

Caitlin Christ

February 26th

Victim Impact

Commonwea

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Brian MacDonald, you have had the privilege of knowing how awful you think Tony and everyone who loved him was, and what we think of you.

You have been the source of the greatest trauma I have ever encountered, that is true. But worse than the fact that you murdered her only brother never be able to live a normal life, your behaviors and destroyed the carefree view of the world that Hannah had. Hannah's 8th birthday party, on January 3, 2000, was a disaster. My parents and I all took turns going to bed during dinner, but we all lost it when Hannah threw herself in the heart with these so I can go be a doctor. I wanted to go to college in Boston when she was 15. "I love him". That little girl, despite being told the lies that she was terrified daily. She is sad and angry, like all of us truly possess that ability. I am afraid for the future of you ended our brother's life.

You made a 15 year old girl with intellectual disabilities lose faith in a world that had already not treated her right. Tony being at her graduation, but he won't be there to help take care of her, like a father she will ever have, from her. Could you be sorry? I don't think you are capable of that, but I hope you are privately.

You destroyed another future, as well. At Tony's funeral, I gained a sister. Ariana. As we neared our wedding, she became my sister. She was supposed to walk down the aisle in Tony's favorite color, but she became my sister by marrying Tony, but she was never given a chance.

What you did to my parents is arguably the most heinous thing they have ever done. For all of the tears your mother has shed in letting you think your behavior was okay, and the fact that in the course of this trial, she will never know sorrow, because she misses you, I can have no pity, because she will never have a cemetery, with a cold headstone that says "Tony MacDonald".

For all of this, from murdering my brother, to the consequences my brother's death has caused, and the fact that for your inability to express remorse and take responsibility, Bianca with a passion unsurpassed by anything I have ever known.

Literally hundreds of people showed up to Tony's funeral. You took something from each and every one of them that can never be replaced. In the case of the young people, Tony's friends, you took innocence, the joy that you yourselves got to experience before you did this and for some time after you did this as well, and you showed no remorse for your impact on any of them.

Your girlfriend Bianca had a public twitter for a good part of 2013, full of attention seeking messages. She had a public instagram until I complained about a photograph of herself holding a sickle, like the grim reaper you decided to be, a completely inappropriate photo for someone who is a co-defendant of someone who is going to be tried for a stabbing murder. She has a public pinterest full of both of your hopes for your future, things that will never be how you and she envisioned them, not now. Her public photos have documented all the vacations and fun that the two of you have had in the past 2 years, all of the times you have gotten to pretend that Tony's murder never happened. All of this serves to show that neither of you have any idea, any empathy or sympathy, any notion at all of what you have done and what the consequences of your actions have been. I hope that listening to me has given both you a clue, but with people so narcissistic, I firmly believe that the only way you will ever understand is to be faced with a consequence that impacts you and impacts you to an extent that could somehow be compared to what my family has had to endure.

Brian, I have so much more I want to say to you,, so much anger and hatred I would like to express. However, I don't think any of that anger or hatred is going to make you feel remorse for what you did or sympathy for what suffering your actions caused me. I don't want to waste more of my energy on you, when I have done too much of that already in the past 2 years. What I have to say to you isn't about how angry I have been and how much I have hated you. I want to tell you about what impact you will have on my future.

Tony posted on facebook, a little over 2 weeks before you stabbed him to death. He said, "Let's all focus on improving ourselves and the world we live in, not feeding into this negativity and giving it attention to reinforce it." You have had control and power over our thoughts and lives for over 2 years. I want you to know that it ends today. You sat here and you made Tony's friends, and particularly the love of his life, Ariana, look no better than you yourselves really are. Here is the truth, though, each and every one of them are infinitely more valuable, more wonderful, and so much stronger than either of you will ever be. They have the benefit of having known and loved Tony, and will continue to receive benefit from that distinction forever.

After today, we will all walk out of this courtroom, together, loving one another, supporting one another, and remembering Tony and how amazing he was. We will forget you. We will never forget what you did and how it changed each and every one of us, but we won't think of you. I hope, every night you spend in prison for the next 25 plus years, and preferably for the rest of your miserable life, that you think of us. Think of us being happy, doing all the things that Tony never got to do, but that you will never get to do either. We will leave here and we will live, we will love, some of us will get married, have amazing careers, have children that we will find joy in every day... You will not. We will be happy, like Tony would want us to be, and even with the tinge of sadness that will linger over us for not being with Tony any more, we will be happier than you will ever be, than you ever have the right to be after what you both have done.

I want you to think of us tonight. Think of how I walked out of this room with my husband, my family, my friends who love me, and how we all went out of this building towards the rest of our lives. Think of

that when you are walking with a bailiff out of this building, to the rest of your miserable life. You don't have the power, the control, anymore. I do. We do. And we will all chose to be happy, in spite of you. We will be happy, and we will do so with thoughts only of Tony and how he lived before you ever came into any of our lives, and without any thoughts of you; either of you.

Your honor, when my friend Emily was 14, her father died very suddenly. On the 14th anniversary of his death, I texted her to let her know I was thinking of her. She responded: "Time heals, it's the only part I know to be true. But once in a while you gotta throw on some Stevie Ray Vaughan and have a good cry for the loss of what could have been. This year I'll have lived without him for as long as I lived with him. Feels like two separate lives."

When I have lived without Tony for as long as I got to live with him, Brian MacDonald may be a free man again. Tony doesn't get a parole hearing, or even a trial or sentencing that Brian MacDonald didn't dole out himself; No one is going to listen to Tony's pleas to come back to his family and say that he can. He is going to stay in that cemetery for eternity. There are no second chances for Tony despite what an amazing person he was. No second chances for me, or my sisters, or my parents, or Tony's friends to have him back. Tony got a life sentence. Brian MacDonald will have a second chance and a life at some point in future. He doesn't deserve it, and I hope the court makes sure that the time before he gets his life back, so to speak, is as lengthy as possible.

What is justice? "Just behavior or treatment. The quality of being fair and reasonable. Equity." What should that be here? Forever, like Tony got. No parole, because Tony doesn't have that chance. A life not worth living, because Tony didn't even get a chance to live. Anything less is not true justice.

While Brian MacDonald cannot, by law, can be sentenced to life in prison, I would beg the court to consider the maximum sentence allowed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for his crime. It is, unfortunately, as close to justice as the court can get today.

I thank the court and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for this opportunity to speak, on behalf of myself, on behalf of my sisters, on behalf of my friends, and on behalf of my brother. I ask the court to take under strong consideration the things I have said today when deciding the sentences for this now convicted murderer, who deserves everything the court chooses to impose on him and likely more. Thank you, your honor.

Nicholas Aroyan
February 23, 2015
Impact Statement
Commonwealth of Massachusetts v. Brian Macdonald

"They killed my best friend." I watched, mortified, as Austin Brown answered his phone at the police precinct, and seconds later dropped it screaming these words and collapsing in tears onto the table at which he sat. That very moment changed my life in a way that I will never find the words to describe. It altered something in me; in all of us. Not one of us could find the ability to process the news that Tony had not made it. That his bright light had been extinguished by an unwelcome intruder that none of us even knew the first thing about. When the reality of the situation set in, it was made clear that losing a friend like that, was to be the single most significant event to have ever taken place in my life, and with such regret to say, the most crushing. I have never experienced evil of such magnitude firsthand, never truly felt shock, and not once felt loss to such a degree before that night. Now I bear these feelings every minute of my life and they have manifested into severe anxiety, stress, and an imbalance in my emotional being. I do not strive to be pitied, only heard.

Tony was in every sense of the word, magnificent. I can honestly say that he was the most positively impactful friend I have ever, and will ever have the privilege of knowing. I would even go as far as to consider him a mentor. The strongest memory I have of Tony is actually something that I cannot remember at all, and that is him ever telling a lie. Tony was the type to say exactly what was needed to be said in any situation, and whether it was commending or critical, it was always constructive. The lessons he unknowingly taught us are priceless and I still refer to his sense everyday when faced with trials. I am constantly asking myself, "What

would Tony do?" However now, his teachings have a positive outlook have been transformed into a knowledge that memory enters our minds, knowing that we will never see music with him, high-five or hug him ever again.

When I transferred to The New England Institute of Technology he was one of the first people I spoke with and befriended an acquaintance because Tony just had a way about him that no one or even spoke to Tony can attest to that. We shared a mutual passion for music, and with Austin Brown and Corey Brown we were a sort of a project team that allowed us to help each other out while learning from each other's insight. Tony was instrumental when trying to become familiar with the highly-technical nature of the school facilities was unmatched. It was pure passion that in fact, when Tony would teach our professors, well-rounded ideas and tricks and ideas. I knew for a fact that he was destined to be stolen by a vicious, malevolent being for absolutely no reason. As academic integrity began to crumble. I did not want to work so closely together. I merely scraped by until I was below grade average. Austin was unable to bring himself to do anything more than retrieving his belongings, and he eventually became traumatized.

I have the deepest sympathy for Tony's family, above all. In the short time that I have known them, they have truly shown me where Tony got all of his kindness and charity from. The Spauldings are such incredible people, and inspire hope even throughout this despair. For them to have to bury and mourn their own son, brother, and teacher like this is a horrific crime in itself. No one in this world should ever have to go through such horror, but especially not these benevolent, loving people. I will always hold them in my heart along with him.

This

horrible theft that Brian Macdonald has committed in the form of taking a life cannot go unpunished. He has stolen something so invaluable, and not only from those that knew and felt Tony's guidance, but from the countless lives he undoubtedly would have helped in years to come. The world is now far less of a good place without Tony, if it even can be considered to be good allowing such an inhumane act to take place on it's surface. In order for Brian Macdonald to even begin to indemnify for his horrid deed that New Year's morning, I so strongly believe he should without question be forced to serve the maximum sentence of twenty years in prison. His freedom has spanned far too long of a time, and it is time for him to be brought to justice. Nothing will ever mend the wounding we bear for our dear friend, but the torture of knowing that his killer has lived the life of a free man for years after excessively stabbing someone to death must stop. Thank you, your honor.

