John Richardson

President

Swank Internet Business Solutions LLC 716 S Broadway, 2nd Floor Baltimore, MD 21231 (443) 362-0400 john@swankibscom

April 20, 2017

To whom this may concern,

My name is John Richardson, President and Owner of Swank Internet Business Solutions LLC in Baltimore, Maryland. I have been asked by Mr. Michael Arnstein of The Natural Sapphire Company Inc. (herein referred to as "NSC") to provide accurate and truthful testimony to the events I witnessed related to the hacking of his company's website orchestrated by Mr. Prashant Telang. Having built a strong rapport with Mr. Arnstein over the past six-plus years, I willfully and gladly accept. What follows is a brief, accurate account based on my memory of events which were witnessed first-hand.

I was first contacted by NSC in early January of 2011, based on a referral by one of the company's contractors. After signing a non-disclosure agreement, I was informed of their situation: They had cut ties with an India-based development company, and soon discovered their website had become inoperable.

After agreeing to terms, I personally traveled to New York to assess the situation in-house from NSC's Manhattan office. My goal was to first identify the source of the problem; resolve the problem; and then offer a long-term solution for the future.

Upon arrival, it was immediately clear that there was a tremendous amount of corruption to both the website, and database. As I was analyzing the code, I could see in real-time that files were being manipulated. New files were being created while others were being edited and/or destroyed. This was the work of an unauthorized intrusion.

After investigating the server's logs, I was able to confirm that the action of the intrusion was occurring from an IP address based in India. This was the same IP address that was associated with Mr. Prashant Telang.

My first step was to block this IP address and completely shut off any outside connection to the website. From there I spent three days repairing the website code and database. I scanned and parsed thousands of files and hundreds of thousands of lines of code,

removing hacks and back-doors, correcting programming errors, and re-creating files and snippets of code that had been maliciously deleted.

After restoring the health of the website, I recommended we place it into a distributed version repository system. This system would allow us to instantly detect any changes to the file system moving forward, and allow a simple, one-click path to recovery.

For the next few weeks everyone monitored the website closely, as every few hours the site would be hacked. The IP address would always change, suggesting the attacker was now hiding behind a firewall, but the hacks all resembled the same strategies and techniques. The breadcrumb trail left behind all pointed to Mr. Prashant Telang.

Whenever a hack would occur, I would stop and disconnect the website, look at the changes that had been made, determine the vulnerability, and provide a patch. This continued for months, with less frequency as more and more patches were applied.

After we were able to secure the website from intrusion, Mr. Telang appeared to quickly shift to a longer-term strategy of attempting to destroy the reputation of The Natural Sapphire Company. He proceeded to hijack a domain that was the rightful property of NSC; create micro sites aimed at damaging search engine rankings; post countless false reviews and accusations on 3rd party websites including (but not limited by) industry related review sites, blogs, and forums; take on the identity of NSC employees using similar email addresses; etc.

While I and Swank Internet Business Solutions were actively engaged with developing and executing online marketing strategies with NSC during this time, we were not directly involved with the resolution of Mr. Telang's continued negative online-reputation tactics. As such, I cannot speak much further on anything outside of the physical website hacks without providing conjecture. That being said, there was a definite presence of frustration from all parties involved.

I attest that this written account is accurate to the best of my memory. I can be reached to confirm this via phone: (443) 362-0400 - or email: john@swankibs.com

John Richardson

Sincerel



International Gem Tower 50 W 47th Street , #1702 New York NY 10036 T- 800-634-0050 E- colorline@gmail.com W- www.colorlineusa.com

To Whom It May Concern,

We are a Sapphire & Ruby wholesaler that has been working with Michael Arnstein and his team at The Natural Sapphire Company for the past 5 years on a daily basis. We extend high amounts of credit to his company, typically in the hundreds of thousands at any one moment.

In our business, we give our stones out to resellers like Michael before being paid a single dollar. We have no guarantees from Michael or any other company in our industry that we will be paid in a timely manner, if at all! Therefore, the entire industry exists on trust and reputation. We extend high credit to Michael's company because he is a truthful man with integrity. Michael's father Seymour, and his grandfather Walter, the founder of the company, were both honest businessmen as well that had much respect within our industry.

With all this said, when Prashant Telang was writing all of those horrible reviews about The Natural Sapphire Company, he was damaging the trust and reputation of the company. These reviews can sometimes be enough to put a company out of business as both customers and vendors may be hesitant to deal with the company. For these reasons, we understand why Michael got the court order to have these removed.

We hope to continue doing business with Michael Arnstein and The Natural Sapphire company for a very long time.

Thank you.

Regards,
Colorline, Inc.
(800)634-0050
www.colorlineusa.com









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P: 212.688.6700 | F: 212.688.2747

www.jackabraham.com

April 10, 2018

The Honorable Judge Carter,

My name is Jack Abraham, President of Precious Gem Resources. I have been in the gem business since 1962. I was the first chairman of the Ethics Committee of the American Gem Trade Association who formulated the code of ethics and business conduct for the 800-member organization of gem dealers throughout the United States and Canada. I had the privilege of working with Robert Friedman of the Federal Trade Commission and Robert Abram, Attorney General of New York. We went after unscrupulous, boiler-room gem houses. I am a member of AGTA, ICA, AGS, JVC and was twice the President of Congregation Anshei Shalom, Young Israel of Holliswood, Young Israel of Jamaica Estates and a past member of The American Sephardic Federation.

