



OCTOBER 2021

THE COURIER

FOREST SERVICE JOB CORPS CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CENTERS
Creating the Next Generation of Conservation Stewards



Students enrolled in Collbran and Trapper Creek Job Corps Advanced Wildland Fire Management gather at the 7,000 acre Crater Ridge Fire on the Big Horn National Forest on September 23, 2021. USDA Forest Service photo.

SERVICE LEARNING IS LIFE CHANGING



Jesse Casterson, Program
Coordinator - Integration, JCNO.

From the moment he arrived on Center, everyone could tell he had charisma, magnetism, and an unsavory past. Not all Civilian Conservation Center students have such a checkered past, but he did: substance abuse, no parents, legal troubles. In fact, he applied to enroll in Job Corps a month from his prison release.

Our students, like all of us, tend to take the path of least resistance. For him that was raising his voice to get his point across, argue with authority, and see the system as corrupt. I believe even early on he knew he needed to change his life. But he had no idea where to start and began by trying to force staff and his peers to fit his mental model.

Holding students accountable is only beneficial if we hold them accountable properly. As he bounced around the behavior management system, we kept providing

him feedback. "How did this strategy work for you in the past?" "I know you are better than this. We are holding you accountable so you can be great." "Remember in CPP how you told me you wanted to be different? I am only trying help you achieve that goal."

“FOR MANY STAFF, ONE OF THE MOST MEMORABLE MOMENTS WITH STUDENTS IS WHEN THEY “GET IT”. THEY STOP TRYING TO SWIM UPSTREAM AND STOP FIGHTING THE SYSTEM. USUALLY STUDENTS STRUGGLE WITH ARTICULATING WHAT BROUGHT ABOUT THIS CHANGE, BUT I PERSONALLY FEEL IT IS RELATED TO SAFETY.” – JESSE CASTERSON

For many staff, one of the most memorable moments with students is when they “get it.” They stop trying to swim upstream and stop fighting the system. Usually students struggle with articulating what brought about this change, but I personally feel it is related to safety. Asking this particular student at graduation he validated my opinion; for the first time in his life felt safe enough to open his mind and heart to the possibilities the center offered him.

He was a fantastic welder, top of his class. However, he found a passion for wildland firefighting. The camaraderie in the team gave him a sense of belonging he had never before experienced and working 16-hour days and getting dirty in the wilderness was a bonus. Serving the forest and making an impact on his world was fully rehabilitative. He later told me, “There is something about service that softens the heart.” As Job Corps employees, we know the truth in that statement, and it is amazing to see the students in our care discover it as well.

If center culture saved his life, service changed it.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **At-a-glance:** Visit the [OC Editorial Calendar](#) for upcoming agency-wide communication activities.
- **Combined Federal Campaign (CFC):** Check out the Campaign's [Cause of the Week](#).
- **Visit Us:** Job Corps National Office [SharePoint](#) site.

EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND SERVICE



L-R: Gavin Rucker, Hareya Araya, Ocean Stevenson and Torence Ndolo harvest radishes. USDA Forest Service photo by Bonnie Fuller.

BOXELDER JOB CORPS CELEBRATES A BOUNTIFUL HARVEST



Boxelder Job Corps students and staff care about where their food comes from. The People's Garden they planted in 2009 continues to expand and each year reaps greater harvests. A greenhouse, along with chickens and bees, providing fresh eggs and honey, have been added to the mix over the years. The garden's 2021 harvest includes peas, radishes, carrots, lettuce, beans, flowers, sweet corn, and sun flowers. The seeds of the sun flowers will be harvested and roasted for tasty snacks.

Ocean Stevenson and the Rooster Brooster. USDA Forest Service photo by Kim Sukstorf.



Boxelder's People's Garden is "farm to table" in its truest sense. Tilling the soil, planting seeds, and pulling weeds in the garden helps students understand that fresh produce does not miraculously appear on grocery store shelves, while also providing them with fresh produce, void of preservatives, sugars, and sodium that are detrimental to a healthy body.

Ian Cedar Face with displays his corn harvest. USDA Forest Service photo by Bonnie Fuller.

The mission of the 24 Forest Service Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers is to train eligible youth ages 16 to 24 with educational, social, and vocational skills while assisting in the conservation of the nation's public natural resources.

MEET LISA STAUDT TIMBER LAKE JOB CORPS



Timber Lake Job Corps Counselor Lisa Staudt's career path has been eclectic, with job titles like explosive ordinance disposal technician, correctional guard, and screen printer dotting her resume.

But she found her 'why' when she began working as a psychosocial rehabilitation counselor. The experience spurred her to enroll in Northwest Nazarene University in 2012 to earn a master's degree in social work. Familiar with the mission of Centennial Job Corps, she pursued an opportunity there to complete her practicum in mental health counseling. Receiving a response of "heck yeah," her career journey with the Forest Service began.

Staudt arrived at Timber Lake in November 2019. Then the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Staudt was forced to provide her mental health counseling services to students remotely. Maintaining communications was difficult. As the weeks passed, students would "ghost" her. Making matters worse, the Riverside Fire tore through the center, forcing it to shut-down.

As Timber Lake goes through the process of rebuilding, Staudt keeps busy by creating an inviting physical environment for her students once they return—she's already painted the counseling building and installed new flooring. With the Bull Complex Fire Incident Command Post now on-center, Staudt will spend the upcoming weeks working in the center's mobile kitchen feeding fire crews, all the while anticipating the day that students will return to Timber Lake and she can serve them once again. Click [here](#) to discover how Timber Lake is rebuilding.



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- #jobcorpsfire

More exciting news can be found on our [Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers' website!](#)

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