Nobody ever asks about what happened after you murdered him. Nobody ever wants to know about what happened after I heard the scream for 911. Nobody at this table seems to think that's important. But that's where my, or rather our, story starts. It's also where our lives ended.

My name is Ariana Taylor, I'm 22 years old and I've been dead for two years, seven weeks, one day, and about 9 hours. Let me be clear – my body is still alive, and sometimes if I pretend, or I have a few good hours or days, it really feels like I could be alive. And then I remember. I remember what you did. You didn't just murder Tony, my best friend, the only person I have ever truly loved and trusted. You killed me too that night.

Cut to: me running down the stairs as fast as I can. Falling on the ground next to my love, his friends kneeling over him, whispering in his ear to hold on. His blood is covering the ground and my mind tries to make sense of it. I'm crying too hard to speak. I reach out and gently stroke the top of his head, feeling his soft hair for the last time in our lives.

In December of 2012, the last few days we were alive, I had just come back from San Diego, where I was studying design at one of the best colleges in the US. Tony had encouraged me to apply and when I was accepted, he completely supported my decision to move there, even though it was so incredibly difficult for both of us. So I moved in October. I didn't know anyone for hundreds of miles and was very alone. It was so hard in the beginning, but with his love and encouragement from back home, my grades at the end of the term were the best I'd gotten in my life. We were both poised on the brink of a happy and successful life. He was just about to graduate college, and we were planning a life together after that. But then I lost everything.

I flew back to California nine days after Tony died. Two days after we buried him. I tried so god damn hard to keep going because that's what he would have wanted for me, and because I didn't know what else to do. Every time I had come home before, Tony would take 2 trains, a bus from South Station to New Hampshire, and drive my car an hour to the airport just so he could see me as soon as I got off the plane. All I could think about looking out the window before we took off, was that he would never be there to pick me up again. My first day back in class was 12 days after. I sat there, trying to be numb, until a girl in my English class started reading a song about a man's last words to his wife. I walked out that day and didn't go back.

I spent the next 10 weeks in solitude. I slept for 16 hours a day. I would wake up and force myself to go for a walk outside, just to get some fresh air. I ate just enough to keep myself alive. I called my mother every day just to tell her I wasn't dead. But I wanted to be, God, I wanted to be. I made a plan, too. I planned to end my life on my 21st birthday, to buy a bottle of liquor to thin my blood and die by a knife just like Tony did. But I didn't. Even though I've thought about it almost every day since, I didn't. I knew I needed to be here for my family, for our family.

In April of 2013 I tried again to start over. My school had another branch in San Francisco, and I moved there to try and begin again, with some family and friends close by. But I couldn't do it. I was still so empty, so tired from the nights I woke drenched in cold sweat, so weak from the food I couldn't force myself to eat, so uninspired by the superficial men and women in school around me. So I moved home in August. And I've been here ever since, just waiting for this day to finally come.

Since I lost my angel, my companion, my better half, the world has turned inside for me. I quietly wander the outskirts of life, just trying to survive another conscious moment, observing the other people and how different they now are from me. I see them laugh and smile and connect and I envy them. Do you want to know what it's like being dead on the inside? It means that everything that you think you know to be true becomes false. Every interaction, every time you wake up, every time you go anywhere or do anything, it feels different and strange and uncomfortable. People look at you in a different way. They look at you with sad eyes and say all the wrong things to try and make you feel better. When I was with Tony, that was the only time I ever got to feel like I belonged. We loved each other completely. We knew each other better than we knew ourselves. I would lay next to him for hours just to watch him, to memorize the way he looked when he was completely at peace. His smile lit up my life. His laugh was my favorite music. I can still feel his soft beard against my face, the way he felt in my arms when we held each other close, the way his hands gently wiped my tears away when I cried. He made me a better person. He made me want to be a better person because he was so incredible and loving and kind. My heart used to skip a beat every time he would walk around a corner or meet me in someplace. Now my heart only stops when someone says the word "stab" and my mind gets ripped back to that night.

These past two years, I've had to watch Tony's mom's go through New Years, Christmas, Thanksgiving, his birthday, and countless other events without him. TWICE. While you've been out on bail, enjoying your pointless existence, Tony's sister had to plan her wedding, honeymoon, and first anniversary trip around your trial. Because of you wasting all of our time pushing this trial back further and further, so you could have more time as a free man, we have had to lie to Tony's two young autistic sisters for two years about you being in jail because they were afraid. Because of you, I will never be able to get married to the man I love. Because of you, I will never be able to have children with the man I love. Did you know that before he died, I was on my computer planning a vacation for us? Did you know that I was going to propose to him? Did you know the last thing he said to me was, "I love you."

Witnessing something so traumatizing has forced my mind into places that I didn't know existed. Your actions have made me question the very foundation of my beliefs. You have forced me to answer questions that no one should ever be asked and have to explain myself when no words should have been necessary. Every time someone asks me "How are you?" I am forced with the decision of lying just to make things easier, or to trust them with the disgusting truth that you have created.

Nothing that I can say here could ever make you comprehend or sympathize with the pain that I have felt over the past two years. Partly because there are no words for a feeling so utterly crippling and exhausting, and partly because I truly believe that neither one of you are even capable of feeling anything for anyone other than yourselves. I have never seen any emotion from you, Brian, nothing for the human life you took and all suffering you've caused, except the tears you shed only when you realized that you got caught.

How did that make you feel? I hope it made you cry until you vomited, the same way I did when I saw Tony's dead body, with his eyes still open and a tag on his toe, his lips purple and slightly apart, but no words will ever escape again. I hope that you feel so consumed by pain and hurt that you want to die every single day and night, just like I do. I hope you lose the energy to live, just like me.

How long will I have to wake up and decide to fight for my life? How long will I have to keep going to the counselor who helps me work through my grief and trauma? How many future relationships of mine will be ruined because of the nature of my past? How many times will I hold his crying mothers and sisters, trying to help them make it through one more holiday, or anniversary, or just another fucking awful day without Tony? How many future memories have you robbed from us?

Anthony Richard Spaulding didn't get a fair trial, a judge and a jury, high-priced corporate lawyers and a free ride for over 2 years. He was robbed of his life, of our life, of all the things that will not and cannot ever be. For me, the only true justice for you would be life in prison, without parole, without family or friends, without any closure because that's what Tony got. And that's what you deserve. A cold, empty box with no light or sound to distract your mind from the truth that you are responsible for.

State of Massachusetts vs. Brian McDonald

February 26, 2015

I will try to keep this statement brief and without drama. Victims Impact reaches far and wide. I didn't sleep for months, worried sick over my daughter's anguish and attempt to go on with her life. I carried my phone with me 24 hours a day to check in on her. If I didn't hear for a few hours I panicked. Her step dad, her brother, her father, all devastated and so were her aunts, uncles, cousins and neighbors. There wasn't a way to console her and there is no greater angst for me, as a mother than being unable to help one of my children.

I traveled across the country and

moved her yet another several thousand miles in order for her to try to cope. After another couple of months she called, once again defeated and asked if she could come home. College has vanished. Our family's life has been turned upside down by this act of arrogance and idiocy.

Justice Without Vengeance, but justice fully informed, aside from simply the facts.

This statement is written for Cate Spaulding, who had the unbelievable courage and grace to call me, at 4:00 on New Years morning and say "Linda, this is Cate, Tony's sister. Ari's at Beth Israel. She's ok, but has been admitted so they could medicate her. Tony's dead. Someone stabbed him through the heart."

Linda Basha Brookshire
Mom to Ariana Taylor

Melissa Prew
February 26, 2015
Victim Impact Statement
Commonwealth of Massachusetts vs Brian MacDonald

The day I found out Tony had passed, a suffocating weight of complete denial, running thoughts through my head of how it happened. My heart sank straight into my stomach when I heard he was murdered. The room was spinning. I lost it. I couldn't move. I sat for hours, stuck in my own head. Trying not to lose the sound of his voice, the warmth of his hugs and every single ounce of advice he gave me. How there'd be no more moments to say hello, to catch up, or to be more trying to make plans over the Summer to hang out on the porch, screaming out to each other on the courtyard at school. No more and late night adventure walks through the back roads of Brockton, no more smiles and laughter. No more memories to make. Time was moving so quickly.

Now, for the days I miss him most, I have kept a picture of him and a note he wrote to me one time he stole my phone to read. It showed me, and can't seem to stop playing "Be Still" by The Lumineers. I really wish he could be here. I still miss him everyday, and I know he's out there.

Now, for you, Brian. I never thought I would ever have this weight quite like this off of my chest, but I'm happy I have this weight off. Regardless of who you are, what you did speaks volumes of your character. You have done a terrible act of violence that is impossible to undo. Being told to leave where you didn't belong, you stayed. With your presence, you created chaos where it didn't need to be. You murdered a son, a boyfriend, and a friend. You murdered someone who was so kind, that instead of being able to see him walk up on that stage, walk down that staircase to take his diploma - something, that should have been his. That was a heart breaking moment, realizing your friend is really gone. You murdered someone who was a light in many people's lives, and taken away from us.

Thank you your honor, and everybody who is sitting inside the courtroom for the words I have been able to say. I hope you truly try your best to do what he so rightfully deserves. Please, listen to each and every statement carefully - to see how much we are all still hurting. This man has changed our lives for nothing but the worst. When a man decided to stay. That terrible decision has led us to these courts. I find justice for Tony. I hope you do this for us today.

