looking forward to the day that I actually get to visit Friendly Aquaponics and meet Tim and Susanne in person.

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I was saddened when I became aware of the legal matters Tim and Susanne are currently facing. My heart is heavy for them. We have all had periods of adversity in our lives, and while it is true that much wisdom can come from these periods of adversity, it is also true that they can be very difficult times through which to persevere. Unbeknownst to me, while I was communicating with them about the e-book, and we were troubleshooting the internet related issues that arose during the ordering of the book, they were concurrently dealing with these stressful legal matters. I think this is important to mention in that it provides me with additional information about how these good people operate under pressure. I received prompt, courteous responses to each communication I sent. I'm fairly certain too that, based upon the size of their business, I couldn't have been the only person who needed their assistance. Responding to me as they have, speaks well to me about their integrity. They are professional and committed individuals who are working to make the world a better place for those less fortunate. They truly cares about their customers and their mission in life, which as I see it is evidenced through their business, Friendly Aquaponics.

I will be relying upon Friendly Aquaponics for support, as I bring to Kenya, their method of aquaponics development. It is because of Tim and Susanne that there exists such an opportunity for these disadvantaged people. They have done the hard work to obtain and share the knowledge that will help so many people. Their work is having a positive impact world-wide, and they deserve recognition for this fact.

I implore Your Honor to consider this correspondence as you determine the fate of these good people. They are very necessary individuals who are making a positive impact in their community and beyond. We need more good people like Tim and Susanne. To remove him from them equation is to empower others who do not care for the needs of their fellow humans as they do. Please, based upon their character and history of helping others, I humbly and respectfully request that you grant Tim and Susanne any and all leniencies that they may be afforded under the law.

It is with heart felt gratitude that I submit this correspondence for your kind consideration.

Very respectfully,  
  
Ron Neufeld

3105 S 11<sup>th</sup> St  
Tacoma, WA 98405

Mobile: 253-202-6499

**HAWAII FISH COMPANY INC.**  
*North Shore AquaFarm*

P. O. Box 740  
Waialua, HI 96791, USA  
Contact: 808-429-3147  
E-mail: hawaiiifish@gmail.com

City Bank TIGR Award  
US SBA Tibbitts Award  
US SBA Small Business Award  
Special Congressional Recognition

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January 18, 2014,

To: The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

My name is Ronald P. Weidenbach and I am Co-Owner of Hawaii Fish Company Inc. (HFC) located on the North Shore of Oahu. Established in 1978, HFC is Hawaii's oldest commercial aquafarm, raising freshwater foodfish for Honolulu's seafood marketplace.

My wife and I met Tim Mann and Susan Friendly at Friendly Aquaponics' first aquaponic workshop in 2008, held at their fledgling family aquaponics farm in Honokaa, Hawaii. This workshop was very well attended by approximately 100 participants and from this initial catalytic event, enthusiasm for aquaponic farming has spread throughout Hawaii.

In the years since this workshop, Tim and Susan have continued to make refinements and add new innovations to their aquaponic systems, have published numerous informative aquaponic newsletters, and have continued to hold aquaponic workshops in Hawaii and elsewhere to share their growing knowledge. Their ongoing educational efforts have provided a very positive and valuable public service locally and beyond.

I have learned that Tim and Susan made the unfortunate decision at some point to try and grow marijuana in their aquaponic system along with their leafy greens and other legal crops. They have since openly admitted their wrongdoing and serious lapse in judgment, and also their remorse in having done so. As Tim and Susan have said, this was the biggest and most regrettable mistake of their lives.

I understand that Tim and Susan's sentencing will be before your Court on February 13, 2014, and that the range of sentencing options available to you are from supervised release to lengthy prison terms. Given that Tim and Susan have readily admitted to this offense and have publically expressed their deep remorse, and given that they are very loving and hands-on parents with several young children, it is my respectful opinion and belief that the public good in this case would be best served by a sentence of supervised relief. I do not believe that a prison term would serve the community's or their children's best interest in this case.

I thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.

Sincerely,



Ronald P. Weidenbach

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Viking, Alberta, Canada  
January 9, 2014

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

Dear Sir,

I wish to add my support to the many who stand behind Tim Mann and Susanne Friend, and their operation Friendly Acuaponics. I regret that I have not yet met Tim and Susanne personally, but I have been in touch with them via email for several years now. I was working as a missionary in Colombia, South America when I first got in touch with them. Working in third world countries and seeing firsthand the poverty and malnutrition in the rural areas made me understand the value of what they are developing. Of course I also saw firsthand the effects of street drugs and their use: the destruction of individual lives, of families, of society, of a country. I cannot, and do not condone their production or usage for anything other than medical conditions as prescribed by a physician. However, one thing that has impressed me about Friendly Acuaponics is how Tim and Susanne have repeatedly stressed that their system is NOT intended for growing marijuana. Indeed they have stated repeatedly in the emails that they send regularly to their subscribers that their systems cannot be used for producing marijuana. I have followed these newsletter emails with great interest, reading every detail that they share both of their acuaponics operation and also the anecdotes of their personal lives. I have just received the 156<sup>th</sup> edition. I fully believe that they are dedicated to their children above all, secondly to developing and teaching a very practical method of farming that has the potential to eradicate malnutrition and hunger in every country in the world. I have been impressed with how quickly they share both their successes and their mistakes. Both in the business sense and in their personal lives as well. Though I haven't yet had the opportunity, I do intend to spend some time with them, work with them, study their operation, and then take it back with me to Colombia and introduce it as a method to compete for poor farmers who can't dream of ever being able to afford acres of land and the equipment needed to farm it.

