

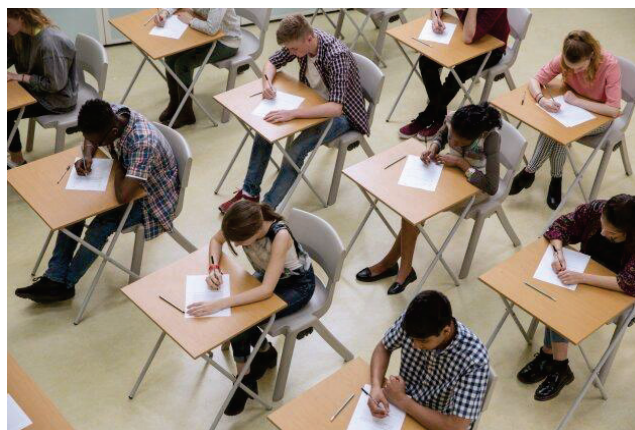
# Tanagers' Nest News

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## April = Spring Assessments

by **Jon Frey** March. 30, 2024

The transition into spring at VHS brings with it a focus on preparing to test our junior class while also gearing up for the final run toward the end of the year and graduation. While students are tested every year in middle school, the state assessments (Smarter Balanced Tests) are only administered once in high school - during the spring of the junior year. These assessments will be in the areas of English/Language Arts, Math and Science.



Our juniors will test on Tuesday and Wednesday, April 9th and 10th over math and science, in a large group setting and will test Monday and Tuesday, April 15th through the 17th over English/Language Arts content, in their junior English classes. In all, the entirety of the junior class is required by the state to be tested. The performance of the junior class on the state assessments each spring is a contributing factor into the overall score the South Dakota Department of Education assigns to Vermillion High School on our annual state report card.

Often, it is hard to get the students to “buy in” to the importance of the tests because they do not see the tests as having a direct bearing on them or their educational futures. Though numerous South Dakota schools will take scores on these assessments as part of the college entrance process. Nevertheless, the tests reflect directly upon the academic capacity of Vermillion High School students and are utilized to form the school and district’s overall grade as an educational institution. To this end, we want to encourage you to help us motivate the juniors to do their best on these assessments. We want to encourage them to get a good night’s sleep the night before, eat well and do not forget to charge their computers! If our juniors do these little things, it will help tremendously and may positively impact our scores, as well!

Thanks!

*Jon*

# Tanagers' Nest News

## IN THIS MONTH'S TANAGERS' NEST NEWS

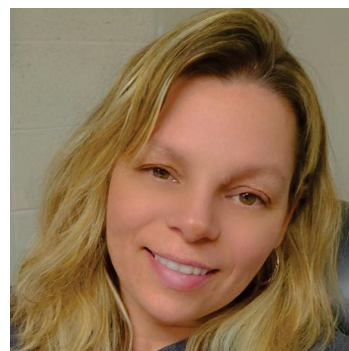
Click on the titles below to move directly to the article.

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## VHS Announces Employees of the Year!

by [Jon Frey](#) on Apr. 4, 2024

Vermillion High School is pleased to announce that our new head custodian **Christina Jensen has been selected as our 2024 Classified Staff Member of the Year!** Christina started as a night custodian in 2022 and transitioned to daytime staff the following year. This past fall she took over building operations for TJ Johnson who had served a number of years in that capacity. Christina is a hard worker who takes pride in the appearance of our building and the support she can provide our staff. We are grateful to have her overlooking our building operations and helping to ensure that Vermillion High School always looks its best! Congratulations, Christina!



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**Trina Merideth has been selected as our 2024 Certified Staff Member (Teacher) of the Year!** Trina came to VHS in 2021 to fill a vacancy in our English Department as part of her plan to move closer to home. She is a graduate of Wakonda HS and USD but spent the first part of her teaching career in San Diego, California. Trina was nominated for her caring and kind approach with students, her high expectations and the high degree of student engagement she is able to attain during routine instruction. Ms. Merideth's students speak very highly of her and I firmly believe there can be no higher praise for an educator.