2/21/2015

Vanessa Boucher

Commonwealth of Massachusetts vs. Brian MacDonald and Bianca Hollenbeck

To whom it may concern,

I didn't know Tony Spaulding his whole life but I wish I had. We grew up on the Cape, practically neighbors, but only briefly crossed paths. It wasn't until we both ended up at the New England Institute of Art, in the same dorm, starting our freshman years of college that we bonded fast over mutual interests, similar backgrounds and a shared general outlook on life. Tony saw the world in a way that most people can't, with a completely open heart and the biggest smile on his face you've ever seen. At a pivotal moment in my life, he was a powerful friend.

Aside from being the best kind of friend, Tony Spaulding was the best brother, son, boyfriend and human being I've ever had the good fortune to know. He was ripped from this world brutally and abruptly, murdered in cold blood by Brian MacDonald while Bianca Hollenbeck held him down. He died on a frozen street surrounded by the people who loved him most and it has affected all of our lives in ways so deep and so profound, that these words will only reflect a fraction of the pain we have felt since that day, and the parts of all us that were lost that night. This is why I believe Brian MacDonald and Bianca Hollenbeck should receive the maximum penalties for their convicted crimes.

I have been no stranger to loss in my life. There are five dates tattooed on the underside of my wrist to mark the passing of five people who impacted my life the most - my maternal grandparents, my paternal grandfather, my mother, and Tony Spaulding. That's five dates for five times I lost a part of myself. It may seem strange to see a person I knew for only three years permanently inked alongside the people who raised me but when I said he was a powerful friend at a pivotal moment in my life, I meant it. Tony Spaulding saved my life.

After my grandfather died, I was in a dark place. I was in the early stages of recovery and on the brink of falling back. Along with another close friend of ours, it was Tony's compassion, and wisdom that helped push me through. He told me once that death is a part of life and I had to be strong. I spent many nights with Tony on his couch talking into the early morning. He pushed me and he saved me and he taught me that I was capable of handling and processing pain in a healthy way. Ironically, it was his

advice and his strength that I drew from when the call came, on a gray January morning that I will always remember vividly, that Tony had been taken from us.

I don't say the call came that Tony had passed away, or died. I say taken because he was ripped from our lives. He was murdered in the worst kind of way and that kind of pain, the kind that is sudden and overwhelming, is like an ice bath to your heart. The impact of Tony's murder was felt immediately and by everyone he knew.

It's hard to say how close we would have stayed. I like to think that we would have had a lifelong friendship, the kind of friendship that grows from sharing the darkest parts of yourself with another person but none of us will ever know what our future would have looked like with Tony in it. He was supposed to walk with us in graduation, but we had to settle for a piece of paper in his honor and his name sewn onto our gowns. I think that Tony and Ariana Taylor would have been together for a very long time because the love we all saw between them was real, and enduring. I believe that our nuclear family wouldn't have been scattered across the city, ripped apart by this senseless tragedy.

If Tony Spaulding was still alive, our lives would all be better. For every flaw of his that was used against him, there are 10 more aspects of who he was that are gentle, kind and good. He gave more love in his 21 years than some people give in a lifetime and that is why he is the last date I will ever tattoo on my wrist. People will leave impressions on who you are deeper than any ink penetrate.

Please give Brian MacDonald and Bianca Hollenbeck the maximum allowable sentences allowed for the life they cut short and the people whose lives will never be the same.

February 23, 2015

Dr. Barry Marshall

Associate Professor

The New England Institute of Art

Victim Impact Statement: *Commonwealth of Massachusetts vs. Brian McDonald and Bianca Hollenbeck*

I knew Tony Spaulding as a student in my classes at The New England Institute of Art. I had him in two classes and he was registered for another with me to start the week after his death. I also interacted with him in several studio classes where he was a Teacher's Assistant. In the course of his time at school I saw Tony grow from a searching and curious young man into an inspiring student leader. He worked hard both as a student and as a musician to improve his own skills and to help other students to improve their skills. I enjoyed observing the process of maturity in Tony as he grew to become an important role model for other students. He became the organizer of many student recording sessions and was well on his way to becoming an audio professional.

Tony's death caused an irreparable breach in the culture of our school. To say that both students and faculty members were traumatized doesn't begin to express the anguish we experienced. It was especially heartbreaking to see our students, many of whom had learned from and been inspired by Tony, and some of whom witnessed the immediate aftermath of his murder, have to go through the wrenching helplessness that his death brought on, and at such a young age.

Over time, many of these students have gone on to graduate and move into promising careers. Some did not. A few dropped out and have struggled to regain a

footing in life. Some of the faculty have "moved on" (as if you can ever really move on) from the immediate trauma of Tony's murder. One faculty member, who was particularly close to Tony, Professor Alan Shapiro, was so traumatized by his murder, that I think it may have contributed to his own sudden premature death this past June. I wonder if any of us who truly knew Tony will ever get over this.

I can honestly say, your honor, that this murder permanently damaged the wonderful learning culture of our school. I urge you to consider this in your consideration of the sentencing. I think the perpetrators of this horrible crime should receive the maximum sentence allowable under the law.

Dr. Barry Marshall

Impact Statement for Tony Spaulding

I am Rev. Dr. Douglas Scalise, the Lead Pastor of Brewster Baptist Church where Tony and his family attend worship and participate in the life of our church. I knew Tony from middle school age until his death. At our church, Tony played drums for our early service for a while when he was in high school and he appreciated that opportunity and we were happy to have him serving God and others in a way he loved. Tony was sensitive, loving, musical, charming, emotional, inspirational, intelligent, intuitive, genuine, energetic hyper & never stopped moving, driven, a perfectionist.

Tony received his GED at Cape Cod Community College and was enrolled in New England Institute of Art pursuing his degree in audio engineering. Tony was a talented musician playing the guitar, piano, trombone, and the drums. He had a beautiful, soulful voice. He loved engineering recordings-movie soundtracks and live artists. He had the most amazing ear for sound. He was so young but had found his passion in music. Music was his healing. His greatest gift, however, was his ability to touch so many lives with his acceptance, love, and encouragement.

Tony loved being in the studio at school in Brookline working on projects. On Christmas Eve Tony came down to the front of the church sanctuary to speak to me after the service and we talked. He looked good, he was happy, he told me about his future plans working on audio, and looking forward to finishing school in March. I told him that was great and he even offered that when he was home he'd be happy to help us with our sound board. We shook hands, Tony had a good hand shake, and then he turned to go. I never could have imagined it was the last conversation we would have.

Losing someone like **Tony** at such a young age in such a tragic way is excruciatingly difficult. All of us who knew and who loved Tony are still coming to terms with our grief and loss. Tony's family and close friends will continue in our church's prayers in these difficult days especially **Chris, Randie, Cate, Maria, Hannah and their family as well as for Ari, Austin, and Connor and for all Tony's close friends.**

Tony's untimely death which came so suddenly and violently at such a young age is somewhat like a young man who goes off to war and who does not return to live out a long life with his loved ones. In the face of our loss and grief, we go on, carrying the scars of our grief over Tony with us.

Emily Marjorie MacPherson

Friday, February 20th, 2015

Victim Impact Statement

Commonwealth of Massachusetts vs Brian MacDonald and Bianca Hollenbeck

My name is Emily MacPherson. I'm an astrophysics research scientist at the Yale University Department of Astronomy. I grew up on Cape Cod, a town over from the Spaulding family. For several years, I was an administrative assistant at the Eastward Ho! Country Club in Chatham, where I met a Mount Holyoke College alumna who encouraged me to consider studying at her alma mater. After I'd begun my first year, Chris and Randie Spaulding happened to stumble upon that encouraging friend of mine, along with her husband, at a pizza place in Harwich. Both parties representing Mount Holyoke, with a hat and sweatshirt between them, they struck up a conversation about Cate and me, and how we were both off in South Hadley studying the stars – they'd wondered if we'd met each other yet. Meanwhile, I had started my classes, which were scattered about the Pioneer Valley – Smith, Amherst, Hampshire, and UMASS, and had begun to carpool with some of the other women in my major. By chance, the driver of the pool, one day, spoke about a chicken coop on the Cape – the Cape? That's you? That's me! The rest is history, as they say.

A few years later, we were back on the Island, astrophysics degrees in hand, yet as we often did throughout both of our lives, we fell back into what really mattered to us: human service. I discovered that the Spauldings had also worked for the Latham School, a residential treatment center for, among other things, children living with Prader-Willi syndrome and other chromosomal and behavioral disorders. After a few years working night shifts in a residential home for disabled adults myself, I had spent a year at Latham, just before leaving for college. We'd passed like ships in the night. I also discovered that Chris and Randie had created a non-profit of their own, in order to serve an underrepresented population of just-over-the-age-of-majority adults living with varying disabilities and challenges. I had the opportunity to join them at Transitions, where I worked with all three adult Spaulding women, and my life has been richer for it. They are my friends, my former colleagues, and much more.

