Leadership Corner

By Chris Frederick, Executive Officer of Fuels and Fire Program

What have we learned?

❖ Of the past, we learned to yearn.
❖ “When we get back . . . . When things return . . . .”
❖ And lessons unveiled upon reflect.
❖ Opportunities that we may not neglect.
❖ We have learned the value of a quiet space.
❖ The financial costs of face-to-face.
❖ And the in-person smile, that touch of grace,
❖ A virtual meeting cannot replace.
❖ We have learned the importance of balance in life.
❖ Your dog by your side, lunch with your wife.
❖ And what is the value of laughter in halls?
❖ New employee pictures hanging on walls.
❖ We have learned that some time is whittled away.
❖ For the wind up and wound down most every day.
❖ And routine is comfort with gear in a sack,
❖ Time on the road for the day to unpack.
❖ We have learned that we never really liked that guy.
❖ Who droned on in our cube as we oft wondered “why?”
❖ And the value of small talk is now understood.
❖ It makes this job more than just fire and wood.
❖ We have learned that our kids like us around,
❖ That lost relationships still can be found.
❖ And for that there must a balance be,
❖ For what we represent to the community.
❖ We have learned that not everything can always be fair.
❖ That it’s ok, as long as we show that we care.
❖ And that meeting others right where they are at.
❖ Well, there is not much more important than that.

What have we learned?
Enterprise Program, Hoosier National Forest collaborate to amplify African American settlement’s past voices

By Amanda J. Campbell, Historical Archeologist

In May 2022, staff from the Hoosier National Forest and the Enterprise Program kicked off one of the first projects in the Sites of Civil Rights and Resistance, a heritage-based civil rights program developed by Enterprisers Amanda Campbell, Valencia Morris, and Michael Hill.

The program aims to amplify the voices of underserved communities through the pursuit of racial equity and the agency’s mission-critical work.

The Lick Creek African American Settlement near Paoli, Indiana, founded in the 1820s, was a haven for free African American pioneers seeking opportunity in the Northwest Territory and reprieve from social and racial injustices of the American South. The settlement peaked with African Americans owning over 1500 acres by the Civil War. Like many rural African American settlements, the population dwindled in the late 19th century. The Forest Service acquired the abandoned landscape in the 1930s. During a two-day event, Enterprise facilitated a community consultation and recreation design workshop with the descendants of Lick Creek. The group hiked to the Roberts, Thomas, and Bonds family cemetery near the Lick Creek Trail—a place none had previously visited. The site visit was powerful, connecting family history with the landscape encountered by their ancestors.

Lynette Troutman, a descendant of Lick Creek with ancestors buried at the cemetery, commented, “This experience for our family was not only remarkable but crucially significant!”

After visiting the site, attendees engaged in a workshop to brainstorm potential recreational opportunities, identify partnerships and future projects, and establish a collaborative relationship. Stakeholders also attended, including representatives with Indiana’s State Historic Preservation Office, local historical societies, nonprofits, and university representatives. Forest Service staff and descendants of Lick Creek hope to interpret the settlement’s story and its people’s struggles and accomplishments through a recent nomination to the forthcoming Indiana State Heritage Trail.

Regions 8 and 9 are currently piloting the Sites of Civil Rights and Resistance program—including projects such as National Register of Historic Places nominations, recreation design, community engagement, and interpretation. The collaboration between the Enterprise Program and the Hoosier National Forest showcases new innovative approaches the Forest Service uses in identifying opportunities that develop or enhance recreation, preserve and make accessible unrepresented histories, affect agency culture, diversify the agency’s workforce, and leverage partnerships and platforms.
New Faces of Enterprise

Welcome, Jacob Hemingway!

Congratulations to Jacob “Jake” Hemingway, who recently joined Enterprise as an archaeologist with the Cultural Resources and History Management program! Jake has 14 years of experience in archaeology. His education includes a bachelor’s in anthropology and a master’s in geography and GIS from Michigan State University. His archaeological work experience includes Carlsbad Caverns National Park and Bandelier National Monument in New Mexico, Yosemite National Park in California, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, the Enterprise Program, and the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest in Wisconsin. Jake enjoys playing the guitar, reading, and spending time with his family. He brings a wealth of experience and technical expertise to the group and looks forward to reuniting with old colleagues and meeting new ones. Welcome, Jake!