I do not presume to say what would be justice in this case, but I do not see any merit in a jail term for these people that are seeking to be a help to society and do not pose a danger in any way.

Sincerely,



Cynthia R. Jensen

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5-6-14  
K -

Date: January 27, 2014

To: The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

I am currently employed as a Food Service Delivery Truck Driver with previous experience in the mechanical trades. My wife, a retired schoolteacher, and I live in south central Pennsylvania about one hour north of Baltimore, MD. We have both been actively looking for a career that would allow us to stay home on our small farm with the goal of becoming self-sustaining.

After extensive research into the field of aquaponics, we decided to pursue training with Friendly Aquaponics. My wife had been a schoolteacher for 35 years and liked their simple and straightforward training program. We first met Tim, Susanne and their sons, Victor and Jack, at a benefit aquaponics training in the Bronx, New York. This event focused on providing support for people building table top aquaponics systems in apartments as well as converting unused factory buildings for growing fish and vegetables. The training showed how to get a small system up and running and producing fresh food for minimal cost. We were very motivated after meeting Susanne and Tim, as we could tell their ideas were innovative and cutting edge with the potential to have a huge impact by providing food and business opportunities for low income people in the inner city.

After this training, my wife signed up for a further training at a farm in Tennessee, owned by students of Friendly Aquaponics who already had a working system. This was an opportunity to see a larger commercial system in operation that was using greenhouses; the course provided us with all the details to create a commercially viable system in our climate and how to build or adapt greenhouses in an aquaponics application.

I had been unemployed for six months at this time, and with travel and lodging expenses we could not afford for both of us to register. However, I went along to help with the driving and planned to stay in the hotel while my wife attended. Although the training was sold out, when Tim learned that I was at the hotel he made it possible for me to attend. It became very clear to us that Tim and Susanne had a commitment that put people before profits and would do anything they could to help others succeed. It reminded me of the countless hours my wife spent preparing lessons, grading papers and counseling her students. During her teaching career, she was recognized three times in the "Who's Who Among America's Teachers" (a publication which recognizes teachers based on the nominations of successful first year college students who are asked the question "Which teacher has had the most lasting influence on you?"); her fifth grade class also won a national essay contest and had the opportunity to spend a week at Space Camp (Huntsville, AL) with all expenses paid.

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Only Tim, assisted by his son, Jack, age 12, presented at the Tennessee training; Susanne and Victor had returned home to care for the other children. During the long days of the 5-day training (the days were long because the participants always voted to have Tim present extra segments), I had several opportunities to speak one on one with Tim and Jack. I was most impressed with Tim's honesty and devotion to his family as well as his attention to the many important details of running these systems and his commitment to getting things done right.

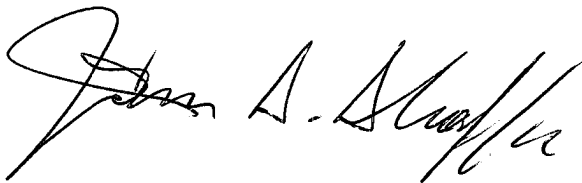
Since our two trainings in June of 2013, my wife and I have purchased all the materials necessary for building a 128 square foot aquaponics system and are planning on beginning instruction this spring as soon as the weather improves.

As a CDL Driver, I am strongly opposed to the use of drugs and alcohol with few exceptions. I used drugs (including marijuana) and alcohol most of my early life. This choice, that started when I was a teenager, has had a very negative impact on all areas of my life and has hurt those close to me. I would agree with a statement I heard recently, as some states have decided to legalize marijuana, that "using marijuana makes you stupid, but you think you're smart."

I believe Susanne Friend and Tim Mann greatly regret their involvement with growing marijuana, not because of the embarrassment or financial losses, but because of the bad example they set for their children and the negative impact it may have had on their mission to "spread the word" about aquaponics.

I am hopeful that you will consider all the positive contributions to the world this family has made, and allow them to continue under reasonable supervision without prison sentencing. Before we were aware of the charges against them, at both of the events we attended, Tim and Susanne spoke out against any attempt to cultivate marijuana using aquaponics. They are always very "up front" about their failures as well as their successes and am sure they have already learned a very hard lesson from this experience.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John S. Shaffer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "S".

John S. Shaffer  
97 Barkmill Rd  
Airville, PA 17302  
717-862-3091

January 7, 2014

TO THE HONORABLE JUDGE LESLIE KOYBAYASHI

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

My name is Alexandru Bittner and bellow is my story (as short as possible) and my thoughts about Susanne Friend and Tim Mann's problem.

10/11/2013

"ALOHA

I just got your manuals (3 days ago) I have been reading about aquaponics for 6-7 months at a rate of 5-8 hours a day

THIS IS THE BEST MANUAL of all the crap that is out on the market. It is a real technical book. And I know what I am talking having a master degree in mechanical engineering from Europe

Keep up the good work

Alex Bittner "

This is what I wrote to them long before I knew of their problem (I received an email with details only yesterday).

My story:

Born in 1957 in Bucharest (communist) Romania. High school. Mandatory (communist country) 1 yr in the army. Masters degree in mechanical engineering with a specialty in designing, building and/or operating chemical plants (factories).

In 1982 emigrated legally to the US (being of Jewish ancestry), 1982 first job in US=dishwasher (so I know what being poor and desperate means). 1982-1989 going from job to job and from school to school I got to be a licensed master plumber and a licensed general contractor for the state of California and in December 1989 I had a full time job with the LA school district and my construction company on the side. During this period I got arrested for drunk driving and it did not ever happened again.

