



FEBRUARY 2024

THE COURIER

FOREST SERVICE JOB CORPS CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CENTERS

Creating the Next Generation of Conservation Stewards



The Cass Job Corps CCC Community Relations Council donated snacks, essential hygiene products, soft drinks and journals to fill care packages for 102 Cass students who had to return home after a January 18, 2024 water main break. USDA Forest Service photo by Venorris Webb.

THE POWER OF COMMUNITY

By Alicia D. Bennett

Civilian Conservation Centers enjoy the support of their communities through Community Relations Councils (CRCs). Composed of civic leaders, including law enforcement, community leaders, elected officials, local school representatives, and non-profit organizations, CRCs are centers' ambassador to surrounding communities.

Cass Job Corps CCC rediscovered the advantages a strong CRC can provide when, after a January 18, 2024 water main break, it was forced to send students home. After Liaison Specialist Venorris "Vee" Webb shared this news at a community meeting, unprompted the CRC stepped into action looking for ways to help. Knowing Job Corps students come from low-income households, the CRC provided enough snacks, essential hygiene products, soft drinks and journals to fill care packages for 102 students.

On February 1, 2024, Cass staff traveled across Arkansas to deliver 75 care packages. The contents of the packages were important but packages' impact went far beyond what they contained. Crying as she accepted a package, a grandmother of one student reflected that Cass Job Corps staff not only train students, but they also care. "It's not what you tell

people, it's how you show them that matters."

"This project reminded us why our roles are essential to changing the lives of the students we serve and the true

"IT'S NOT WHAT YOU TELL PEOPLE, ITS HOW YOU SHOW THEM THAT MATTERS."
-GRANDMOTHER OF CASS STUDENT

spirit of community," said Webb. "This is just another example of how Cass Job Corps' resiliency turns a setback into a comeback."



Top left photo: Cass Job Corps student Jonathan Brannon.

Top right photo: (l-r) Cass Job Corps staff member Amanda Gortiemier and student Mattie West.



Bottom left photo: Cass Job Corps Social Worker Andrea Cooper, student Juan Baldazo, and Teacher Edwina Carr.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Pine Knot Job Corps: [Pine Knot Job Corps camp crew pitches in at Southern Area Incident Support Cache](#)
- Job Corps CCC Program: [Job Corps Holiday Card Program 2023.](#)
- Mingo Job Corps Social Media: [Job Corps student recruitment campaign](#)



EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND SERVICE

(l-r) Boxelder Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center Pow Wow dancer Eugene Little, Job Corps National Office Program Coordinator Brian Daher and Boxelder Job Corps Pow Wow dancer Riversage Black. USDA photo by Bonnie Fuller.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY ON DISPLAY AT BOXELDER JOB CORPS CCC

Job Corps National Office Program Coordinator Brian Daher received a special honor when Boxelder Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center Native American students Riversage Black and Eugene Little performed traditional Pow Wow dancing during his visit to the center in early February 2024. Black and Little wanted others to experience their culture and it was a proud moment for them. When Black and Little completed their dance, they led Daher and Boxelder CCC students and staff in a traditional Round Dance.

“ WE HAVE A STUDENT POPULATION THAT ACCEPTS EVERYONE AND CELEBRATES STUDENTS ABILITIES. OUR STUDENT POPULATION IS 41% NATIVE AMERICAN. WE ARE LUCKY TO HAVE TWO STUDENTS THAT ARE POW WOW DANCERS. ”

-CHRISTI HABERMANN



Boxelder Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center Pow Wow dancer Riversage Black. USDA photo by Bonnie Fuller.



Boxelder Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center Pow Wow dancer Eugene Little. USDA photo by Bonnie Fuller.

The mission of the 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 DIANNE NELSON TIMBER LAKE JOB CORPS CCC

Dianne Nelson currently serves as Timber Lake Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center's high school diploma/GED program instructor. When she stepped foot on-center in 1992, she was a contract driver's education teacher and at 23 similar in age to her students. After this long a tenure, Timber Lake staff tease Nelson that they will have to bury her on campus grounds one day. Nelson is unperturbed. "I know what I like and I like what I do," she stated. "Passion and pride should go hand-in-hand when you are at work. If those two words are missing in your workday, think about a career change."



Students Nelson has taught, now parents themselves, stop her in the street to chat and she receives calls and e-mails from students long gone. She believes that when a student is having an off day, the problem is generally

traceable to their home environment. What they need is a confidant. "Once they realize you're not the enemy, the behavior turns itself around," said Nelson. "The worst student is usually the one who seeks me out to talk because they know they can."

Tracing the origin of Nelson's dedication is easy. "When I was in high school, I hated school," she stated. "If it weren't for my teacher, Dan Fowler, I would have dropped out." Instead of a life as a high-school drop-out, Nelson earned BA and Master's degrees at Concordia University and lives her best life paying it forward. "Wherever you are, Mr. Fowler, thank you." Fowler may have had no idea that by touching Nelson's life, he was changing generations. If Nelson's students knew the reason she became a teacher, they too would be thanking Mr. Fowler.



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