

Christina Fernandes
2 Princess Rose Pl.
Palm Coast, FL 32164
386-931-3121

August 20, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Christina Fernandes, and I am writing this letter on behalf of my husband, Joao "Paul" Fernandes, who I have had the privilege of being married to for the past 25 years. He was my high school sweetheart, and through all of life's ups and downs, he has remained my best friend and the person I trust most in this world.

I have watched Paul grow from a young man into the kind, caring, and dependable person he is today. He is the type of person who will drop everything to help a friend or even a stranger. Whether it's lending a hand or simply being there to listen, Paul is always just a phone call away. His compassion and willingness to help others are at the core of who he is.

Paul is also an incredible father to our children. He has been present for every milestone—from soccer games and school dances to first days of school and award ceremonies. Despite a demanding work schedule, he still made time to coach both our daughters' soccer teams, teaching them not only the game, but also discipline, teamwork, and confidence. He also taught them to drive and instilled in them a strong sense of responsibility and safety on the road.

Beyond our home, Paul is deeply involved in the community, particularly through his work with the Portuguese American Club. He dedicates countless hours to volunteer work, helping organize events and support fundraisers for community members in need. He is especially passionate about supporting local youth and their education, and he is a proud supporter of scholarship foundations that benefit students in our area.

One of Paul's great passions is motorcycle riding, which we have shared together for over 20 years. He is always safety-conscious and deeply committed to ensuring the well-being of fellow riders and those around him.

The incident that brings us here has deeply affected Paul. From the moment he realized someone had been hurt, he has shown nothing but sincere remorse and concern. He has prayed daily for the victim's full recovery, and we have had many heartfelt conversations about his deep regret and the emotional burden he carries. I know my husband, and I know he would never intentionally harm anyone. His heart aches over what happened.

While Paul is not perfect—none of us are—he is a truly good man with a good heart. He is a devoted husband, father, friend, and community member.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I respectfully ask that you take all of this into consideration as you make your decision.

Sincerely,

Christina Fernandes

Dear Judge Perkins,

Your Honor, my name is Tony Amaral, and I am the owner of Amaral Custom Homes here in Palm Coast. I regret that I won't be able to attend Joao Paulo Fernandes's sentencing in person, as I will be out of state at that time, but I wanted to take a moment to share my perspective on the man I've known for nearly 30 years.

I first met Paul when he was in his early twenties. He didn't speak much English at the time, but even then, you could tell he was a hard worker, determined, and ready to make something of himself. My son and I were among the first people he met when he arrived here, and from day one, he impressed us with his drive and his willingness to learn. Over the years, I watched him build his company, Top of the Line Concrete, from the ground up. He has kept it running strong for nearly three decades, providing steady work for his employees and supporting his family at the same time. That kind of dedication and reliability is rare, and it's been a privilege to watch him grow both as a businessman and a person.

Beyond his business, Paul has always been a devoted husband and father. I've seen him take an active role in raising his daughters, supporting his wife, and being fully present for his family. While raising their daughters, his wife Christine continued her education and is now a Nurse Practitioner and co-owner of Circle of Health Family Practice. Paul was very supportive throughout, helping however he could and encouraging her along the way. He is hands-on, involved, and genuinely cares about his family's well-being, setting an example through his actions every day.

Paul and I also spent many years working together at the Portuguese American Cultural Center, especially while I served as president. Whenever something needed to be done, Paul was there — donating materials, lending his skills, or volunteering his time. I've seen him put in long hours to help the center, even when he had pressing work obligations. He's the kind of person who just does what needs to be done, without looking for recognition, and that has made a real difference in our community over the years.

He has also been a steady supporter of my Foundation Antonio Amaral, which I started 19 years ago to provide scholarships for local students. So far, we've awarded 270 scholarships totaling \$447,000. Paul has helped at nearly every fundraiser, whether it's setting up tents, taking down tables, cooking meals, or just doing whatever needs to be done. His efforts have helped make it possible for dozens of young people to further their education, something that's really important to me and to our community.