On Tuesday, January 1st, 2013, I was on a JetBlue flight out of Fort Lauderdale. I was due to arrive at Bradley Int'l at 2:44pm. I had just been visiting my husband; a work responsibility had taken him to Florida for 11 weeks. I had started my new job at Yale without him, but managed to visit during the holiday break. My phone was on by the time we landed - a few minutes early - and a message popped up from Caitlin. 14 seconds, 1:32pm: Hey Emily, can you give me a call back as soon as you get this? Indeed, I was still buckled when she answered. "Tony was stabbed." You see, after hearing a sentence like this, your brain does awful things to you, it starts to imagine all of the possibilities that don't end in what you already know is coming next. I knew this because it had happened to me before. At 14 years old, I walked into my apartment and my mom said, "Oh Emily, Uncle Tom and Uncle Chuckie called." Now it might

seem different to an outsider, after all, uncles do call; it's not as descriptive as "Tony was stabbed" and yet it had the same sense. It was the same lifeboat, drawing near only to pass by. It was the same hand, holding on to mine as I dangled off a cliff, starting to pull me up before it letting me go. It was hope, it was hope that was already in vain, hope that the brain conjured up malevolently, knowing full well what was coming next. "Tony was stabbed." "He's dead." How many seconds did I just live, believing that "Tony was stabbed" meant Tony was hurt, Tony was recovering in a hospital, two adorable girls dancing around his bed, two doting mothers meeting his every request while he lay smiling, aching a little, maybe, but laughing nonetheless, flanked by his sister and his girlfriend, making wisecracks, teasing the lot of them. How many seconds did I imagine that this young man, seven years my junior, would go on to finish his degree in audio engineering, would produce records for other aspiring artists, would see promotions and opportunities to shine, would date, would marry, would walk Cate down the aisle and shake Matt's hand, would hold his nephews, his nieces, his godchildren, his *own* children? Maybe as many seconds as I had lived believing my father was still alive, right after my mom told me that my uncles had called, and right before my mom told me, too, "He's dead."

I had to believe, I had to wish, I had to hope, because the alternative was too dark to bear. The alternative was Cate without Tony, Chris without Tony, Randie without Tony, Maria without Tony, Hannah without Tony, Ari without Tony, and that couldn't be. That would be too much, that would be insurmountable. Wouldn't it?

Life after the murder is shockingly new and different. Life after murder means rewiring your entire existence. It means overwriting protocol. It means reformatting corrupted hopes and dreams for the future, because important elements no longer exist in the database. It means Cate not calling her brother anymore when she needs to hear his supportive words, his simple yet profound answers to her complicated questions, his advice, his wise understanding of their shared experience. Cate needed her brother. She needs him now. Cate wasn't finished knowing him or loving him. There is still a place for him in this world, we wanted him here, we need him here now, but that place is starkly empty. Brian MacDonald heard Tony's case, he found sufficient evidence, he swiftly deliberated the verdict and carried out the sentence of death. Death for daring to confront and disrespect a stranger found outside his bedroom door. Tony's punishment is everlasting, enduring. It is a punishment to every loved one, every moment of each day and it will never end. Tony's sentence wasn't lighter due to the color of his skin, it wasn't any lighter due to the fact that he had successfully completed high school and moved on to pursue a college degree. Tony's sentence wasn't any lighter even though his parents are upstanding members of their community. Tony's sentence wasn't any lighter even though he was a "good kid." Even though he didn't have a criminal record.

I feel empathy for all humans. I have empathy for John MacDonald, who we heard from last week. I have no doubt that, as we all hold deep and personal biases, he believes his son is lucky to have escaped with his life that night. He is shocked by what the prosecution says occurred; it can't be true. We know that shock too. We've asked all the same questions. To

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understand that people are put into situations all the time that they never imagined possible – and they are faced with decisions that I have never been faced with. I've tried to imagine all of the scenarios, the trope suggestions you hear by virtue of being against capital punishment, for instance. And yet, in all cases, in all potential circumstances, I cannot imagine taking the life of a human being and not feeling utterly full of sorrow for what could have been and the part I played. In that respect, I have to wonder why there is no remorse, no apology, only apathy, self-centrism and arrogance. Please help us correct this. Please let them pay a price worthy of stealing the beating heart from a well-loved and heavily-mourned man. Please let them pay the maximum penalty for ending Tony Spaulding's life.

Connor Brown

February 24, 2015

Victim Impact Statement

Commonwealth of Massachusetts vs. Brian MacDonald

When I first started commuting to Massachusetts from New Hampshire, I was attending NEIA. I was a little nervous because it was a big step in my life after leaving my other school; curry collage, for bad grades. For 6 Months I didn't have any friends in Boston, just classmates to talk to. I would eat lunch alone and wait for my classes to start up or get back from break. One class I attended in the last of the summer months, had a group of people I started to talk with, it all started due to all these police sirens around the school, one the guys in the group had a police scanner app on his phone, so I went to go ask what was going on "Yo man you got to listen to this, its going on right around the block" one of the guys in the group said to me. After having a conversation for a couple minutes, and introduce my self to the group, one man reaches out his hand, I recognize him as the first guy who talked to me in a friendly tone, he shakes my hand and says "I am Tony, nice to meet you Connor. For the last days of the semester we all hung out and chatted about backgrounds in music and sound recording, I always felt a little out of place since I really didn't have a lot of experience in any of it, but it was still great company. Semester ends.

This is it, I am moving to Boston for the start of September 2011, I got a great place to live near Fenway park, new start, roommates from craigslist, full time student at a great recording school, this is what all young adults want. Moved in, roommates met, its raining, one week of break left, it hasn't stopped raining., been in this apartment for 5 days, hasn't stopped raining, maybe this was a bad idea moving here, its ok, tough it out for a couple more days, then you are back to school, hopefully you will see those guys you met last semester.

SCHOOL STARTS. I got to my first class and see that is in my class. I hope some of the guys I meet last summer are in the class with me. What do you know its Tony? Tony and I go through class helping each

other with audio troubles
going, started hanging o
in school I started meeti
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was struggling a little m
always happy to do so. I
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always went to Tony, eve
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was as much as a mentor
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him. The year went on an
for the next lease term. A
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was that there wouldn't

September 2012, t
we had a roommate part
day. Life went on in the h
turned his room in to a fu
and I on the second floor
would all gather in Tony
21st birthday went by an
best times of our lives.

New years of 20
I miss the ball drop at the
miss too much, I get hom
to another house to watc
Tony doesn't look so hap
room and says he is sorry
New Year, I love you man
before he died, the rest is

Brian, if I shook han
house, I now curse that n
that you were welcomed
and the hands of my frien

depression and nightmares about the lool
lot of friends have moved away, my best f
the city anymore, and as the years went o
disbanded. I almost couldn't finish school
hallway I walked through had a memory o
talk to him, or enjoy a beer with him, ask I
I have been as strong as I possibly could t
friends from home think Boston is a bad p
event. I have finished school and have a jo
and I also freelance at the Brighton Music
Tony's favorite band "Big D and the Kids T
there. I think about him every time I am b
were right there next to me. I live with frig
one letter that you have is from my roomm
close with Tony's family, Tony's mothers
Cate, but this not the way I wanted to get
learning how to play the guitar and I know
play with my favorite drummer.

I ask that the maximum sentence is
the pain that he has caused to this wonder

Thank you, your honor.

Common
02-26-20
Nick Me

Dear Sir

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night of their lives. You can
never get back. Two parents
know many people that can
I saw in his mother's eyes

As you can see, Ted
destroyed the lives of countless
The fact that he is only on
that night, but he left countless
is still strong. I hope you can
should face. Anything below
maximum sentence is not
last name.

Hannah Christine Schupbach
February 23rd 2015
Victim Impact Statement
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Tony Spaulding was son
friend, a hardworking teammate
giving boyfriend, a devoted son
him up accurately and in order
rest of my life talking. His bright
him. To me, he was a best friend
integral aspect of the person I am
but he also knew exactly when
and he changed my life in the moment

Tony brought out the best
your team. When I think back to
there holding my hand. He would
feeling. His laugh shot straight
he was in. I remember lying in bed
wondering what the future had
about his family and his music and
remember watching him excel in
the feeling I got in my chest when
school's hallway. And I remember
when I woke up to the news of his

Finding out that someone
violent and heinous way change
my chest and I couldn't think. I
might still be. My world changed
senses dulled. I had a constant
into a dull aching sensation. This

that made me the angriest was that I was living my life in a way that Tony wouldn't have wanted for anyone. He believed in living a peaceful and joyous life and because of Brian MacDonald's actions so many of us will never be able to live that intended life.

Sometimes if I sit quietly and listen as hard as I can, I can almost hear his voice. I try and silence the anger I feel in my heart. Tony was better than that and I can work my hardest to be the bigger person. I have become calloused and scared. I am filled with panic when I see an unexpected phone call pop up because I worry I will lose another friend too soon. But when Brian MacDonald murdered my friend, he took away everything I loved about Tony. He took away my friend. He took away a brother, a boyfriend, a son and a full and colorful future. Brian MacDonald will never know me or know my story but I will never be able to get his name out of my mind. He stole what I cared about most from me when he murdered Tony Spaulding. He doesn't care about how many sleepless nights I have spent crying myself to sleep or shaking in my bed. He doesn't care about the fact the last two years have been painted grey because of him. He doesn't care that his selfish choice affected hundreds of people. Those people will never see the world quite as brightly as they did with Tony Spaulding in it.

True justice will never happen unfortunately because in a just world, Tony would still be with us. But in order for this court to make a just decision, I implore you to give Brian MacDonald the maximum sentence for his crime. He needs to serve those years so the friends and family of Tony Spaulding can begin to heal and learn how to live in a world without him in it. The world has become a disappointing and terrifying place for so many young people I know because of Brian MacDonald but seeing him receive the maximum sentencing might be the first thing that has made sense in the last two years.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to say all of the things that have been on my mind for the last two years. I hope you will take all of this and the voices of my peers into consideration. I am very grateful for this chance. Thank you, your honor.

Douglas Brown and Donna Taylor Brown

February 25th, 2015

Victim Impact Statement

Commonwealth of Massachusetts vs Brian MacDonald and Bianca Hollenbeck

We are the parents of Connor Brown, one of Tony's housemates at Pratt Street. Connor and Tony were also class mates at The New England Institute of Arts (NEIA) pursuing degrees in the same area of discipline. They were also best friends and while not biological, most definitely brothers. Connor is an only child, and as he became an adult developed relationships with certain friends that went well beyond friendship and into the realm of family. Tony Spaulding was one of those individuals in Connor's life. Tony and Connor met well before moving into the Pratt Street house and had decided they wanted to move into a house together along with Austin Brown another classmate and friend from NEIA. During the fall of 2012, Connor was a full time time student at NEIA and worked a minimum 30 hour week at Fago De Chao, a Brazilian Steakhouse in Boston's Copley Place.