Welcome, Christine “Chris” Crawford!

Congratulations to Christine “Chris” Crawford, who recently joined Enterprise on detail as a supervisory engineer with the Engineering program! Chris has almost 33 years of service with the Forest Service, of which the last year and a half has been as assistant transportation program manager for the Washington Office. She has spent much of her career in Region 3 on the Apache-Sitgreaves and Tonto National Forests in Arizona as a road manager, a transportation design team leader, an assistant forest engineer, and an engineering and minerals program staff officer. She has a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering from Arizona State University. Chris and her spouse welcomed their son, Jackson Wyatt, into the world in January of this year. They also have two rescue pups, Maggie and Lucy, and between the three “kids,” she is constantly on the go. She enjoys all types of outdoor activities, including camping, fishing, kayaking, and hiking. Welcome, Chris!

Welcome, Darrin Jons!

Congratulations to Darrin Jons, who recently joined Enterprise as a budget analyst with Enterprise Business Solutions group! Growing up in southwestern Wyoming, Darrin began working for the Forest Service as a volunteer on a fencing crew—while in high school. During college, Darrin worked seasonally on the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests in Colorado and the Thunder Basin National Grassland in Wyoming, doing many jobs including recreation and trails, fire, and range. During this time, he was accepted into the agency’s Student Career Experience Program as a range specialist. Upon graduating from the University of Wyoming with a bachelor’s in rangeland ecology and watershed management, he accepted a permanent position as a range specialist with the Black Hills National Forest in South Dakota. In 2012, Darrin transferred to the Fort Pierre National Grassland in South Dakota as the supervisory rangeland management specialist. Over the last nine years, Darrin has worked on a highly productive, small district where he has increased his knowledge of range, wildlife, NEPA, fire, and much more. Darrin recently completed a detail as the budget officer for the Nebraska National Forests and Grasslands, where he learned he has a deep interest in budget. He and his wife, Christy, have two kids, Mathew (age 12) and Bailey (age 9), and a golden retriever named Ella. Welcome, Darrin!
Welcome, Jordan West!

Congratulations to Christopher “Jordan” West, who recently joined Enterprise on detail as a program specialist with Enterprise Business Solutions group. Jordan started his Forest Service career in 2016 as a customer support representative at Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area in Kentucky and Tennessee as a Greening Youth Foundation intern. He later switched to his current permanent role as an accounting technician. Jordan has been married for five years to his wife, Monica. She is involved in campus ministry as an associate minister where they live near Murray State University in Kentucky. Jordan is a fan of all things tech and uses his creative side in projects. He uses his skills in various areas ranging from woodworking (creating a burned wood family tree plaque and even a bed frame) to smaller projects like crocheted figures such as stuffed AT-ATs (Star Wars), Baby Groot and Iron Man, and even Baby Yoda (yeah his real name is Grogu—he'll always be Baby Yoda in the hearts of fans). He is also a Sci-Fi nerd and enjoys Doctor Who, Star Wars, and all the Marvel movies and shows. Although he claims not to like musicals (“they just move too slowly”), he enjoys most musicals from Disney (Frozen and newer). He just can't “let it go.” Welcome, Jordan!

Welcome, Alison Hostad!

Congratulations to Alison Hostad, who recently joined Enterprise on detail as a procurement coordinator with Enterprise Business Solutions. Alison started her Forest Service career in 2008 as a seasonal crew lead for the Santa Fe National Forest in New Mexico. She accepted a permanent position the following year on the Black Hills National Forest in South Dakota. From 2015-2020, Alison spent some time with the private sector but always felt drawn back to the Forest Service. Heritage always held a special place in her heart, and she often worked closely with various national forests as a contractor. As her little human grew, her priorities shifted. She found that administration required fewer worries about racing home from the field and it was a lot easier to “turn off” at the end of the day. Alison’s most recent position as the program assistant for Forest and Woodland Ecosystems of the Rocky Mountain Research Station included a new passion: supporting the “ologists” and researchers that make the Forest Service tick. Alison looks forward to learning more about Enterprise and helping with anything thrown her way as well as being reunited with her former Black Hills National Forest colleagues who have since moved to Enterprise! Welcome, Alison!

Welcome, Martin Aksentowitz!