In Dec 1989 Romania had the bloodiest anti-communism revolution of all East Europe (60.000 people killed) but finally the country was FREE. At that time I was married with a 3 year old daughter. My wife is of Chinese origin from Taiwan and I had to convince her to leave all her family behind and follow me to the other side of the planet. I DID IT and one of the most important arguments was that I told her :ROMANIA IS A DRUG-FREE COUNTRY AND

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CHRISTINE WILL GROW AND MATURE IN A DRUG-FREE ENVIRONMENT. This is to explain the position of our family on drugs and is important (I think) considering the last few lines of this letter.

So in 1990 I was back in Romania and little by little I developed over 40 different companies from medical clinics, insurance companies, TV stations, a glass factory, real estate (on a big scale) to agriculture on over 20.000 acres and the biggest freshwater fish farm in Europe (15.000 acres of ponds). At one moment only in the offices I had around 100 people and in the companies over 2000. I did mention all this because it will help me substantiate 3 main ideas:

I know how to "read" people

I know how to "read" a business

Because the businesses were so many and diverse and because in Romania of those times life was going on at a rate of 200miles/hour, what I had to use was "common sense". I think I had it or at least I trained to achieve it.

In 2011 because family issues we decided to return to the USA. As both my wife's parents passed away and because CA was "dead" from the real estate point of view we decided for Texas.

At the end of 2012 all the real estate income was built (so my wife will leave me alone :) ) and I was free to go finish what I started in Romania and did not finish= an organic farm.

And this is how I got to know Susanne and Tim. We NEVER met and we only exchanged 9 emails on technical aspects, but I think that I know them very well from their HUGE website and here are my thoughts:

A) I think that they are a "whole" both in business and in the family, and in today's times a strong family "brick" (as the base for our society building) and a strong business "brick" are starting to be rare so in my head I consider both of them as one.

B) In all the pictures and the movies on the website it looks that they raise some fine kids. I know that the movies and the pictures can be deceiving but there are just too many of them and with all the details in the right place that made me think that nobody can be that good (at deceiving).

C) After 2008 to operate that farm, to write their manuals, to build that HUGE website and to keep classes while you raise 4 kids and run a family I think that all of it just took all their time so no time for "growing" anything else (and also not their wish as they stated in their email and my "reading" tells me to believe them).

D) I "read" their business from middle to good and that means that they make enough money now for no need to do foolish things anymore.



The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

1-27-14

Good day. My name is Tony Perino and I am a general contractor from the Chicago area. I own several businesses that have to do with construction, development and property leasing and management. I am also the men's ministry leader at Crosswinds Church in Plainfield Illinois.

I have been involved with aquaponics for over three years and have had mixed results on the sincerity and honesty of the different people I have encountered. I built one of Tim and Susanne's systems after a lengthy search to find someone that would put their money where their mouth was. There were several people that only wanted your money, and in some cases a lot of your money, but were not very forth coming with any useable information on their system or the results.

The opposite was the case with Tim and Susanne. The price point was very affordable and the technical support and was available and with quick turnarounds on any emailed questions. They seem to have a genuine desire to educate as many people as possible about the benefits and simplicity of aquaponics even if you have not purchased the affordable plans that they have which is refreshing in a world that is dominated by the attitude of ME, ME, ME.

I took a commercial aquaponics class with Tim in June at Todays Green Acres farm in Tennessee. This is the first time I had met Tim in person and even though I don't see us going out for a cup of coffee the passion and desire to teach was striking. He was very honest and thorough about the advancements they have made to their systems, what they are working on currently and things they are working on for future advancement of both aquaponics and sustainability.

I am not familiar with the laws of your state or the offences that are being brought forth but I think it would be a mistake to put these people in prison. Tim is a tinker and I think the benefits of letting him tinker outweigh the benefits of incarceration. I believe house arrest so Tim could continue his work or having Tim design and build a system for the Hawaiian penal system would be much more beneficial than a jail sentence. A system for the penal system could have several benefits from a dietary standpoint as well as teaching inmates valuable skills about food production and sustainability.

I thank you for your time and consideration in this manner and hope you have a blessed day.

Sincerely,

Tony Perino

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2-3-14



# CHISAGO COUNTY

Housing and Redevelopment Authority  
Economic Development Authority

January 21, 2014

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Nancy Hoffman and I am the Executive Director for the Chisago County HRA/EDA, located in the state of Minnesota.

For the past seven months or so, I have been working with Akashlina Haider to realize a project of a large scale aquaponics project in a very small town called Taylor Falls, here in Chisago County. This project is supposed to create 78 jobs in total (more than half being full time) and a great boost to the local economy in that small town. Not to mention, a huge accomplishment in the sustainable agriculture field, in frigid cold Minnesota Winter.

As I understand (and have been told), Haider is relying on the knowledge and know how's of his friends and mentors in Hawaii, to create the aquaponics system needed for his project. Therefore, their presence during the construction and early operation time until becoming fully operational (estimated to be end of February thru end of April, 2014 for construction and another three months or so before becoming fully operational) would be vital for the realization and success of this project.

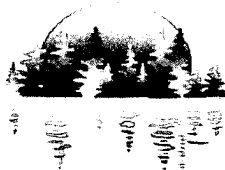
I hope that they could be here in Minnesota, during those phases and make this project a reality.

Should you have any question or concern regarding this project, please don't hesitate to contact me at (651)674-5664.

Sincerely,



Nancy Hoffman  
Executive Director



A NATURAL RESOURCE FOR BUSINESS  
38871 7th Avenue · P.O. Box 815 · North Branch, Minnesota 55056  
(651) 674-5664 · [www.chisagocounty.org](http://www.chisagocounty.org)

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1-29-14

January 26, 2014

Dear Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi,

My name is David Reto. My wife Valerie Reto and I have been married together for 32 years. We have 5 children (including our 2 wonderful daughters we adopted from Liberia, West Africa) and 6 grandchildren.

