

NORTHERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' OBSERVATIONS AND COMMENTS
CONCERNING THE N.M.U. JOB CORPS ENROLLEES AND JOB CORPS TRAINING
PROGRAM (RELATING TO STUDENT VISITS TO THE JOB CORPS TRAINING CEN-
TER AT N.M.U. AND SUBSEQUENT INTERACTION BETWEEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS
AND JOB CORPS ENROLLEES, AT N.M.U., SINCE JANUARY, 1969.)

Student interest at Northern Michigan University concerning the Women's Job Corps Training Program on the campus became more evident towards the end of 1968. At the beginning of 1969, many students, especially those completing their studies in areas of the field of Education, visited the Job Corps Training Center, either in small groups or as individuals. Their subsequent reports concerning their visit and the continued interest and interaction on the campus between Enrollees and students are noted in the following paragraphs.

NOTE:

The following commentary has been quoted directly from reports by senior students in Education at Northern Michigan University, submitted to their professors. The total number quotations represents the observations and subsequent opinions of more than sixty students concerning the Job Corps enrollees and the training program. It is interesting to note the bias that was present in students' attitudes before they visited the Job Corps Center, and how, subsequent to their visit, these same negative attitudes changed and became objective, relative to their experience at the Center and continued interest in the program.

EDUCATION AND JOB CORPS - A MUTUAL CONCEPT?

INFORMATION CONCERNING THE N.M.U. JOB CORPS EDUCATION & TRAINING PROGRAM

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I. Northern Michigan University Job Corps Training Program, Marquette, Michigan, began operations in 1966. Since that time, more than 1,600 female enrollees have been processed through this Center, and the following program description briefly explains the educational and vocational curriculum:

Education -- (Self-contained, individualized instructional approach)

1. General Education (Basic Areas of Education and Remedial Work)
2. General Education Diploma (High School Equivalence)
3. Receipt of High School Diploma (from Marquette Public High School) upon completion of further studies.

Vocational Training

1. Tailoring
2. Sales:
 - a) Retail Grocery
 - b) Clothing Sales
3. Business Studies:
 - a) Basic Business Courses
 - b) Clerk Typist & Filing
 - c) Data Processing
 - d) Stenography

Other Areas (Further Education)*

1. Practical Nursing
 2. University Study
- *at Northern Michigan University

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"I believe that the primary purpose of schools is the preparation of people capable of living and participating in our world today and in our world today and in the future. Since we are in the midst of an industrial-technological revolution, it becomes the responsibility of our schools to prepare people with a practical and useable body of knowledge they can apply to their "producing" in such a society. The Job Corps provides the opportunity for effective participation in the world of work through vocational education as well as the necessary social skills for the efficient management of family functions through general education. These are not very different schools could learn much through observation and implementation of methods employed by the Job Corps. Perhaps in this manner, our schools could produce citizens who wouldn't need the Job Corps."

"Although I was very upset at the idea of observing Job Corps, I am very glad the class assignment was made. I think it was very worthwhile, and more teachers ought to get more students involved with the Job Corps' Program."

"My reaction to the visit is that the Women's Job Corps Center is helping a lot of people who would otherwise be forgotten. I also see that the whole reason Job Corps is needed is because of a failure of our educational system, not only in the ghetto high schools, but from kindergarten through college throughout our system. I hope to apply what I can learn more about their methods and materials. I have seen only a small part of the program of one center which is not enough to judge a national program on but I can see that there are many positive aspects of the program which should be continued.

"For some reason or another, enrollees had failed in the standard school situation. Now they try again. Instead of fitting the girls into a disciplinary and rigid situation, they enter a blocked - hour and very flexible program.

"This is where education becomes so necessary---to banish fear, ignorance and poverty. With problems like these to face, any teacher ought to be humbled at the enormity eliminating causes of problems, and finally, allow himself to be encouraged by the fact that centers such as these are a beginning in the right direction."

"I feel that the Job Corps makes an excellent learning laboratory for Northern. Just the fact that many of us will have pupils with many of the same problems in our classes is reason enough to closely observe the Center's program."

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time to work out some of its kinds."

"In the hour or so that we spent together I feel that she made it possible for me to more fully understand the problems that Job Corps students encounter during their training in the center.

"It seems to me that she needs to learn the basic skills necessary to further her education. She (enrollee) is interested in data processing and even talked about entering college and play in the band. She has a long way to go, but if she is able to continue self-motivating herself, through the Job Corps, she will be able to further her education."

"My visit to the Mob Corps Center proved to be one of the most worthwhile activities in which I have participated as a future teacher."

"It would be a shame if the Job Corps in Marquette closed completely. When you think about these girls who were the slow learners, dropouts, or just deprived people of the public schools, it is very gratifying to see them put out so much effort to learn in a situation where they are getting individual attention. If only we as teachers or future teachers could find better ways to reach these students while they are still in the public schools."

"I believe that my visit to the Job Corps was one of the most interesting experiences of my four years at Northern. It is funny how a person can have a certain opinion of a group of people, and just how fast that opinion can change after visiting with that certain group."