I am writing this letter on behalf of Michael Arnstein, whose family I have known for three generations. I have known Michael for over twenty years. Soon after he joined the family business, I took a liking to him and took him under my wing. Michael is a workaholic who takes excellent care of his team, all of whom are from different backgrounds and ethnicities and have been working for him for many years which is very rare in our industry. I know his principles. I know the situation that he went through in India because I had a very similar experience. The person doing my website tried to blackmail me for \$120,000 to remove false and derogatory statements about me and my company. I contacted the Attorney General's office of Arizona, where the website was headquartered, but they could not help me. I decided not to take legal action which would be too costly and more important I don't generate any business on the internet. All my business is person to person. The same thing happened to Mr. Arnstein, but since all his business is based on internet transactions he had to take action to survive the derogatory report about him and his company.

I admire Michael, his energy and his principles and the way he took care of his father when his father was sick. I took care of my mother for eight years when she had a stroke, made my home wheelchair accessible and made sure she was comfortable. Michael came to my home, saw this and realized that you have to give much more than some people do to their parents. I admire him for what he did for his father, bringing him into his home to take care of him. He gave him his personal attention and made sure he had people who knew how to take care of someone with his father's condition.

I am writing this for you to please take into consideration that Michael is a hardworking, principled man.

Whatever he did was done more for survival purposes rather than taking advantage.

Thank you very much for reading my letter and I wish you all the best.

Respectfully

Jack S.D. Abraham

THE NATURAL SAPPHIRE COMPANY THE WORLD'S GREATEST COLLECTION OF NATURAL SAPPHIRES

To Honorable Judge Carter

03/26/2018

My name is Kevin Fournie and I was an employee at The Natural Sapphire Company from April of 2008 until August of 2014. I was the Senior Gemologist, Purchasing Director, and Head of Gemstone Acquisitions. As the Senior Gemologist I inspected and graded stones as well as assisted the sales team with any gemological questions they or the customers may have had. As the Purchasing Director and Head of Gemstone acquisitions I worked closely with our team of buyers in Sri Lanka to inspect and purchase stones for our inventory and negotiate the purchase price based on the current market. I also managed our in-house inventory and worked closely with our local vendors who supplied us with stones to list on our website for sale.

The in-house software system at The Natural Sapphire Company, which we heavily relied on, was designed by an Indian software company headed by Prashant Telang. After the system was established we created a team of in house software designers, and in turn no longer need the services of Prashant Telang. Upon his firing, Prashant Telang began what I believe to be an intentional, coordinated and concerted effort to put The Natural Sapphire Company out of business. We discovered that during the development process, Prashant Telang created backdoors in the software system, which he impermissibly used to remotely change pricing, crash our website, and shut down the software system entirely. Evidence I'm familiar with suggests Prashant Telang also engaged in "click fraud," artificially driving up The Natural Sapphire Company's online advertising costs with Google and costing the company a tremendous amount of money. Evidence I'm familiar with suggests Prashant Telang created multiple fake websites and fake reviews that were designed to damage the company's image. In addition, I'm familiar with evidence suggesting that Prashant Telang frequently used the website's live chat function to impersonate a potential customer and, after a short period would personally attack the sales person he was speaking with. This conduct lowered customer confidence in the Natural Sapphire Company, and directly resulted in the loss of business and the loss of company funds.

In addition to attacks described above, I personally witnessed Prashant Telang attempt to extort money from Michael on many occasions. On these occasions, Prashant Telang told Michael that unless he received financial compensation, he would continue the attacks described above until The Natural Sapphire Company was put out of business. In the end, Michael could not find an alternative to make Prashant Telang stop his abusive and destructive behavior towards The Natural Sapphire Company and paid Prashant Telang.

The results of these attacks were multi-faceted. Prashant Telang's conduct cost the company a tremendous amount of money and cost employees their jobs. My friends and co-workers were laid off to keep the company afloat. Those of us that remained often took our paychecks late to ensure vendors and jewelers were paid on time, and to prevent The Sapphire Company from being "blacklisted." Morale was low and the stress in the office was extremely high. As a direct result of Prashant Telang's coordinated attacks, The Natural Sapphire Company became a very difficult place to work.



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THE NATURAL SAPPHIRE COMPANY

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COLLECTION OF NATURAL SAPPHIRES

I eventually left the company because the stress levels were just too high for me and it was a difficult working environment. I harbor no ill will and remain friends with my former co-workers and Michael. I continue to trust Michael, as proven by the fact that I still purchase and sell stones through The Natural Sapphire Company's website as a source of extra income.

That said, from the perspective of a current vendor with The Natural Sapphire Company, and one who purchases stones for the sole purpose of listing them for sale on their website, Michael going to jail would, and already has, made me think twice about purchasing more stones to list on their site. I do not know what the effects a sentencing would have on customer confidence and the overall health of the business, but I think they would be far reaching and very negative. I suspect customers may just take their business elsewhere and many other vendors will become wary of doing business with them. This business is all about trust, and if The Natural Sapphire Company loses the trust of vendors/customers, it will be at risk of going out of business. The employee's, my friends, are honest and hardworking people, and many may have difficulty finding another job in the industry if The Natural Sapphire Company were to go under.

Michael made a poor decision by forging those signatures, but I know him well, and I know that he did it to try and protect the company that he has worked so hard to build. He also did it to protect the jobs of the loyal employees who stood by him during the tough times and the years of attacks from Prashant Telang. I know it was a decision he regrets making, and I also know it was one that in the moment he felt he had to make in order to help his business survive. It was a poor decision that stands in contrast to his normal, truthful behavior, and I believe his heart was in the right place when making it.

Sincerely,

Kevin Fournie G.G., A.J.P.



