

9TH UNPLUGGED

SAMANTHA CARABALLO

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM SPECIALIST

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HOSTED BY: ALICIA L. LATIMORE

JUDGE LATIMORE: Hi, I'm Judge Alicia Latimore.

MS. CARABALLO: And I'm Samantha Caraballo.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And you're listening to 9th Unplugged.

(Music)

JUDGE LATIMORE: Before we get unplugged from work and dive into life outside of the courthouse, can you tell our audience what your job assignment is and the duties?

MS. CARABALLO: Yes. I am with the unified family court unit here in Osceola County. And my title is domestic violence specialist. What I do is I do all the related case information for all injunction cases.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

MS. CARABALLO: And monitor respondents for compliance. If they're sent to BIP or some kind of mental health evaluation, or anything like that.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay, and BIP is...

MS. CARABALLO: I'm sorry, Batterers' Intervention Program.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, no problem. The audience may be interested in knowing what that is. So how long have you been doing that?

MS. CARABALLO: I've been doing this for 3 years, but I've been with the circuit for 6 years so before that I was in the injunction processing unit before that went back down to the clerk's office. So we did all of the pre-injunction process.

JUDGE LATIMORE: So what did you do before you came to the court?

MS. CARABALLO: I worked in a school for three years. I was a teacher's aide.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

MS. CARABALLO: Before that, I did some paralegal work.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right. We are glad you are here with us at the Ninth.

MS. CARABALLO: Thank you.

JUDGE LATIMORE: So let's go ahead and get unplugged. Talk about what it is that you do when you leave work. All right, is there anything in particular, your favorite thing to do when you're outside of the office?

MS. CARABALLO: You know that's always a hard question for me because it's mainly just being with my family. I mean, I enjoy watching documentaries.

JUDGE LATIMORE: You do.

MS. CARABALLO: Stuff like that. I do. I love documentaries, but I mean other than that, it's just me and my family.

JUDGE LATIMORE: So which documentaries do you watch?

MS. CARABALLO: Mostly history. So especially around February because that's when all the black history and the holocaust documentaries come out and those are like my favorite to watch.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, wonderful. I like watching documentaries as well. As a matter of fact, that's pretty much what I'll do on my iPad, put on a documentary and watch that

through. So other than hanging around with your family, and do you have a large family or small family?

MS. CARABALLO: I have a pretty big family. We're a big family. Well, I guess for me, family includes extended family as well.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes.

MS. CARABALLO: Although the majority of my family does live in Chicago because that is where I am from.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Chicago is my favorite city, other than it's way too cold –

MS. CARABALLO: Oh, yes.

JUDGE LATIMORE: -- for a native Floridian like myself.

MS. CARABALLO: Yeah, it really, really is. But here in Florida I have my husband, mom, dad. I have two siblings here. I have one sibling still living in Chicago and all my aunts and my cousins and everyone else is up there.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Now, where in Chicago did you live as if I know all of the...

MS. CARABALLO: So, that's another funny question too because I had to learn how to figure out how to answer that question for a while. Humble Park area.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

MS. CARABALLO: So the Humble Park area is predominately Puerto Rican/African American and Mexican descent. I didn't know what a Jamaican or a Haitian was or a Venezuelan was until I moved to Florida because it was just those three groups over there.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes.

MS. CARABALLO: That particular area is dominated by people of Puerto Rican descent so you will find a lot of Puerto Rican restaurants, barbers named after different parts of Puerto Rico.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Nice, a lot of culture there.

MS. CARABALLO: Yes, a lot of culture.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, wonderful. So I understand you eat hotdogs only one way.

MS. CARABALLO: I only eat hotdogs one way.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Is that the Chicago style hotdog?

MS. CARABALLO: It is the Chicago style hotdog.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Portillo's, right?

MS. CARABALLO: Portillo's.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Portillo's, here in Orlando.

MS. CARABALLO: Portillo's, yes.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Never mind. Okay, yes, Portillo's.

