



APRIL 2023

# THE COURIER

FOREST SERVICE JOB CORPS CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CENTERS

Creating the Next Generation of Conservation Stewards



David R. Obey Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center (NGLVC) Visitor Information Specialist Chellbie Cheairs is a 2021 graduate of the Trapper Creek Job Corps Advanced Wildland Fire Management program who received a \$15,000 recruitment incentive bonus. Photo courtesy of Chellbie Cheairs.

## IT IS AN HONOR TO SERVE



(l-r) Account Technician Gloria Wilson, Cristina Newton-Schlesselman, and Account Technician ) Kaylene Ripko at the Albuquerque Service Center in New Mexico.

In February 2022, the Chief expressed his commitment to the Forest Service Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center (CCC) program by urging all Forest Service Regions to hire 100 CCC graduates each year by FY25. When the Chief's intent was issued, I was a Management Analyst in the Job Corps National Office and took full ownership of the initiative as an extra duty on top of my formal program of work. Fast forward one year. I facilitated hiring 22 graduates in FY22. I was

honored to receive the Chief's award for Exceling as a High-Performing Agency and be part of a historic and exciting moment for the Forest Service Job Corps CCCs.

The first year's goal was 18 Job Corps graduate hires, almost double what I was expecting. Since there were no processes established to expedite these hires and the Agency historically struggled with coordinating and creating a

strategy to hire our graduates, I knew this was going to be a challenge. Within seven months, I had to create a strategy to place enough graduates into entry level positions to reach the Chief's goal, while navigating challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic and the rebuilding of CCCs student populations.

Fortunately, I had many Forest Service employees, and Job Corps students and graduates, on-board with this vision and the expertise to help make this happen. It was exciting to collect their different and valuable perspectives to identify what we are already doing successfully, alongside challenges. This included CCC staff, Assistant Fire Management Officers, hiring managers, Job Corps Ambassador Board Members, the National Talent Acquisition Human Resources Team and recruiters. The collaboration with the Agency's hiring subject matter experts and outside the box strategizing resulted in placing graduates into entry level positions that included recreation, firefighting, facility maintenance, social services, dispatch, tractor operator, accounting technicians and visitor services.

I am proud off the extra effort we all put in as an Agency to provide meaningful career opportunities while at the same time meeting the Agency's needs of filling important entry level positions. We identified and worked through barriers while creating solutions such as Regions providing career ladder GS-3/4/5 positions, recruitment incentives, and mentorships. The Forest Service is the only land management Agency to manage Job Corps centers and it only makes sense that the CCCs are creating a pipeline of a trained and experienced employees that represent the diversity of the American population the Agency serves to fill our Agency's entry level positions. Our CCC graduates get it; they know the value of public service work and enjoy working outside. The Forest Service Job Corps program exposes these students to opportunities working on public lands providing a transformative experience for young adults and want to work for the Agency.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- **At-a-glance:** Visit the [OC Editorial Calendar](#) for upcoming agency-wide communication activities.
- **CCC Students Join All-Female Engine Crew:** [job-corps-students-round-out-all-female-engine-module](#)
- **Chief's Award Ceremony:** [Chief's award recognizes employee excellence](#)



## EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND SERVICE

(l-r) Pine Knot Job Corps CCC graduate Gianna Bazzel and Gabriella Ibarra are enrolled in the Advanced Training, Human Service Worker Program at Curlew Job Corps. USDA Forest Service photo by Armanella White.

## MEET VICKIE SUTTON LYNDON B. JOHNSON JOB CORPS CCC



After a successful 33-year career at Franklin High School, Vickie Sutton retired and sought out a second career as Lyndon B. Johnson (LBJ) Job Corps' Academic Manager. Growing up as a military brat, Sutton was exposed to a variety

of peoples and cultures and her experience shapes how she approaches LBJ students and staff. "Each day is an adventure!" shares Sutton.

Sutton juggles her administrative and managerial duties in-between meeting with students and staff, listening to their concerns and helping to celebrate successes and resolve problems. "My open-door policy for students and staff has helped develop a community where students and staff feel respected and heard," states Sutton. "The best part of my job is interacting with students and witnessing the remarkable growth they experience as they progress through the program."

Sutton ensures that everyone in her department works diligently to build students up, make them believe in themselves and help them adopt a 'can do' attitude. LBJ academic staff celebrate the students' success through an incentives' program and by posting alcaides on hallway bulletin boards. "Students absolutely beam with pride when they reach academic milestones," states Sutton. "I will never forget the time when a student entered my office with tears in his eyes proudly holding his high school diploma. He exclaimed, 'I finally did it. I proved my mom wrong! I am not stupid.'" For Sutton, the intrinsic rewards provided by playing even a small part in helping a student reach their goals are immeasurable.



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

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Pine Knot Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center Computer Technology Trade program graduate Gianna Bazzel has distinguished herself as a dedicated and talented student.

Prior to graduation, she earned six different certificates, including CompTIA A+, CompTIA ITF+, Google IT Support Certificate, Lockout Tagout, Microsoft Technology Associates in Mobility and Device fundamentals, and FEMA IS-100/700/800 certification.

Outside her academic achievements, Bazzel has a passion for helping others which led her to enrolling in the Advanced Training, Human Service Worker Program at Curlew Job Corps. Bazzel knew everyone at Pine Knot Job Corps. She was the person other students would come to for advice and counseling.

"Gianna's family works in healthcare and she wanted to enter a field where she could help people," states Pine Knot Information Technology Training Instructor Roger Sheffield. "Her original idea was to work in an IT health-oriented field. The certificates she's earned will assist in a career in residential living and she still has career opportunities in IT if she wants to return to that field."

Gianna's plan is to work on a CCC to help youth like her. She sees this as a way to give back to her community and help others achieve their goals. Gianna's dedication, passion, and commitment to excellence make her a shining example of what it means to be a student leader. There is no doubt she will continue to achieve great things in the future. Everyone should keep an eye out for her accomplishments!

*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.*