March 14, 2018

Dear Carter Judge,

I have known Michael Arnstein since 2006. Through the years I have seen and worked with Michael on some important community-based initiatives. My background includes extensive experience working for and volunteering for various non-profit groups. One group I have been very involved with since 2005 is Achilles International (www.achillesinternational.org) which provides free walking and running guides to athletes with disabilities for their daily workouts. I also worked directly for four years with the East Coast Greenway, (www.greenway.org) working with NYC, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington, DC to develop new and safer walking and cycling routes for local residents.

Michael Arnstein and I both Co-Founded and developed two community-based initiatives together. In 2010 we started The Holiday Marathons (www.youtube.com/watch?v=AYRAP3HVIZw) whose mission was to provide free running events to people in NYC; people who didn't have the financial means to participate in other running events throughout the City because of high entry fees. Michael and I put on over 10 free events in Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx from 2010-2011. These events averaged over 400 participants and topped out at 1300 people for our Thanksgiving Run in 2011. The thousands of people which took part in these events did so at zero cost. This was the result specifically of Michael's financial backing of the events which my estimates put at between 50K-100K. Michael Arnstein was the only financial sponsor of these events and they would not have taken place without his support. The events attracted people living in the Bronx that would never have participated in a running event. Many gave us stories of how the events changed their lives jumpstarting them to weight loss and improved mental health. There are many articles and videos detailing the success of the Holiday Marathon's and I included a couple links below for you to look at.

 $\underline{www.nydailynews.com/blogs/running-dialogue/gobble-the-van-cortlandt-thanksgiving-marathon-holiday-marathon-turkey-trots-blog-entry-1.1625244$

www.news12.com/story/34815445/hundreds-race-in-van-cortlandt-park-holiday-marathon

The other initiative Michael Arnstein and I started together in 2011 was The Save the Putnam Trail Campaign. (https://savetheputnamtrailnow.wordpress.com). This involved a volunteer advocacy effort to prevent a natural trail in Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx from being paved with asphalt. There aren't many natural refuges left for people of the Bronx to access and enjoy and Michael felt the need to help preserve this piece of nature for Bronx residents. The NYC Parks Dept. was scheduled to pave the Putnam Trail in 2012 and 6 years later the Putnam Trail has not been paved. This success can be directly attributed to Michael's advocacy efforts and financial backing.

I also wanted to add that Michael received nothing in return for these efforts. No awards were given, and there were no financial benefits but only the day to day work and headaches that come with the territory of working for a cause to benefit the community.

I wanted to add one more thing regarding Michael Arnstein. Every year since 2005 I volunteer to walk with an athlete, Dave Fraser for the NYC Marathon who has cerebral palsy and is in a wheelchair. (www.nydailynews.com/life-style/health/marathoner-uphill-battle-article-1.1202866) Dave usually takes 9 to 14 hours to complete the NYC Marathon and many times is the last finisher of over 50,000 participants. Whenever Michael Arnstein is in New York for the NYC Marathon he comes out and walks

with Dave Fraser and I for the last 5-10 miles of the race. This is when it's dark, cold and all the crowds have left and it's only us on lonely streets. Michael's support is greatly appreciated every year and it means a lot to Dave Fraser.

I know you have a lot to review but I hope you can consider leniency in your decision. There are many convicted criminals who never gave back anything to society and many that never will give anything back to society in the future. I truly feel Michael Arnstein has given back to society in the past and these experiences should be taken into account when determining his sentencing. I also feel that Michael can give back more to society in the future if he's treated with leniency and given the opportunity to atone for any wrongdoing he has taken part in.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter about my experiences supporting the community; many which would never have even been started without the support of Michael Arnstein.

Sincerely,

Michael Oliva

michaelolivacg@gmail.com

720-588-7217

3220 Geary Blvd., #309 San Francisco, CA 94118 March 11, 2018

RE: Michael Arnstein, my son.

Your Honor,

It's not unusual to expect that a letter from a mother will be written solely in defense of her child. And so shall this one be.

From the time Michael was born I knew he was special. He had a tremendous amount of energy which he ultimately channeled into physical challenges as a long-distance runner and into entrepreneurial ventures. There was always a loving, caring, compassionate and devoted aspect to his relationships as well, which he frequently displayed in both of these passions.

Michael was an entrepreneur for as far back as I can remember, even in the 1st grade. He recognized opportunities and sought to make the most of them. At the same time, he was generous, charitable, honest and fair in all his dealings. He has always been a good and loyal friend, exceptionally supportive both emotionally and financially. As he grew into adulthood, he took pride in honoring the aphorism taped to the desk he inherited from his beloved grandfather, and at which he still works: "Integrity is doing the right thing when no one is looking."

I think one of the most remarkable and admirable things my son has ever done was the care and concern he exhibited to his morbidly ill father (from whom I was divorced.) Though their relationship had been strained for many years, Michael willingly took it upon himself to provide for his father's needs in order to defend his dignity. He refused to place him in an institution; he secured private care 24/7 in his own home, visited regularly, and diligently monitored his care. It was perhaps the most selfless act I have ever witnessed. A video was made about this:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KalbOhWKSbA

Michael took a great deal of pride, and rightfully so, in carrying on and bringing to new heights the business that his grandfather started in 1939. The family's name was and still is highly respected in the industry and Michael quickly followed suit, being elected to the Board of a respected industry organization, the youngest member ever to hold that position. Moreover, it was utmost in his mind to provide opportunities in this industry for immigrants and those in underdeveloped countries on which the success of his business depended. Without prompting, he readily provided amongst other things health insurance, gym memberships, catered breakfasts, and bonuses in recognition of their hard work. He felt and still feels a responsibility to respect his employees.