I am a self-employed businessman who provides financial bookkeeping and office management services to my clients in the Ashland, WI area. I've been an active member of the Wisconsin Aquaculture Association for the last 9 years and own a registered fish farm in Northern WI. I earned a degree in Biology from Northland College. Val learned about farming growing up on her family's dairy farm.

Val and I have been interested in aquaponics for about the past 7 years. We became aware of Tim Mann and Susanne Friend by reading the excellent information about aquaponics that they make available on their website, in their newsletters, videos, and training materials.

I had the pleasure of meeting Tim and his son Jack in person last June when Tim taught a week of aquaponics training sessions in TN. When you get to know him, it becomes very obvious that Tim is a hard worker, a devoted father to his family, and has a passion to help people become successful with aquaponics.

Both Tim and Susanne have provided a tremendous amount of helpful information and education to me, my wife Val, and the world-wide community of aquaponics enthusiasts. To their credit they have been honest and open about their legal problems. I do not approve of their wrong doings, but I ask that when you decide their sentencing please consider all of the positive public service Tim and Susanne have provided and will continue to provide. I personally believe they would do society much greater good outside of prison rather than being locked up.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have questions or need more information. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



David C. Reto

301 Beaser Avenue  
Ashland WI 54806  
715-901-0517  
davereto@netscape.net

RECEIVED  
1-30-14

To: The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

c/o Philip H. Lowenthal  
33 N. Market St.  
Suite 101  
Wailuku, Maui, HI 96793

Re: Letter of support for Tim Mann and Susanne Friend

My name is David Pennington, I live in Dallas Texas. I am by profession an "aquaponic systems designer", and in 2010 I founded the North Texas Aquaponic Meetup Group, which has over 600 active members. In 2006 I studied aquaponics under Dr. James Rakocy at the University of Virgin Islands, which is the leading institute of learning in this field. Since then I have travelled all over the United States studying commercial aquaponic systems, and founded Synergy Aquaponics LLC in 2008. As the leading aquaponics "guru" in north Texas, I provide advanced technical training and specialized equipment to many people including several commercial aquaponic growers who donate a portion of their fresh produce to local food banks.

I promote aquaponics because I believe it is the most important advance in agriculture since the invention of the plow. This unique farming method is critical to a sustainable future because it allows people to easily grow quality food with no soil while using 90% less water than traditional agriculture. The supply of water is fast becoming a crisis in Texas and in many other areas. With a growing population and shrinking resources, aquaponics is a rare ray of hope in a troubled world, and for this reason I have dedicated my life to promoting this emerging technology. Our children deserve a good future!

I would like to put in a brief word of support for Tim Mann and Susanne Friend. I have been a fan of their work for many years, and I believe they share my values. Even with my extensive training one of the resources I rely on is the prolific work of Friendly Aquaponics, and I recommend their newsletters and instructional videos to all of my students. They have pioneered several advances in aquaponics which make it much easier for low to moderate income folks to build and operate aquaponic systems, and have given away (for free) vast amounts of valuable information on this topic. **Their generosity has allowed hundreds if not thousands of people all over the world to build their own aquaponic systems and to avoid many problems new growers face.**

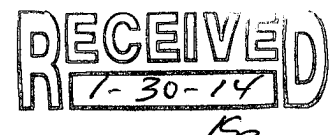
They have obviously gotten themselves into a lot of trouble, and when I found out about this I was shocked and disappointed. To their credit they have been very up-front with my community about the poor decisions they made, and I believe that they have learned a huge lesson about what they really stand for, and what they now need to do. I truly believe that they still have much to contribute to the aquaponic community and the planet, even with this black mark on their record.

I understand that Tim and Susanne have several children, and the idea of these kids being put into foster care because of their parent's crime is heartbreaking to say the least. I hope that you can find some way to allow them to serve their sentences in a way which keeps their family together. Perhaps they could do community service by teaching aquaponics to the local people of their area? I know this is what they do best and I truly believe that it would greatly benefit the people of Hawaii, and indeed the rest of the planet as well. In any event I respect your judgment and wish you all the best in your deliberation, I know this is not an easy question to face.

Sincerely,



David Pennington  
CEO Synergy Aquaponics LLC



# MAINSTREET studio

105 n. main st. north liberty, ia 52317  
319.626.6875 | mainstreetstudio.com

Dear Judge Kobayashi,

January 21, 2014

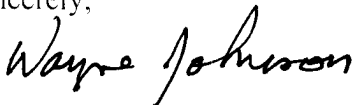
This letter is written as a character reference for Tim Mann and Susanne Friend of Friendly Aquaponics. I know they got into trouble a few years ago, and did something very regrettable.. I'm hoping this letter will help in your decision regarding their future.

I am currently an architectural photographer with a business in North Liberty, Iowa. I met Tim exactly one year ago while in Tennessee at an aquaponics training program. However, I've known Tim and Susanne for much longer online as aquaponics experts/ teachers, and I'm an avid fan of their wonderful website at <http://www.friendlyaquaponics.com/>.

I was introduced to aquaponics two years ago and resolved to learn all I could about this revolutionary farming technique. After scouring the internet for months, I settled down at Friendly Aquaponics for several reasons----both Tim and Susanne are extremely passionate about this radical new science, and have committed themselves and their business to training / teaching others. There is simply no one on the internet / on our planet offering so much public information about aquaponics! And none of this information is theory--it is all tested and proven at their farm in Hawaii. Their methods are different, even radical, but they really, really work, and if given the chance, would easily eradicate world hunger. The bottom-line numbers for this technology are ridiculous, and I'm in process of creating an aquaponics venture in my own backyard this year. I can hardly sleep at night.....

