



AUGUST 2022

# THE COURIER

FOREST SERVICE JOB CORPS CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CENTERS

Creating the Next Generation of Conservation Stewards



Fort Simcoe Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center experienced a treat on July 15, 2022 when the Vintage Auto Club of Yakima arrived on-center for an auto show. (l-r) The owner of a green Ford Model "A" converses with students Sean Farmer and Christopher Dennis. USDA Forest Service photo by Austin Brown. USDA Forest Service photo.

## CHANGE IS GOOD



Brian Daher, Program Coordinator, Job Corps National Office.  
USDA Forest Service photo.

I have frequently joked with others, "If you don't like what's going on in Job Corps, just wait a few minutes. It will change." Change is the agent of evolution, the impetus for innovation and it's what moves the program forward. Job Corps' mission of helping young people to improve the quality of their lives through vocational and academic training resulting in gainful

employment hasn't changed much since Job Corps was created 58 years ago. But change is due and deserved.

It is said that the most accepted change happens gradually and over long periods of time because people have a chance to adapt and accept what's occurring. Recently, the Forest Service awarded a contract to conduct Outreach & Admissions/Career Transition Services (OA/CTS) operations for its own five centers in the Philadelphia Region. Currently

there is a procurement being prepared to award contracts for OA/CTS for all Forest Service centers. This is a sea change.

A big change we're expecting soon is a re-write of the Policy and Requirements Handbook (PRH) Chapter 1. The eligibility criteria for the Job Corps program are being refined, the background check has changed vendors and a new application portal is being created for students that collects more information and documentation to hasten the admissions process.

Another exciting recent change is the Forest Service realigning its career technical training offerings to better integrate with the Forest Service system to train in and support conservation, forestry, wildland firefighting and facilities maintenance. The initiative, which launched in 2019, will expand training programs that will benefit Job Corps students and the Forest Service. The new programs are currently ramping up and will be in full operation at the beginning of the calendar year.

Lastly, our students have changed. Young people everywhere have borne the brunt of the COVID-19 pandemic. Their education has been disrupted. Many have lost jobs. Their mental health has suffered and too many have experienced gender-based violence. We need to continually adjust our approach to the young adults we serve.

I recently made a big change in my life and career. For 17 years I served the Department of Labor as the Regional Director for the San Francisco Office of Job Corps. Upon moving to the Forest Service, I've not met a more friendly and supportive group of co-workers with whom I enjoy interacting with every day. I think we all are in this program because we enjoy helping people.

As I've ended all meetings and calls for the last 17 years, "Make all your decisions in the best interests of our students—even when sometimes the answer is no."

## HIGHLIGHTS

- **At-a-glance:** Visit the [OC Editorial Calendar](#) for upcoming agency-wide communication activities.
- **Great Onyx Job Corps partners with the Allegheny and Shawnee National Forests:** [Job Corps partnership with national forests benefits forest and students](#)
- **Visit Us:** Job Corps National Office [SharePoint](#) site.

## EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND SERVICE



Weber Basin Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center Advanced Emergency Dispatch student Damian King places an order while working at the Silver City Dispatch Center in Missoula, Montana on June 13, 2022. King served a 30-day assignment in Silver City and during his assignment he was signed off as an Expanded Dispatch Recorder. USDA Forest Service photo by Cris Newton-Schlesselman.

## 2022 CCC FIRE CONTRIBUTIONS

As in years past, Forest Service Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers (CCC) are making their presence known in the wildland firefighting community. The CCCs began their season in March, supporting Eastern and Southern Region Rx work and/or Cache support. Year-to-date, Job Corps students have contributed 58,436 hours to wildland firefighting efforts. As of August 1, 2022, 173 Job Corps students are working to construct food boxes or in work-based learning, camp crew, suppression, and dispatch assignments.

Students and staff have spent much of their time on firefighting efforts in New Mexico. To date, Job Corps Wildland Firefighter Type 2s have contributed 1,136 hours and camp crews have worked a whopping 18,449 hours in the state. Their hours have been concentrated on the Calf Canyon/Hermit's Peak and Black Fires, largest and second largest fires in New Mexico's history.

Filling a significant personnel gap, 10 Job Corps emergency dispatch students have worked 2,654 hours in interagency dispatch coordination centers as far away as Alaska. Job Corps students fill dispatch assignments as ADs and earn \$24.44 per hour.

Job Corps received rave reviews for its Mobile Kitchen support at the Cascade Complex 2007 Staff Ride in mid-July. Boxelder, Columbia Basin, Ft. Simcoe, Timber Lake and Trapper Creek Job Corps students and staff supported that effort.

The Forest Service is currently at a Preparedness Level of 3. The U.S. is experiencing a heatwave across the country, but the West is particularly dry. Whatever the future holds in store, the CCCs will be on-the-ready to travel wherever they are needed in support of the agency's mission.

*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 BARNER COLUMBIA BASIN JOB CORPS CCC



Working on a CCC is often challenging. The pace of work can be grueling and career opportunities are often limited. This was the reality for Columbia Basin Job Corps Acting Administrative Officer Chris Barner two years ago. After an 18-year

career in Job Corps, he felt stymied in his professional growth. Barner was at his desk signing his resignation letter when a student entered his office crying. The young woman could not read English and felt she never would.

Barner instructed her to read while he reviewed his resignation letter. Not understanding anything she said, he said read it again. He observed that she was reading right to left—not left to right. “I asked her the first language she’d learned, and she replied to Hebrew and Arabic,” says Barner. He asked her to read again, this time from left to right. “It was her face I remember. It was like it was Christmas,” recalls Barner. From that day, no matter what he was doing, Barner would end his day listening to her read. “That student changed my trajectory,” states Barner.

There is no typical day at Columbia Basin for Barner but he starts each day by reading a devotional. “Each day is very different. We are short-staffed and I serve in many capacities—Education Manager, Administrative Officer, and Driver’s Education Instructor. The only constant is having students in my office with a concern or in need of guidance.” Today, even more than career advancement, Barner values leaving a legacy. “I want to make a mark in somebody’s heart. Job Corps provides me an opportunity to show the best parts of me.”



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- #jobcorpsfire

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

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