

June 3, 2025

The Honorable Judge Rodney Sippel
Thomas F. Eagleton US Courthouse
111 South 10th Street
St. Louis, MO 63102

RE: Victim Impact Statement from Promise Community Homes

Dear Judge Sippel,

Thank you, your honor, for this opportunity to provide this victim impact statement. My name is Matt Elmore, and I am the Executive Director of Promise Community Homes. Today, I submit this statement on behalf of our organization and the people who suffered because of the predatory criminal behavior of Joelle Fouse.

Promise Community Homes is a nonprofit that provides safe, affordable, and accessible housing to nearly 300 adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Many of the individuals we serve require significant assistance to complete daily living activities. We provide critical home modifications—ramps, widened doorways, accessible bathrooms—to ensure they can remain in their homes for as long as they choose. We give families peace of mind, knowing their loved ones live in a safe, well-maintained home with care provided by trusted community partners. Through the generosity of our supporters, we are able to offer these essential services at an incredibly affordable rate.

For more than 50 years, this has been our mission. This was certainly our mission for the entirety of Joelle Fouse's tenure with the organization. She lied. She manipulated. She exploited the trust placed in her and funneled nearly \$700,000 away from the people who needed it most. Her theft wasn't a slow descent into dishonesty—it was immediate and brazen. Almost as soon as she was hired, she began siphoning money away from our mission at a staggering rate. While we welcomed her into an organization built on trust, she wasted no time exploiting it for personal gain.

Let's be clear: this wasn't an accident. It wasn't a mistake. It was a choice—made over and over again. Ms. Fouse meticulously orchestrated her deception at every level. She created fraudulent financial reports, doctored receipts, and fabricated presentations to the board—all designed to paint a false picture of stability. She even engineered a custom administrator access profile for me in our payroll system. This profile carefully restricted what I could see, an attempt by Ms. Fouse to prevent me from uncovering the reality of what she was doing. Every move was calculated, every lie intentional, all to protect the one thing she truly cared about: herself.

While we were stretching every dollar, making difficult decisions about which projects to fund, about which of our residents would receive needed accessibility improvements, she was siphoning away hundreds of thousands of dollars to fuel her own lifestyle.

To add additional perspective:

- Ms. Fouse's \$8,000 shopping sprees at Louis Vuitton could have funded a new ramp for a resident who can no longer navigate stairs.

- Her \$5,000 of bottle service at the Ritz-Carlton could have covered urgent repairs—HVAC systems, water heaters, essential appliances—for multiple homes.
- And the more than \$33,000 she spent on personal consultants to grow her own failing catering business? The list of impactful, necessary, and quite literally life-changing tasks we could've accomplished would be much longer than this statement will allow.

In addition to the \$700,000 Ms. Fouse stole for her personal use, when you account for investigation costs and lost donor trust, the true impact is even more staggering. Her crime wasn't just financial. She left behind a wake of destruction that will take years to repair.

Because of her, our nonprofit has suffered reputational damage. We are now forced to spend valuable time and resources reassuring donors—many of whom have supported us for decades—that we remain trustworthy and financially stable. Every hour we spend restoring confidence is an hour not spent serving our residents.

Beyond the theft, her very presence poisoned our workplace. She fostered division, turned colleagues against each other, and created an environment of dysfunction. With hindsight, we now see that her mismanagement of HR and accounting wasn't just incompetence—it was deliberate. A smokescreen to cover her crimes. She clearly thrived on deceit and chaos. She sat in meetings with us, looked us in the eyes, and pretended to care about our mission—all while directing money out of our organization and into her own pocket.

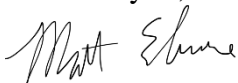
But perhaps the most sickening offense of all? It's not just that she betrayed her coworkers. It's not just that she damaged our reputation and drained our resources. It's not even that, for 10 years, she put luxury handbags and international vacations above the needs of vulnerable adults.

What I find most disgusting, is that in her role – she ***was always the first and strongest advocate for raising rents for our residents... individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities living on fixed incomes.*** She wanted them to pay more—not because we needed it to survive, but because she needed to fund her own lavish lifestyle. That is a level of heartlessness I struggle to comprehend.

She once asked me what I wanted my legacy to be. Well, here's hers: fraud, betrayal, greed, and utter disregard for the people who actually need help. Joelle Fouse stole from a charity for a decade. She advocated for raising rent on adults with disabilities. She has lied to this court, claiming innocence—not out of regret, but as a last-ditch effort to delay facing justice. She is a predator who takes advantage of the vulnerable.

She should not be allowed to walk away from this with a slap on the wrist. She deserves the maximum sentence allowed. We hope, your honor, that you agree.

Thank you,



Matt Elmore
Executive Director