

Fire and Aviation Best Diversity Practices...

National Outreach to Young Adults in Urban Communities: Current demographics in the Fire and Aviation workforce show that age and diversity must be addressed to ensure a pipeline to FAM leadership positions and to represent the populations we serve.



Promoting Diversity through Mass Communications



The U.S. Forest Service is virtually unknown to teens and young adults in urban communities. Our goal to increase agency visibility and to recruit our future workforce could be enhanced through a partnership with a non-profit media organization whose primary audiences are urban young adults. Through two urban music magazines and a teen produced television show, we are able to tell the Forest Service story to literally millions of potential employees. These magazines have established markets in urban music stores in fifteen major metropolitan areas (L.A., Chicago, New York, Boston, Detroit, San Francisco, Philadelphia, to name a few), and on-campus at Historically Black Colleges and Universities. We were also able to share the Forest Service message on the Black Family Channel, **with 14.5 million viewers.**

VISION

- The Forest Service is a recognized natural resource management agency within urban communities.
- The Eastern Region's Aviation and Fire Management organization reflects our diverse population, according to the civilian labor force statistics.
- New outreach and recruitment methods will help provide an avenue to urban populations, making one of the Eastern Region's goals real: Connecting Citizens to the Land.

WORKFORCE PLANNING

- Our limited success with traditional recruiting methods and techniques demonstrates that workforce planning must include a vastly different approach to outreach and recruitment planning.
- The Forest Service/Fire and Aviation program has had only localized efforts to connect with urban audiences.

OUTREACH

- Our outreach efforts are multi-faceted.
 - Regional Forester Randy Moore was interviewed on Gumbo TV, an Emmy award winning young adult television show produced by young adults. His message on the importance of a diverse Forest Service workforce was carried on the Black Family Channel, visible to 14.5 million viewers in 4,000 cities including 24 of the top 25 African American TV markets.
 - Developed a partnership agreement with a non-profit organization that focuses on training urban youth for careers in all forms of mass media.
 - Created advertisements designed by young urban adults to recruit urban youth for careers in Fire and Aviation.
 - Interviewed diverse Forest Service FAM employees about their careers.
 - Published both the ad campaigns and the employee interviews in Ya Heard and Gumbo magazines, with distribution in fifteen major metropolitan areas and on-campus at HBCUs.
 - The magazines have been *instant Forest Service ice-breakers* to urban youth organizations.

- The USDA/NRE Under Secretary instantly saw the value of marketing the agency to urban youth when he saw the first FS ad in Ya' Heard magazine.
- The campaign images are available for download from an FTP site for Forest Service use.

RECRUITING

- Through web response, we can monitor the effectiveness of our magazine advertisement campaign.
- The recruitment ads are suitable for poster-sized, tabletop, and can be enlarged for 8'x10' displays. To date, these recruitment ads have been eye-catching, and initiated several conversations about the agency as well as our outreach campaign.
- Our marketing strategy includes exposure on major employment websites, and in other young adult media venues. Our next marketing step includes printing the ads in Spanish and using a Spanish young adult venue for distribution.
- We plan to partner with other Forest Service regions to develop materials that would be more specific to their needs, and synergistically spark this campaign to national audiences.

HIRING and SELECTION

- Although we know that our message is in urban markets, we have not yet made direct hires from our advertising efforts.

RETENTION

SUCCESS!

The response to this campaign has been phenomenal! Our mass communication and marketing strategy is a key component to Connect Citizens to the Land, and serve as a catalyst for those who may want to join us.

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