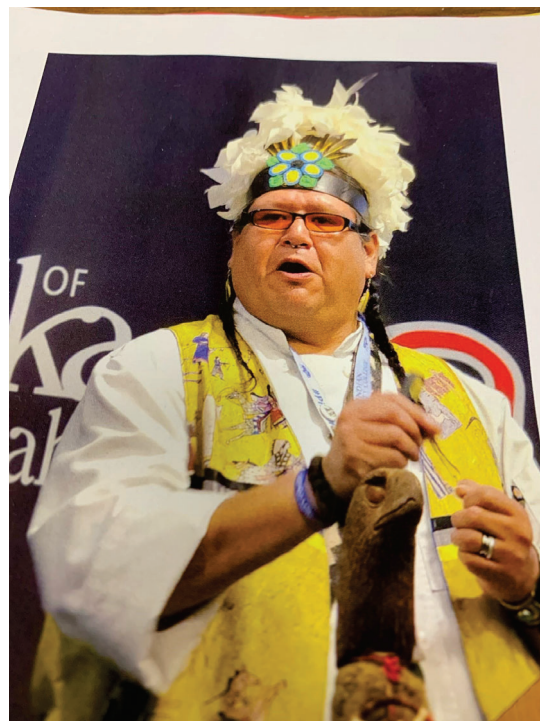
The Vermillion School District's Teacher of the Year will be announced at Monday (April 8th) night's School Board meeting. The district teacher of the year will be selected from the four building's Teacher of the Year selections.

## VHS Co-Hosts Chef Anthony Warrior

by **Jan Stalling**, VSD Native American Liason on Mar. 27, 2024

On Wednesday, March 20th, the parents/caregivers/guardians, and friends of the Native student group of the Vermillion School District and students who are a part of the Living Learning Community from the Native American Cultural Center class at USD, convened for a delicious dinner and presentation. The food was prepared and served by Anthony Warrior, a Santee Chef who embraces traditional Native American Foods. Anthony's presentation was about Food Pathways.

Mr. Warrior is the Human Relations manager at the Nebraska Indian Community College based in Santee, NE. Warrior travels around Nebraska and other Midwestern states sharing his story and encouraging a return to traditional food pathways.





# Tanagers' Nest News

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Dressed in Muscogee regalia, Anthony entertained people attending the dinner while also showing the benefits of a traditional Native American diet. Guests dined on bison meatloaf, three sisters' salad (hominy, beans, and squash with a maple vinaigrette), wild rice, and wild berry wojipe (pudding). The tea provided was one made of hibiscus, cinnamon, and honey. In addition, there were pecans covered with maple syrup and then roasted.

In his presentation, Mr. Warrior pointed out that “not only are we reestablishing a particular relationship with food, but also reinvigorating those relationships with plant and animal relatives, and the land itself. It is not just about food, but a cultural renaissance.”



Anthony went on to say that “we are tied to this earth with food offerings. Our bodies recognize that by altering the food, we are inviting in all the different problems, health issues, and difficulties with genetics. If we can break these behaviors, we could also explore what our bodies need, and break the addictions to sugar, fat and salts. We can start healing ourselves, our generations, and the world around us.”

## Teacher Counselor Feature!

This month, we will feature Mr. Luke Hayes, our *School Counselor* for students A-K in the alphabet.

### Luke Hayes - School Counselor

**Where is home?** I was born in Sioux Falls and lived there until my freshman year of high school, when my family moved to Freeman, SD where they still live.





# Tanager's Nest News

**Where did you get your (post-HS) education?** I earned my bachelor's degree in Sociology from the University of Sioux Falls and my Master's degree in School Counseling from South Dakota State University.

**How many years have you been teaching at VHS? Overall?** I am in my 3rd year at VHS and my 5th year overall in the Vermillion School District. Prior to VHS I was blessed to be at Austin Elementary School.

**What classes do you teach?** Character Guidance Lessons and special interest topics (career and college related).

**Did you always want to teach or did something lead to you teaching after first doing something else?** When I graduated high school I had wanted to go into law enforcement. While attending USF, I worked at an after school program in Sioux Falls sponsored by the Sioux Falls Parks and Recreation Services and took an Intro. to Counseling course which turned my focus to education. With my focus switching towards education, School Counseling emerged as the best career fit.

**Do you coach any sports? Do you sponsor any activities or clubs?** I have coached basketball, football and track in some capacity throughout my years in education. Currently, I help co-lead the VHS Student Council.

**What is your favorite part of teaching at VHS?** Connecting with students and being a small part of helping them navigate life and make plans for their futures.

