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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Sacramento Woman Graduates from Addiction Intervention Court

(Woodland, CA) – October 2, 2019 – On October 1, 2019, an audience full of supporters, family members, members of the Yolo County Sheriff’s Office, 13 members of the District Attorney’s Office, and a representative from Assemblymember Cecilia Aguilar-Curry’s office gathered to celebrate the success of 35-year-old Crystal Reta, who graduated from Yolo County’s Addiction Intervention Court in Department 14 of the Yolo County Superior Court.

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 the likelihood of recidivism.

On June 1, 2017, Crystal Reta was driving a Volkswagen Passat with no license plate with two passengers on Highway 16 in Brook, CA. Yolo County Sheriff’s Deputy Matt Walters stopped Reta at the Cache Creek Casino Valet. The car was a rental car reported stolen. During a search of the car, Deputy Walters found glass smoking pipes and heroin. Reta told Deputy Walters that she had failed to return the rental car and the pipes and heroin belonged to her. The District Attorney reviewed the police report and charged Reta with felony possession of a stolen vehicle, misdemeanor possession of heroin, and misdemeanor possession of drug paraphernalia. After reviewing the case further, the District Attorney’s office felt this may be an excellent case for Addiction Intervention Court and referred it to the AIC team for an assessment. The team found Reta suitable for the program, she plead no contest to a misdemeanor, and her first day of Addiction Intervention Court was November 20, 2017.

Judge David Rosenberg presides over AIC. He opened up the program by telling Reta, “you’ve had your ups and downs, and turns and twists. But you’ve persevered and really turned your life around.” Judge Rosenberg introduced AIC team members to congratulate Reta. Probation Officer Stephen Svetich told Reta how “she was a different person than the person I met a few years ago. You have shown so much growth and somehow you figured something out in your life to get to this point.” HHSA Clinical Forensic Supervisor Kristi Abbott told Reta, “you are absolutely glowing. I feel so fortunate I was part of your growth. You are so tough and strong and capable of taking care of everyone around you.” Next, Deputy Public Defender Bret Bandle walked up to the podium and looked at all the other AIC participants and told Reta “you are an amazing example for all other participants to see what they are capable of achieving.” Finally, Judge Rosenberg asked Chief Deputy District Attorney Jonathan Raven to the podium. Raven has known Reta’s family for over 15 years. When Raven worked for the Attorney General, Reta’s mother Tammy Cappellano contacted him about the prosecution of the man who murdered her son, Michael. Raven assisted Cappellano, Michael’s killer was convicted, and Raven and Cappellano have remained in contact since then. Raven commented on Reta’s graduation essay stating, “Crystal, you mentioned in your essays that you have to love yourself before you can succeed and that no one was going to tell you in the future that nobody loves you.” Raven looked to the other participants and told them, “many of you have done some bad things, but you are not bad people. You are all loved and you have to forgive yourselves.”

Next, Judge Rosenberg invited members of the Sheriff’s office to the podium. Undersheriff Dale Johnson told Reta, “These are the types of outcomes we want to see. You are part of the citizenship of the community that we are here to serve.” Next, Deputy Matt Walters, who arrested Reta in 2017, addressed Reta. “I like speaking to you in this environment rather than the last time we met,” said Walters. “In law enforcement we don’t see these positive outcomes and I feel blessed to be here for this.”

Reta’s mother Cappellano came up to speak next. Reta stated, “I’m really proud of my daughter. I lost my son. He just had his 44th birthday and I tried so hard to help change his road but he made his choices.” She looked to the participants and said, “Please don’t let this happen to you. Love yourself first and everything will come from that.” Finally, Judge Rosenberg told Reta, “The floor is yours.” Reta said, “thank you to the team. You may some hard choices to keep me in line and at the time I didn’t like you for that. But your decisions, though tough on me, saved my life.” She spoke to her fellow participants and told them, “I entered AIC because I thought it was the fast track to avoid jail. Don’t do this. You are worthy of self-love. If you put the work into this program, your best life is waiting for you.”

Finally, Judge Rosenberg presented a certificate to Reta and praised her for her hard work and dedication. After the graduation, Reta and her family and friends, team members and other AIC participants celebrated by eating brownies baked by Judge Rosenberg and pizza.

Reta hugged Deputy Walters and told him, “thank you for arresting me. You saved my life.”

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