And so when he experienced an overseas vendor's repeated failures to produce, he owed it to his employees, customers, and his business to sever that relationship. Little

did he realize the retribution that this individual would take. As you have undoubtedly read in his documents, Michael pursued every available legal and business channel to stop this extortion and from what I understand, these fell short of the goal. It was only out of extreme frustration and admittedly against his better judgment, that he took things into his own hands.

I know that Michael accepts full responsibility for having made a poor choice. He acknowledges what he did was not legal and he should have known his choice was wrong. While recognizing the same, I understand the frustration that was behind this choice and hence I still maintain the high opinion of him that I have always had. I know he deeply regrets making this choice and only wants to put it behind him so that he may continue to provide for his family and the families of his employees. He never was and isn't someone who seeks self-aggrandizement or benefit. Quite the contrary.

I cannot imagine there would be any benefit for Michael to be sentenced jail time. In fact, I believe this would do more harm than good; his employees and their families would unfairly bear the brunt of this loss.

The only victim in this case was Michael. There was no financial gain and no personal or financial harm to any individual from his action. And believe me, emotionally he has already paid dearly.

Your Honor, in rendering judgement, I appeal to the Court with all my heart that the Court move from the Throne of Judgment to the Throne of Mercy and Compassion in this case.

Respectfully,

Roni Silverberg

Lt Col Jesse Arnstein
3 Edelweiss Lane
Voorhees, NJ 08043
732-606-2836
jessearnstein@hotmail.com
21 March 2018

Your Honor;

I am Michael Arnstein's older brother, and am writing to you to describe his character and suggestions for a meaningful and appropriate sentence.

I am a 23-year U.S. Air Force veteran currently serving as the Commander of Air Force ROTC operations in the Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey region. Earlier in my career I was an Air Force Judge Advocate and served as the Chief of Military Justice at McGuire Air Force Base and Prosecutor for U.S. Magistrate's Court at Fort Dix. As such, I've had a great deal of experience in the Justice System.

Michael is extraordinarily dedicated to his wife Victoria and his three children. He participates in the childrens' home-schooling and has formed a deep relationship with Sam while mentoring him to become his understudy in business. Michael has personally transformed Sam from a naïve teenager to a very capable, an accomplished young adult who needs his continued guidance and support in schooling..

Michael has proven to be contrite and can change his ways. I've seen him make mistakes in the past and apologize sincerely to those he has hurt emotionally. Moreover, he changes his actions so those whom he has offended now trust him and hold his allegiance very dear to them.

Based on lengthy discussions with him, I am certain that Michael fully realizes his crimes and has reformed.

I thank you for your consideration of my input during your deliberation.

Respectfully,

Jesse Arnstein



March 16, 2018

Re:

Michael Arnstein

The Natural Sapphire Company

Walter Arnstein, Inc. Market Organization, Inc.

To the Honorable Judge Carter:

I have known Michael Arnstein and his jewelry business since 2004. The business was an active commercial insurance client of this firm, MJM Global Insurance Brokerage Group, from 2004-2009, then again from April of 2017 until the present. The policy remains active and in good standing.

During the time that I have known Mr. Arnstein, he has been honest and upstanding in all of our business dealings. A review of our records shows only one relatively small claim being paid during those years. It was a shipping claim for a package that was lost or stolen while in transit with one of the major shipping carriers.

After being insured by another firm for 8 years, Mr. Arnstein contacted MJM Global to inquire about obtaining new insurance. I was more than happy to know that Mr. Arnstein was again seeking our services.

In April of 2017 we placed Mr. Arnstein's business with the same carrier we used when he was with us previously, Jewelers Mutual Insurance Co. As a direct result of the recent criminal charges against Mr. Arnstein, which are completely unrelated to his commercial insurance policy, Jewelers Mutual has decided against renewing his policy which is set to expire on April 21, 2018. (See attached).

Business insurance, generally, and Jewelers Block insurance, specifically, are vital to the protection of any jewelry, diamond or precious stone business. The high value and compact nature of the merchandise place any such business at constant risk of theft or robbery. A carrier's refusal to continue insuring a jewelry business places hardship on the business which can be very difficult to overcome. Further, inability to obtain insurance can adversely affect the jeweler's relationships with his or her vendors, suppliers, customers and strategic partners.

We hope that Mr. Arnstein is able to regain his once stellar business reputation and we look forward to continuing our business relationship with Mr. Arnstein and his future business endeavors.

Sincerely

Paul K Silverman

Vice President/ Manager, Jewelry Department

Enc.

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February 20, 2018

24 Jewelers Park Drive P.O. Box 468 Neenah, Wisconsin 54957-3601 USA

800-558-6411 Fax: 920-725-9401 JewelersMutual.com

MARKET ORGANIZATION INC 6 E 45TH ST FL 20 NEW YORK, NY 10017-2490

MJM GLOBAL INSURANCE BROKERAGE GROUP INC 25 ROCKWOOD PL STE 210 ENGLEWOOD, NJ 07631-4957

Agency Phone Number: 201-720-7700

Re: Notice of Nonrenewal

Policy Number: 55-012576

This letter is our **Notice** of **Nonrenewal** of your Jewelers Block Pak policy, 55-012576. Your Jewelers Block Pak policy will terminate effective 04/21/2018 at 12:01 a.m. (Standard Time).

This policy will NOT be renewed because your risk (business) presents an exposure that is no longer acceptable to our underwriting standards.

Please contact your agent or Jewelers Mutual directly if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Commercial Lines Underwriting Jewelers Mutual Insurance Company

CC: MJM Global Insurance Brokerage Group Inc (P05D)

CC: Silk & Halpern Realty Associates

Robert McMahon-Glynn Witness For Michael Arnstein

April 19, 2017

To whom it may concern:

I was employed as Chief Technology Officer at The Natural Sapphire Company (NSC) for approximately two years between March 2011 through February 2013.

