

# SUCCESS IS OUR FUTURE CEREMONY CELEBRATES THIRD DECADE

ANNUAL EVENT STARTED IN 1992 BY  
SUPERVISOR OF CENTRAL PLACEMENT DARYLL PIPKIN

On Thursday, May 26th the 30th annual Success Is Our Future Graduation ceremony was held at the Eggleston Youth Center in Irwindale.

"We've been holding the ceremonies at Almansor Court in Alhambra for about twelve years," said Director Jedediah Minoff. "Last year due to Covid we held a drive-through ceremony outside for the first time - and it was successful."

Success Is Our Future was started in 1992 by then Supervisor of Central Placement, Daryll Pipkin. "He felt probation youths weren't being recognized," remembered Clarence Brown, Executive Director of Eggleston Youth Services and the last remaining member of the first Success Is Our Future committee and its chairperson since 2003. "He wanted to make sure that the youth that graduated from high school had an opportunity to receive funding for books and tuition."

Initially the event was a way to celebrate the hard work it took for youth to graduate high school while on probation and in foster care. Daryll Pipkin imagined a banquet with formal dress, fine dining, and a chance for youths to experience a real feeling of ceremony and splendor. The first was held in Hawthorne at the celebrated Cockatoo Inn. In later years venues such as USC Town and Gown, the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, and Pasadena Hilton hosted. "Girls would be dressed in evening gowns and the boys would wear suits," Mr. Brown recalled. "We had some really good times over the years." Prior to the pandemic, more than 500 people would attend the annual ceremony.

The first year was difficult. "We started off with no money," said Mr. Brown. "The group home providers all came together and raised enough to have not only the banquet but also to award the first scholarship." Success Is Our Future now awards scholarships every year in the areas of academics, performing arts, athletics, and entertainment. Youth have gone on to attend and graduate from USC, UCLA, all the Cal State Universities, Howard University, and elsewhere.

"Daryl Pipkin demonstrated that you don't have to have a special title to be a leader and advocate for youth beyond what is expected," said Director Minoff. "I have seen that a lot working with the ILP Transition Coordinators (TCs). Whether it is DPO Alan Brown leading the implementation of the College Summit for the past seven years or individual TCs identifying and passionately advocating for resources and services for their clients, people are going above and beyond their job descriptions all the time."



Daryll Pipkin



Clarence Brown



SDPO Lindsey, SDPO Morris, Director Minoff, SDPO Chanaiwa



DPO II Quintana with this year's themed sweatshirt



Proud Graduate



A graduate and their party pull up to the podium



# SUCCESS IS OUR FUTURE CEREMONY CELEBRATES THIRD DECADE (CONT)

ANNUAL EVENT STARTED IN 1992 BY SUPERVISOR OF CENTRAL PLACEMENT DARYLL PIPKIN

This year's theme, *Rise Up To Success*, fit the mood of the day. Now headed by Director Minoff and the Independent Living Program (ILP), the ILP staff and Short Term Residential Therapeutic Programs staff made sure the graduating youth were treated with a festive occasion to celebrate their hard work and achievements. When last year's outdoor venue was found to be unavailable, Clarence Brown answered the call, offering the area surrounding the Eggleston Youth Services Center. It turned out to be a perfect setting.

Pop-up tents and tables were lined up along the stretch of road right in front of the Youth Center for the second ever drive-through version of the ceremony. In the center was the podium, where youth would receive their diplomas and take their first steps into the future as graduates.

Music from cool jazz to Coolio filled the air (all from Master of Ceremonies SDPO Gregory Lindsey's own collection) as cars began lining up. The graduates, many dressed in cap and gown, would stop at each checkpoint to sign in, receive their diplomas and have their names announced, then stand for a professional portrait at the photo booth before finally cruising to the luncheon area. Cars and vans were filled with family, friends, and well-wishers who showered the graduates with applause and the honking of horns from surrounding vehicles. It was an unforgettable occasion.

SDPO Monique Chanaiwa is the Supervisor for Independent Living Program Youth Development Services and has been part of Success Is Our Future for 16 years. It's one of the highlights of her year to watch the youth graduate.

"That's why we do this," she said. "We didn't want the youth to go unrecognized, because we know how hard it is for our probation clients to actually finish high school. It's a chore for them. I mean, one of their biggest obstacles is going to school every day. We like to give them recognition here."

Thank you to the Los Angeles County Probation Department Youth Development Services staff and Short Term Residential Therapeutic Programs staff for their hard work. And of course, congratulations to all thirty of our 2022 graduating seniors who attended the event!

Probation News



Student art featuring this year's theme



DPO II Quintana and DPO II Roberson



SDPO Lindsey and Director Minoff do some last minute planning



ILP Coordinators Venus and Daryl coordinate plans



A welcome vote of confidence



DPO II Rockisha Roland



The affair was topped off by delicious Bolivian food provided by Let's Celebrate Catering



DPO II Roebuck-Townsend and DPO II Abrego Jr



Transitional Housing Coordinator John Thompson