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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Davis Man Becomes First to Graduate from Addiction Intervention Court

The participant made such incredible progress that he graduated early

(Woodland, CA) – October 16, 2018 – On Monday, October 15, 2018, a 34-year-old Davis resident successfully graduated from Addiction Intervention Court in Department 6 of the Yolo County Superior Court. Due to his wanting to move forward for his productive life, he asked that he remain anonymous. When asked about this, Chief Deputy District Attorney said “It is his story to tell, and the team respects his wishes. We will refer to him as Alan.”

Addiction Intervention Court (AIC) is a specialty court program that serves up to 15 individuals who struggle with substance use disorders and are involved in the criminal justice system as a result of their addiction. The program is a collaborative effort between the Yolo County District Attorney’s Office, the Yolo County Superior Court, the Public Defender, the Probation Department, and Health and Human Services Agency. The program provides intensive support services and supervision aimed at increasing a participant’s overall quality of life while reducing recidivism.

In March, 2016, Alan led Davis Police on a high speed car chase through the streets of Davis. Alan fled from his car and when officers caught up to him he pulled a gun on them. Officers subdued him and he was arrested for serious charges. Alan was referred to AIC and the team assessed him as having a substance use disorder with was a substantial factor March, 2016 crime.

Alan’s mother, father and grandparents joined Alan for the graduation ceremony. AIC Judge Janet Gaard asked members of the team to share some words about Alan and his success. Alan’s attorney, Steve Sabbadini, read a letter from Alan’s parents thanking the District Attorney, the Davis Police Department and the team for giving Alan a second chance. In their letter, Alan’s mother, speaking of the Davis Police Department, said:

“They made the choice to patiently wait for an opportunity to physically detain my son rather than shoot him, even knowing that he was armed. It is my belief that had he been in any other County, he would not be with us here today.” Sabbadini also thanked the officer for exercising restraint and thanked Chief Deputy District Attorney Jonathan Raven for being progressive and supportive of an addiction intervention court resolution as opposed to an outcome that required a state prison commitment. Speaking to his client, Sabbadini said “The reformation side prevailed. Your success speaks volumes of the necessity of this type of interventional court, and the strength, courage and inner resolve on your part to take advantage of that opportunity.” Rich Lansburgh, a long time member of the Sabbadini law firm, who represented Alan at all of his addiction intervention court appearances addressed Alan and said “You took the challenge and your hard work got you here today. I look forward to your future success.” Lansburgh read a portion of the essay Alan had written for the graduation in which his advice to others was to “Take everything one step at a time. It can sometimes feel like everything is crashing down on you, but you have to trust the process by putting one foot in front of the other.”

Judge Gaard then asked Chief Deputy District Attorney Jonathan Raven to share his sentiments. Raven handles all AIC cases in court on behalf of the District Attorney. “It took relentless patience to get you into this program,” said Raven. “The prosecutor on this case took a chance, made the right decision, and you have now paved the way for others to be referred and also have the second chance you got.” Raven asked retired Davis Police Lieutenant Glenn Glasgow to say a few words. Glasgow was involved in the arrest of Alan and said it is rare that police get to see such an outcome in a case. “In my eyes, this shows how out of a horrible day for both of us, you were able to achieve success,” said Glasgow. “It’s very uplifting.”

Finally, Judge Gaard, Probation officer Stephen Svetitch and Forensic Team Clinical Supervisor Kristi Abbott addressed Alan. Raven had commented how although Alan “did the heavy lifting,” his support team of Abbott and Svetitch were critical links to his success. Svetitch said “you had a vision of what you wanted to do and you set the foundation for future success.” Abbott commented “you’ve given others a blueprint for how to do this program successfully.” Judge Gaard concluded by telling Alan “you are quiet but also thoughtful, which is why you have succeeded in the program.”

After the graduation, Alan, his family, team members and other AIC participants celebrated with cake and pizza. The next AIC graduation is scheduled for January, 2019.

Alan is the first AIC graduate. His participation through the program was so exemplary that he graduated early, a few months shy of the standard 18 month requirement. Another reason he graduated early was to open up a space for another worthy participant since the program is currently at capacity. Raven commented, “we sorely need funding so others can take advantage of this program. We need another probation officer and social worker and I’m hoping that a small portion of the millions of dollars in Mental Health Services Act money this county receives can be used to augment this amazing program as well as our Mental Health Court program.”

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