



SEPTEMBER 2024

THE COURIER

FOREST SERVICE JOB CORPS CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CENTERS

Creating the Next Generation of Conservation Stewards



Blackwell Job Corps CCC Forestry Conservation and Wildland Firefighting student Brady Alderman. USDA Forest Service photo by Kent Hiestand.

SPOTLIGHT ON BLACKWELL STUDENT BRADY ALDERMAN

A native of El Paso, Texas, Forestry Conservation and Wildland Firefighting student Brady Alderman enrolled at Blackwell Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center (CCC) to pursue his dream of a career with the Forest Service in October 2023.

Having heard about Job Corps from his mother, Alderman was aware of Blackwell's history and connection to the agency. Alderman enrolled at Blackwell focused on absorbing as much as he could about forestry conservation and wildland fire and he's traveled the country from Missouri to Montana on prescribed and wildland fires.

Alderman's original plan included enrolling in Trapper Creek Job Corp's Advanced Fire Management Program. However circumstances changed when, after seeing Alderman in action on multiple work-based learning assignments, Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forests staff stepped up to offer Alderman an entry level career position as a wage grade 5 fire dozer/equipment helper.

Blackwell Job Corps has built an enviable partnership with the Chequamegon-Nicolet; the forests builds in paid work-based learning opportunities into its annual budget for Blackwell students. "We don't have to chase down work-based learning for our students, but it was a heavy lift three

years ago," said Blackwell Job Corps Engine Supervisor Louis Hall. "Students like Brady have helped Blackwell make huge

“ADJUSTING TO CENTER LIFE WITH MULTIPLE PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT, DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS, WAS MY GREATEST CHALLENGE WHILE ATTENDING JOB CORPS. IT WAS IMPORTANT FOR ME TO KEEP AN OPEN MIND ABOUT OTHERS AND THEIR LIFESTYLES, WHILE LEARNING TO BECOME A LEADER ON CAMPUS.”

— BRADY ALDERMAN, BLACKWELL JOB CORPS FORESTRY CONSERVATION AND WILDLAND FIREFIGHTING STUDENT

strides in our relationship with the forest." Alderman has completed work-based learning assignments across the forests—including timber marking with the Region 9 Strike Team and in silviculture, timber, road maintenance, and at the Oconto Seed Orchard.

Because entry level firefighting jobs are competitive, Hall typically pushes his students to enroll in Advanced Wildland Firefighting training to build out their resume. But this job offer is an opportunity, he felt Alderman should not pass up.

The Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forests also provide funding to support student training at the environmental education center [Trees for Tomorrow](#). Alderman, a Firefighter Type 2 and Sawyer A, attended a weeklong [Trees for Tomorrow](#) wildlife workshop.

If Alderman accepts the fire dozer/equipment helper position, he can advance to a Dozer Operator position and from there into a Dozer Operator Initial A position. "With his attitude and ability to take constructive criticism, he has the potential to make it all the way up to the top in whatever he puts his mind to," said Blackwell Job Corps Fuels Technician/Heavy Equipment Operator Kent Hiestand.

If all goes as planned, the day after he graduates, Alderman will on-board with the Chequamegon-Nicolet in April 2025. No matter where Alderman ultimately lands, he is an awesome representation of the caliber of graduates a CCC can produce.

HIGHLIGHTS

Timber Lake Job Corps: [Timber Lake Job Corps Feeding Firefighters](#)

Fred G. Acosta Job Corps [Job Corps students gain first hand experience during active fire](#)

Cass Job Corps CCC: [Nothing is permanent except change](#)



EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND SERVICE

Frenchburg Job Corps CCC Advanced Forestry and United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners (UBC) Carpentry students replaced all deck boards at the observation deck at Shallow Flats, Cave Run Lake. USDA Forest Service photo.

FRENCHBURG JOB CORPS CONSTRUCTS OBSERVATION DECK AT SHALLOW FLATS, CAVE RUN LAKE



The Observation Deck at Shallow Flats, Cave Run Lake, after replacement of deck boards. USDA Forest Service photo.



Frenchburg Job Corps CCC Advanced Forestry and UBC Carpentry students Tyler Eldridge, Trustin Thornberry, Jordan Collins, DaMontaveious Smith, and Advanced Forestry instructor Jesse Spencer secure new deck boards to the observation deck at Shallow Flats, Cave Run Lake. USDA Forest Service photo.



Frenchburg Job Corps CCC Advanced Forestry and UBC Carpentry students Mason Hinkle, Phoenix Harshbarger, and William Willoughby measure and cut replacement decking boards for the observation deck at Shallow Flats at Cave Run Lake. 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 RACHEL CARTER FLATWOODS JOB CORPS CCC

One of life's biggest challenges is cultivating resiliency and riding out tough times to the end through a difficult situation. This is particularly true of Job Corps youth. Flatwoods Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center Clinical Mental Health Consultant Rachel Carter assists her students with cultivating "stickability" and fostering their emotional well-being, healing, and personal growth.



"I love watching students overcome self-doubt and past trauma to grow into the best version of themselves," shared Carter. "There are so many students that worked through their struggles and created success for themselves." A past student whose memory has stayed with her was on the autism spectrum. He struggled with homesickness and wanted to return home to what he knew--what was within his comfort zone.

Carter gathered a case management team to provide him support. The team assisted him with identifying his core values and practicing self-care so he could develop the skills needed to conquer obstacles and fears of the unknown. At graduation, the student's departing message to his classmates was to push through difficulties and never give up.

As a professional who's facilitated mindfulness workshops, Carter does for herself what she does for her students. CCCs are overcoming multiple administrative challenges while also navigating high staff vacancies. "The first task I accomplish each morning is looking at my schedule to see which students I will be seeing that day," said Carter. "I take a moment to gather my thoughts and mindset for serving those students and preparing for upcoming meetings to the best of my ability."



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More exciting news can be found on our [Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers!](https://www.jobcorps.gov/civilian-conservation-centers/) website!

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