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September 22, 2012

Mr. George E. Pessotti  
Burn Survivors of New England  
10 Harrington Drive  
Merrimack, New Hampshire, NH 03054

Dear Mr. Pessotti,

I am writing to thank you with all my heart for allowing me the privilege to attend the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual World Burn Congress in Milwaukee, which was sponsored by the Phoenix Society for Burn Survivors. Thanks to being a recipient of assistance from The George Pessotti Scholarship Fund, I was part of an amazing event that I will never forget.

Since my accident on January 29<sup>th</sup> this year which led to my hospitalization at Cornell Medical Center that included a skin graft to my right arm, my life has not been the same. This "superficial" wound runs deep, and has had a profound impact on my life. Physically I still hurt, and long for the day for the burning, itching and pain to go away. Emotionally I feel lonely because my few friends don't understand what it means to sustain a third degree burn and never will unless they experience it, which I would not wish on anyone. My family has always been fractured and quite dysfunctional, so I would be naive to think that they would rally and be supportive of me now. Financially I have not been able to work since my injury, and let's just say my phone rings constantly and it's not from well wishers inquiring how I am, and if I need anything!

As a practicing Catholic, I never questioned God why. In fact after taking my daily walks on the burn unit, I was very grateful to God for my burned arm, seeing how much others were suffering from their accidents. No one else was walking the halls daily but me and this little boy and his nurse, because they could not due to their injuries. I knew I was very blessed.

When I heard about the World Burn Congress in Milwaukee, I knew I had to go. I went online to the Phoenix Society's site, and quite diligently filled out the application before the deadline. Then it was off to California to donate a kidney to my brother. Being away for five weeks convalescing, I missed the follow up calls to proceed with the application process. Understandably, the

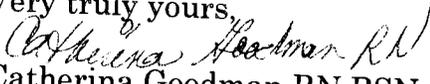
Phoenix Society had to bypass me and move on to other applicants. Well yes and no. My need was great and I was on a mission! So I gave you the old "google", we spoke soon after and the rest is history.

Attending the World Burn Congress and meeting you and hundreds of other survivors who know what I am going through, has given me greater courage and hope. Seeing other with burns more severe than mine smiling, sharing their stories, and embracing me as part of this amazing family is a gift that is heaven sent. I thank God for you and your generosity which you have shared with me, and only He knows how many others!

As I start to think about rejoining the workforce in the hopeful near future and not quite sure what I will be doing, I do know that I want to give back some of what I was given from meeting you and my fellow survivors. You have all been such powerful and inspiring examples of fortitude, resilience and grace. I will take you all with me always, and I will no longer be ashamed because I had an accident that resulted in my burn!

Again with my sincerest love and gratitude I thank you Mr. Pessotti for who you are, and all you do for so many of us through your scholarship fund for burn survivors. May God continue to bless and keep you, your family, and all those who contribute to The George Pessotti Scholarship Fund. Here's to hoping to see you in Providence, RI in 2013 for the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual World Burn Congress!

Very truly yours,

  
Catherina Goodman RN,BSN