If it is possible, please don't shut down their business---it is truly cutting-edge science, and there is no one who can take their place. Aquaponic enthusiasts like me are NOT interested in playing with marijuana--we want to grow organic food for our families! If I lived in Hawaii, I would surely be camping at their farm to learn more and more, and I would wear them out with questions! Comparing aquaponics to conventional farming is like a car versus a bicycle, or better yet, walking versus flying! Tim Mann is the best and loudest voice out there trying to change American agriculture, not from the top down, but teaching future farmers how to re-think food production. Please consider this in your judgment. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Wayne Johnson -- Owner  
Main Street Studio  
105 N. Main St.  
North Liberty, IA 52317  
[www.mainstreetstudio.com](http://www.mainstreetstudio.com)

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1-30-14  
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Lars Nielsen  
1819 E 650 N  
West Lafayette, IN 47906

January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2014

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi  
United States District Court for the District of Hawaii

Your Honor,

I am providing this reference on behalf of Tim Mann and Suzanne Friend who have been charged with illegally growing marijuana on their farm.

My wife and I have been operating an insurance and financial services agency together for over 20 years and much like the accused are very familiar with the challenges of maintaining a self-employed livelihood through rough economic times.

I first met Tim when researching information online about Aquaponics as perhaps a second or 'retirement' career. I visited many websites and spoke to many people, but nobody was as generous, honest, and knowledgeable as Tim. That was in August 2013. In brief, it led me to commit to his view and approach to the business, I attended a weeklong seminar with him in Tennessee later that year, and I am now building my first greenhouse. The seminar was also where I met their son 'Lucky'.

Meeting Tim has literally changed my life. I learned that Suzanne was mainly the person providing the scientific information on the website and the newsletters, while Tim was involved in building the equipment, testing the ideas, and teaching so anyone could learn. He was so generous in sharing what they learned, presenting both the possibility as well as the pitfalls of running a commercial farm, and making himself available to me for life. He repeatedly warned of over extending myself financially and taking it slow instead. The more I learned about his life, the more this made sense, and it was refreshing to relate to a professional on a personal basis as well. I am certain he prevented me from making huge mistakes in an industry where many prey on that very fact.

I also enjoyed watching him interact with his boy as only a loving and committed father could, as we not only shared a common business background, but also the fact I have 3 children to raise as well. We also both served on the staff of a worldwide educational company which most important values are integrity, commitment and making a difference in the world. I am absolutely convinced his mission is teaching people how to grow healthy food for a healthy life.

Tim was very upfront about his legal troubles with us, his remorse for having made a huge mistake in a moment of financial despair, as well as his fears and concerns for his family. I shudder envisioning how easily it could have been me in his shoes. Not in terms of growing marijuana, which I absolutely do not condone, but how easily one such bad decision in a moment of financial peril could have landed me in similar trouble. I am amazed how with this type of pressure, fear and uncertainty for so long he continues to share everything he knows about Aquaponics in a very professional, generous, honest and timely fashion. There is no doubt in my mind this family learned their lesson the hard way and now helps others to not repeat them.

Your Honor, it would be a loss for both the Aquaponic community at large, but certainly for me personally, to not have their expertise available any longer. Not to speak of the loss for the family and his children in particular. I owe him greatly for the difference he made in my pursuit of Aquaponics, and I loathe the uncertainty this provides for my future, knowing I may not have their knowledge and commitment available to me.

Respectfully,



Lars Nielsen

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January 30, 2014

The Honorable Judge Leslie E. Kobayashi  
United States District Court for the State of Hawaii  
300 Ala Moana Blvd., Rm C338  
Honolulu, HI 96850

RE: Susanne Friendly & Tim Mann

Dear Judge Kobayashi,

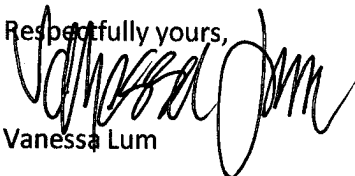
After I retired as a Logistics Materials Manager at the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard with 25 years of service, I decided to pursue a second career in the Aquaponics field. It was at a Aquaponics workshop conference, sponsored by Windward Community College (WCC), and UH's College of Tropical Agriculture (CTAHR) in Spring of 2011 that I first became acquainted with both Susanne and Tim. I subsequently followed their blogs and business, which led to personally attending their Aquaponics workshop, held in Honokaa, Hawaii in August 2012. My current activities as an educator, trainer, consultant and active volunteer at CTAHR's Aquaponics Research Facility at WCC, affords me the ability to closely track the efforts of this sustainable technology, especially for this Island state. I consider both of them friends and pioneers in promoting healthy and sustainable ways for island families & communities.

In your deliberations regarding Susanne and Tim, I would like to add my support for leniency, within the bounds of the law. As the first aquaponics farm in Hawaii to get organic certification and sell their leafy green products at Kona's COSTCO, I applaud their business achievement and the amount of work and effort to accomplish it. Being just a conventional farmer is challenging enough, but to be an aquaponic farmer and have the additional variables of keeping fish alive and healthy, and all the while produce saleable and food safe lettuce under contract to a mainland corporation is noteworthy! They have positively been a role model for small island farmers and have contributed to the efforts to "eat local, source local" slow food movement. And their openness to working with others, so that they are able to be successful in their small farm operations also adds to the kind of community that makes Hawaii such a desirable place to live.