Donna and I had the opportunity to meet and spend time with Tony only a couple times. In October of 2012 Tony was supposed to join Connor, Donna and I for dinner at Fago's. During dinner Connor get a text from Tony that something had come up and he couldn't make it. When we dropped Connor off at Pratt Street after dinner I asked Tony why he didn't join us. He said that he didn't feel like he had the right kind of "dress clothes" to go to a place like Fago's. We talked a while and Tony was the kind of kid that you immediately liked. He was very respectful, warm, and considerate. He asked Donna and I alot of questions about us (which I find unusual these days with young people) and he spoke about how much he, Connor and Austin loved each other and had so much in common. It was pouring rain that night and some neighbors began coming out into the streets to raise concern that the water was rising up over the sidewalks and into their lawns. They were concerned it would get into their homes. Tony immediately ran into the streets and began clearing backed up debris out of the draining pipes (getting soaked and grungy in all that water runoff) that allowed the water to recede and drain properly. The neighbors treated him like a hero. After spending some more time with Tony over the next two months, I found that effort to kind of define Tony. His first instinct was to help others, he didn't appear to have selfish bone in his body.

Donna and I have been impacted by Tony's murder in several ways. We often talk that the horrible phone call that night could have come to us since Connor's bedroom was right next to Tony's where the altercation started. Now when we receive very late at night phone calls we panic prior to answering and once we know it doesn't concern Connor we can relax. Needless to say, from a parent to Tony's parents, we try try to understand the pain Tony's Mom's and sisters are enduring but of course you can't even come close.

Our other major impact is our concerns for Co
stabblings, he was very much involved with the
cradled Tony in front of the Pratt Street house
the bleeding. He saw up close the extensive d
slowing drifting away. He, and Tony, we're bo
this disaster? How will he carry it for the rest
real reply. We ask him if he wakes up in the n
ask him if perhaps if he knew what was going
prevented it or changed the course of the out
our son, and when he reacts to our inquiries i
eating him up inside but he is to strong head
he'll share this pain with us, but we will leave
someday consume him. We just hope he will a

Here is what we do know about how this has a
day. We know he posts Happy Birthday notice
loves him.

Now finally to the sentencing. There are so ma
family and friends, the murder of Tony Spauld
the course of events that unfolded, did McDor
home. Just get out of there. But no he makes a
about Brian McDonald's character and sole? W
whatever one wants to call it that allowed him
that evil seed, he should spend the maximum
will be set free some day. What happens next.
disaster. Once again Brian had plenty of chanc
something inside him, something evil made hi
into a real tragedy. That is why he deserves th

Thank you

Doug Brown and Donna Taylor-Brown

Commonwealth v. Brian McDonald

One of my best friends and the best friend anyone could ask for was Tony Spaulding. We shared many good memory's and some bad and thoroughly enjoyed spending time together. I actually spoke to tony just a couple hours before he was murdered and when I was awoken by a phone call the next morning saying he was dead I merely laughed at first in disbelief thinking why would someone say that as a joke. It wasn't until my worst fears were confirmed after hearing the devastating news from his sister that it sunk in and I broke down think about how anything so horrible could happen to one of the most kind hearted souls I know. I no longer feel completely safe in this world since that day and my perspective is forever changed. I feel the two scumbag people responsible for his death should serve the maximum sentence.

Tyler Wolcott

Carrie A. Reddington

February 26th, 2015

Victim Impact Statement

Commonwealth of Massachusetts vs Brian MacDonald

In life you aren't always lucky enough to get off to an easy, safe start while figuring out the world. I didn't. Prior to college, my experience with people, especially men, was rocky and disappointing. When I came to college I had one best friend and was extremely protective over myself, not trusting anyone and quickly being known as the shy girl. When I met new people, even if I did want a friendship, my comfort level would take a long while to raise. I remember the day where that defensive broken record smoothed, and it was the day that I met Tony.

Tony was instantly welcoming. Two of my friends and I were coming up to our dorms when we spotted someone standing alone at the doorway, clearly a fellow student. My friends, being much more outgoing than I am, quickly made a point to say hello. Tony was so extremely friendly, and sensing my shyness, was gentle with his approach to me. I remember that day it was very sunny, a truly beautiful day.

As we all made our way exploring around Boston I remember thinking to myself "Wow, I'm not worried around this guy!", a huge feat for me. It was absolutely evident that Tony was a genuinely great person from the first day meeting him, in no way a threat. We continued to be friends for years, having a great time in college - talking about our beliefs, values, futures, friendships, the list goes on and on. He didn't know how bright he was, but what he did know was his own effortless kindness and just how important that was to the world.

When I learned that Tony had passed away I felt like ice had been shot through my veins. And when I later found out that he had been murdered, I felt a piece of me leave that I will never get back. I cried for what felt like an entire year, I still cry about it. Now, on sunny days I like to believe that it's Tony watching out for me, I'll have dreams where he's saying hello again and asking me how I've been. And as sweet as it feels to remember him, it hurts twice

as much. When I think about Ari, Cate, his mothers, sisters, friends and everyone else who cared for him, my heart feels swollen and my throat becomes tight.

When someone dies it is hard enough. But when someone is murdered it is so much worse. You want to come to their defense, find something that you could have done, something that many of my close friends have struggled with. It took me a long time to learn, but I know it is still true - some people want to rip the wings off of a butterfly just to watch it squirm, and that is Brian. There is NO reason that Tony deserved to be murdered, there is absolutely no justification for Brian's actions and there never will be.

As long as Brian is in jail, it will not be long enough. He did not only take away a friend and loved one - he took away security, laughter, trust, any feeling of content for his friends and family that survived him. I have seen the panic run through my friends eyes when they even hear the word stab, death, murder, killed - in media, a passing by conversation, a song. You see, Brian's crime does not end with his murder. It has brought enough grief and loss that pieces in every one of us died that day as well. I hope Brian receives the maximum sentencing possible, and even that won't be enough, but it's a start.

I love you Tony, you will forever be in our hearts as the greatest friend we will have ever known.

Thank you, Your Honor, for taking the time to read this and all of our statements.

Gina Dianne Vitale

February 23, 2015

Victim Impact Statement

Commonwealth of Massachusetts vs Brian MacDonald

To Whom It May Concern,

When I think of Tony Spaulding, I think of a caring, talented, compassionate, friendly, loving and funny boy. I think of the boy whose hand I used to hold in the hallway of our high school, the one who sat across from me in choir and the one who would come with me after school to the beach to drink coffee and watch the choppy water from my car. We dated during the last year and half that I was in high school.

Our paths crossed here and there, Harwich is a small town and we both were involved in the arts department. A friendship through mutual friends and hobbies turned into more. The summer that we were together, he worked at the Dairy Queen up the street from the restaurant I bussed tables at. I ate a kiddie twist cone dipped in chocolate almost every day because I would visit him.

His death has made me really think about what that relationship meant to me. At the time, Tony was my entire world. I was seventeen and wrapped up in him and the idea that maybe we would end up together forever. Well, six years later, after finishing high school, going to college, dating a few of the wrong people there, graduating and finding the right one, I can say that Tony and I were never meant to be. It is clear, he had found his other half in Arianna, but there is not a doubt in my mind that Tony was the first person I ever loved.

Tony attended two proms with two of my best friends. He was in a band with my prom date. We had an extended group of mutual friends. We were in classes together and extracurricular activities together. Tony touched everyone he met. He didn't judge anyone, and gave everyone a chance to be his friend. Tony taught people how to be open and loved his friends and family unconditionally. I always remember thinking that he was willing to hug his friends more than any other high school aged boy I had ever seen. Tony was raised with love in his home and it showed in his social life.

I am only a few weeks older than Tony was, but a year ahead of him in school so after we had stopped seeing each other I went away to school. We lost touch and grew apart. In that time, I know that he earned his GED, worked, and found himself at college in Boston in a program that was perfect

for his talents. He had made a whole new group of friends that have now community as an extension of him. The boy that I had been so infatuated intelligent, driven, yet still loving young man.

Tony's death has been one of the hardest things I have ever dealt that sometimes life isn't fair, but his death was just that- unfair. I nanny tv and remind them daily to, "keep their hands to themselves". Lessons on fil (verbally or physically) are lessons we learn as babies and toddlers. They a to be ingrained by the time we go to school as children. Clearly, Brian Mac missed these early lessons.

Brian MacDonald and Bianca Hollenback took it upon themselves finish school, be broke and learn from it, get his dream job, marry his soul amazing father, watch his younger sisters grow up and be at his older sister will never do any of these things as a direct result of Brian MacDonald and on January 1, 2013.

Brian MacDonald has shown no remorse for his actions that night did not find him guilty of the higher charge so that the court was obligated twenty-five years. I feel that Brian should be sentenced to the maximum s voluntary manslaughter. Don't get me wrong, Brian MacDonald being pun the law would be satisfying, however the only thing more satisfying would to begin with. His parents should be ashamed of the job they did raising hi his actions that night, and behavior after the fact. He is a foul, disgusting, MacDonald is a coward that deserves to spend as long as possible in prison

I know that the world we live in isn't black and white, there are gr The law should be different. It should be cut and dry. Brian MacDonald br life ended. When people do awful things, they are supposed to be punished that even in jail, he will still see his mother and family members, he will ha things in life that Tony never will.

The heartbreak I feel for Tony's mothers and sisters is the worst fe with me throughout the last two years, and has given me an insight to the in such an open way that I can't even begin to understand. His family is str

However, that doesn't change the fact that these women have lost their only son and brother. I have tried to put myself in their shoes and imagine what my life would be like if I lost my only brother and I literally cannot imagine it.