Congratulations to Sean “Martin” Aksentowitz, who recently joined Enterprise on detail as a timber contract, measurements, and appraisal specialist with the Timber and Silviculture program. Martin was raised in Phoenix, Arizona, and graduated from Northern Arizona University in 2008 with a bachelor’s in history. He served on an AmeriCorps trail crew located in Flagstaff, Arizona, after college and served in Peace Corps in Moldova from 2011 until 2013. Returning from Peace Corps, Martin started his graduate studies in forestry at Michigan Tech. Upon graduating, he worked for AmeriCorps VISTA in Colorado from 2015 to 2016. Martin started his career with the Forest Service on the San Juan National Forest in Colorado in 2016 as a pre-sale forester. In addition to being a forester, his passions include cycling, hiking, camping, backpacking, fishing, hunting, and working with his wife to turn their first house into a home. Welcome, Martin!
Welcome, Fay Dearing!

Congratulations to Fay Dearing, who recently joined Enterprise as an interdisciplinary information specialist with the Fires and Fuels program! A Michigander by upbringing, Fay spent most of her summers in the Traverse City area swimming in Lake Michigan and annoying her grandmother by climbing into closets and trying to find a doorway to Narnia. After earning her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in applied ecology at Michigan Tech, Fay swore she would move someplace where she would never see snow again. So, of course, she next moved to Alaska! After working briefly for the Bureau of Land Management as a cartographer, Fay moved back to GIS by joining the Forest Service in 2016, where she worked for the Chugach National Forest in Alaska. There, she developed a deep love for the Forest Service mission and a healthy fear of moose after nearly walking into one when heading to the bus stop. Eventually, Fay escaped the snow, traveling to New Mexico to work as a GIS analyst in the Southwestern Region’s headquarters in New Mexico—where it’s sunny 310 days a year. She’s delighted to be joining the Enterprise team and is looking forward to meeting everyone through the magic of Microsoft Teams. Welcome, Fay!

Welcome, Ben Gannon!

Congratulations to Ben Gannon, who recently joined Enterprise as a biological scientist with the Fire and Fuels program! Ben has a bachelor’s from the University of Michigan, a master’s degree from Colorado State University in ecology, and a Ph.D. from Colorado State University in forest science. Ben has worked on diverse forest and fire ecology topics, including inventory and monitoring, disturbance mapping, fire history reconstruction, hazard modeling, wildfire risk assessment, fire and fuels planning, and fire management performance evaluation. He enjoys working with managers, problem-solving, and developing decision support tools. Though raised on a Midwest diet in Detroit, Michigan, with wholesome role models like Dennis Rodman and Bill Laimbeer, Ben has lived in Fort Collins, Colorado, since 2008. In his spare time, he enjoys mountain biking, backcountry skiing, and volunteering for the Canyon Lakes Ranger District Trails program in Colorado. Welcome, Ben

Welcome, Howard Williams!

Congratulations to Howard Williams, who recently joined Enterprise as a biological scientist! Howard was born in England to a family of movie-business people. After emigrating to Los Angeles at age five, he spent a summer in East Glacier in Montana as his parents worked on a movie. By 16, Howard was washing dishes at the Villager Restaurant, hiking, backpacking, and summiting his first mountain. While attending Prescott College in Arizona, he minored in being a 1990s outdoor dude, wearing blue long johns under his Patagonia baggie shorts, Phish t-shirts, and Tevas. His major was therapeutic use of wilderness and environmental studies. He then worked a stint with the Bitterroot National Forest’s Trapper Creek Job Corps in Montana and enrolled in the University of Montana’s Social Work program. A few years of social work led him to enroll in the GIS program at the University of Montana, where he studied and worked in wildfire risk analysis, fire behavior and climate change, and the wildland-urban interface. He has since worked for the Bureau of Land Management in North Central Montana and (most recently) with the National Park Service at the Yellowstone National Park in Montana, serving as the GIS program manager. He looks forward to working on projects that help keep firefighters and communities safe and landscapes resilient to the effects of climate change. He, his wife Amy Chadwick, and labrador, Bowie, live in Livingston, Montana. Welcome, Howard!
Welcome, Will Downing!