During my time at NSC, I witnessed the results of a systematic campaign of harassment against NSC as an organization as well as individual employees. As CTO, I had first-hand knowledge of many of these issues as it would be my responsibility to rectify or ameliorate problems caused by these actions. It is my belief that all of this was done by, or at the direction of, a past contractor based in India named Prashant Telang. During my time at NSC I experienced:

- * Our e-commerce site and internal order-processing and customer-relation-management software, originally produced by Prashant Telang and his employees, contained a malicious "back-door" within the source code designed to disable the systems and delete data necessary to run the systems. This malicious code was activated shortly after I started at NSC causing a loss of sales revenue and significant manhours to fix the damage and remove the "back-door" code.
- * E-mails sent to employees, including myself, to both corporate NSC as well as personal addresses, encouraging individuals to cease working at NSC, threatening that employees would be subject to online harassment themselves if they continued working at NSC, and slandering employees and Michael Arnstein. Many of these messages were signed by Prashant Telang and came from mail servers with authority from domain names Prashant Telang had control of.
- * Websites published on the internet and reviews posted to online forums dedicated to tarnishing the the reputation of NSC and it's products.
- * Security vulnerabilities in an open-source website framework (WordPress) NSC was using were exploited to delete data and files on NSC's servers.
- * NSC's online paid advertising was targeted by using an anonymous proxy service (Tor), increasing costs exponentially.

This constant campaign of harassment and online attacks created a huge amount of extraneous work for NSC's employees, reduced NSC's ability to perform regular business, created undue stress for NSC staff and Michael Arnstein, and most assuredly cost NSC a significant amount of sales revenue. If requested, I would readily testify under oath to my experience in these matters.

Sincerely,

Robert McMahon-Glynn

rglynn@eamonson.com 646-283-3353

Original Gems Inc.

22 West, 48 Street, Suit # 610, New-York, N.Y. 10036 (U.S.A.)

Member : AGTA, IDCA, JBT

Tel. : (212) 768-2036 Fax : (212) 768-2039 Toll Free : 888-644-0100

E-Mail: amit@originalgems.com

March 12th ,2018

Honorable Judge Carter,

Re: Michael Arnstein

I, Amit Birani owner and President of Original Gems Inc. dealer of loose Gemstones & Diamonds. I am the third generation in business. My grandfather and father have been very reputable in this business in Jaipur, India. I have travelled and lived in different parts of the world and met variety of people in this industry. My company, Original gems Inc. is also proud member of these renowned organization like AGTA, IDCA, JBT, etc.

I have known Michael Arnstein for more than 15 years personally. He is a very hard working, professional, honest and family oriented person. I respect and admire him, I have been a supplier i.e. vendor for him and he has always treated me with dignity & ethically more than I can expect. He also treats people working with him as a part of his own family and everyone loves him.

In our Industry, most of the dealings are on credit basis like 30-90 days terms and hence your reputation is the key to stay and be successful in business, being a small business community everything spreads like fire specially defamation which can really hurt your business.

Michael Arnstein is the man of his words. In the past he had some trouble paying us and others for the merchandise on time when he was being harassed and troubled by Prashant Telang, a former computer programmer, we met and he told me not to worry and that he will do the best in his ability. Michael Arnstein not only came through paid us everything and became current. I know he accepts his wrong doing, but he was put in a horrible situation which caused him to act inappropriately.

Majority of my business depends on his company selling online and Michael not being there really worries me a lot. As owner of my business, I know how important my presence is in the company's day to day operation. I trust, support and will stand with Michael Arnstein in any situation now and in the future.

I am thankful to you for reading my letter and grateful for any consideration you may give to my request for leniency for Michael Arnstein. If you need any more information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Amit Birani

THE NATURAL SAPPHIRE COMPANY

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COLLECTION OF NATURAL SAPPHIRES

March 16, 2018

To The Honorable Judge Carter:

Thank you for taking the time to read my statement. I started working at The Natural Sapphire Company (NSC) in 2008 as a graphic artist and I've known Michael for ten years.

He has always been a caring, well-intentioned person, dedicated to the business that his father and grandfather built. NSC is so small that coworkers are much more like family than colleagues. People stay with the business for 5, 10, and even over 15 years. We don't work on commission; we love what we do and we're committed to making sure each couple has a wonderful engagement experience.

When Prashant Telang began to virtually terrorize NSC, updates to the website would fail and all of our systems and servers would crash. He posted fake online reviews and comments on every consumer reporting website and every jewelry forum. Prashant knew that his fake reviews would jump to the top of The Natural Sapphire's Google search results. His actions were overtly malicious; his goal was to damage the integrity of The Natural Sapphire Company and to influence customers to buy elsewhere.

The company and all of its employees suffered considerably due to Prashant's efforts. Many people, including myself, would forgo our paychecks for longer periods of time to keep the company afloat. We all lived with the fear and anxiety that we would lose our jobs at any time. I know this weighed extremely heavily on Michael and influenced his actions.

I hope that Michael's attempt to remove Prashant's fake reviews will be judged as a serious but misguided attempt to save his company. He made a terrible mistake out of frustration and desperation. A severe sentence could irreparably harm our company's reputation and endanger the livelihoods of many people. I hope we will be able to continue bringing joy and happiness to our clients for many years to come.

With respect,

Erika Sheykahmetov



THE NATURAL SAPPHIRE COMPANY

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COLLECTION OF NATURAL SAPPHIRES

Date: 3/12/18

To your Honor Judge Carter,

My name is Su Su Htay. I am originally from Burma and blessed to be an American citizen since 23rd February 2012.

