

PLSE and Board of Pardons Partner in Creating a Video Library to Help Applicants for Pardons



Pictured (L-R): Eric Patterson, successful applicant for a pardon; Renee Chenault-Fattah, former television news anchor and PLSE Board Member; Board of Pardons Secretary Brandon Flood; and M. Zane Johnson, Managing Attorney of PLSE

APRIL 22, 2019 – Philadelphia Lawyers for Social Equity (PLSE) announced today that, with the assistance of the Pennsylvania Board of Pardons, it had completed a full day of videotaping people who shared their experiences in applying for a pardon. The applicants, who are being called “Pardon Coaches,” included Brandon Flood, recently appointed Secretary of the Pennsylvania Board of Pardons, who himself was a successful applicant for a pardon.

“Creating a video library to help people who are considering applying for a pardon is a terrific idea,” said Secretary Flood, “and I was absolutely delighted to be asked to serve as a Coach. My hope is that more people will see from these videos that a pardon is a real option for them, and they will continue to be productive citizens.” Flood had been convicted of two felonies by the age of 22, served nine years in state prison, and received his pardon when he was 36.

“All of the people who came out today to share their stories and their wisdom were simply terrific,” said Renee Chenault Fattah, well-known Philadelphia television news anchor who conducted all of the interviews. “A few of the Coaches shared what they did wrong and why they thought their applications had been rejected, while others explained what they thought they did well. But the bottom line for everyone was, ‘You can do this!’ For me, it was an inspirational day.” Chenault-Fattah is a member of the PLSE Board of Directors.

Funding for the PLSE Video Project was provided by the Thomas Skelton Harrison Foundation. Students in Drexel University’s Film and Television Program recorded and will be producing the videos, a dozen of which are expected to be completed and posted on PLSE’s website by July.

ABOUT PLSE: PLSE provides free legal representation to low income residents of Philadelphia whose criminal records are holding them back from achieving their potential as productive, contributing citizens. The services include seeking expungements in criminal court and pardons from the Governor, educating elected and community leaders, and empowering under-resourced communities to seek a greater voice and needed legislative reforms. PLSE was twice recognized in 2017 as an exemplary non-profit, with both a 2018-19 Barra Award, and the Pennsylvania Bar Foundation’s Goffman Award.