In all my dealings with Susanne and Tim, corresponding (I live on Oahu), attending their workshops and personally having their assistance in producing some chocolate mint plants, they are a pleasure to work with. Where they really shine, though is how they both, as parents, are raising their children. After all, children are the reflection of their parents. I'm impressed with the vitality, joy, and sense of self that they exhibit, from the youngest to the oldest, around adults. And I am a parent with a 28 year old son myself.

I am well aware of their legal issues and the seriousness of their situation. They both do not shy away from admitting publically of their wrongdoing. From the time I've first met them until the present, I would love to have them be my neighbors, and have them continue to be a positive influence in the community, and in the growing Aquaponics technology field. I sincerely petition you to consider all of this in whatever sentencing process is required.

Respectfully yours,

  
Vanessa Lum

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**Town of Campbell  
Department of Code  
Enforcement**

**To:** The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

**From:** Marvin Rethmel ,.CEO

**Cc:** File,

**Date:** 01/10/2014

**Re:** In the Case of Susanne Friend

Your Honor

My name is Marvin Rethmel, for the past 14 years I have been a Code Enforcement Officer in New York State and come across all types of people some honest and some not so honest.

In the Case of Susanne friend I have never met her but she has responded to me via e-mail when I had issues with plants not sprouting she kindly directed me to one of the little e-mail new letters that would answer my question and it did. And it was even more helpful than for what I needed so I gained a whole lot from it.

Now I have a better planting and sprouting system than before all because someone was willing to share her knowledge with me about planting see in this type of system. This also allowed me to put numbers in my business model that were real and factual and not a guess.

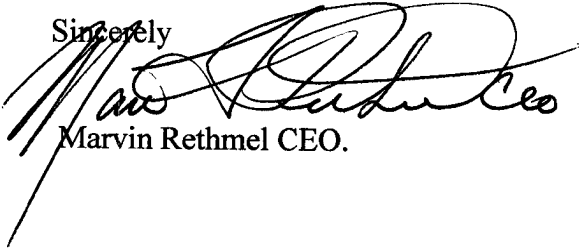
I have a business model I used that I got from Tim and with the way I am planting now I was able to put realistic numbers in for the plants, from germination to harvest all because of Susanne's help.

Now I know that Susanne and Tim are a family because they have 4 kids and they are doing the best to set a good example even through this trial they that they are in right now. I know they remorseful or they would not have shared with those they do not know the mistake they made by being sucked into someone else's pipe dream.

I don't know what else to say except I need the knowledge of these folks is very valuable to the world wide community of aquaponics. They teach classes in a lot of different places to people with no knowledge of aquaponics what so ever and some of them are running full time business now and home operations. It would be detrimental to the aquaponics community to not have their knowledge available to us.

Your honor I respectfully submit this to you on behalf of the defendant.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marvin Rethmel CEO". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "M".

Marvin Rethmel CEO.



Don Meighan  
HC 60 Box 34017  
Round Mountain, NV 89045

January, 21, 2014

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi  
C/o Philip H. Lowenthal  
33 N. Market St.  
Suite 101  
Wailuku, Maui, HI 96793

Your Honor:

I am writing you today with regards to Tim Mann and Susanne Friend. I am a local business owner in Round Mountain, Nevada. I had the opportunity to come to Hawaii and participate in a 2 month aquaponics internship on their farm during May and June of 2012.

Previous to my stumbling upon their website while researching aquaponics, I had never heard of nor spoken to either Tim or Susanne. Having my interest peaked by what I was reading, I contacted them by email to inquire about this internship that they offered. The very first contact I received from them was a lengthy letter explaining that they were under federal indictment for drug charges and a very humble explanation of what happened. I must admit at first I was taken aback. After pondering upon it for a bit, I put my pre judgment aside and made a phone call. I spoke to Susanne for at least an hour, at which time; she demonstrated the level of integrity and honesty that I have come to expect and appreciate from both Tim and Susanne.

Needless to say I did decide to participate in the internship. I was so comfortable with my decision that I presented it to my uncle and he too came to Hawaii during the same time period. In addition, during my time there, my wife Teresa came out and stayed with us at the "Friendly Farm" for a week. I lived on their property and associated with their family daily. There was never anything that I saw that gave me a moment's concern. In fact at one point, I had to come home for a week to take care of business matters and chose to return and finish out the internship.

In addition to being a business owner and member of the leadership of our church, I am the father of 7 children which means more to me than everything else. To say that my reputation is important to me is an understatement. If I had ever suspected that there was something going on that would have reflected poorly on me, I would have never gone in the first place or would have left immediately upon gaining awareness. It was the Tim and Susanne's openness and humility that comforted me. Never was there any justification as to what took place. It was simply, this is what happened and we did it.

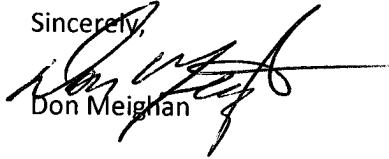
Like Tim and Susanne, I too have made mistakes in my life. Fortunately I was blessed to have mercy shown upon me and I was given the opportunity to learn and do better. I am writing you today to petition you to give them that same blessing. Please consider that though both of these individuals are

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guilty of what you claim by their own admission, grant them the opportunity to move forward and prove to the world that they have learned and are doing that which is right.

Thank you for your time. If there are any questions that I may answer for you, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone at 775-482-4441 or email at [dmeigh@yahoo.com](mailto:dmeigh@yahoo.com). In addition, if it would be beneficial, I would be willing to fly out and testify of my experience with them in person.

