



# NEWS RELEASE

**Blackwell Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center  
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## **Blackwell Job Corps students travel to Florida to gain firefighting experience**



**Blackwell Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center wildland firefighting students from assist Ocala National Forest firefighters with a recent controlled burn. The 8-person crew traveled to central Florida to gain first-hand experience during this 14-day assignment. USFS photo.**

**BLACKWELL, Wisconsin, (March 18, 2016)** – Wildland firefighting students from the [Blackwell Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center](#) are helping the Ocala National Forest in Florida complete controlled burns while learning more about wildland firefighting techniques.

The first 8-person Blackwell crew traveled to central Florida from Feb. 28 to March 12, said Lee Jensen, Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest assistant fire management officer. A second team will embark in late March. “This is a brand-new idea. A brand-new module configuration,” Jensen explained. “We are combining Blackwell students and staff with other students and staff from around the eastern United States to make 8-man modules for Forest Service’s Region 8.”

The Blackwell team completed its 14-day assignment alongside fellow firefighter-students from the Nebraska-based Pine Ridge Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center, Other Job Corps Centers will contribute their firefighting students this spring.

“We have been sent to a fire just about every day. We helped to stop a 140-acre fire yesterday afternoon,” Jensen reported. “The boys are jumping in with the host engine company. They love our guys.”

Jensen said this program enables the Job Corps students to gain valuable experience on prescribed burns and helps them train for real-world wildfires.

“This project serves many goals for the Forest Service,” Jensen said. “This project and many others like it are building a legacy for future public servants to better consider our land as a resource worth managing but also our youth as assets worth developing.”



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wildland firefighting students assist Ocala National Forest  
firefighters with a recent controlled burn.**

The Forest Service started the wildland firefighter training program at Blackwell in October 2014. Since then, more than 18 students have been certified as wildland firefighters and 60 more are participating in the program.

The Blackwell Job Corps offers training in office automation, carpentry, construction crafts, health occupations, masonry and welding. Additionally, students can earn their high school diplomas either through a partnership with a local high school, online or through General Educational Development (GED) or High School Equivalency testing.

To learn more about opportunities at the Blackwell Job Corps Center please visit <http://blackwell.jobcorps.gov/home.aspx>.

Students may take classes in basic reading and math, and participate in groups covering topics like independent living, employability skills, social skills and career success standards. Other opportunities include earning their driver's license and certifications in Occupational Safety and Health Administration safety standards/regulations and in other skills such as forklift operation and scaffold construction and tear down.

The 25-acre Blackwell Job Corps campus features a wellness center, dining facility, counseling services, a student-run bank, a computer lab and entertainment areas located in its dormitories and campus recreation center where students can work out, play basketball, challenge each other to a game of pool, or just relax.

"The Blackwell Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center is associated with the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest. The Blackwell Job Corps Civilian Conservation serves 160 students. The USDA Forest Service operates 28 Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers across 18 states with a capacity of 6,200 students. For more information, visit: <http://recruiting.jobcorps.gov/en/home.aspx>. The mission of the USDA Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. The Agency manages 193 million acres of public land, provides assistance to State and private landowners, and maintains the largest forestry research organization in the world."