



August 26, 2011

Celebrating 25 Years!



Gabriel Toledo with his daughter

When were you in the Corps and for how long?

I started in 1997 or 1998 and was there for 18 months. I was a tree specialist and helped build a lot of trails. Those are the two things I did the most, but I did a little bit of everything they offered. For example we also used to fix driveways at people's homes and I participated in fire crew with the Aztecs. In fire crew we were forest firefighters. I loved it and did it for 2 years – I would have stayed but it was only seasonal! The Corps was a good job and taught me a lot about what you've got to work for.

Please tell us about your life now, both professionally and personally.

I've been married for 12 years and have 3 kids – they're 16, 13 & 11 years old. I work as an Assistant Transportation Manager at *Sweetener Products* where I have been working for 10 years. My job is setting rates, getting people to make deliveries up north and down south, dispatching drivers, and generally running the transportation department. I started out as a laborer with the company and worked my way up.

In my free time I'm involved with sports: I play in a men's fast pitch travel league, coach my 11 year old son's team, and am an assistant coach on my daughter's soccer team.

How did the Corps influence who you are and what you are doing currently?

The Corps was a stepping stone that showed me how to work hard and have a work ethic. It just kind of put me in check and taught me to go after what I wanted. I also got to go to school with the Corps, which was big because nobody wanted to hire someone without a diploma. Like I said, it was a stepping stone. It opened my eyes to a lot of things that I didn't think I could do. And it showed me how to work with people.

Is there anything particularly memorable about the Corps that you would like to share?

I really liked getting out there with my friends and the community members to plant trees. And I remember that a lot of neighborhoods used to have a block party for us when we were done!

Paddle the Los Angeles River

We continue with our Paddle the LA River tours and the turn out has been outstanding! We have received a lot of positive feed back from the participants. The program has received a lot of media attention and it was recently featured on [CNN](#) and in the [New York Times](#). Both pieces discuss how the program is bringing attention to the need to revitalize the River. The program will run through September 26, 2011. For more info, you can visit the [Paddle the Los Angeles River website](#).



Kayakers on the Los Angeles River

Young Adult Corps

In the middle of the Wildland Recovery Team's (WRT) training on Wednesday, August 24th, they received their first call of the season for a brush fire that had started across the street from their training facility in Malibu Creek State Park. The Team was the first to arrive on the scene and members assessed the fire, then progressed by using a hose line around both sides of the fire. The WRT worked with assistance from LA County Fire Departments' type 1 fire engines, fire patrols and a helicopter that dropped over 1,000 gallons of water on top of the fire, as well as one National Park Service type 3 fire engine. With hard work and dedication the Wildland Recovery Team had the 2-acre blaze put out within the hour with zero injuries. They received commendations and gratitude from the public and the assisting agencies.



Ryan Walker, Tim Stowe, and MRCA staff Pat McQuaid at the site of the brush fire

This past week, the LA Corps held a life skills conference in which 14 corpsmembers participated. The conference included a money management presentation and also a yoga class! During the money management presentation, the corpsmembers learned the importance of credit ratings and reports. They also enjoyed yoga so much that some of them decided to join the Yoga studio on 9th Street! Corpsmembers expressed in their written reports that they prefer to be in life skills classes instead of staying home, and they would like to participate in more yoga or other similar physical activities. They also would like more assistance with relationship and parenting classes.

Clean & Green

- Today and Saturday, Clean & Green will be assisting the Northeast Police Station with their annual Carnival Festival. The carnival will take place at 3353 San Fernando Road from 5pm to 10pm.
- On Saturday, August 26th, Clean & Green will be at Councilmember Herb Wesson's District 10 to assist with the "Neighbors United Block Party". The event is from 8am to 12pm at 1917 Stearns Drive.
- Also on Saturday, Clean & Green will be at the "Back to School Health Fair" taking place at 4318 Degnan Blvd from 8am to 12pm.