**Anything else?** My hobbies/interests include; running/fitness, model trains, and sports. The Wisconsin Badgers are who I cheer for (Football, Men's and Women's Basketball, Volleyball, more specifically). I have two children. My son is 10, and my daughter is 7! They both attend Jolley Elementary and enjoy being involved with after school activities. We have a dog named Rue and a cat named Silver.

## Important Dates & Information for Spring Semester

- April 11th - 8th Graders Visit VHS for Registration
- April 17th - Midterm for T4
- April 18th - Senior Health & Wellness Day - 8:30-10:00 am - VHS Main Gym
- May 1st - Senior Awards Day Presentation - 2:00pm, VHS Auditorium (Public Welcome)
- May 6th & 7th - Semester Exams (Seniors ONLY)
- May 8th - Native American Graduate Honor Ceremony - 4:00pm - Prentis Park
- May 8th - Senior Cookout & Baccalaureate Service (*optional*) - 6:30 pm - VHS Aud.

# Tanagers' Nest News

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- May 11th - Graduation - 1:30 pm, Sanford Coyote Sports Center, USD (Doors open 12:30 pm)
- May 14th - 16th - Semester Exams (Grades 9, 10 & 11)
- May 16th - Final Day - 1:30 pm dismissal.
- May 30th to July 3rd - Summer School - VHS

**RED text** denotes important dates for seniors!

## Important Dates & Information for Fall Semester

- August 15th - 1st Day of Classes for 2024-25 School Year
- September 10th - Picture Day
- September 13th - No School - Teacher Inservice
- October 9th - Picture Retake Day

## Senior Health & Wellness Day

by **Amy Askew, School Nurse** on Feb. 28, 2024

*We are running this item again from last month as it is critical that every member of the senior class and their parents are aware of this.*



It's that time of year again... We're making plans to schedule Senior Health & Wellness Day here at VHS, **The plan will be to host it the morning of April 18th from 8:30-10:00.** This is a graduation requirement at VHS as it fulfills a SD Department of Education requirement for formalized training of CPR. Like years past, we will host three separate sections of education, approximately 25 minutes each:

- Hands only CPR with Amy Richardson, ATC (AHA Instructor)
- Health Education presentation with Anthony Burbach, PA-C
- AED demo/first aid presentation with Ty Murray, Vermillion Firefighter/EMS

Students who miss this session will be required to complete a make-up session prior to taking part in graduation practice or the graduation ceremony. **We ask all members of the graduating class to mark this date on their calendars and do not miss out!**

# Tanagers' Nest News

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## Activities News

By **Jason Huska** and **Jon Frey** on April 3, 2024



While this past winter sports season was certainly historic, the strong performances have not been limited to the hardwood. VHS just hosted the Region 1 Large Group contest on Wednesday of this week. Nineteen choirs and fifteen bands from Region 1 crowded the cafeteria, music rooms, auditorium and gyms of VHS. As for our Tanagers, both our Concert Band and Concert Choirs received Superior Ratings (I) and our Mixed Choir received an Excellent Rating (II).

On March 19th, our award winning Rhythm in Red Show Choir performed for St. Agnes students and our student body in the morning, Austin, Jolley and VMS in the afternoon during the Music in Our Schools celebration. The performances were very well received and even though many of the performers were battling spring illness, it was not evident to the audiences as our students put on a tremendous show for each audience. Show Choir recently competed in Spirit Lake, IA where they were finalists and in Mitchell, where they won their class!

We are also excited to share that our Special Olympians brought home Gold from their state basketball tournament, in Mitchell, last month. Winning all three games, the team was right at home placing along with our girls basketball team (1st) and our boys (8th). It's definitely been a busy and exciting basketball spring at VHS!

Track hosted 15 schools and over 800 competitors at the annual VHS Booster Club Track Meet on April 4th. Softball has had some weather-related schedule adjustments, but will kick off their competition season today (4/5) at Lion's Park.

Finally, we would like to remind everyone that the VHS Athletic Booster's Hall of Fame banquet will be held on Saturday, April 20th at the Dakota Activity Center. Please contact Nicole Mockler in the district office if you would like to obtain tickets.





## Student Services News

By [Laura Suing](#) & [Luke Hayes](#) on Apr. 1, 2024

### Registration for 2024-25

Last week, registration forms were collected from current freshmen, sophomores and juniors. If you did not get the opportunity to discuss the class registration options with your student, it is possible that they turned in their form without your signature on it. We would encourage you to contact the Student Services office if you have any questions regarding your student's registration for next year's classes. Nothing is finalized at this time and anything can be changed or updated, if need be.

