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For Immediate Release

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## **BLACK HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATED AT BLACKWELL JOB CORPS CENTER**

**Laona, WI – March 1, 2011**

During the month of February Blackwell Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center celebrated Black History Month. Black History Month is a celebration of important people and events in the history of the peoples of African descent. Students were encouraged to participate in the different events that took place like the poetry and essay contests and the soul food dinner that took place.

Aaron Hadley, TEAP Specialist, at Blackwell JCCCC was asked what Black History Month meant to him and this is what he had to say:



I have had people approach me from time to time and ask me why is there a 'Black History Month'? Why the special designation? One has to understand the history of African American people...they did not immigrate to America as other ethnic groups did. When the immigrant ethnic groups migrated to America; they came with their culture, norms and mores intact.

Africans were brought to America for one purpose and that was for what is known as chattel slavery. In America, Black families were broken up, destroyed. They were commodities; they were sold like one would sell a horse or a cow. Children were separated from parents, sons from mothers and daughters from fathers. It was illegal for a person of African descent to read or even learn how to read. The people of African descent were not allowed to speak in their native tongue. Their culture was stripped from them such as their native religion. An attitude had developed over the years that people from African descent did not contribute anything to society. So much so, that the people of African descent believed it too.

Emphasis was placed upon negative aspects of people from African descent and stereotypes were perpetuated about them. On some slave ships, mothers jumped into the sea and drowned with their infants in their arms rather than expose their infants to an unknown fate.

There is so much to say excluding some things does not give justice to the wealth of knowledge and information that African Americans have contributed not only to America; but to the world. From Dr. Charles Drew inventing blood plasma and devising ways to categorize blood types to Dr. Daniel Hale Williams who performed the first successful open heart surgery to Louis Latimer who invented the light bulb filament.

There have been great civilizations on this earth and the history of African Americans had been historically excluded from the history books.

I feel that recognizing and honoring Black History Month is truly the ultimate in practicing diversity and it can be a tremendous learning experience to know a person who once was not even considered a person.

Aaron provides assessment, intervention, counseling, relapse prevention and education related to drug and alcohol testing and intervention. Aaron is originally from Indianapolis, IN and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology along with a certification as a Clinical Substance Abuse Counselor for the State of Wisconsin.

The Blackwell Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center is associated with the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest. The Blackwell Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center serves 205 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://www.jobcorps.gov/>

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.

The Blackwell Job Corps Center is located in Laona, WI. For more information on the Center, please call (715)674-2311 or visit the website at <http://blackwell.jobcorps.gov>