I know this incident is out of character for Paul. He has never had any prior run-ins with the law, and I truly believe that it was a lapse in judgment during a very difficult time — he had lost his mother just two months before this happened, and I know it affected him deeply. He has expressed sincere remorse to me personally, and I believe it.

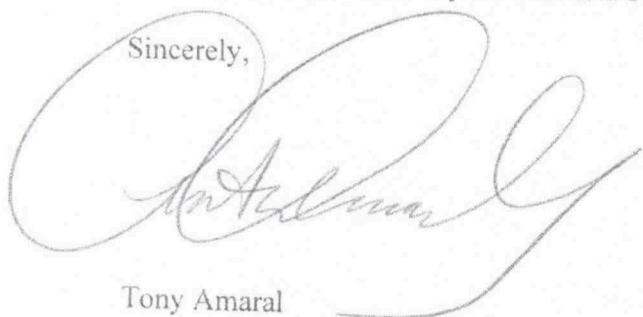
A lengthy sentence would be a huge hardship for his family. His wife, Christine, relies on him, and his daughters are at critical stages in their lives — one getting married soon, and the other preparing to graduate high school. It would also impact his employees, who count on him for

their livelihoods. I know that Paul is someone who has always been dependable, responsible, and committed to the people who depend on him.

Your Honor, I ask that you take into account the man I've known for three decades — a hardworking, loyal, family-centered man who has given so much to his family and his community. He is genuinely remorseful for his mistake, and I believe he still has a lot of good to give. I hope you'll consider all that he has done and continues to do when making your decision.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Tony Amaral

Notary Acknowledgment

State of Florida
County of Flagler

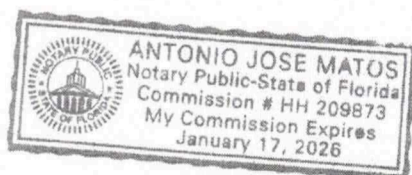
On this 25th day of July, 2025, before me personally appeared Antonio Amaral, known to me to be the person whose name is subscribed to this letter, and acknowledged that he executed the same for the purposes therein contained.

In witness whereof, I hereunto set my hand and official seal.



Notary Public:

My Commission Expires: 1/17/2026



Ivone Carneiro

1200 Cinnamon Beach Way, unit 1141

Palm Coast, FL 32137

ivonecarneiro57@yahoo.com

386-503-7446

August 25, 2025

Re: Character Reference for Mr. Paulo Fernandes

To Whomever it may concern

My name is Ivone Carneiro, and I have had the pleasure of knowing Mr. Paulo Fernandes since 1995, when he moved to Palm Coast. We met through family members, and over the past three decades, I have come to know Paulo as a dedicated family man and an active, generous member of our community.

Through my long-standing involvement with the Portuguese Club — where I have served as President, Vice President, Secretary, and President of the General Assembly — Paulo has always been present and willing to help. His support has never wavered. Whether we needed volunteers for events or help organizing community functions, Paulo was someone we could rely on. In particular, he contributes every year to our scholarship program, the Portuguese American Educational Society (PAES), and plays a key role in supporting our annual golf tournament, which helps raise funds for this important cause.

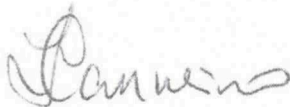
Paulo is a devoted father, husband, and friend. Family means everything to him, and that shows in the way he carries himself and treats those around him. He is respectful, kind, and thoughtful — always looking for ways to contribute positively, both at home and in the broader community.

While I am not here to speak on the legal aspects of his current situation, I felt it was important to speak honestly about the man I've known for over 30 years. I believe Paulo is someone of solid character who deeply values his responsibilities and relationships.