In the meantime, current eighth graders will have the opportunity to meet with Ms. Suing and Mr. Hayes on Thursday, April 11th in the morning. They will come home from school with registration forms on Thursday and those will be due back to Ms. Sayavong at the Middle School on Monday or Tuesday. Please contact the high school Student Services office with any questions you may have.

### SD Opportunity Scholarship

Starting in Fall 2023, the SD Opportunity Scholarship provides up to \$7,500 over four years to a qualifying student who attends an eligible higher education institution in South Dakota. The scholarship is distributed at the beginning of fall semester and the other half is distributed at the beginning of the spring semester:



# Tanagers' Nest News



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- \$1,500 – 1st year of attendance
- \$1,500 – 2nd year of attendance
- \$1,500 – 3rd year of attendance
- \$3,000 – 4th year of attendance

There are two ways a student can become eligible for the Opportunity Scholarship:

## Option 1:

- Be a resident of South Dakota.
- Have an ACT Composite or Super Score of 24 or higher. · Complete the high school course requirements with no final grade below a “C” and a cumulative high school GPA of 3.0 prior to graduation.
- Attend an accredited university, college, or tech school in South Dakota.
- Enter the program within 5 years of high school graduation.

## Option 2: (has a higher ACT requirement, but no curriculum or GPA requirement)

- Be a resident of South Dakota.
- Have an ACT Composite or Super Score of 28 or higher and meet the ACT college readiness benchmarks scores equaling or exceeding 18 for English, 22 for Reading, 22 for Math, and 23 for Science.
- Attend an accredited university, college or tech school in South Dakota.
- Enter the program within 5 years of high school graduation.

## Participating Institutions:

- Augustana University
- Black Hills State University
- Dakota Wesleyan University
- Dakota State University
- Lake Area Technical College
- Mount Marty University
- Mitchell Technical College
- National American University
- Northern State University
- South Dakota School of Mines & Technology
- South Dakota State University
- Southeast Technical College
- University of South Dakota
- University of Sioux Falls

- Western Dakota Technical College

## Summer and Fall Dual Credit

The application for summer registration will open March 1st and registration for fall courses will open April 1st. We would like to have all applications in by **May 15th** as this helps lower the stress of trying to apply just before classes start after we return from summer break.

Dual credit gives eligible students the chance to accelerate their education by enrolling in classes to receive both high school and college credit. You can find our dual credit basics document, along with other important information, on the dual credit webpage at <https://ourdakotadreams.com/high-school/dual-credit/>.

There is a wide variety of courses for students to choose from, including courses offered online, on campus. See Mr. Hayes if you have questions.

*As a clarification of the difference between dual credit and advanced placement or AP: dual credit are courses students take at or sponsored by a college or university to obtain general education credit. There are currently two AP courses offered at VHS - Advanced Chemistry and AP Biology. Students elect or choose to take an exam towards the end of the second semester and then depending on their score, they could potentially earn college or university credits.*

## Student Services Important Date Reminders

### ACT Testing

Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late Registration Deadline	Standby & Photo Upload Deadline
April 13, 2024	March 8, 2024	March 22, 2024	April 5, 2024
June 8, 2024	May 3, 2024	May 17, 2024	May 31, 2024
July 13, 2024	June 7, 2024	June 21, 2024	July 5, 2024



# Tanager's Nest News

## FAFSA Update

Hopefully, if you are a parent of a senior, you and your student have had the chance to review the 2024-25 FAFSA form. If you haven't, it is available for completion and has been working consistently for most students. Currently, the Federal Student Aid website reports that they have processed 6.6 million of 6.7 million FAFSA applications submitted.

The FSA site further indicates the information below for students once their application is processed.

### Post-Processing Experience for Students

Students will receive an email informing them that their FAFSA form has been fully processed and their FAFSA information has been sent to the schools they listed on their form.

Students who applied using the online FAFSA form will receive an email that they can access their FAFSA Submission Summary by logging in to StudentAid.gov using their account username and password.

The Department will send an email reminder to previous FAFSA applicants who have not yet submitted a 2024-25 FAFSA form.

Students will be able to make corrections to their FAFSA once their eligibility has been calculated and ISIR generated. Students may view their eligibility calculation by logging back into their Studentaid.gov account.

