



JUNE 2022

THE COURIER

FOREST SERVICE JOB CORPS CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CENTERS

Creating the Next Generation of Conservation Stewards



Angell Job Corps CCC's Urban Forestry trade partnered with Mike Kitchen from American Land and Leisure to improve campground safety at Canal Creek. (l-r) Angell Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center Forestry student, Jovannie Uribe bucks up an alder tree that had been uprooted under the guidance of Urban Forestry Instructor Ken Ruiz at Canal Creek on April 6, 2022. USDA Forest Service photo.

STAYING STRONG WHEN TIMES ARE TOUGH



Jesse Casterson, Program
Coordinator-Integration, JCNO.

As human beings, we encounter problems all the time. Life at times seems to consist of solving problem after problem. Some problems for all of us in the Job Corps family are unique due to the incredible work we do, and for all of us, unique issues have arisen with the COVID-19 pandemic. I want you all to know that I, too, am struggling with many things and trying to manage the

multitude of issues life continues to throw my way. I will line out some things I am doing personally in order to balance these problems and, maybe, some might be applicable to you all.

Stay vulnerable: Speak your truth. Being honest with people about your life can act like a pressure relief valve. The more you share the tough (and the beautiful!) parts of your life

with others, the less alone you feel. Being real about yourself and opening your heart takes weight off your shoulders and helps you see that others are struggling with the same things you are.

“BEING HONEST WITH PEOPLE ABOUT YOUR LIFE CAN
ACT AS A PRESSURE RELIEF VALVE.”
JESSE CASTERSON

Pick your friends wisely: this is simply the law of attraction: we attract others based on how we live our own lives. Personally, I do not have the time and energy to keep negative people in my life; I can find general appreciation and care for them, while still keeping them at a distance. Choose to be with those you inspire to be. Surrounding yourself with those that are compassionate, those who provide grace and space, and those that are honest with you will feed and nourish those parts of you.

Take yourself lightly: I screw up, sometimes more often than I want to admit. For a perfectionist like myself, it is essential that I laugh at myself and remember that just because I made a mistake it does not mean that I am a mistake. It is also important to remember that I do not need to have all the answers and fix all the problems and be available for everyone. Approaching my work and my life with humility, understanding that I can learn something new, helps me forgive myself.

Do not “never give up:” It is important for me to know when I have done all I can, tried all I could, and need to move on. I prefer to think “know when to change course,” as a guidepost in my life. There are times we simply have to “give up” for the sake of our mental and physical wellbeing.

I hope this finds you well. Please reach out if you ever need an ear or anything else.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **At-a-glance:** Visit the [OC Editorial Calendar](#) for upcoming agency-wide communication activities.
- **Blackwell & Jacobs Creek CCCs:** [Job Corps heavy equipment program benefits forests, students](#)
- **Visit Us:** Job Corps National Office [SharePoint](#) site.



EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND SERVICE

l to r: V. Cass Job Corps CCC staff and students Webb-DeLesline, Kennett Milton, Brandon Browning, Bradley Fillers, Hernon Gonzales, Amanda Romaine, Arning Construction Company Project Manager Gabriel Wolfe, Danny Theo, Abigail Parker, Hunter Boyette, Barbara Austin, and Kennett Philips tour companies and discuss how industry impacts communities on May 31, 2022. USDA Forest Service photo.

CASS JOB CORPS CCC NURTURES STUDENT LEADERS

“Careers Begin Here.” That’s an official slogan of Job Corps. To make this promise a reality, Cass Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center (CCC) Liaison Specialist (LS) Venorris Webb-DeLesline launched the Cass Leadership Development Program in March 2022. The program focuses on building leadership through the three C’s—community, communication and connections.

“Our CCC leadership development program has been game changer for our students, community leaders and employers,” says Webb-DeLesline. “The relationships and partnership developed from this program have greatly impacted the center.”

Each month Cass students meet community leaders, educators, industry professionals, and elected government officials from across Arkansas and Oklahoma. The list of guest speakers has been impressive. Students have had front row seats to learn from leaders like the Mayor and Chief of Police of Ozark, Arkansas, Congressman Bruce Westerman, Arkansas State Representative Jay Richardson and executive leadership from major employers including Walmart, ABB Inc., and OG&E. Guest speakers address topics that include employability, financial literacy, community service and preparation for the workforce.

Residential Supervisor Cedric Holland, GED Instructor Dawn Harter, and LS Webb-DeLesline comprise the core team of employees that sponsor the Leadership Development Program. “We have employers asking to be contacted after students graduate,” says Webb-DeLesline. “We held a connect day with employers in May. We are excited about the community support Cass has and the opportunity to develop leaders one student at a time.”

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 CHRIS BROWN FLATWOODS JOB CORPS CCC



If asked, no matter their job title, all Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center (CCC) employees seem to easily recall “that student,”—the one seemingly set on being the worst student in the world. Flatwoods Job Residential Lead

Christopher Brown is no different.

“As an Oconaluftee Social Services Assistant (SSA), I had the opportunity to help teach forestry while the center was searching for an instructor. I encountered what I thought was the worst student I’d ever seen,” says Brown. “I worked one-on-one with him in both trade and in the dormitory. That patience was rewarded, and he not only went on to mentor other students but today is a Forest Service GS-05 wildland firefighter.”

A graduate of the Oconaluftee forestry program, Brown started his career at Oconaluftee as a contract SSA in 2011 before eventually accepting a permanent appointment. Brown accepted a SSA position at Flatwoods Job Corps in 2014.

Encouraged by Flatwoods Center Director Loren Perkins, Brown accepted a position as a Recreation Assistant at Angell Job Corps in 2015. He returned to Flatwoods as the Residential Lead in October 2016.

Brown finds mastering the technical aspects of the PRH, knowing the nitty-gritty of center reentry plans and preparing student paperwork both satisfying and important to the mission. “Still, the best part of my job is demonstrating to students that if they give Job Corps a chance, they can become just as successful as me,” he says.



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- #jobcorpsfire

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

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