Congratulations to Will Downing, who recently joined Enterprise as a biological scientist with the Fire and Fuels program! Will was born and raised in Maine and moved west to pursue a bachelor’s degree at Pomona College in California. After graduating, he accepted a position on a 20-person handcrew on the Umpqua National Forest in Oregon. He fell hard and fast for fire and spent the next 10 years working as a Hotshot, rappeller, and smokejumper. Eventually, he dragged himself out of the woods and back into the classroom. He received a master’s from Oregon State University, where his research focused on post-fire regeneration and understory plant community ecology. Upon completing his degree, he stayed as a researcher at the university. His interests broadened to include dendroecology, fire severity patch dynamics, and wildfire risk. After several years working in academia and before joining Enterprise, Will returned to a primary fire position with the agency on the Fremont-Winema National Forest in Oregon, the part of the world he now calls home. When not working or spending time with his joy-of-a-seven-month-old daughter, Will enjoys backcountry skiing, backpacking, whitewater kayaking, trail running, and mountain biking. Welcome, Will!

Welcome, Jason Barker!

Congratulations to Jason Barker, who recently joined Enterprise as a biological scientist with the Fire and Fuels program! Jason is originally from Baltimore, Maryland. His fire journey started with campfires at Boy Scout camps and dodging M-80s thrown by the local kids. He turned his childhood love of the woods into a career by studying forest ecology and silviculture. He researched everything from wood decomposition at the H.J. Andrews Experimental Forest in Oregon to the impact of wildfire on mushroom harvesting in northern British Columbia. For his Ph.D., he worked to assess how symbiotic mycorrhizal fungi affect artificial regeneration following wildfire and harvesting. After graduation, he worked for the Forest Service’s Forest Inventory and Analysis program to improve post-fire mortality modelling. Most recently, he has worked at Taking Root, creating carbon prediction models fusing remote sensing and field data for small-holder farmers in the tropics. He is excited to get back into fire science with Enterprise working on fuels and fire modelling! Outside of work, he and his wife are busy with their 5-year-old son. They wander around the woods, search for dinosaurs, build Lego castles, and paint volcanos and whatnot. Welcome, Jason!

Enterprisers On the Move

Congratulations, Jayme Cook!

Congratulations to Jayme Cook, who recently accepted a detail as a supervisory engineer in the Engineering program! Jayme is originally from Missoula, Montana, and started with the Forest Service after high school in 2000 at the Aerial Fire Depot in Missoula as an intern of the Student Temporary Experience Program. She was hired under the Student Career Experience Program in 2001 in Dickenson, North Dakota, while studying for a degree in civil engineering at Montana State University. After graduating in 2004, Jayme was converted and brought on board permanently on the Idaho Panhandle National Forest in Idaho. During her time with the forest, she gained experience and certifications in contracting and facility maintenance, transportation systems, and timber sales. In 2016, she joined Enterprise. Jayme helps teach on the National ER Administration cadre and the Logging Area and Road Institute classes for timber and engineers. It’s been a very rewarding and fun 20 years! Outside of work, she enjoys skiing, fishing, a multitude of outdoor adventures, and just hanging out with her husband, Jack, and their dog, Squirrel.
Congratulations, Mary Yang!

Congratulations to Mary Yang, who recently accepted a budget analyst position with Enterprise Business Solutions group! Mary’s career with the Forest Service and Enterprise began in 2009 as an intern through the Student Career Experience Program before becoming a permanent employee in 2012. Mary holds an associate’s degree in accounting from Milwaukee Area Technical College. During her time with Enterprise, Mary worked on financial management, budget, purchasing, and travel. She is very excited about her new role and looks forward to the knowledge and growth this position offers. She enjoys gardening, biking, traveling, and exploring the outdoors in her spare time. Mary has two children, Kate and Laila (both teenagers). Just last year, Mary relocated from Wisconsin to Oklahoma to be closer to family.

Congratulations, Matt Shaffer!

Congratulations to Matt Shaffer, who recently accepted the Projects and Planning Supervisor position! Matt started working with the Forest Service seasonally in 2003, fighting fire and preparing timber sales while attending the University of Montana, where he earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in forestry. After college, Matt went to work for the Bureau of Land Management in Oregon through the Presidential Management Fellows program as an interdisciplinary team leader and environmental coordinator. After starting a family and missing Montana’s recreational opportunities, Matt returned to Montana and the Forest Service. He eventually joined Enterprise in 2018 as an environmental coordinator. Matt lives in Kalispell, Montana, is married, and has two sons, ages 8 and 10. When not at work, Matt enjoys spending time with his family and skiing, hiking, biking, and fly fishing.