Thank you for considering my words as part of your broader understanding of Mr. Fernandes. Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Ivone Carneiro



Lisa Teixeira
51 Whippoorwill Drive
Palm Coast, FL 32164
203.275.5055
lisateixeira@yahoo.com

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter of reference on behalf of my friend, Joao Paulo Fernandes (Paulo). I have known him for 7 years, and in that time, I have come to know him as a person of honesty, integrity, and strong character. He was the first friend I had the pleasure of making when I relocated here to Palm Coast. He made me feel welcome and introduced me to his wife and circle of friends to help in my transition to a new state.

Paulo is one of the most hardworking individuals I know. He consistently demonstrates dedication and responsibility, whether in his work, family commitments, or community involvement. He approaches challenges with determination and always strives to do what is right. We volunteered together for 3 years and saw this dedication personally.

One quality that stands out most about Paulo is his integrity. I have witnessed him treat others with respect and fairness, even in difficult situations. He is someone who can be relied upon to keep his word and act with sincerity.

I understand that Paulo is appearing before the Court, and I respectfully ask that you consider the person I know him to be. While no one is without flaws, I firmly believe that he is an individual of good moral character who strives to make positive contributions to those around him. His volunteerism and charity involvement with his community is ongoing and not a one-time contribution. He truly cares about helping others.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Lisa Teixeira

August 20, 2025

Paula Vieira

42 Westmount Ln.

Palm Coast, FL 32164

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Paula Vieira, and I am writing this letter on behalf of my dear friend Joao Paulo Fernandes. I have known Paul for the past seventeen years. During this time, I have come to know him as a loyal, hardworking, and honest man.


Paul is a loving father to his beautiful daughters. He is also a dedicated husband to one of my best friends. His family means everything to him, and he always puts their needs and safety first.

Paul is always willing to help anyone in need. He supports local charities and is always finding ways to give back to the community. I have personally experienced his kindness and support during one of the most difficult times in my life. Several years ago, I suffered a traumatic loss, and Paul was there for both my daughter and I without hesitation. To this day, Paul continues to be there for us. He has never wavered on his promise to be there for us and make sure we are well.

Paul is a man of integrity and loyalty. His presence has had a meaningful impact on my life and the lives of those around him. He is a very important person, not only to his family, but to his friends and community as well.

Please take Paul's character, moral values, and the love he has for his family and friends into consideration when making your decision. He is missed and needed by so many people.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paula Vieira".

Paula Vieira

Kenny Goncalves

61 Francis Lane Palm Coast FL, 32137

(386)503-7190

Goncalveskenny@gmail.com

January 20, 2025

Subject: Character Letter for Joao Paulo Fernandes

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter to offer my sincere support for Joao Paulo Fernandes, a man I have had the privilege of knowing for over 22 years. During this time, I have come to know him as a man of integrity, compassion, and unwavering dedication to his community.

For the past 19 years, I have served as a law enforcement officer in our community, and through this experience, I have developed a keen understanding of character and the importance of upholding the law. I can unequivocally state that the incident currently under consideration is entirely inconsistent with the Joao Paulo Fernandes I know.

Joao Paulo is a productive and valued member of our society. He consistently demonstrates a strong commitment to giving back, notably through his dedicated involvement with the Portuguese American Cultural Center. He generously donates his time and resources to this organization, working tirelessly to benefit the entire community. Furthermore, he has taken a leading role in organizing numerous fundraising events to assist community members facing hardship. His willingness to help others in need is a testament to his generous and caring nature.

Based on my long-standing personal relationship with Joao Paulo and my professional experience in law enforcement, I firmly believe that the incident in question is an aberration. It does not reflect his true character or his established pattern of positive contributions to our community. I am confident that he will learn from this experience and continue to be a valuable asset to society.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kenny Goncalves

August 24, 2025

Laurinda Alves

19 Barrington Dr

Palm Coast, FL 32137

To Whom It May Concern,

I have known Joao Paulo for the past 28 years. During these years his integrity, compassion and dedication as a husband, father and son-in-law have been observed.

