

PROBATION NEWS



AB 109 CLIENT HEADED TO UC BERKELEY

There are numerous success stories of the men and women that have been through the probation process. Unfortunately, too few of these stories are shared with the public at large. Many former probationers go on to lead successful, if private, lives. When a positive story presents itself, we like to share it with you.

Meet Adrian Caceres.

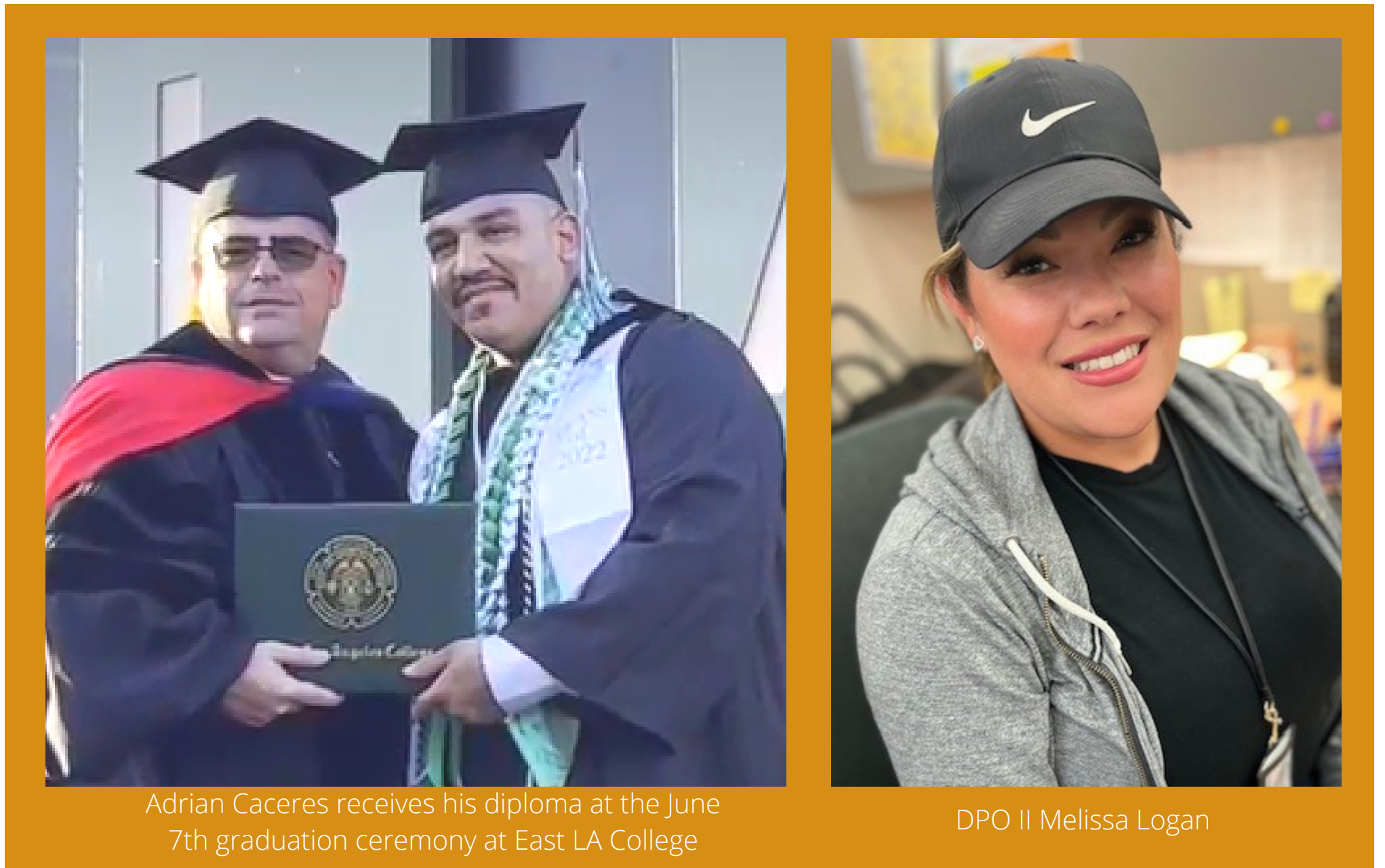
Mr. Caceres followed the same path of many formerly incarcerated men and women. He had a challenging home life, was kicked out of schools, and had multiple prison stays. But he persevered. He's an inspiration to all of us, and he shared his story with Probation News.