When someone passes away, the people who love you tell you to think of the happy times, they tell you it gets easier even if you always miss that person. They tell you that person is still with you in spirit or that they are in a better place. I believe all of these things, and I know I have said them to others before. You take this advice with a grain of salt. I have the happiest memories of Tony but because getting him justice has been such a long and rocky road, my memories of him are tainted. Brian MacDonald already took Tony away from so many people, we should be able to keep our happy memories of him. The people who loved Tony need this closure to move forward and start to bounce back. Tony wouldn't have wanted any one of us sitting in this limbo, dwelling on the negative. Brian MacDonald needs to go to jail so that when I have a kiddie twist ice cream cone from Dairy Queen, I can smile and think about the first boy I ever loved; the first boy who just maybe loved me back, instead of thinking about how violently and unfairly his life ended. He needs to go to jail so that everyone involved can still believe in our justice system.

I thank you for taking the time to read this statement. And again would please ask that you sentence Brian MacDonald for as long as you have the power to do so. There is an entire town, family, extended family and different groups of friends waiting for justice and closure. Brian MacDonald will never change, I truly believe he will always be this monster, so please, put him away for as long as possible to save other people from knowing the tragedy we all feel in losing Tony. He was absolutely, one-of-a-kind, and the world is a less full place without him. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Gina Dianne Vitale

Patricia A. Williams

February 24, 2015

Victim Impact Statement

Commonwealth of Massachusetts vs Brian MacDonald

I am Randie Spaulding's sister, Tony's aunt. I was driving home New Year's Day 2013 from a night spent at a hotel celebrating the New Year with friends. I heard my phone ring in my purse several times. Thinking it was just friends and relatives calling to wish me a Happy New Year, I kept driving. When I got home I realized the calls were from my sister Randie. I remember thinking what could be so important, alarm bells went off in my head but I told myself she was just calling to wish me a Happy New Year.

When I called Randie back and she told me the news about Tony's death, I could not take it in. I said "what" even though I heard perfectly what my sister was saying. My mind could not comprehend it. She asked me to call our other relatives to tell them what had happened. After I hung up the phone I could not move. This does not happen to real people, I remember thinking. This is something that only happens on TV. A car accident or anything else I could understand, but not someone deliberately taking the life of a family member and someone that I loved. To have someone take the life of another person that I knew, especially someone like Tony was unthinkable.

My family and I live in Wisconsin, so it had been awhile since I had seen Tony. As most sisters do though whenever I talked with her we discussed our kids and what they were up to. I knew Tony was a talented musician, a smart kid, great student and a loved baseball. What I knew myself about Tony whenever we went to Cape Cod or they came to Wisconsin to visit was that he was sensitive, usually had a smile on his face, was polite and always offered to help out. My sons, especially my oldest always looked forward to our visits and hanging out with Tony. He is a couple of years younger but Tony always had time for him. He had his moments like all teenage boys do, but we all enjoyed our time with Tony whenever we had our visits.

The last time we had been out to the Cape to visit, Tony was 16. Tony worked in a kite shop on the Cape. We went there to get a windsock I could hang on my camper at the lake. I wanted the perfect windsock. Tony helped me pick out the perfect one! A frumpy lady in her swimsuit, holding an inner tube. I still have that windsock to this day and will never get rid of it. I will never get to enjoy seeing my nephew on these visits again. We all drove to New York City that last visit when Tony was alive as well. We have pictures of all the kids together. Those are the last pictures we will have of the cousins together, because Brian Macdonald chose to take this smart, sensitive and kind young man's life.

After I got that phone call that New Year's Day, I know I called the other relatives, but I don't really remember doing it. I told my 19 year old son Tom to come out to the dining room. I dreaded telling him. I knew he would be upset. I wasn't wrong. He cried for hours.... He was devastated. I don't think either one of us moved from where we were sitting the rest of the day. My husband came home from work and we talked about it into the night. I read every article I could find and watched every news video. I think I was just thinking it maybe could help me make sense of why anyone would do anything so

horrible to another human being. It was like I was reading about someone else though. Having 2 sons myself I could not even imagine going on after having one of them taken from me, especially in such a violent senseless way!

I am not sure why I worked up until the day I flew out for the funeral as I could not concentrate and cried on and off for most of the day. I was not crying for me, as much as I was crying for Tony's Mom's and sisters. I just wanted to be out East so I could hug them and give them as much support as possible, but I was nervous about leaving my two boys behind. Ever since this has happened I have been scared that something like this could happen to my kids as well. My oldest in college and I can't help thinking that this same thing could happen to him. I know I can't protect them from the world but as a parent you think that you should be able to keep something like this from happening.

I know how it affected my sister, Randie. She had to quit her job because of this person who so casually took her son's life. I know Tony's sister Cate lost her best friend, and his mother, Chris lost her baby boy. Maria and Hannah lost their hero. He loved those girls so much. He could have been jealous when they were adopted, but he wasn't! He was their number one fan and cheerleader! They will never be the same, none of us will ever be the same. There will always be a hole, something missing when we go out to the Cape to visit. I don't know Brian MacDonald, but I doubt his being in prison will leave a hole in anyone's life. How could such a horrible person be missed by anyone? Maybe his parents will mourn the fact that they have a son that could commit such a violent act instead of the son they wish they had. All I can think is that they should consider themselves lucky to have him out of there life.

I saw firsthand how Brian MacDonald's heinous act affected Tony's friends and girlfriend as well. My heart broke for those young people as I heard their account of what happened early that New Year day. The New Year is supposed to be the time of new beginning, of renewed hope, especially when you are young and your whole life is in front of you. Tony's whole life was in front of him until Brian MacDonald took it. He took all of Tony's friend's hopes, and dreams of the future with Tony in it as well that morning. Tony's girlfriend will never know how their love story would have ended, as Tony was taken before the story had hardly even begun. Tony will never have that career in music, marry or have children that could carry on his talent as a musician.

Please sentence Brian MacDonald to the maximum amount of time allowed in prison under Massachusetts law for someone sentenced with voluntary manslaughter. It is a way to small of a price to pay for all he has taken from Tony and those that loved him. Thank you, your honor.

Sincerely,

Tricia Williams

Thomas Jeffrey Williams

February 26nd, 2015

Victim Impact Statement

Commonwealth of Massachusetts vs. Brian MacDonald

Ever since I was very little, probably as far back as I can remember, Tony has always been in my life one way or another. Though I did not see him often I cannot think of any bad memories with him. I cannot even think of okay memories with him. Every memory has been exceptionally enjoyable with him. In my earliest memories we would play games near the woods, at his old home in Red Wing, Minnesota. Even after moving to Massachusetts, the memories would not stop there. We would play video games and I got to see him play in his little league game when my family and I visited for a week one year. In 2007, we visited again, and he found the time to teach me how to play a little bit of guitar when it was an interest of mine.

Though there are not many memories that we shared (there are more that I didn't list though), the memories that we did have were great, and I cherished them dearly. I heard of a possibility of Tony and his immediate family visiting soon in 2012. I was rather curious and excited if that was going to come into fruition. I wondered if there were going to be even more memories made that I could look back on fondly. Of course that didn't happen that year, so I thought "maybe next year."

When I woke up New Year's Day, I went about my normal business, until my mother called for me. When I went to see what happened, she told me of Tony's murder. I didn't believe it at first. No one believes stories like that first. So, in my state of disbelief, I sat. I just sat and stared at the empty dining room in front of me. Slowly and painfully, reality started to creep into

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heartless as I heard you were at the trial, I hope horrible things happen to you in prison. The man who puts a shiv in your gullet is a hero in my eyes.

Words cannot express how much I miss you Tony. Keep strumming your guitar and save me a spot up there.

02/18/2015

Janet DeFilippo

Commonwealth of Massachusetts vs. Brian MacDonald and Bianca Hollenbeck

Tony Spaulding was an incredible gift to the world. I met him when he was a freshman in high school and I, a junior. I was immediately impressed with his charisma and character. We grew closer over the next couple years, all the more demonstrating so much of the compassion, respect, and optimism our world sorely lacks. It's truly a dimmer place without him.

I was a senior when I truly got to know Tony and his background. I can tell you Tony loved his family unlike anyone I have met before. He was a protector, an encourager, and an empathetic son. He would always express to me how much he wanted to always do right by his family and be a hard worker just like his parents.

I was so unbelievably thrilled when I found out he was coming to the same college as me. I knew he would love the freedom of the city and have a fun time growing. But I knew Tony was the type to grow fast and forward. He was on track to graduate and had been doing more work than any 21 year old I have ever known.

I remember my last conversation with Tony before trying to see him on New Years Eve. I told him to enjoy his trip to Cape Cod and call me when he got back. We hadn't hung out in a couple months. Which prompted me for some reason to tell him I hope he was being careful and to watch out for bad people. I knew Tony had 100x the love and energy for dozens of people and knew him well enough to know he gave almost none of the same energy back to himself.

I could tell he seemed more tired and he told me how he was ready to move out of Allston and take time for himself. With graduation on the horizon he was getting his priorities straight and moving forward to the next stages of his life with no idea it would be cut short in the following weeks.

I have been a witness to my fathers passing, I have felt the sting of deaths whip when he comes. But I can not describe to you what it feels like when a loss of a loved one is not at the hands of death or God or a cosmic contract, but instead at the hands of a 26 year old boy and his girlfriend. My father died from cancer and as hard and quick as it was and felt, I had my chance to say goodbye. I got to sit with him and work through why or why not it was happening.

I didn't wake up the next day after a celebration and have a friend tell me he was gone and only gone because someone found it acceptable to play God and take his life in an atrocious manner. Because life is mysterious but it isn't cruel. People can be cruel. and Brian MacDonald and Bianca Hollenbeck are cruel. Cruel, cruel people.

