

# BEYOND THE BADGE: FEATURING DPO II T. BROOKS

## BRINGING SPORTS EQUIPMENT TO THE YOUTH OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Deputy Probation Officer II T. Brooks has served with the Los Angeles County Probation Department for 32 years. He currently serves as a Deputy Probation Officer II and exemplifies what it truly means to serve with compassion. While vacationing in the Dominican Republic, DPO Brooks noticed the vast differences in the infrastructures of the DR and the United States. He observed that many families were living in poverty, and services were minimal or, in many cases, unavailable. With his years of experience working with youth and being a father, DPO Brooks specifically noticed the children and their love for baseball. "They play in open fields and parks with trees. They play baseball wherever," he explained. "As I drove around the cities, I saw kids playing no matter the conditions. They play in the rain. They play in their socks, bare feet, holey shoes, and no gloves. Yet they all have that dream in their eyes."

Witnessing the children's resilience and love for the sport, he reflected on life and his children, who are currently playing high school and travel ball. He saw a need and desired to be of assistance to the children in the Dominican Republic who don't have access to the same services and support as the youth in the states. DPO Brooks immediately spoke with his friend Roberson Valdez of Valdez Hitting Club in the DR and declared that he'd be back with equipment for their young people.



DPO II Brooks and Mr. Valdez

[Click here](#) to view a video of DPO Brooks at work in the DR

"This year's trip to Hania brought me and a few other grown men to tears as we gave out stuff. Some of the kids were so poor and in need. But, to see the smiles on their faces, you know when you're touching people," shared DPO Brooks. "Hania was touching and moving. It made me appreciate what I have for my kids. It motivated me even more to continue doing this."

*-DPO II Brooks*

Upon his return to the Dominican Republic, he fulfilled his promise. Traveling with huge duffle bags, DPO Brooks has provided baseball equipment for children on the island during his last two trips. Mr. Valdez helps him identify areas where children are in need. "We get in his van, and while driving around, we see kids out practicing," shared DPO Brooks. "We pull over and stop like the ice cream man and talk to some of the coaches. Then, the kids get in line, and we give away equipment."

Most children on the island go without because their parents don't have the means to pay for uniforms. DPO Brooks says he witnessed children playing pick-up games with holes in their shoes and worn-out cleats. "The coaches are volunteers that love the game and get a group of kids together in their barrio," he explained.

On his last trip, DPO Brooks visited Haina Barrio in Santa Domingo. Because of the generosity of several individuals and businesses, he donated to over one hundred young people. Upland National Little League donated over one hundred jerseys. Performance Fitness Athletes (PFA Baseball) donated hats, helmets, and gloves. And several baseball families and individuals in DPO Brook's personal and professional networks also donated cleats and gloves.

"This is what being a Probation Officer is all about, giving part of yourself away, creating relationships, planting seeds of hope, and showing that you care," DPO Brooks said. "This is who we are as POs. We give our hearts to those we serve. Then when we see a need, we step up without question and are there for people."

He plans to continue donating to the youth in the Dominican Republic every other year. Thank you, DPO Brooks, for serving local and international communities, on and off duty, with compassion. Thank you for identifying a need and answering the call. The Los Angeles County Probation Department acknowledges, recognizes, and salutes you for your servant's heart and for living a life beyond the badge.

Probation News



DPO Brooks is able to do this because of many donors that believe in his efforts



Distributing uniforms to DR youth



A happy youngster with his new uniform