



AUGUST 2024

# THE COURIER

FOREST SERVICE JOB CORPS CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CENTERS  
Creating the Next Generation of Conservation Stewards



After taking the initial expanded dispatch (D-110) class, Boxelder Job Corps student Lia Nelson was deployed on a 14-day assignment to Great Plains Dispatch (GPC) in Rapid City South Dakota. Nelson also has earned her Wildland Firefighter Type 2 certification. USDA Forest Service photo.

Now that the 90-day requirement of previous wildland firefighting experience is no longer mandatory for qualification needed to compete for secondary firefighter (administrative) covered positions—like expanded dispatch recorder—lucrative career opportunities in the dispatch arena are now open to Forest Service Job Corps graduates.



A Columbia Basin Job Corps camp crew organizes supplies at the Pioneer Fire. USDA Forest Service photo.

## JOB CORPS FIRE PROGRAM UPDATE

Alicia D. Bennett, JCNO Public Affairs Officer

Last month the USDA Forest Service announced it was moving to Preparedness Level 5 after a rash of wildfires erupted across the country, the highest on the wildfire preparedness scale. Even after winding down from active prescribed fire seasons (during the first six months of this year alone, 236 Job Corps students worked 64,372 hours in prescribed fire efforts) the Civilian Conservation Centers (CCCs) have geared-up to work alongside national forests and grasslands staff to do their part.

As of August 9, 2024, 247 students and 143 staff were out on assignment. They are serving across many capacities, including wildland firefighters, camp crew members, and expanded dispatch recorders—an area of great need. *The Washington Post* ran a story on fire resource shortages recently and National Interagency Coordination Center Manager Sean Peterson stated “the most critical shortage” was in local fire dispatch centers where there are more than 100 vacancies. The Advanced Dispatch programs offered by Harpers Ferry and Weber Basin CCCs are helping meet this need. Ten students are presently serving as expanded dispatch recorders at interagency dispatch centers across the country.



Schenck Job Corps Wellness Director Stephanie Williams (second from left) served as the crew boss trainee on a Schenck camp crew deployed to the Durkee Fire on the Vale District Bureau of the Land Management near Huntington, Oregon. Job Corps students earned much needed funds to help them to transition to independent living. USDA Forest Service photo.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- **Wolf Creek Job Corps:** [60 Years of Fulfilling Promise](#)
- **LBJ Job Corps** [Making every choice count: Lyndon B. Johnson Job Corps student looks to future](#)
- **Cass Job Corps CCC:** [Trade changes strengthen the relationship between CCCs and forests](#)





## EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND SERVICE

Boxelder Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center managers met with the Lawrence County Sheriff's Office on July 23, 2024. Lawrence County Sheriff's night shift officers are scheduled to visit the campus twice each evening, with all officers encouraged to drop-in when they are in the vicinity. USDA Forest Service photo.

## BOXELDER JOB CORPS WORKS TO REVITALIZE A SAFETY CULTURE



Boxelder Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center (CCC) managers met with the Lawrence County Sheriff's Office on July 23, 2024, to discuss the center's emergency management plan, with a focus on risk reduction and preparedness.

The Forest Service Job Corps program places a heavy emphasis on physical security and emergency management planning on its campuses to create a safe learning environment for students and staff.

Job Corps National Office Safety Manager Donica Bigelow holds monthly meetings with CCC Safety Managers, offering valuable trainings best practices and the opportunity for center safety officers to share "lessons learned" to create a continuous learning environment.

Lawrence County Sheriff's Office professionals helped review Boxelder's emergency management and police response protocols. There were productive discussions on check-in and check-out protocols, controlled substances chain of custody rules, evacuation and lock down plans, and communication barriers.

Officers finished their visit with a campus tour alongside the center's emergency response team. Lawrence County Sheriff's night shift officers are scheduled to visit the campus twice each evening, with all officers encouraged to drop-in when they are in the vicinity. Boxelder is modeling a framework on how to build a strong partnership to ensure a culture that incorporates safety in all aspects. This follows the spirit of an important safety message, "The real enemy of safety is not non-compliance but non-thinking."

*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 KEN WINNER PINE RIDGE JOB CORPS CCC

An early riser, Pine Ridge Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center Safety Officer Ken Winner starts his day in the center cafeteria jiving with students. "Smiles are good medicine," he shares and he likes to start their day with a positive spin.



When asked about, "What is it that you most dislike," most people will name an unfortunate characteristic of humans. But, for Winner, it's ticks. "Ticks... anytime, and anywhere. Yuk!" High season for ticks in Nebraska is year around so he must practice and encourage tick safety

throughout the year. No need to worry for him though, Winner is a subject matter expert on Job Corps' CARE Team and Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Peer Support Program so he knows how to manage this particular stressor.

Winner's greatest "extravagance" is "Conversations, companionship, smiles, and making memories!" One memory, and still a reality for him, is of Job Corps graduate Keim Vue who stays in frequent touch. Winner taught Vue welding when he was an immigrant who, although fluent in five languages, could not speak English. Winner would physically show him the welding process. As Vue's English skills improved, he shared details of the challenging circumstances of his life. "Seeing what he was able to accomplish was awe inspiring for me," says Winner. "How humbling, and what an honor...."

"Some of our students have been through many challenges that have shaped them into what they are. It's easy to take our day to day for granted... Don't forget to count your Blessings!"



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