I was hired by Michael as a secretarial assistant in 2004. Over the next 14 years, I worked side by side with Michael helping him build this business from a 3 person operation to now over 25 fulltime employees.

I am currently the Vice President of the company.

In this business we work with expensive gemstones, gold and platinum, everyone needs to trust each other explicitly well.

Most other companies in this industry are family members working together due to the high risk nature of this business.

We have very little turn-over in our employees here for a reason, our unemployment rate is almost at the lowest rate possible to prove this point.

Michael treats his employees *like* family. We stay here because he is a very caring and generous person. He really cares about us.

I have seen the suffering and stress that Michael has endured for almost 10 years since he fell into a hostage type situation with an Indian computer programmer.

This person has tried continuously to destroy our entire company, all our jobs have been at risk, our most important asset, our reputation is constantly being questioned and will always be under a cloud now.

Michael bleeds for this company and the people that rely on him.

On behalf of our entire company, I plead with you to let him come to work, to do what he does best and help all of us maintain our jobs.

Thank.ve

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Vice President,

The Natural Sapphire Company



Don Bennett, DAS • 1994 E. Sunrise Blvd. • Fort Lauderdale, FL 33304

The Honorable Andrew L. Carter Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse 40 Foley Square New York, NY 10007

March 22, 2018

Dear Judge Carter:

I am writing to you on behalf of Michael Arnstein who will come before you for sentencing.

I have known Mr. Armstein for eight years, having been involved with the annual outreach event he created and produces as one of the health educators who lecture there. His founding of this weeklong event was to help people regain lost health and to empower them to live to their health potentials, which we all have. I can say with one-hundred percent certainty that his motivations for founding and continuing this event are not financial; Mr. Armstein has personally covered the event's overages year after year, and refuses to raise the admission price to prevent this, wanting to make the event as affordable, and thus, as accessible as possible. To his credit, this year, people – some with families – will be attending from over 20 countries.

As someone who has produced such events, it is my considered opinion that Mr. Arnstein's presence at the event is critical to its operation; he not only personally oversees the selection of the food for the 600+ attendees bought from the wholesale food market, but is an integral and irreplaceable part of the tiny admin team. And while the fact that he himself drives one of the trucks from the wholesaler to the event isn't irrefutable evidence of his personal commitment, I can attest to this being just one of the many behaviors that demonstrate Mr. Arnstein's altruistic nature.

While this doesn't excuse what Mr. Arnstein did, I hope you can find it within your heart, and the law, to consider the mitigating circumstances in Mr. Arnstein's case, and his invaluable role in the production of this event which helps many people prevent degenerative disease and regain lost health – our most valuable possession – so that he is punished for what he did while not punishing those who would benefit from this event due to his incarceration.

Your Honor, I hope that the uniquely invaluable service Mr. Arnstein provides to the community can factor in your sentencing decision.

Yours truly,

Don Bennett, DAS

Dan Dennet

Presenter at TheWoodstockFruitFestival.com



March 27, 2018

To Honorable Judge Carter,

Re: Michael Arnstein

My name is Sam Sulimanov, I'm the president of NYGA (New York Gemstone Association) an organization of 65 member companies, gemstone dealers (reputable companies only accepted by a board vote) based here in New York's jewelry district. I'm also a committee member of AGTA (American Gem Trade Association), the largest gemstone trade organization in the USA.

Mr. Michael Arnstein is a valuable member at NYGA. He is known by many of the members as a reputable, old time family company, very professional and trustworthy. Many of the members depend on him as he is a prime outlet for selling their gemstones.

By selling the members gemstones on www.thenaturelsapphirecompany.com it became an extremely important part of our industry as business and technology has our industry over the years. Many of us build our inventory in coordination with Michael and his great company.

It will be devastating to us to see Michael be imprisoned. It will definitely affect our business and livelihood.

It's been very unfortunate seeing what happened to Michael during the attacks to sabotage a reputable legitimate company. In that situation we see Michael Arnstein as the victim. Indirectly we, the suppliers share the consequences and suffer.

Mr. Michael Arnstein is the face of our business and the industry and we are proud of his achievement. He promotes our products, discloses them fairly and precisely. His success is ours and his loss will be our loss. As much as he needs us, the dealers, we need him as well and we depend on his performance. After so many years of successful performance it will be extremely difficult to replace his operation. I must say that a few companies will be at risk of losing their business and shutting down their operation in the case that Mr. Arnstein will have to shut down his.

I urge to take into consideration the outcome of a devastating decision as it may cause a chain reaction in our circle. We all have families and dependents and they do not deserve any harm.

Truly,

Sam Sulimanov

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119 Railway Parade
Glasshouse Mountains
Queensland 4518
Australia
E-mail: fruitbatanne@yahoo.com
Phone: +61 438190070
4th April 2018

Dear Honorable Judge Carter,

My name is Anne Osborne, I currently work with Michael Arnstein for the Woodstock Fruit Festival.

I have been employed by the festival for the past six years.

My background has been as a Holistic Therapist and published author on dietary and lifestyle issues.

I have a BA degree with honors from the University of Kent at Canterbury, in the United Kingdom.

In addition, I have a diploma in Holistic Health from Leicester College in the United Kingdom, and on completion of my studies there, I was awarded the Holistic Therapy 'Student of the Year' award in 1999.

I also speak at various international festivals, and in 2015, I was invited to Brunei by the Brunei Government to address school children and government officials on the benefits of healthy eating.

I have known Michael since 2010, in both a personal and professional capacity.