As a person, Paul demonstrates exceptional character. He has always been an honest, hardworking and reliable person as a husband, dad and businessman. As a dad Paul has never missed one of his daughter's soccer games or cheerleading. Paul even coached both his daughters for many years. He always made sure to make time for father-daughter dances and help with any other organizations the girls joined. His ability to balance guidance with affection ensures that his children feel loved, secure and encouraged.

As a husband he always encouraged my daughter Christina to do the best she can. He encouraged her to go for her master's degree while he helped at home with the girls and drove them to their events so that Christina could study. He is always willing to help at home with whatever is needed.

As a son-in-law, I personally know that I could call him at anytime for anything that I need. I remember when my dad passed, and I was home alone, Paul was the first person I called. He came right over and took my phone notifying the rest of the family and stayed with me till my husband and daughter got there.

Paul is a kind and responsible person. I can recommend Paul without reservation as a person of the highest character. He has my complete respect and admiration as a husband and father. Paulo is very involved in the community and has done many fund raisers to help people he knows and others that just need help.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Laurinda Alves', written in dark ink.

Laurinda Alves

August 22, 2025

Gianna Araujo

126 Pentwater Rd.

St. Augustine, FL 32092

To Whom It May Concern,

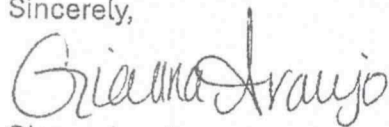
My name is Gianna Araujo, and I am writing this letter in support of my friend, Joao Paulo Fernandes. I have known Paul since I moved to Florida at the age of six. From the day I met him, he has been like a second father to me.

When I lost my own father in 2019, I was only 16 years old. At that time, Paul stepped up in a way that I will never forget. He supported me, looked out for me, and made sure I never felt alone. He not only helped raise my best friend, but he also helped guide me through one of the hardest times of my life.

I am aware of the accusations against him; however, they do not match the man that I know and love. Paul is compassionate, dependable, and has always been a positive influence on those around him. To see him in prison would be like losing another father all over again. His family, friends, and community need him.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I respectfully ask that you take this into consideration in making your decision so that Paul can continue to may an impact on the lives of those around him.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gianna Araujo". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Gianna Araujo

August 25, 2025

Your Honor,

My name is Mario V. Carmo. I'm a retired U.S. Marine Corps Lieutenant Colonel, and I am writing on behalf of Joao Paulo Fernandes who is appearing before your court. Like Paulo (as his friends call him) I immigrated to this country (legally) with my parents and five siblings over sixty years ago. After high school, I joined the Marines and served a tour in Vietnam. Once I was released from active duty, I enrolled in college. I graduated in 1976, and decided to return to the Marines as a commissioned officer. I had the honor to serve our great country for just over thirty years in both peace and war.

I have known Paul since the mid to late 1990s when I was stationed in Quantico, VA and he lived in the area. We would often encounter each other at the Portuguese American Cultural Center in Manassas, VA. We both come from the same region in Northern Central Portugal, so we have many things in common. I know Paul as a family man and a loving father to his two daughters. He is also a small business owner who has provided jobs for members of our community. He has been an active member of the Portuguese American Cultural Center in Palm Coast. During construction of the ten thousand square feet facility in 2014, Paul donated free labor and material toward the completion of the project. He is a respected member of our community.

I respectfully ask that your honor take his many positive qualities in consideration as you weigh sentencing for his transgression of the law. Paul is a man that deserves a second chance at life.

Very Respectfully,



Mario V. Carmo

LtCol. United States Marine Corps, (Ret)

Luis Miguel Ramalho Ferreira
26 Bud Hollow Drive
Palm Coast, FL 32137

08/21/2025

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Luis Miguel Ramalho Ferreira, an Airline Captain for JetBlue Airways and a devoted friend of, Joao Paulo Fernandes. I wanted to thank you for letting me speak on Paulo's behalf regarding his moral character. I've known Paulo for 12 years and with time we have become close friends in which I'm very honored to call. Aside from sharing many common interests, we are both family oriented and always ready to contribute to our community.

