

Jackie Lacey

District Attorney

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NEWS RELEASE

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District Attorney Jackie Lacey Honors Teen, Two Others for Courageous Acts

A 15-year-old boy and two others were recognized today by District Attorney Jackie Lacey for their role in helping to bring a car thief, an animal abuser and a sexual predator to justice.

“These honorees come from various walks of life but they all have bravery in common,” District Attorney Lacey said. “Their actions were instrumental in making our communities safer by getting three criminals off the streets.”

The honorees were a teenage boy who witnessed a sexual assault and wrote down detailed information to help capture the suspect; a woman who witnessed a dog being abused and did not rest until the animal was safe; and a man who helped save his gardener’s livelihood.

District Attorney Lacey recognized the three honorees this afternoon at a Courageous Citizen Awards ceremony hosted by the Rotary Club of Pasadena.

The Los Angeles County District Attorney’s Office presents these awards several times a year to people who have performed extraordinary acts of valor and selflessness in assisting in criminal prosecutions, aiding victims, preventing crimes or even capturing suspects.

Awards were presented to:

Leo Richard Anicua, 15, of Pacoima. (Case no. GA097270, presented by Deputy District Attorney Carolina Lugo)

A 78-year-old man sexually assaulted a 10-year-old relative as they waited for the girl’s mother in a parked car outside a Burbank supermarket on Oct. 4, 2015. Then-12-year-old Leo Anicua was in the next vehicle, waiting for his mother. The boy witnessed the assault and wrote down the vehicle’s license plate number. When his mother returned, the boy told her what he saw, and they drove to a police

station to report the crime. Based on the information the boy provided, including a description of the girl's clothing, police officers located and arrested the man.

On Sept. 14, 2017, the defendant pleaded no contest to one felony count of lewd act upon a child for a three-year prison sentence. Sentencing is scheduled for April 23, after he has finished his jail time with no custody credits. He is under a 10-year stay away order from the victim and has to register as a sex offender for the remainder of his life.

The case was investigated by the Burbank Police Department.

Tracy Richardson, 55, of Los Angeles. (Case no. BA451992, presented by Deputy District Attorney Jeffrey Megee)

On June 2, 2016, Tracy Richardson saw a man yelling and cursing at his dog and then use a chain wrapped around the animal's neck to lift the dog and slam it against a metal gate. Ms. Richardson immediately called 911 and began following the man as he walked his dog through Silver Lake. She watched the man lift the dog a few more times, slamming it against a tree, a metal traffic light pole and other objects, and then punch it. Ms. Richardson followed the man until she saw him tie up the dog and walk away. She ran to check the dog's well-being as police arrived and arrested the man.

The man pleaded no contest to two felony counts of cruelty to an animal. On April 4, 2017, he was sentenced to 270 days in jail, three years of probation, anger management classes and was ordered by the court not to own any animals.

The case was investigated by the Los Angeles Police Department.

Frank Bañuelos, 48. (Case no. GA102716, presented by Assistant Head Deputy District Attorney Annette Peterson)

A pickup truck owned by Frank Bañuelos' gardener was stolen in Pasadena last December. The theft was made worse because all of the man's work tools were inside the stolen vehicle. A few weeks later, on Jan. 19, the victim, while working at Mr. Bañuelos' home, saw someone drive by in his truck. The victim told Mr. Bañuelos, who immediately called police and ran to his vehicle to pursue the stolen vehicle. Mr. Bañuelos, an off-duty Los Angeles police officer, stayed on the phone with Pasadena police officers, notifying them of the suspect's location, until they arrived and arrested the suspect.

Just four days after his arrest, the defendant pleaded no contest to one felony count of driving or taking a vehicle without consent and was immediately sentenced to two years in state prison.

The case was investigated by the Pasadena Police Department.

[About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#)

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to protecting our community through the fair and ethical pursuit of justice and the safeguarding of crime victims' rights.