I say this because my first thought when I first heard how and what happened was what kind of person even brings a knife out with them for what is supposed to be celebration for everyone, unless he had intent to use it from the moment he left his house. If it wasn't Tony, it would be somebody else, and that I am most certain of.

The type of person who arms himself before going to a college party with babies, children in my eyes; kids who are 5, 6, maybe 7 years younger is the CRUEL type of person looking for trouble.

My heart sank and I simply said it had to be a mistake, there is no way, and this feeling only got

worse as details of the story continued to come. I knew Tony so well I could picture it all. I knew that the fact that he was in his room to begin with while a party went on meant I wanted to chill out and go to bed. I knew it also meant if he was tired he could have been more than usual to speak up about any excessiveness, and unfortunately with someone walking around flaunting a knife it made for trouble.

Tony was NEVER the type to seek out a fight. He never wanted anyone to be mad at him. He was a peace maker through and through. You can understand that about his character that he attempted to apologize and make amends. He knew it was New Years and probably didn't want to ruin anyone's good time. Instead of meeting him with a handshake and a nod, the unstable and cruel people thought it was their place to take my friend's life. They believed that being asked to be quiet was so threatening and so unruly that violence was the best solution. That was the better way to handle the situation than to mutilate someone they didn't even know.

And they knew they were in trouble, that's why they fled. I used to live maybe 100 yards from Pratt and then in Brighton, a stone's throw from where Brian was living. You don't run to get away from a fight. You run that distance to hide evidence and formulate a story. I can run 10 feet and get lost in a crowd, ESPECIALLY on New Years Eve. You run far to realize you butchered someone because they asked you to be quiet in their house. The fact that it takes for someone to try and justify that behavior is shameful and frankly, despicable.

Losing Tony wasn't just like losing a brother, it was losing hope. It meant we existed in a world where hard working, empathetic, wise people could be removed at the hands of the exact person Tony stood against. It meant having to watch my attitude around strangers in a place that had been my home for almost a decade because you just didn't know who you were interacting with. It lifted a veil of optimism and replaced it with fear.

Which is why I believe Bianca and Brian deserve maximum sentencing. I have a great deal of respect for a person so quick to turn a miscommunication into a funeral. You can know a convict by their actions. I know if I hang out with someone whose been arrested 10 times for theft, they're probably going to rob me. It's the people with the capacity to snap like this with no previous record that cause the most concern and should be a concern to the general public.

I believe in the good in people and believe in second chances but only when someone proves to me they understand working as a collective toward peace and calm is what the world needs. Tony understood, that's why he tried to apologize. He understood people have to work hard to rise above. That's why an argument doesn't matter, what happens after it does. Decent people try to put their pride aside for resolution.

I don't understand why anyone's reaction would be to stab another person to death. It's so close and so personal. There is no remorse with a knife like there is with a gun. Knives are intimate, you have to physically exert yourself and feel the violence in your action. That's not serious. That's enjoyment.

I saw Tony's face everywhere. TV, school, Facebook, newspapers, it made my head spin. It made it unreal while also reminding me.

I would expect him at school nights we would be in the computer lab together or getting cigarettes together but he never came back. I failed my classes and had to leave school. I went from being school to being the place we got to hang out while busting our humps or making out. I was talking about going from the Cape to Boston. I couldn't focus. I had to leave school and it was so easy since. I can tell you anyone who went to school with Tony (Middle and High School)

will tell you that Tonys spirit and enthusiasm could
made me a more enthusiastic person like him just
throughout that school and changed the whole atm

I know that even in death Tony would probab
coming to them" and I can only hope that any fract
smudge this loss has left on the lives of anyone wh
of.

I miss the person who would stop and help a c
up a conversation with anyone as if they'd met 1,00
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I WON'T miss the person completely willing to aff
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Bianca and Brian are cruel people with no resp
and people who don't play by the rules don't deserv
the people who bite their tongues or say sorry first
with people who don't respect my right to LIFE. W
and pain is okay and can be decided in one quick se
disregard human life.

To the Spaulding family, I love you and adm
people in the face while they justify why Tony sho
punished for it. And I hope you can begin to fully
again to consider the caliber of hate and inhumanit
while someone shouts with encouragement. I hope
wrath of these two had subsided. I have been punc
friends present and we all walked away alive and v
understanding that someones mother is waiting to
Someones brother will be waiting for them at their
justify taking someone away from their family or t

I'm fearful of people who can't understand the
Thank You.

Katelyn Anne Popp

February 26th, 2015

Victim Impact Statement

Commonwealth of Massachusetts vs Brian MacDonald

Cate Spaulding (Tony's older sister) is one of my best friends from college. We met our very first day there when we were moving in. Three years later, it was our senior year and we lived in a large suite with two other friends, Sarah & Caroline. The end of senior year is a mix of emotions and events. After graduations and ceremonies, we had to face move-out day and four years of accumulated stuff.

While I'm sorry to say that I only met her brother, Tony, once or twice in my life, I distinctly remember seeing him that last day on-campus. Tony had driven over two hours to help Cate finish packing and moving out. When he finished helping her, he was ready to leave until he noticed Caroline could use some help, too. Without hesitation, he started bagging and boxing until Caroline was also fully packed, car loaded, ready for her long drive home. That's honestly my single memory of him — helping Cate (because he came to help her) and Caroline (because he could).

Throughout our senior year living together, and friendship before that, Cate & I talked about our siblings often and I remember how proudly she'd always speak of her brother and sisters. Both of us had families of four kids, me with three brothers, and Cate with one. I remember hearing her talk of Tony and thinking, "yes, that's like my brother, Mike, and me, too." They, like us, had a special bond from growing up with close ages and life experiences. You can't break that apart, but Brian MacDonald did in the worst possible way.

On New Year's Eve 2012, I attended a party at a friend's apartment in Boston. I had a great time, seeing new and old friends, celebrating my favorite holiday of the year. I woke up the next morning, laughing and looking through pictures with friends who had been there. I was completely oblivious to the nightmare Cate and her family were going through. The call they got in the middle of the night, the nightmare Tony had already been through. I forget exactly how I heard the news later that morning — from Cate or Caroline, call or text. I just remember how the blow felt, and he wasn't even my brother. But he was Cate's, and Cate's best friend, and that matters.

I know that fear of losing family, a sibling. A fear of their death someday, but you don't really think to have a full fear of murder. It seems so far away. You can't prepare for that. You shouldn't have to. I remember sobbing so suddenly. Of my own brothers, I had perhaps worried about my younger two "overdoing it" at their frat parties, figuring I just had to trust them not to drink too much. That's all. I had placed my fears on them not being safe enough, making poor choices, not on others harming them, let alone fatally. Who goes to a party and kills someone?

Every New Year's Eve, you think excitedly about the immediate future, how this year would be better than the last. But how was the entirety of 2012 "tough" in comparison to this first day of 2013? Who can think of resolutions and excitement for days to come, when, for Tony, the days aren't going to come at all? The headlines called it "The First Murder of 2013" like it was a record or a prize. It's horrific.

I have a hard time remembering anniversary dates. I mix up the months of my parents' wedding. I forget which day of January my grandmother passed away. I forget what day it was that we graduated. But, by nature of it being a holiday, I will never forget the anniversary of Tony Spaulding's murder. My own grandmother's last day, sadly, but not Tony's. If I can't accidentally forget it, how do those closer to him do so? Every coming holiday a certain, painful reminder, with a quite literal countdown by the world around you, celebrating that day.

It's not just the future pain any more though. I've seen the Spaulding family and Tony's friends go through enough pain for a lifetime, and it's two years of this now. At Tony's funeral, family and friends did everything they could to honor his life in a beautiful way - there were musical tributes, slideshows, full memory boards, and more. The pews were full. His friends were all there, grieving, traumatized, in their late teens... It speaks volumes to his character that they kept referring to him as their brother, not just a friend. They had lost a sibling too. I kept thinking of them having a New Year's Eve that started the same as mine but ended so differently — futilely trying to save their young friend's life with their bare hands.

The next time we were in that church, it was Cate's wedding a year later. I (accidentally) sat on the groom's side, the same side of the church where I sat for Tony's funeral, and could see Cate's family across the aisle. This wedding is one we'd anticipated since college. Cate and Matt were high school sweethearts and they're great together. It was a matter of time but it wasn't supposed to happen this way. The way it was supposed to happen was actually pretty simple. Cate wasn't someone who had been planning details of her wedding since childhood, not colors, not dresses. The only detail she had ever planned throughout her life was that Tony would walk her down the aisle someday. While it was still a beautiful wedding, it was not the full-smile, happy affair it should have been. Tony was taken from that ceremony, and reception, missing when he was supposed to be front and center — walking her down the aisle, maybe playing some music instead of the DJ, being there for any wedding jitters. Cate, though, has proven that she is so remarkably strong and full of love in spite of her pain and anger and grief. If Tony couldn't be there, she'd make him be there in all of her loving tributes throughout the day. Her wedding photos were taken by his headstone. She and Matt had recently gotten Tony's tattoo copied on their own calves. While most brides share a happy wedding photo online, Cate shared that photo — a picture of their tattoos by Tony's grave, her white dress in the background. On the dance floor, their first dance was to one of Tony's songs or a favorite of his. It was a beautiful wedding, I just wish it could have been her dream. I wish Tony could have physically been there and never been taken.

