



## CHANGING LIVES THROUGH SPORT

June, 2025

Many of you have heard this story, taking place nearly 25 years ago. But I think it bears repeating at this moment in Exceeding Expectations' history.

In 2001, shortly after EE began, I was driving a group of kids home following a race and was talking to them about graduating from high school and going to college when one of the kids, Nicholas, interrupted me with this question:

***“Cherie, why are you talking to us about this? That’s for other kids, not for us.”***

Nicholas and the other kids had every reason to believe this. As I later learned, not one of them had anyone in their families who had ever graduated from high school.

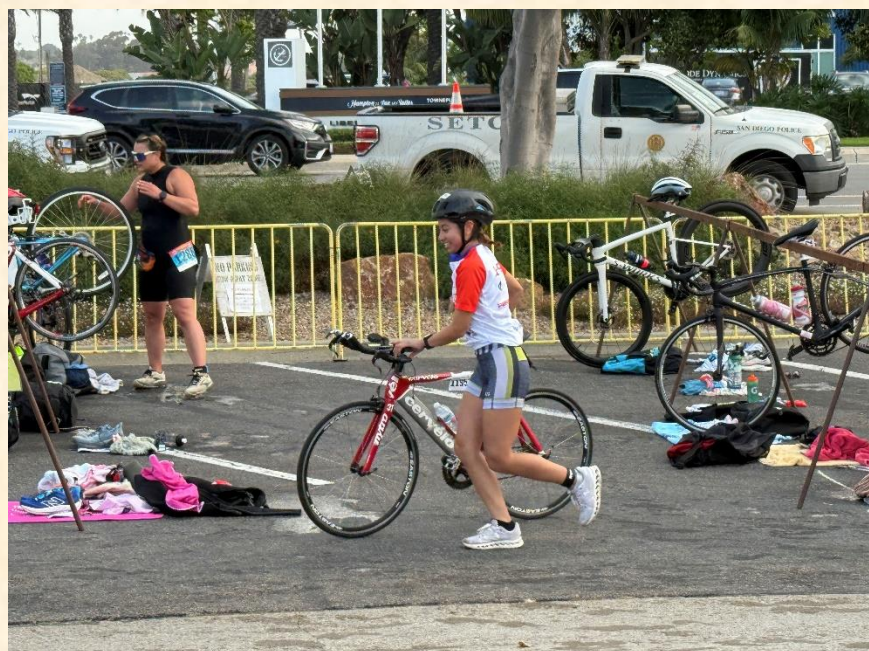
For me, that was the moment that the goal of Exceeding Expectations became to get these kids educated, and participation in sports became the vehicle in this mission.

**Flash forward to June 2025** – I’d like to share some success stories that I believe demonstrate how today’s EE kids might respond to that discussion about high school graduation and college.

Last weekend, eight kids represented us in fine fashion at the San Diego International Triathlon. They looked very experienced while setting up transition and preparing to enter the water and start their race. Two were entered in the International distance and the six others in the Sprint distance. Every one of them completed the challenging course with very good finishing times: **Ahris** placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in the M16-19 category of the International, and **Yoselin** came in 1<sup>st</sup> in the F20-24 category of the Sprint.















*Big shout-out to Carrie & Tobias Panek of KOZ Events for their generous support of the kids.*

-On Saturday before this race, Ahris (17) participated in a soccer game which was by invitation only, for players who were being considered for a select team from SoCal where scouts would be recruiting for colleges. Ahris was a star, making the winning goal for his team, and afterward he had some serious conversations with recruiters.





-Yoselin (21) has been at Valley College getting her 2-year degree and working on the coaching staff for the track team. She was recruited by UC San Bernardino and will be entering as a Junior in September. Her younger sister Gaby will be joining her as a Freshman and they both will be working towards a degree in Criminal Justice.



-Two other members of EE missed the San Diego event for a very good reason. Richard and Adrian had qualified to participate last weekend in the USA Track & Field regional meet in Las Vegas. Both represented EE extremely well: Richard (17) placed 5<sup>th</sup> in the 1500 meter event and Adrian (8) placed 7<sup>th</sup> in the 800 meters. This qualified both boys to race in Nationals coming up in Savannah, Georgia this July.







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All EE kids learn to set goals, face challenges, be accountable and deal with setbacks as they participate in sports, which helps prepare them for life after high school. And it's working. Past members have graduated from UCSD, UCLA and UC Davis, among others. Two have Masters degrees; five are currently serving in the military.

How do you suppose our EE kids of 2025 would respond to a discussion about graduating from high school and going on to college?

***“Yes – that’s for me!”***

Diana Velasquez graduated from the University of Redlands with a degree in business.



Of course, none of this is possible without your ongoing support. For that, we're very grateful and we always strive hard to make sure you're getting a good return for your investment in Exceeding Expectations

Thank you!

-Cherie

P.S. We've been posting larger photo galleries of the kids on our website. Please visit [www.eefoundation.org](http://www.eefoundation.org) to see the latest.