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THE COURIER

FOREST SERVICE JOB CORPS CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CENTERS

Creating the Next Generation of Conservation Stewards



Elizabeth "Beth" Lillian O'Neill, August 9, 1971 - May 11, 2024

REMEMBERING ELIZABETH "BETH" LILLIAN O'NEILL

Alicia D. Bennett, JCNO Public Affairs Officer

Elizabeth (Beth) Lillian O'Neill passed away on May 11, 2024. Beth, who had worked at Angell Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center for two years as a Social Services Assistant, was driving three students to Corvallis, Oregon, so they could travel home when she was involved in a head-on vehicle crash. She left behind a husband and two children.

Compared to some long-term Job Corps employees O'Neill's time on-center was short, but she made an outsized impact in the time she was present. The impression she left in the hearts and minds of Angell Job Corps students was deep. For her students, O'Neill made the simple act of walking down a dorm room hall an opportunity for laughter and fun.

"Beth was a great person to be around no matter what was happening. She was always calming, and the students reacted to that as if she was everyone's favorite mom," said Supervisory Support Services Assistant Lesley Moe. "Her office was inviting to come into and relax for a chat about problems or just to say hello." A special gift of O'Neill's was the energy and joy she brought to holiday gatherings. Angell staff speak glowingly of her contributions to and love for Angell Job Corps CCC.

"Beth was well loved. She bent over backwards for any student in need and would do anything in her power to see they had ample supplies of food, attention, and love," said Moe. "She volunteered whenever there was a space to do so. She was involved with every opportunity to give students or staff a piece of her wonderfulness and spread her light freely for all. Beth was never cross to anyone, nor did she have a bad thing to say about anyone. She was a lovely person through and through."

O'Neill's absence from center left a gaping hole on center. These days, Angell Job Corps staff continue to serve the youth in their charge—with the knowledge that O'Neill would expect nothing less—but do so with heavy hearts or even numbness. "We have such a huge hole in our hearts around here now and the sun doesn't shine so bright anymore now that she is not here to give it that extra glow," said Moe. The circumstances surrounding O'Neill's passing may have also left some Angell staff members with feelings of anger or guilt. Yet they continue to report to work, day-in and day out because, like them, they know that O'Neill loved Angell Job Corps.

O'Neill's love for Angell Job Corps was manifest to everyone in her life—particularly her family. Within days of her passing, her family's requested permission to travel to Angell and spend time with the students that Beth was so passionate in serving. Talking to and interacting with the students O'Neill served provided them comfort. They asked that anyone wanting to honor her legacy to donate to Angell Job Corps.

"Death comes to us all," is a familiar refrain. Yet, it seems tragic when it happens to the best of us. Death robbed the world of Beth O'Neill too early. But what death cannot do is erase the servant-leadership O'Neill modeled to the world or the impact she had on tender hearts and minds of Angell Job Corps students. That legacy that will live on in their lives and beyond.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Cass Job Corps: [Trade changes strengthen relationship between CCCs and forests](#)
- Oconaluftee Job Corps [Job Corps students' career takes flight](#)
- Oconaluftee Job Corps CCC: [Oconaluftee Job Corps' advanced forestry program yields results](#)



EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND SERVICE

Seven Wolf Creek Job Corps Forestry Conservation and Firefighting students rescued a hiker experiencing a medical emergency on the Wolf Creek Falls Trail on July 10, 2024. USDA Forest Service photo.

EVERYDAY HEROISM IN ACTION

On July 10, 2024, a stranger appeared at Wolf Creek Job Corps' administration office seeking help for a relative who had collapsed on the Wolf Creek Falls Trail on the Umpqua National Forest. Staff called 911 and Assistant Fire Management Officer Tadd Niebel and Forestry Technicians Skyler Shrum and John Salvador, accompanied by seven forestry conservation and firefighting students, sprung into action.

Hiking 2.3 miles up the trail to the hiker, who had lost consciousness due to a heat related injury, the team hand carried the victim to a road where they were met by the Glide Rural Fire Protection District (Glide RFPD). The RFPD then turned the patient over to the Umpqua Valley Ambulance which transported the patient to Mercy Medical Center.

"I was headed back to the trailhead when a person, a relative of the hiker, ran up behind me on the trail wanting to know if I had cell service," said local resident Dennis Steil in a social media post. "Wolf Creek was the closest place I could think of that could help. The stars aligned yesterday for all. Great job.!" Steil added a reminder that the public should remember to take extra water when hiking on hot, dry days—a timely reminder as the country is experiencing an unprecedented heat wave.



Seven Wolf Creek Job Corps Forestry Conservation and Firefighting students rescued a hiker experiencing a medical emergency on the Wolf Creek Falls Trail on July 10, 2024. USDA Forest Service photo.

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 LAWRENCE "LARRY" BROWN PINE KNOT JOB CORPS CCC

You might say that Job Corps runs in the blood of Pine Knot Job Corps CCC Academic Manager Lawrence (Larry) Brown. He first heard of the program from his paternal Grandfather, who was Pine Knot's first masonry instructor. As a teenager, Brown would attend recreational events hosted by the center. Even back then, the thought lurked in the back of Brown's mind that one day he might pursue a career with Job Corps.



Brown pursued a career as an educator with Kentucky's McCreary County school district—serving as a teacher, administrator, and resource coordinator—before moving on to the Federal Bureau of Prisons. Feeling dissatisfied with the impact he was making, he made the leap to

Job Corps where he has served in a variety of positions at multiple centers, including Schenck and Frenchburg CCCs.

Brown starts every workday by greeting Pine Knot students and staff with a hearty "Good Morning" to inspire motivation. He treasures that he can make a positive difference in the lives of his students.

"I really can't single one specific student out during my 20 years in Job Corps because they have all added to my life."

Doing the right thing is Brown's guiding principle. "What can I get into today," is always a thought lurking in his mind.

"Every day is an adventure and can never be repeated so we must strive to get the most out of it. Live it to the fullest and drain it dry because we can never get it back."



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