MS. CARABALLO: Portillo's.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right, and also Garrett's Popcorn. Not that I'm advertising anything, but I love that part of Chicago. So what else is that – what else about that area that you grew up is special? Do you miss it?

MS. CARABALLO: You know, this is the thing. I grew up in a real tough neighborhood.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

MS. CARABALLO: So when I first moved to Florida, I was just about to start my freshman year of high school. Complete culture shock when I first moved here. A lot of things that I wasn't used to.

JUDGE LATIMORE: What side of town did you come to?

MS. CARABALLO: We moved to southwest Florida.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

MS. CARABALLO: So we were in Sarasota County.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

MS. CARABALLO: So I went to school in Sarasota County. And so yeah, I missed it, and I missed you know that culture part about it, that city life of course, I was so used to it. It was noisy, all of those things, but you know after – and I still miss those things of course, but as I said, we grew up in a real tough neighborhood and it was just like, you know, from a really young age, you got to – you know, you're learning how to watch your back constantly and stuff like that. And it wasn't until you know I came here and I had been here for a few years, and I grew up and I matured that I was like, wow, I was kind of happy to kind of get out a little bit.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yeah.

MS. CARABALLO: So you know and I'm always happy to go back and we go back every year to visit family and stuff like that, but it was a necessary transition.

JUDGE LATIMORE: I'm sure a lot of things that you experienced, you are using that to your benefit while you're here today, isn't that right.

MS. CARABALLO: Um-hum.

JUDGE LATIMORE: So what are you doing for fun? What are you absolutely doing for fun or what's on your quote unquote bucket list? You're too young to have a bucket list but I'm going to throw it out there anyway.

MS. CARABALLO: I want to go to Greece.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes. Can you tell me why you want to go?

MS. CARABALLO: It's so beautiful.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Is it?

MS. CARABALLO: I just, I don't know, I always saw pictures on the calendars and stuff, and I was like oh, it's so pretty. I just you know – and the food is great.

JUDGE LATIMORE: You like Mediterranean food.

MS. CARABALLO: Yes.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes, I'm with you. Let's do this.

MS. CARABALLO: Yes, the food is great. Store bought humus doesn't do it for me. So I love the food. I remember having some teachers in grammar school that were of Greek descent, beautiful people as well so yeah...

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. Tell me something, tell me what skill you would like to master if there was one.

MS. CARABALLO: A skill I would like to – public speaking.

JUDGE LATIMORE: You would like to master that?

MS. CARABALLO: Yeah.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Do you feel comfortable public speaking?

MS. CARABALLO: I get nervous, so nervous and like I practice in the mirror when I'm at home and I sound so good and I kill it. And then I get out there and I'm like, like a complete disaster.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Keep working at it. It will come natural to you. The mirror is always your friend, okay. So keep working with your friend and I'm sure you will be better. Is there any particular areas that you like to speak publically about?

MS. CARABALLO: Well, I grew up in the church. My grandfather was a minister. He has been a minister since the 70s and the only really public speaking opportunities that I had given has been in the church so that's what I'm familiar with. And I know the opportunities, they're always there for me so you know, my faith is something that is very important to me. Contending for my faith is something that is very important to me so anything of that nature I would really like to you know get up there, be confident about what I'm saying and share with people.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Other than public speaking, if you were a super hero and had a super hero power, what would it be?

MS. CARABALLO: That is so easy.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, good.

MS. CARABALLO: Sala porting. I say it every single time at 5:00 o'clock. I want to just sala port home right now. I want to skip through the traffic and just take that hot shower and

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JUDGE LATIMORE: I love it. That is a great answer for that question. I really do love that. What's your best tip for making the world a better place?

MS. CARABALLO: Oh, wow. I guess the Golden Rule, right; treat others how you want to be treated.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yeah. Absolutely. That definitely would make this world a lot better place to live if we had everyone to follow that.

MS. CARABALLO: Yeah.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Wonderful. It has been such a pleasure to meet you and to be unplugged with you today. Thank you for coming.

MS. CARABALLO: Thank you.

(Music)