



## News Release Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest



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### Blackwell Job Corps CCC holds “Bury the ‘N’ Word” Ceremony

**Rhineland, Wisc. – August 13, 2007.** The students and staff of the Blackwell Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center gathered the afternoon of August 1 to bury the “N” word and other words that reinforce hatred and denigration of others. The Master of Ceremonies for the event was Steve Peloquin, Recreation Supervisor at Blackwell JCCCC. Jason Maloney, Center Director helped set the tone in his opening remarks. He stated, “What is in a word? Words we speak influence how and what we think. What we think influences how we act towards each other. When we use words that are related to hate, we think hateful thoughts and take hateful actions against each other. I hope this ceremony will teach us to be more tolerant of each other, and value the diversity that each of us bring to Blackwell and our world. Every person here possesses basic dignity as a human being and is deserving of respect from the rest of us.” Aaron Hadley, the Trainee Employee Assistance Program Coordinator at Blackwell, explained the history and connotations of the “N” word to all present. Along with outlining the use of the hate words in popular culture, Hadley said, “If you feel that it is ok to use the “N” word as well as other hate words, I would like you to think about your mother, aunts, sisters, nieces and grandmothers. Would you want hate words to be used on them? When you call yourself and refer to yourself and others as an “N” you are not only telling people in your home, neighborhood, or school, that you are nothing, you are telling it to the whole world.”

Special guest Michael L. Alloway, Sr., Director of the Forest County Potawatomi Cultural Center and Museum addressed the Blackwell students and faculty. Alloway explained the importance of language and how using hate words vilify individuals and groups of people. He also invited students and staff to visit the cultural center and museum to further the spirit of valuing diversity and promoting understanding between people of all cultures.

Staff and students including Tom Morgan, Peggy Cutchins, and Dartanyeol Dukes addressed the assembled crowd to share the importance of not using words or terms defaming, demeaning or denigrating to other people. All present were invited to write the hate related word of their choice



***Aaron Hadley, Trainee Employee Assistance Program Coordinator at the “Bury the ‘N’ word” gravesite.***

on a card and place it in a casket set before the crowd that was carried to the center of the Blackwell JCCCC campus by students and staff and buried.

Hadley delivered closing remarks as students covered the casket with dirt. “This is not only a word, this is a legacy of hate, cruelty and evil. It is a word that flows unfortunately too freely from some people’s mouths. This so called word has been present during too much violence and too many arguments, and is exploited by some artists and recording industries merely for profit at the expense of people who choose live in a dignified and respectful manner. This so called word has insulted, demeaned and degraded too many decent and well meaning people for too long and enough is enough.”

Blackwell JCCCC has joined the ranks of other schools and organizations around the nation that have taken a stand in favor of basic human rights and basic human dignity. The “Bury the ‘N’ Word” ceremony has made the students and faculty at Blackwell more aware of how words influence thoughts and actions.

Blackwell Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center, located on the Chequamegon-Nicolet National forest between Laona and Wabeno in Forest County. Blackwell offers federal scholarships for young adults under the age of 25. In addition to diversity training, students at Blackwell receive academic training that leads to completion of an HSED or High School Diploma as well as vocational training in Welding, Union Bricklaying and Tile Setting, Union Carpentry, Union Construction Craft Laborer, Union Painting, Health Occupations (CNA), Business Technologies, and Electrician Training. For information on Blackwell JCCCC or to arrange a tour please call Penny McLaughlin at (715) 674-7654. To fill out a free application for a Blackwell scholarship, please call Julie Eder at (715) 359-7040.