The Department will fully process paper applications in the weeks following.<sup>1</sup>

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**READ MORE ON OUR WEBSITE**

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<sup>1</sup> "2024-25 FAFSA Student Aid Index Update and Timeline (Updated March 14, 2024)." Federal Student Aid, United States Department of Education, 4 April 2024, <https://fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center/library/electronic-announcements/2024-01-30/2024-25-fafsa-student-aid-index-update-and-timeline-updated-march-14-2024>.



# Tanagers' Nest News

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## Vermillion High School

1001 East Main Street, Vermillion, SD, 57069  
605-677-7035



## CTE: Capstone Experiences

Capstone experiences allow students the opportunity to consolidate and apply the learning from their high school coursework into a meaningful and relevant career-related experience. This student-driven experience is based on the student's chosen career cluster or pathway and designed to help increase college and career readiness.

### Work Based Learning: Visual Media & Marketing

In the spring of 2023, a new capstone course was added to the VHS course offerings. Visual Media & Marketing is an entrepreneurship experience that provides students with the opportunity to develop the skills needed to establish a business. Through hands-on projects, students gain skills to be successful in the workplace. The inaugural group of students named the business **Caged Creations**.

Alongside the employability skills such as communication, leadership, problem solving, cooperation, time management and so on, students learn a variety of printing techniques including screen printing, direct-to-garment, and vinyl heat transfer. New to the production line, during the fall semester, was vinyl banners. Caged Creations proudly proceeded the Senior banners on display outside the VHS gymnasium.



Caged Creations would like to first and foremost thank the **Vermillion Public School Foundation**, who sponsored the class with a \$25,000 grant. Secondly, thank you to the groups and organizations who trusted us with your business very early on in the process ... VHS Athletic Booster, VHS Music Boosters, VHS Drama Department, VHS Cheer, VAST, Flamez, and the VHS student

body! Find us on 

Facebook: [Caged Creations](https://www.facebook.com/CagedCreations)

## Youth Internship Spotlight

VHS senior students are eligible to enroll in a semester or year long Youth Internship class. High school internships allow students to gain authentic, real-world experience in business and industry. Based on the internship experiences, students will gain insight to their postsecondary personal learning plan. At the end of the year, students will present what they have learned to a panel of stakeholders, such as teachers and administrators. This month we are highlighting **Senior Tayden Wells and Wyatt Morse.**

"My name is Tayden Wells, and I am currently enrolled in the Internship class offered here at Vermillion High School! The reason why I have chosen to participate in this class is to get a better grip on what occupation I would like to join after I graduate from high school. I am currently placed at Union County Co-op, located in Elk Point, SD. There, I am working with the utility lineman crew. I am on the job site for 10 hours a week and get to help them with utility line work when conditions are appropriate. The crew is working on power lines that carry electricity from generators to your house. While interning there, I have observed and learned so much about areas in this field such as: overhead line work, underground wire placement, transformer connections, etc. Because of my internship at Union County Co-op, I have made utility line one of my top interests to choose from when I select what occupation I want to pursue after I graduate!"



**About Union County Electric Cooperative:** Union County Electric Cooperative is a not for profit, rural electric cooperative. As a not for profit organization any profit, or margins, that we make in a year are returned to the members that we provide service to. This ensures that we are providing service at the lowest possible cost.

**Number of Employees:** 11

**Number of member consumers:** 1,215

**Assets and Liabilities:** \$18,726,306

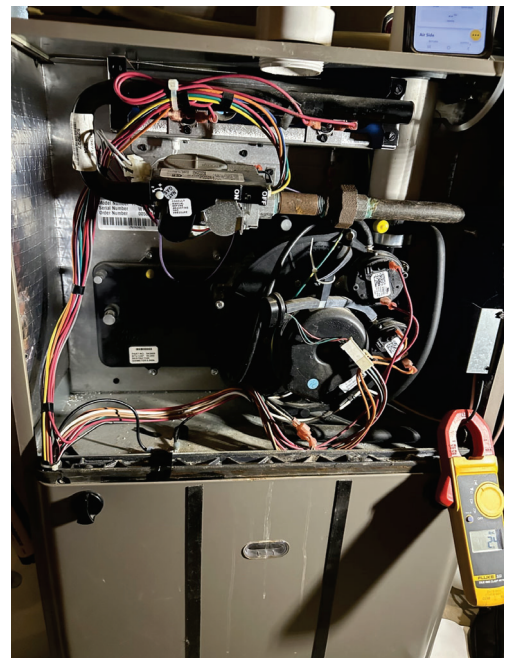
**Miles of distribution line:** 521 miles

"My name is Wyatt Morse, and I have been enrolled in the Internship class since August and have been interning at Kalins Indoor Comfort. I took this class based on my friend's recommendation from last year. They said they loved it and I decided I wanted to try it out. I have loved being in this class because it has helped me learn about what I want to do the rest of my life.