Sincerely,



Don Meighan



Aadi - Original Root, Beginning  
Vaahan - Vehicle  
Naqshband - Reformer of Patterns,  
Weaver of Context

To the Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

Greetings from Bangalore, India.

I am writing to you to speak on behalf of my dear friend, supporter and all round good human Susanne Friend and her Husband, Tim.

Susanne and Tim have been known to me for over three years now. We connected when I enquired as to who had the world's best aquaponics technology to help grow that as a solution to the emerging food crisis here in India. I found that Susanne and Tim gave away their excellent training manuals at less than half-price to NGO's in developing nations. And were also overwhelming in their desire to help. That was the energy I always got from them. "How can we help?"!!!

Susanne also helped me by spreading the word to her extensive contact base about the work I was doing as an innovator myself.

Tim, and his work with commercial sized sail-vessels is also revolutionary, with far reaching implications for the world energy crisis if he and his partner succeed.

Additionally, every conversation I had with Susanne was around how she would bring up her children to be good citizens, humans.

From the bottom of my heart, I can say that the world is and will be a better place with Susanne and Tim, lessons learnt, doing what they do best.

To err is human and I believe they made a human error.

I vouch for them as human beings and a friend and hope they can be allowed to continue giving back to society as they already do/have.

With warm regards,

Vivek Chaturvedi

CEO, ANDC Designs

Bangalore, India

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Mark Aiken  
1504 Silver Creek Drive  
Desoto, TX 75115  
972-223-1358  
mark\_aiken@att.net  
January 27, 2014

Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi  
C/O  
Philip H. Lowenthal  
33 N. Market St.  
Suite 101  
Wailuku, Maui, HI 96793

Dear Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi:

I would like to ask for a few minutes of your time to express support for Tim Mann and Suzanne Friendly in regards to their upcoming trial in your court.

For introductory and credibility reasons, I'd like to tell you some things about myself before I move to commentary regarding Tim & Suzanne. I'm college educated; 3 college degrees with a Masters of Business Administration as my highest level of attainment. I'm currently employed by Oracle Corporation as a Senior Program Director—and hold several professional certifications in that career field. I'm also a former US Air Force Officer; honorably discharged in April 1990. During my tenure in the Air Force I was the Command Instructor for the Minute Man III ICBM and Combat Crew Certified to perform my duties. I'm a strong believer in community and helping others; I currently serve on the Board of Directors for the Dallas Housing Crisis Center and am a contributing member to several local agricultural, aquaponic, and permaculture community groups.

I initially became acquainted with Tim and Suzanne through their contributions to the worldwide Aquaponic Community. I subscribed to their regular newsletter and frequently visited their website for Friendly Aquaponics. As time progressed, their offerings moved beyond a newsletter and took the form of books, greenhouse plans, and instructor led courses. I attended one of these courses in Nashville, TN last October. I spent 5 days with Tim as the instructor and also became acquainted with his son Lucky.

Tim and Suzanne have had a profound and positive impact on the global farming (Aquaponics) community through their Aquaponics training program and newsletters. Their farm and their farming activities sets the standard for 21<sup>st</sup> Century food systems throughout the world. They are recognized leaders in the field of Aquaponics and Aquaponics training.

As for character, I can attest that Tim has comported himself with integrity and honesty since I've personally known him. I watched him eschew using his aquaponic technology for growing illegal plants on several

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Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi

January 27, 2014

Page 2

occasions – I noted he wouldn't discuss even when the growth would be in areas in which production is currently legal.

Did Tim and Suzanne make a mistake that has landed them in your court? Yes, they did. But through my interactions with them, and my observations of their recent activities, I can confidently ask of you to be considerate of their community (global) contributions, their character as a family, and what can bring to all us through the strength of their family and the strength of their business. Please be lenient; and if possible, seek a path for clemency.

Thank you for your time. If you have further need of my input, please contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Aiken". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mark" and last name "Aiken" clearly distinguishable.

Mark Aiken



Shumin Wang

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi,

My name is Shumin Wang and I am writing to you on behalf of my friends Susanne Friend and Tim Mann, whom I met during their training class of Aquaponics. I am the general manager of Aone Development. We operate the largest Aquaponics farm in China. Through this farm, we are able to provide our CSA members fresh produce and live fish, while simultaneously deliver training programs to local farms.

Aquaponics is an agricultural technique which combines fish breeding and vegetable/fruit farming. In traditional farming, plants rely on the nutrients from the soil in order to grow. However, in Aquaponics, fish waste is broken down by microbacteria and can be used by the plants directly. Without a dependence on soil, Aquaponics has overcome one of the major restrictions of traditional farming techniques.

Aquaponics has paradigm shifting potential in the world of agriculture. It uses less land, no artificial fertilizer, conserves water, reduces energy cost, and produces organic crops, all at a fraction of the cost of traditional agriculture. Now you're probably asking, if it's as good as it sounds, why doesn't everyone use it?

One of the main obstacles of Aquaponics, unfortunately, is that not many people know about it. Even those who have heard about it are sometimes reluctant to switch farming methods due to a dogmatic allegiance to traditional farming, which may have roots generations deep. However, with the shifting global climate, exponential growth in human population, and a decrease in fertile farm land worldwide, it is inevitable that we find a modern, technologically sound solution to one of the absolute fundamental problems facing the human race: Hunger.

This is Susanne and Tim's goal.

When we worked together, all they wanted was to expose their community to the advantages of Aquaponics. They are very kind and generous couple and share all their knowledge with the students. They are great mentors, always offering valuable advice and solution for the students whenever needed.

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However, along the road, they lost their way. Susanne and Tim have been very forthcoming about their very unfortunate mistake. This was not the direction that they intended to take their Aquaponics idea, and is not representative of the kind hearted people they are.