Inside this issue:

Success Is Our Future celebrates 30 Years

Super Bowl Champions Host Clinic at DKC

Employee Spotlight: K-9 DPO Robinson



Adrian Caceres receives his diploma at the June 7th graduation ceremony at East LA College

DPO II Melissa Logan

AB 109 CLIENT HEADED TO UC BERKELEY (CONT)

My story, by Adrian Caceres:

First and foremost, I want to acknowledge that I am here by the grace of God. Secondly, having a probation officer that was as supportive as Ms. Logan was instrumental. I will not be getting in depth about my full story, but I'll share the major points as to how I got here.

I am a first-generation college student that grew up in a household where I witnessed drug addiction and domestic violence. I joined a gang at the age of 13 because I wanted to be loved and cared for. I just wanted to be heard and have a voice.

Growing up in the neighborhood allowed me to feel appreciated and valued. It was my first experience of kinship and what I thought a family was. Growing up I never thought about college, let alone graduating from any school. I never walked the stage for elementary. I would have been kicked out of elementary school except I had my appendix removed which landed me in the hospital. I went to 6 different junior-high schools because I kept getting kicked out for fighting. Again, I did not walk the stage for graduation. I went to summer school to complete junior high and move on to high school. In high school I went for a bit of time but got kicked out for fighting again. I never went to high school prom, senior dances, or parties. I earned my GED in prison. I was in the Secure Housing Unit (SHU) and decided to utilize that time to educate myself.

I never thought of college as an option until I met a counselor who helped me enroll and start college for the first time ever. Upon enrolling I had a relapse and eventually dropped out before going back to prison. Upon my release I was done with school. I felt like I did not belong in college. My world was the gangs - that's where I belonged. While I was in prison, I almost died from Covid. I had two hours to live (at least that's what the paramedics said) since I had Covid 19, pneumonia, tuberculosis, and asthma. I made a promise to God that if he allowed me to live, I would do something in return. I kept my word to this day. I started working at Homeboy Industries and while I was working there, I started running self-help Men's groups.

So, as I was running these groups, I wanted to inform myself better to help these men. I feel God put the thought in my head to go back to school and finish what I had started. I enrolled in college and started going again, and now I am about to finish. I applied last semester to transfer and was accepted into my dream school, UC Berkeley. I did not just get accepted but I got a full scholarship to attend school and that is by the grace of God.

(cont. on next page)

*I joined a gang at the age of 13 because
I wanted to be loved and cared for.
I just wanted to be heard and have a voice.
- Adrian Caceres*



Proud graduate Adrian Caceres

AB 109 CLIENT HEADED TO UC BERKELEY (CONT)



Ms. Logan with Mr. Caceres

That’s just the academic part. While on probation, my probation officer Ms. Logan helped me transition from Homeboy Industries into Exodus mental health where I worked until earlier this year before leaving to focus on school. My P.O would send me the links and I would follow through. I was even homeless for a while and would give my mother’s address, but the whole time I was working and going to school. My P.O. soon connected me with an agency that helped me get my own apartment and I am now living on my own.

It was hard not having credit or enough income to get approved to get housing so it was difficult looking for a place. Again, I would follow through with all the links and referrals Ms. Logan would send. Honestly, it was just that open communication that I had with her that made it work. I was very transparent for the most part. If I made a mistake, I would be upfront with her. If I needed help, which I did most of the time, I would ask her. I strongly believe that I am here because of God and Ms. Logan. They both were guiding me through the process. Now for the first time ever I will walk the stage in college, transfer out and continue on my academic journey.

One day I would like to attend a school like Harvard or Princeton for my master’s degree, but I no longer make plans. I just pray and ask God. If it’s His will, He will make it happen, just like He did with Berkeley. I am not yet financially stable so I can’t really afford Harvard, but with God anything is possible. My message to those individuals in my shoes is the following: “I am no one or nothing, I am just here trying to be the best version of myself, I am not perfect but thank God I am not who I use to be, and now I put others before me and just trust my higher power, God”.

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