



NEWS

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For Immediate Release

May 5, 2015

El Camino College Compton Center Alumnus Prepares to Graduate from UC Berkeley

Compton native Alejandro Trujillo is a bright and thoughtful man who has had more than his share of adversity in his life. He completed his GED before he was 18; was a shooting victim in the wrong place at the wrong time at age 19; and just six months later suffered from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as a result of another shooting incident where he was not physically injured. Then, his beloved nephew passed away, leaving Trujillo with no motivation to improve his life.

Now, he is celebrating his accomplishments. Trujillo is poised to graduate from the University of California, Berkeley this month with a bachelor's degree in psychology. While he has not yet decided on a career path, he is considering work as a researcher to develop improvements in the treatment of PTSD. "I really want to work with people with PTSD, said Trujillo. "I would like to develop a new method of treating PTSD and bring awareness to the disorder in a new way. I believe that doctors are often too quick to prescribe medication rather than offering alternative methods of treatment." After graduation, he plans to apply for research positions at UC Berkeley in addition to applying to graduate school at UCLA, UC Berkeley, Stanford, and University of Oregon, as well as a few east coast universities. He eventually plans to complete a doctorate degree, which would give him the option to become a professor.

Trujillo is a first-generation college student who came to attend ECC Compton Center almost by accident. He was enrolled at another community college when his nephew passed away. Devastated and discouraged, he dropped out of college. While attending the first community college, he was assisted by an adjunct counselor who also worked at ECC Compton Center. A year later, he decided to contact that counselor, with whom he had developed a rapport, initially "just to say hello." Recognizing the student's potential, the counselor started the enrollment process for him. "This turned out to be a major life-changing event for me," said Trujillo. "I hadn't even realized that what I wanted was within my grasp. I want to thank my counselor at ECC Compton Center, Rosa Carillo, for truly believing in me, even when I didn't believe in myself."

Trujillo's participation in higher education, along with tenacity and serious attention to his studies, has opened up a world of opportunities for him. ECC Compton Center helped set him up for transfer success. He was accepted to a total of seven universities in both the University of California and the California State University systems. "After being declined by UCLA, I cried tears of joy when I received my acceptance letter to UC Berkeley," said Trujillo, who was the only ECC Compton Center student accepted to UC Berkeley in fall 2012.

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ECC Compton Center Alumnus Graduates from UC Berkeley 2-2-2-2

While at Berkeley, he also had the opportunity to study abroad. Last summer, he studied in Barcelona, Spain and enjoyed the experience so much that he decided to extend his graduation date so he could spend a semester abroad studying in Berlin, Germany last fall. “What I learned from my experiences studying abroad is to appreciate the quality of life we have in America,” said Trujillo. “My takeaway from my time in Europe is the concept of simplicity. Europeans live very simple lives and are content with that. I have already applied this philosophy by slowing down and taking my time with things. I don’t mind finishing last, just that I finish right. I value my happiness more than I value the money in my pocket.”

Trujillo credits ECC Compton Center as being a launching point for his academic career. “I know I am a life-long learner,” he said. “I didn’t want to go to school for a paycheck, nor do I want to pick a career for a paycheck. I picked a major and career direction that stood out to me because I have a passion for it. I want to give back and help people in some way.”

About El Camino College Compton Center

El Camino College Compton Center is the community’s education solution offering a full complement of transfer and degree courses, as well as career and technical education. Students may earn an associate degree or certificate, transfer to a four-year university or train for a career. El Camino College Compton Center is located at 1111 E. Artesia Boulevard, Compton, CA.

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Photo Caption:

El Camino College Compton Center alumnus Alejandro Trujillo in Paris while studying abroad last semester. Trujillo will graduate from the University of California, Berkeley in May 2015.