



THE DALAI LAMA

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The plight of people in prison has always concerned me. As someone who believes strongly in the possibility and potential of individuals to change, I feel that the focus of a society's justice system should always be on rehabilitation rather than punishment. I therefore support initiatives that provide prisoners with opportunities to pursue education and personal development and in so doing to benefit society as well.

I am delighted to hear that Life University and its Center for Compassion, Integrity and Secular Ethics, through a program they call "The Chillon Project," has now developed a degree program for people imprisoned in the state of Georgia in collaboration with the Georgia Department of Corrections. I firmly believe that education is one of the most effective ways of bringing about long-term change in both individuals and society, and can provide a powerful tool for dealing with the problems of high levels of incarceration. Moreover, because Life University's degree program seeks to bring secular ethics into a college curriculum, it includes a strong focus on the cultivation of inner values such as compassion. These will be studied alongside and in the context of coursework in business, psychology, the humanities and social sciences, peace and conflict studies, and other areas that are important for understanding and making a positive difference in our increasingly complex world.

I am encouraged to know that the university has also created scholarships for correctional officers. I sincerely hope that all who sign up as students for these programs will study diligently, believe in their own worth, and strive to fulfill their potential for the benefit of themselves and others.

The Chillon Project is a testament to Life University's sincere commitment to promoting secular ethics to bring about constructive solutions to social challenges. I hope those of you who read this will share my enthusiasm for the transformative potential represented in this endeavor. I invite you to join me in lending support to the Chillon Project.

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