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Photo by Jimmy Stroup

Ramiro Moreno, right, took a winding path to get to Metro but wound up at the beginning of a career he thinks suits him to a tee. His uncle, Horacio, at left, has worked for Metro for five years and brought Ramiro to Metro.

found a job doing what he liked: working with and fixing machines.

"My parents weren't that happy, but I wanted to get my life started and college wasn't what I wanted to be doing," Moreno says.

Now 26, Ramiro Moreno says he's finally where he wants to be after a trying experience in college and struggling through some part-time work to make ends meet.

He was hired as a property maintainer "C" a few months ago and began training, working with his uncle Horacio Moreno, a facilities systems technician, who has been with Metro for five years.

### 'I really like the work'

"I like the environment here, the people, the benefits are good, the pay is good," Ramiro says. "But I really like the work. There's always something to fix. Always something that needs to be looked at."

With all the equipment that goes with keeping the 270 plus buses at Division 9 in serviceable condition, uncle and nephew are never lacking for work. Ramiro says he likes the variety: "It's never the same thing. There's

## UCLA Math Student Found His Calling as Property Maintainer

by JIMMY STROUP

(March 12, 2008) When Ramiro Moreno graduated from Ruben Ayala High School in Chino, he went to college. That's what he thought he ought to do.

His older brother had gone. His parents thought it was a good idea. He'd been accepted to UCLA, a tough school to get into. So he went.

Problem was, Ramiro wasn't engaged by college. He changed his major several times – a classic response when students aren't being engaged – and was plugging through a math degree that he didn't really want. He'd entertained being a teacher, but that was "only something to do."

What he did enjoy was fixing things. He liked to work with his hands. After some soul-searching, Ramiro stopped registering for classes and

always some new problem to figure out."

The bus washing system at San Gabriel Division 9 is the current project of the Morenos, though they've recently been grappling with the chassis washer.

"We've had to work on this chassis washer a few times in the last few weeks," Ramiro says. "I don't know why it's acting up. But we'll figure out why it's not working – trust me."

And now that Ramiro is working in a field that engages him professionally, he's considered returning to school to study the subjects that interest him: electronics and mechanics.

"There's a test to move up to the [facilities systems technician position], so I have to start getting ready for that," Ramiro says. "They have some classes at Rio Hondo [Community College] I can take that would really help me get ready for that."

Uncle Horacio is quietly encouraging Ramiro's return to college, but is glad to see his nephew engaged at work and enjoying his duties at Metro.

"It's neat to see him at work every day," Horacio says. "I watched him grow up. It's a little weird to see him here, working with me, but I'm enjoying that. He's picking it up fast."

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