Somehow, our two-year college reunion happened, meaning two years had passed by since I'd first seen Tony. A second generation past us were moving out of their own dorm rooms

now. Cate, Caroline, and I tried to recreate our senior year dorm room and stayed in one large room together. There were parties outside and downstairs. We could have hopped between them, but we mostly spent the evening in our room, playing a word game. Unlike college though, before we started, a friend helped us remove any word clues related to murder, stabbing, death, etc. How were there so many in a game we'd played so many times in college? How was this a game? We had a party-music playlist in the background and had to jump to change it when songs like Ke\$ha's popular "Die Young" came on. This was the first "normal" evening I'd had with Cate and Caroline since the murder, since college really, and in that one evening, I couldn't count how many triggers were there, reminders of murder when we should be celebrating reminders of our last two years out of school and memories from school itself. At the end of the weekend, we were packing up the room while Cate played music from Tony's favorite band.

For my own brothers, they've had to deal with a much clingier sister whose fear of losing them multiplied when strangers became a new layer of consideration. When I witnessed the pain of a sibling taken away and much too soon.

For Brian MacDonald, I hope he receives full justice for this. It was a gruesome murder and one that is tied to painful, recurring reminders of the loss. The Spauldings and broader circle of Tony's friends deserve to sleep soundly knowing his murderer isn't out living his life freely and potentially harming others in the future. They've had to live with his freedom since he was released on bail. They should have peace knowing the world is a bit safer with him away at jail for as long as judiciously possible.

Like I said, I'm sorry to say that I only met Tony once or twice in my life. I figure I should have met him at least four times by now, in his. Based on the love of those who knew him, my life would be better off if I had.

Eliza Lord

February 26th, 2015

Victim Impact Statement

Commonwealth of Massachusetts vs. Brian Macdonald

The night of Tony Spaulding's murder is in my mind every day of my life. I have never experienced so many terrible emotions simultaneously at any other time of my life, as I had that night. I have never seen such close friends, and even people who had never met Tony, break down in ways I had never seen a person break down. Tony had such a positive legacy that even people who didn't know him well, or didn't know him at all, were heartbroken and utterly shocked to hear of his passing. I was one of those people.

I didn't know Tony well. We went to the same college and had many mutual friends, but I only had the blessing of actually formally meeting him on New Years Eve night; the night of his death. I had heard many, many positive things about Tony and he was a best friend of many of my best friends. They always talked about how great he was as a musician, a friend, and a person in general. One of my closest friends, Nick Aroyan, recently reminisced to me, "Tony was just good at life, for lack of a better phrase. He was on another level. That's the most important thing we can take from all of this. I wish everyone had more time with him". I had been looking forward to meeting the great man everyone talked about, but unfortunately his life was taken from him before I got that chance.

Fast forward to the night of New Years Eve. That night, and the entire week after that is a blur of breakdowns and panic attacks. I will never forget the look of blatant horror on my friend Abbot's face as he held Tony's body as he frantically yelled to me to call an ambulance. I'll never forget Nick running from the house and dropping to his knees screaming when he laid eyes on his best friend, lifeless in the snow. I'll never forget the next week when none of us left the house, none of us slept, and none of us ate. I'll never forget watching each and every person that was in that house break down, on their own, some of them crying in others' arms and some of them trying to find privacy to cry for hours. I'll never forget the hours upon hours of hearing stories about Tony. I'll never forget how hard we all cried and how we all assured each other that one day it would be okay, even though it still doesn't feel okay. Though I didn't know Tony well, watching my best friends who loved Tony with all of their hearts, break down like that, will forever be one of the most painful and tragic things I have ever been through.

To this day I still cry about that night. My heart breaks that Tony never got a chance to live his life to his full, amazing potential. I feel sick to my stomach when I think about what exactly was blatantly taken from him. Tony left behind not only loving friends and family, but a world of people he was bound to make a positive difference to, and a world of people he could have shown his greatness to; a world of people he could have met, befriended, and loved.

This brings me to Brian Macdonald. Brian, you are the one that coldly robbed Tony of his life at such a young age. Because of you, hundreds and hundreds of people will be in pain for the rest of their lives. Because of you, and your complete and utter lack of remorse, your complete lack of compassion

for another human life, your decision that you made to choose to end Tony's life in a brutal and morbid way, nothing will ever be the same. Because you have the privilege to continue on with your life, you get a chance to have new experiences, and follow life wherever it takes you. Tony will never get that chance. His family will never get the chance to watch him succeed. The love of his life will never get to marry him. Could you even understand the pain that the consequences of your actions have caused to so many people? Would even a 25 year sentence make up for the loss of a loved ones life? Of course it can't. Could any sentence ever reverse the pain we've felt? Never. But one thing that all of us could maybe hope for, is that a 25 year sentence could give Brian Macdonald a long enough time to be able to feel some remorse for taking the life of an amazing person. Maybe a 25 year sentence is the closest fair consequence for a life lost, that we could hope maybe he could begin to understand the brokenness we've all been through. None of this seems fair to Tony's loved ones, but the first step to healing could be to go home knowing that Brian Macdonald, the man whose decisions effected a lifetime of hurt, will not walk as a free man. We will love and support each other in honor of Tony, and carry on his positive legacy for the rest of our lives.

I'd like to end this with the words of Tony Spaulding himself. "Let's all focus on improving ourselves and the world we live in, not feeding into this negativity and giving it attention to reinforce it." I feel as though I speak for everyone who knew Tony, that we only wish to see Brian Macdonald receive the consequences of his actions to the extent of the decisions he made, and that we only want justice for the amazing man that Tony was, and could have grown to be.

I thank the court and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for the opportunity to speak. I ask for the court to please consider these words that I have poured my heart into, when they consider the sentence of Brian Macdonald.

Thank you, your honor.

February 25, 2015

Re: Commonwealth of Massachusetts

To Whom It May Concern:

I have known the Spaulding family for ne
and Randie, I was on the Worship Team
and I am now his sister Maria's youth le

Tony is missed, greatly by lots of people
make you smile. He didn't have the "pe
compassionate toward others. His two
would be easy for him to have just done
But that wasn't Tony. He loved those gifts
grow and prosper. He made them feel s
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Maria and Hannah. They will never aga
had with Tony. He was a truly unique pe
challenges and their flaws and make the
family have pretty strong, big personaliti
settled and made them laugh. I remem
making Chris crazy and she would telling
said/did this...." and she would always s
he could just melt her heart. Even now,
to the part when she says, "And Tony sa

And he will be missed for his passion for
he wanted other to be talented and to fe
and wanted the music to shine. The last
Eve Service and we have a worship ban
nice sound board to amplify it in the sanc
technicians that use the board, know how
be done. Tony, felt after the service, tha
parts of the music and voices could be n
after the service and offered to come ba
them improve what they were doing and
be. Tony had clearly found his outlet for
productive with it going forward. It had g
himself and his family and friends.

I was at the church throughout the night of Tony's wake, where lines of people sharing their stories of how Tony had helped them out, how he encouraged them, included them, cared for them. And then the next morning to see our large sanctuary filled with so many people of all ages, many of whom I'm guessing didn't attend church very often, who had come to show their love for Tony and support for his family. There was a lot of love in that room and since then I have heard many stories of how Tony has touched their lives. And now they have been coming back and reaching out to Tony's family in return, therefore continuing on Tony's legacy.

As far as what a sentence should be, a lifetime in prison will not change the lifetime without Tony that Brian MacDonald has sentenced Tony's friends and family with. But it is my prayer that someday this the time that Brian is sentenced to will make him realize the consequences of the grief he has inflicted on so many.

Sincerely,

Sharon L. Kautz

Brendan Hynes

2/25/2015

Commonwealth of Massachusetts vs. Brian MacDonald

How am I, a 22 year old recent graduate from The New England Institute of Art who knew Tony Spaulding for only a short amount of time write a letter regarding the sentencing of Brian MacDonald? It's easy, as an outsider I couldn't feel the pain that his friends and family we're experiencing, I could only see it. What it caused and how it effected others. Our history doesn't date back very far before he was killed but we shared a few classes together over the time we attended school and had a lot of the same friends. Tony did leave an impact on my life but unfortunately it was only after he was gone.

Although we only shared friendly interactions and a few handshakes I could tell Tony was a good person. Tony would always be hanging outside with our mutual friends smoking a cigarette and laughing between classes. You couldn't miss him, he had the biggest and brightest smile on campus. I knew his girlfriend quite well from dorming together at PMC. I've seen her go through good times and bad and I spent enough time with her to know who she was as a person. When I saw them together it just seemed right, I was really happy for her. It's comforting when a friend finds that significant other, the person that treats them in a way that allows them to live life to its full potential. That's what Tony gave Arie.

New years day, 2012 I texted my friend Carrie asking how she was doing just making

small talk to pass time. When she replied "not good" I called her and she told me Tony was stabbed to death during the night at a party. She could barely even speak through the crying, I didn't know what to say. When we returned to school everybody was quiet, holding tears back as much as they could. The halls and even classes were silent filled with an extremely uneasy feeling. I feel as if I knew Tony for who he was through the stories and by piecing together the short memories I had of him. At his wake I cried, because there I was able to see the faces of the people closest to him. Seeing him lying down in his casket, a kid that was only 23 years old with his entire life taken from him too early is a hard site to see. And unsee. But I wont ever forget.

I want to tell you about a night that I'll always remember. Tony's sister Cate, Tony's friends from the Cape and the Ai students put together a benefit show that would unite all his friends and family. We played live music that brought us all together. It made me feel as if Tony was in the room with us. I formed a band with my friends, some from school, some from home and that night on stage was the best time I've ever had performing. All the proceeds went to his mother for funeral cost and whatever else she needed help with. The worst part about it was that it ended, and when it did, Tony was gone again. But for a short few hours he was remembered by the people who loved him and the people that grew into his love, kind of like myself. Tony's life, a life I never knew gave me strength and guidance through hard times. The sentencing wont bring back Tony Spaulding, but you might as well give MacDonald 60 years, the time that was taken away from Tony. A kid who had his entire life ahead of him. My name is Brendan Hynes and I miss my friend, wether he knew me or not, Tony Spaulding.