In 2011, Michael invited me to contribute as a presenter at the inaugural Woodstock Fruit Festival.

Michael had the vision of bringing together people from all over the world in an event that offered support, education and self-development; and created lifetime friendships, for people who were living on a fruit based vegan diet.

Michael put his savings into the event, and took on this large financial responsibility to enable attendees to experience a potentially lifechanging event.

Michael did not benefit financially from the festival; the real benefactors being the people who attended each year.

Many had their lives changed forever.

In the past six years, I have been working for the festival, I have had countless people tell me, both in person and by e-mail, how attending the event changed their lives forever.

Without Michael's vision, energy, and dedication, the festival would not have been created, an event that continues to change many people's lives for the better.

In addition to his work with the Festival, Michael has business and family responsibilities, but Michael has always found time to help improve the event and make it the largest festival of its kind in the world.

In the early years, when the festival had financial struggles to keep going, Michael never gave up and kept on devoting his time and energy to ensure that it carried on.

Over the past seven years, thousands of attendees have benefitted from Michael's dedication to the event.

Michael remains the key figure in the continuation of the festival; and I believe his contribution is irreplaceable.

If Michael is unable to continue in this role, the future of the event would be very uncertain, and the huge potential the festival offers to improve the quality of many people's lives may never be realized.

If Michael is able to continue to be able to run the festival, I see so many benefits for our precious planet, its people and the environment. So many attendees have said attending the Woodstock Fruit Festival was the best week of their lives, and gave them vital tools to take back home to improve their health and wellbeing.

I have the greatest respect for Michael both as a colleague and as a friend; working with Michael has shown me how one person's dream and vision to help many others can be realized by hard work, determination, a caring heart, and never giving up.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Yours Sincerely,

Anne Osborne, Assistant Executive Director for The Woodstock Fruit Festival.

400 Hualani Street #367, Hilo, HI 96720, USA

Email: yuliya.a.yakhontova@gmail.com

Phone: 347-524-1630 Date: April 6th, 2018

Dear Honorable Judge Carter,

My name is Yuliya Yakhontova, and I am the Executive Director of the Woodstock Fruit Festival - an organization created by Michael Arnstein to educate, inspire, and empower people to lead healthier lifestyles by including a greater percentage of fresh fruits and vegetables into their diets. I graduated with honors from Tambov State Technical University in Russia with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Economics. I am also a Certified Paralegal, graduate of New York Paralegal School (GPA 97.1). Along with my work for the Woodstock Fruit Festival, I am pursuing a career as a Certified Bookkeeper (accredited by American Institute of Certified Bookkeepers), and Registered Tax Return Preparer.

It was around the time I met Michael in 2010, that he became increasingly concerned about a plethora of health issues in our society. Michael had the inspiration to create an annual retreat where people could come together to rest and recharge in nature, while eating the best quality fresh fruits and vegetables, and learning ways to achieve a better health through lifestyle and diet changes. It took 5 years of ongoing loans from Michael to bring the festival to a place of financial equilibrium; all while he was going through financial struggles himself and experiencing an enormous amount of stress being responsible for many people's jobs and the sole supporter of his own family with 3 children. I observed Michael literally becoming a workaholic, working nonstop trying to keep his main business from bankruptcy, and in the same time still supporting the festival through thick and thin.

Michael has never been financially compensated by the festival. This event is his charity and his yearly reward comes in dozens of heartfelt emails and testimonials from our attendees sharing how the event has transformed their lives (see Exhibit A). Our admission fees are considerably lower compared to similar events, because our goal is to enable as many people to attend as possible. In addition, we implement various scholarship programs and work-exchange opportunities in an attempt to make the event accessible to people who normally wouldn't be able to afford anything of this nature. Michael's sole goal is to make the festival stable financially so it can continue touching people's lives for years to come.

Throughout each year, Michael invests countless hours contributing to brainstorming and making important decisions. His most active participation is in the week prior to the event where he puts his main business on hold to dedicate all of himself to the festival. Michael's most important duties have been personally selecting and buying more than \$100,000. worth of produce - a weekly supply of food for 600+ people; then loading it into refrigerated trucks and personally driving trucks to our festival venue in the Adirondack Mountains (about 5 hours away from NYC). Then during the festival itself, Michael is the number one person overseeing all aspects of the event and handling all emergencies and unforeseen challenges, which tend to come up when several hundred people get together at a summer camp in the mountains.

Michael's presence at the festival is critically important to its success and even survival. I can't imagine not having Michael available to do the produce shopping, and then as our Chief Admin throughout the event. Right now we already have a record number of registrants for this year compared to prior years and expect to have between 650 and 700 attendees. This is an enormous responsibility to hundreds of people, for many of which investing time and money into attending the week-long event.

I have a tremendous amount of respect and admiration for Michael on all levels. He cares deeply about people he meets in his life and is using his main business as a means to help them in multiple ways - from providing jobs, to sponsoring a school in Sri Lanka where he buys gemstones, to funding this essentially non-profit event. All while doing the best he can to fulfill his home schooling responsibilities to his family as a father of 3 young children.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Sincerely,

Yuliya Yakhontova

Exhibit A

This festival has changed my life each time i've gone, and it gets better every year...I grow more as a person in one week at WFF than i do the rest of the year, and it's because, each time, i'm surrounded 24/7 by the most incredible, awake humans i've ever met...it feels like my home planet, like concentrated love, and I'm so grateful to have found it...thank you:) ~ Chena Immel, Maine, USA