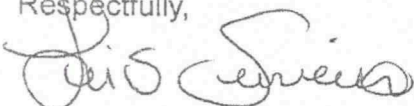
I have been nominated as Vice President at the Portuguese American Cultural Center, whom many call a special place of gathering to over 2000 members. Paulo was a strong foothold in its development of the early stages by donating his time and assets. Paulo is the founder of many events of the social club where hundreds of members actively participate, such as dinner with friends on the first Wednesday of the month. His involvement with the Portuguese American is very noticeable. He's a person who makes it his priority to make sure the ones around him are taken care of, contributing to fundraisers and participating in events which bring the community closer. He never says "NO" when someone needs help.

Paulo is a very proud and supportive father of 2 daughters whom he takes pride in their accomplishments, something simple as winning the soccer game to becoming a Registered Nurse. Paulo has always placed his family and friends first before himself. The lack of his presence in his family's life will be detrimental to his young daughters, as this was very sudden and very unexpected.

I own several motorcycles, ranging from small to luxurious touring motorcycles. We both are motorcycle enthusiasts and joy ride with our friends and family, where we gather more than 10 motorcyclists with ease. His involvement in this case does not convey who he personally is. I view Paulo as a supportive figure where he chooses to participate in motorcycle events that honor and help the community, such as the 9/11 ride that is coming up next month. He's not a violent individual and likes to be the last guy in the group making sure everyone is okay. He's our wise owl ! We have a saying "adopt a rider", when we see a biker riding in the rain, we stay behind the motorcyclist to mitigate the risk of being injured by the trailing vehicle. Paulo is that person !

In my view, this situation is not reflective of Paulo's character but a result of poor judgment. I humbly request for some level of leniency as this is a harsh life lesson for all involved. Thank you for considering my opinion and hope this helps the court's decision.

Respectfully,



Luis Miguel Ramalho Ferreira
(201)320-6982

*Esmeraldino Vilas Pereira
Maria Elizabeth Frazão Pereira
57 Fairbank Lane
Palm Coast, Florida 32137
201-259-4637*

To: To whom this may concern

From: Esmeraldino V. Pereira & M. Elizabeth Frazão Pereira

Date: August 23, 2025

Subject: **RECOMMENDATION FOR PAULO FERNANDES**

We are writing this letter on behalf of **Paulo Fernandes**, so that whom this concerns, may know the kind of person that he is. He is a long and in-good standing member of the Portuguese community of Palm Coast. The Portuguese community has a club founded 36 years ago and in 2004, after much work, a building was built to house the growing community. Paulo was young and starting his business, but he gave his all, in time, work and financial resources towards the concrete foundation and more, for this wonderful building.

We reside in Palm Coast for 18 years and got to know Paulo and his family through the Portuguese American Cultural Center (PACC), where we worked as volunteers for over 10 years. At every event Paulo and his family had reservations for Table 1, no matter what the feast was. As you probably know, the PACC is a very active club with dinners, lunches, feasts, events and also fundraisers for various causes.

We always counted with Paulo's generous financial help for every fundraising cause that came our way. Any fundraiser, he gave above and beyond donating towards it. Paulo and his family have been pillars of the community for as long as we have lived in Palm Coast. Paulo is a parishioner of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church, as we are, it also being a target of his donations.

We ask that you take this information in consideration for his penance. We, as Christians, also have bad days where we might make momentary wrong decisions in our life. Please consider that he is a good person and how much he is missed not only by his family, but also by an entire community of peaceful residents in Palm Coast.

Sincerely and respectfully,

Esmeraldino V. Pereira *M. Elizabeth Frazão Pereira*

Esmeraldino V. Pereira & M. Elizabeth Frazão Pereira

Benefactor Members of the Portuguese American Cultural Center in Palm Coast
Residents of Palm Coast for over 18 years.