But we all have lost our way in life, at one time or another. What's important is admitting that we are lost, and trying to find our way back. Susanne and Tim have admitted their mistake. They're now trying to atone for what they've done. I know that they are good people, and have always had the interest of others in their hearts. Certainly, it's the reason why we worked together on Aquaponics.

Susanne and Tim have dedicated their life to helping their communities. They are big-hearted people who have simply made a mistake. I know that given a second chance, they will take this as a precious life lesson and will return to providing valuable services to their community, as they've always done.

Very Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Shumin Wang', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Shumin Wang

Joseph James  
11580 Gratiot Road  
Saginaw, Michigan

Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi,

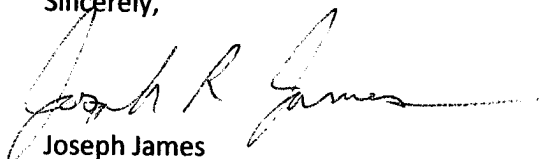
I am writing to you regarding Tim Mann and Susan Friend and the charges against them. I know Tim and Susan through my interest in aquaponics. If you are new to aquaponics, it is the combination of raising fish and plants together synergistically. This exciting technology solves many of the problems with in-ground agriculture, including: nutrient depletion, water usage, chemical runoff and ground water pollution, pesticide contamination, waste handling, and more. The food produced has better nutrition, no carcinogens, better flavor, and better shelf life than the same vegetables grown in commercial fields. I have been following this technology for years and literally jumped for joy when I discovered what Tim and Susan had been doing and the information they were sharing. I am a computer networking expert by trade, having built an Internet services provider and hundreds of voice and data communications networks. I made a very comfortable living and am nowhere near retirement as I am 47 years young. I gave up all that to be a commercial aquaponics farmer.

As you may have read, assuming you don't have direct experience in farming, it is very difficult for a small grower to become a farmer and make a decent living. Tim and Susanne have committed the last several years of their lives into developing aquaponics commercially. They have figured out how to modify aquaponics systems developed at universities to be practical and profitable for small farmers. The system they have developed is the only one economically viable for commercial production on any scale. Hundreds if not thousands of people from small gardeners to farmers have been able to go into production sooner thanks to the information Tim and Susan have shared with all of us. The work they have done in this field and their generosity of sharing this information is extraordinary. Many of us would not be able to continue in this new field without the research, field trials, and support that Tim and Susan provide to the aquaponics community in an ongoing basis.

It is my understanding that Tim and Susan have been charged with marijuana cultivation. I don't know any details of this other than what they told me in a remorseful letter. If they are dangerous criminals then they should be incarcerated. However, if they are removed from society, many people like me would be hurt financially. I have just invested my life savings in this endeavor and I have anxiety that I may not be able to get the support I need if they are in prison. I can't imagine Tim wanting to hurt anyone. I met him and his son Lucky in person last September and Tim impressed me as being a loving and caring dad. It seems to me that Tim and Susanne are good people who got misled and made a stupid mistake. If they must be punished, please consider all the other innocent people that are likely to be punished indirectly along with them.

Thank you for considering my thoughts on this matter.

Sincerely,

  
Joseph James

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Jan.23,2014

Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi,

We are writting regarding our cousins,  
Susanne Friend and Tim Mann. We were shocked  
to hear about the trouble they are in.

We have several rental houses for many years  
and we`ve heard all kinds of strange miss-step stories.  
Susanne and Tim unfortunatley, believed and co-  
operated with the “Pastor”-type person scheme.

.

Susanne and Tim are hard working people  
trying to support their family. Their kids, Victor,  
Jack, Lucky and Rose are home schooled. They are  
good kids and well cared for.

We were in Hawaii in 2011 and saw the business they  
owned that involved growing food in water which used fish

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CSM Marc Maynard  
14 Linda Lane  
Spencerport, NY 14559-1614

10 January 2014

The Honorable Judge Leslie Kobayashi  
C/O Philip H. Lowenthal  
33 N. Market St., Suite 101  
Wailuku, Maui, HI 96793

Dear Judge Leslie Kobayashi:

I am a Command Sergeant Major in the NY Army National Guard. I am also a fledgling aquaponics (AP) enthusiast with a small backyard greenhouse containing a 200 gallon AP system. Most AP growers including myself grow food with a goal of growing better more nutritious food the way God and nature designed them to be grown.


I was introduced to the Mann's through Linked-in on the internet. I have had many questions along the way as I built my system some of which were directly answered by Tim and Susanne. I am also a subscriber to the Friendly Aquaponics Newsletter.

Up until the date of this letter I did not know the Mann's had a legal problem. I have read over 35 of their newsletters, at least 50 blog posts, and have had several email exchanges directly with the Mann's. I did not personally see them say anything about marijuana in any of their communications. They have not glorified the cannabis industry and have not disparaged the legal system, nor have they complained about their situation.

They have in a recent letter been very forthcoming regarding their situation and have expressed sincere regret for what they have done. When I discovered they had an upcoming trial date, I wanted to send this brief note to affirm my support for them as leaders in the AP industry. I have not personally visited their site and do not have close contact with them so I cannot speak about their day to day activities. I do know however from my extensive exposure on the internet to the community of AP growers that the Mann's are among the few fair brokers when it comes to information and help. They have helped me directly and I am thankful for it. I very much appreciate their voice in the sea of noise.

I am a military man and I have extensive respect for law and order. It is my opinion that the community of AP growers, would be better served with the Mann's continuing their work as freely as possible. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Marc L. Maynard  
Command Sergeant Major

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