Nowhere else on earth have I felt more at peace than at the Woodstock Fruit Festival. Nowhere else have I allowed myself to be so tender, open, wilnerable, present, loving, accepting of my true self and others. This allowing is an art that has helped me become more aligned with my authentic self and purpose. When I allow my life to unfold day by day, and follow my inner guidance, all the little dots connect. By opening up, stripping away the layers, and choosing my highest excitement, in just a matter of weeks I've made genuine emotional connection, seen new places, inspired and have been inspired by others. I am beyond grateful. ~ Devonney Victoria Waters, Connecticut, USA

This festival is the most beautiful and fulfilling thing I have ever gotten to experience! It's a beautiful journey of self-realization that is supported by the love and high frequencies that all of the attendees exude. It brings hope that the earth can be healed. There's nowhere else on earth I have ever felt I could truly be myself. This is my 3rd festival and I am our lights shine, giving us the strength and support to shine those lights in our lives back home. ~ Danielle Finney,

WFF has changed my life, my soul and my heart. I am so blessed and thankful for this opportunity. Now I feel that I am a part of the most kind, thoughtful, generous, acceptable, lowing and caring big family. I have never met so many incredible people in one place, the organizers did a fantastic job on putting it together and providing the most epic, ripe fruits from all over the world. Everyone has to attend this festival to understand the beauty of what nature can provide to us and experience the feeling of love and wisdom from all the guests speakers. I feel reborn and rejuvenated. ~ Kristina Shatova, Winnipeg, Canada

I went to the Woodstock Fruit Festival looking for inspiration and personal growth. I found both. It's been just over a month since the festival and I'm still going strong. I'm not perfect, but that's not my goal. My goal is to love myself, accept myself and continue to choose the best foods to eat so that I can be at my best every day. I've got two boys with special needs and they need me to be there for them. When I choose to eat healthfully, I can be who I'm meant to be. ~ Lori Anne Lanigan, Quebec, Canada

The Woodstock Fruit Festival has changed my life for the better in a myriad of ways. I couldn't thank WFF for being my home, helping me grow, connecting me to now lifelong friends, and showing me true love and acceptance. I will come back every year no matter what, and I hope it continues until I have my own children so I can show them this beautiful little piece of the world we create each year for one week. They deserve to know Woodstock like I've gotten to know Woodstock. I love you Woodstock, and everyone that attends and will ever attend. Thank you for being a light in this world for so many. I hope you never burn out. ~ Maggie Whitman, Nebraska, USA

Every morning I wake up and give thanks for three things in my life. This morning I gave thanks for one thing three times because it was just that awesome! I am so grateful for all the wonderful friends I have made either directly or indirectly from The Woodstock Fruit Festival! I can't even begin to tell you what a difference it's been to be among such beautiful, vibrant, healthy and thriving individuals. The positivity, the love and the support. I feel truly blessed to have you all in my life. ~ Eliana Forero, New York, USA

This fest was amazing the first year I went, and even better this year as my second year. I cannot describe the Joy I am filled with every single day. The people I have met at the fest are my true friends and soulmates. They have made me want to live all over the world and become the best possible person I can be. There was a lot of healing this year, and I cannot imagine my life without the fest and these people. They have all made me believe in my dreams again, which I was ready to give up on. This is a great opportunity to break out of your shell and shine your brightest light with people who accept you. I would love to have the fest be longer so that I can connect with more people. Anyone who's considering coming should jump aboard, because you never know what will find you here. I love you all and thank you a million times over for the amazing time!! Can't wait for next year;) ~ Olivia Didrichsen, New York, USA

NSC Sri Lankan Staffs, Ratnapura, Sri Lanka.

Honorable Judge Carter, United States of America.

20th March 2018.

Your Honor,

We are writing this letter concerning Michael Arnstein. We have known him for 8 years as our company president and a good human being. During all of this time, we have never seen Michael Arnstein act inappropriately or misuse the law during our office time or with after work time.

Michael Arnstein has done so much for us and for our local community here in Sri Lanka, above and beyond his duties as a company president. He took over every responsibility and needs since the beginning of our office establishment. We had tons of needs and requirements in our life when we join this company, but Michael helped us in many ways. He has been providing funds and care for personal needs and community needs. As a company we donated so much funds and necessary goods to local hospitals, schools, orphanage and elder's homes under Michael's lead. He always asks us to collect information about those kinds of people who really need a push to survive in this local community.

We are 11 poor families who works for Michael here in Sri Lanka. We depend on him and our families depends on us. We are poor families and most importantly true loyal people to Michael Arnstein. Right now here in Sri Lanka inflation is so high. Most of the people live with lots of demands with low earnings. But with Michael's care and funds we manage our lives and able to pay our bills. Without his management and maintenance we will not be able to keep our Sri Lanka office. He often comes here to check our productivity and push forward our business all the time. He sends emails, videos and sometimes he sends our New York staff members to check our office management and business improvements. We always seek Michael's ideas and his leadership.

We had so many problems in this company because of online defamation lies. How ever Michael kept our jobs safe and overcame those attacks. Some people tried to collapse our business through threatening emails and fake news, but Michael saved our lives and protected our jobs. Michael plays the main role in our company He is the 'The Natural Sapphire Company' he is our hope, and most importantly he is the one who can make us safe.

Your honor, we don't know so much about law and government rules. We only ask WE NEED MICHAEL. Please help our families and lives through his presence to our office ever. There is only one person who can do this it's you sir. We would very much appreciate your orders.

Thank you, Yours faithfully, NSC Sri Lankan Staffs.

NSC Sri Lankan Staffs

Supun Sumanada



Supun Chamara



Dinusha Madushani

Dilini Nisansala



Dilushan Rangika Perera



Dhanushka Saranga







Thans M.



Dinesh Bolonne





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