



THE
RHODES
SCHOOL

November 14, 2008

RE: Leaving The Cocoon Ministry

I'm writing this letter as a testament that Leaving The Cocoon Ministry must go on and if you are reading this letter that God has a plan for you. I'm not writing this letter as a mere reference for Leaving The Cocoon but how if this program never came into existence, my life would not be what it is now. I was an inmate at Tennessee Prison for Women and I was released in Dec of 2005. During my time at TPFW, I met a woman name Vicki Harvey who changed my life. She did that by simply loving me even when I did not want to be loved. Her constant support and unconditional love allowed me to heal from past issues and see a brighter future. Last year, I left the cocoon when I moved from Nashville, TN to Houston, TX for a position with YoungLife Ministry. While there I worked with young adults, mentoring them as they experienced the pressures that I myself once faced. Through my experience, I was able to guide and counsel them to make better decisions. It was a "set-up" from God. Learning from my mentor, Vicki Harvey, about giving back and helping others, I was offered a position at The Rhodes School. Rhodes is a charter school for economically disadvantaged students and considered "at risk" for failure. I'm now the Administrator of School Affairs. Through my position, I use my voice for the children that society says will end up in prison or death before age 21. God has given me the privilege to love and mentor these children. I would have missed this important destiny if I never had heard that voice through Vicki and the vision that God gave her to change the lives of incarcerated women. Fortunately, she did not stop with me, but mentored and loved my daughter. This year, she is a graduating high school senior where she was recently inducted into the National Honor Society and will be leaving for college next fall to pursue her journey to become the first doctor in my family. For me, opportunities continue to arise. I'm being given the privilege to be a part of "No More Victims." This is a program for children with parents in prison which was founded by an ex-parole officer Marilyn Gambrell. *Lifetime* made a movie about her called "*Fighting The Odds*": *The Marilyn Gambrell Story*.

For this great program, Leaving The Cocoon, to continue you must not only give financially, but you must give through your prayers, your time, and your commitment to help other women achieve what I have achieved. I made poor decisions and I needed someone bold enough to tell me to come out of my darkness and leave the cocoon, so I could see my wings and fly.....

With the Greatest of Joy,

Nikisha R. Carter
Administrator of School Affairs