The best part about Kalins is they are welcoming and it has been an amazing place to work. All of the employees are very fun and enjoyable to be around and they make me feel like I am a part of a special team. It makes my day to be able to be on a call with one of the technicians.

Next year, I am going to Mitchel Tech and plan to further my knowledge about heating and cooling technology. I have been accepted into the HVAC program. In addition, Kalins has also decided to sponsor me for the Build Dakota Scholarship. With this opportunity I am beyond excited to help this company."





# Help Us Learn How To Better Support Children And Families After Surgery

## Who can participate?

Children and adolescents ages 7- 17 years old who have had surgery in the past 12 months and their parent/caregiver

## What do I have to do?

Parents and their child will complete separate surveys that will take approximately 20 minutes to complete

## Compensation

- \$25 gift card to Amazon
- Free workbook to help families cope after surgery

## Contact Us

Jessy Thomas

Email: [castlab@usd.edu](mailto:castlab@usd.edu)

Phone Number: (605) 658-3724

## Do you want to participate?

If you are interested, please scan the QR code or click the link below to provide your contact information. We will send you more information about the study and you can decide then if you want to participate.



**\*\*\*Click Here\*\*\***

Your contact information will be kept private and will not be shared with anyone outside the study team.



BOXELDER

# JOB CORPS CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CENTER

22023 JOB CORPS PLACE | NEMO, SOUTH DAKOTA 57759 | (605) 348-3636



**170**

Students



**25-ACRE**

Rural Campus



**NEAR**

Mount Rushmore

**TRAIN** for a career you're  
passionate about.



**ADVANCED  
MANUFACTURING**

Welding



**HOSPITALITY**

Culinary Arts



**CONSTRUCTION**

Carpentry, Pre-Apprentice\*

Electrical

Facilities Maintenance

Painting, Pre-Apprentice\*



**RENEWABLE  
RESOURCES AND  
ENERGY**

Forestry Conservation  
and Firefighting



**FINANCE AND BUSINESS**

Office Administration

\*Pre-Apprenticeship programs offer students the hands-on training and education needed to qualify for apprenticeships.

**LEARN** new skills that  
benefit your future.



Earn your **high school  
diploma** or the equivalent



Take **community college  
classes** while living on center



Meet with  
**career counselors**



Participate in **work-based  
learning** experiences



**LIVE** on campus  
and be independent.



**Look around** the Boxelder Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center's campus, classrooms, dorms and more at [boxelder.jobcorps.gov](https://boxelder.jobcorps.gov).

## BOXELDER JOB CORPS CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CENTER CAMPUS INFO

### 3 Dormitories



2 male dorms



1 female dorm

Full-service **cafeteria**

**Store** with snacks and other essentials

**Health services** for basic medical needs

**Computer labs**

**Lounges** with TVs

**A SAFE ENVIRONMENT:** Job Corps has a strict **Student Conduct Policy**. Violence and drug use are strictly prohibited to ensure all students can train and learn in a safe environment.



### TYPICAL WEEKDAY DAILY SCHEDULE

Exact times will vary from center to center

7a	<b>BREAKFAST</b>
8	
9	<b>Morning</b> Career training and academic classes
10	
11	
12p	<b>LUNCH</b>
1	<b>Afternoon</b> Career training and academic classes
2	
3	
4	<b>DINNER</b>
5	
6	<b>Evening</b> Time to study, seek tutoring, work out, socialize with friends
7	

**CONNECT** with the right  
people and resources.



Develop **leadership skills**  
and learn conflict resolution  
best practices



Build **professional  
and social development**  
skills



**Network** with local  
employers and organizations

**To Apply Email: [sm.fs.dr@usda.gov](mailto:sm.fs.dr@usda.gov) or Call: 1-877-763-0580**



Job Corps is a U.S. Department of Labor Equal Opportunity Employer Program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. TDD/TTY telephone number is (877) 889-5627.



[dol.jobcorps](https://dol.jobcorps.gov)