Congratulations, Paula Randler!

Congratulations to Paula Randler, who recently accepted the FORECaST external partner lead with Enterprise Business Solutions group! Paula is currently the acting supervisor of the Human Dimensions program. Paula comes to Enterprise from Region 8, where she works as the Urban and Community Forestry Program manager (State and Private Forestry). Paula has 13 years of experience in the Forest Service. She is also a certified career coach and enjoys helping people find joy and ease in their work. Combining her formal education in natural resources with mountains of library books about productivity, energy management, and the joy of letting go, Paula finds great satisfaction in guiding natural resource leaders on their chosen path. The pandemic opened up worlds of opportunity for Paula to live her values (accomplishing things together, candor, finding the deeper meaning, attentiveness, and compassion). She looks forward to sharing more of herself with the Enterprise team!

Congratulations, Christine West!

Congratulations to Christine West, who recently accepted the Fish and Wildlife supervisor position in the Ecological Resources and Restoration program! Christine joined the Forest Service as a seasonal botanist with the Tahoe National Forest in California in 2002. She joined Enterprise in 2004 as a field botanist and entered into planning in 2009. Christine has enjoyed working on various projects throughout the country, particularly those involving fire and fuels management, GIS analysis, survey and manage species, and National Register Information System database management. She detailed as the executive officer of a former Enterprise unit and is interested in communication, compassionate leadership, and facilitation. Before joining the Forest Service, Christine spent eight years as an interpretive naturalist for science schools in Colorado and California. Christine holds a bachelor’s in natural resources and a master’s in forestry and vegetation mapping from Humboldt State University in California and a Multiple Subjects Teaching Credential. She lives in Arcata, California, along the beautiful north coast. She enjoys hiking in the redwoods, biking, meditating, and spending time with her husband and daughter.
Congratulations, Kim Piccolo!

Congratulations to Kim Piccolo, who recently accepted a detail as the supervisor of the Fish and Wildlife program. Kim has been a wildlife biologist for Enterprise since October 2020, after working in the jack pine forests of the Huron-Manistee National Forests in Michigan for 14 years. She received her bachelor’s and master’s degrees from the University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana. She started her career in wildlife biology by trapping and tracking red foxes in Illinois. She moved around the country working for universities and multiple federal and state agencies, gaining experience in zookeeping and recreation in addition to wildlife research. She enjoys spending time with family and friends, hiking with her dogs, paddling, and snowshoeing. Kim’s two daughters (ages 17 and 12) enjoy sports and spoiling their dogs but mostly love teasing her about being a science nerd.

LENGTH OF SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

In Enterprise, people are and always will be our greatest asset. The success of the agency is a direct result of employee efforts and dedication. We are delighted to recognize our Enterprise Program employees’ length of service milestones below:

- Jake Beightle ........... 5 Years
- Charles Cutter ........ 40 Years
- Aaron Fargo ............ 10 Years
- Caleb Hennekey ........ 10 Years
- Heidi Hooper ........... 20 Years
- Laura King ............. 15 Years
- Mark Lehner ............ 25 Years
- Amy Odom ............. 15 Years
- Ann Pallanes ........... 15 Years
- Tricia Prentice ........ 15 Years
- Donald Tintle ........... 25 Years
- Stacey Weems ........... 15 Years

ABOUT ENTERPRISING PEOPLE

The Enterprising People newsletter is a quarterly publication wherein content is created by and for Enterprise Program employees with a main focus on sharing project work obtained and performed by the Enterprise Program and its partners. The newsletter is circulated to its employees and partners on a regular basis; project work obtained and performed by the Enterprise Program and its partners are not always inclusive and rarely include all facets of obtained partners unit’s/organization’s project, mission, or goals. The articles in the newsletter are, therefore, not necessarily a description of the organization’s objective in its entirety, but only that of the work acquired and contractually obligated to perform. The portrayal of a project in the newsletter is not all-encompassing of the project because of the Enterprise Program and its partners working only on a piece of the larger project.

Enterprise Program employees and their partners are encouraged to share stories and provide comments or questions by emailing newsletter editor Richard Parker at richard.d.parker@usda.gov.

The Enterprising People archive can be found on the Enterprise Program website at https://www.fs.fed.us/enterprise/news-and-events.php.

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