"To be truthful, I would have to say that I was one of those people who thought Job Corps was a waste of the government's time and money. To some, maybe to a lot of people, the Job Corps is still a farce. The question is, have these people actually seen or read literature about the Job Corps? . . . When I visited the Center in Marquette, my views on Job Corps for women changed immediately. I don't know if the Center in Marquette is an exceptional center or not, but believe me it's quite impressive."

" . . . I came away with the impression that here indeed is a valuable program in preparing underprivileged young people for the life ahead of them."

"On a recent visit to the Center, many of my biased opinions have been altered and insight into the REAL problems these girls have, in my opinion, been obtained."

"If only the entire public would visit the Job Corps Center and talk with the girls and the instructors, I'm sure that many people would change their attitudes toward the Job Corps and the merits of the program. I did."

"In talking with the administration, instructors, and students, I have changed my opinion of the Job Corps completely. Before visiting the Job Corps Center, I had based my opinion on what other people told me, and what my mind had let me imagine. With these two things working together, my stand on Job Corps was definite. No! Since I visited the

JOB CORPS AND THE TRAINING CENTER AT NORTHERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY - COMMENTS

"Since the Job Corps was housed on the campus of Northern Michigan University, I must admit that I had become a little prejudiced against it. Visiting the Training Center and talking with some of the girls and their instructors has caused a change in my attitude. I was very impressed with the work that is being done by the girls and their teachers."

"Before going to the Job Corps Centers, I was under the impression, as are most of the uninformed, that the whole project was merely another waste of tax money. Naturally, this attitude sent me into the assignment with a prejudiced mind. After nearly two hours of observation, though, my concept of the Job Corps trainees had been considerably altered I must admit that in spite of my initial bias, I was favorably progressing in their work. My concern is no longer with the wasteful spending that I thought I saw, but with the productive spending I did see I feel now that this endeavor must be preserved."

"Prior to my visiting the Job Corps Center and personally interviewing some of the trainees, I also held the erroneous belief that all these people were merely drop-outs from society, here to only reap the fruits of government assistance. It has become plain to me now that this is not the case at all."

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Center, I have changed from that seemingly No!! to and almost unmovable YES!! I think that the Job Corps is very important and definitely should not be discontinued as rumors have it"

"I'd like to say I am very glad I went to visit the Job Corps Center; I learned a lot about it I feel that it is too bad the way some people feel about the Job Corps, and I now realize that there is a true learning experience taking place and that these enrollees are a very vital part of our society."

After my visit to the Women's Job Corps Center, I came back to the dorm very impressed. I was impressed with the program, personnel, and trainees. Not having much knowledge about Job Corps, this experience provided me with a greater insight of the function of such a program and a greater understanding of the trainees. Before this encounter, I definitely held certain views based solely on hearsay of the program and the girls. Now that I've seen the procedures and conversed with some trainees, I've become more aware and impressed with the Job Corps program and the individuals connected with it.

"Her time (enrollee's) at the Job Corps has gone by very fast for her, but she is happy its over and she is graduating. She said the Job Corps offered her more in the short time she was here than all her years in high school. She was very enthusiastic about leaving and getting her on the job training and then getting a job and doing good.

Nevertheless, there were some points which I noticed. Of the girls which I talked to, all of them seem to be very concerned about learning a skill and then getting a job. Almost all of them told me, without me asking, when they would get out and what kind of job they were looking for."

COLLEGE STUDENT AND JOB CORPS ENROLLEE INTERACTIONS ——— POSITIVE SOCIAL ASPECTS

My reaction to the girls and the Center was favorable. I felt that for the most part these girls gain something from their experience at the center. Besides being exposed to a trade the girls learn to live and communicate with others. They (especially the negro girls) are placed in an entirely new environment. They have to learn socially, to cope with the surroundings. Without fail the girls will run into a certain amount of bigotry and discrimination. However it will probably be less than what they have had to cope with previously.

She was also afraid of her reaction to Negro girls, as she had never before had any close contact with Negroes. She found her apprehension to be baseless, and soon made many new friends, both black and white.

We then invited the girls to our dorm, and they accepted immediately. On our way over to our dorm I wondered if these girls would be accepted by our fellow students and if we had put ourselves in jeopardy with our friends for interacting with Job Corps women. The outcome was more positive than negative. The girls were accepted, and we had a social gathering of approximately twenty-five people.

ENROLLEE ATTITUDES EXPRESSED TO STUDENTS

"I had the opportunity to talk to two girls, one a high school graduate, and the other, still pursuing her high school diploma. Both wished to become nurses after their Job Corps training.

Whether or not the girls will reach their objectives is debatable but their optimism was impressive. Although both had met defeat at least once before, they were at least outwardly confident that this time they would make it. They displayed faith in the Job Corps and looked forward to further education. Both felt that the work done at the center was worthwhile and should be continued."

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The feedback that we received from the college students that met the girls was one of mixed feelings, but the majority commended us. Every one of them did state that the viewpoints that they held about J.C. girls had changed somewhat."

"And what was the feedback from the J.C. girls? They came to visit us the next day, and those that couldn't make it called to apologize." This gave me a great feeling to know that I was accepted by them and that they felt accepted by us."

"Now I am working toward a more personal relationship with the girls. I would like to talk with them on a personal level and get to know their viewpoints, attitudes, values, etc. I am eager to understand these enrollees and others so that I can better live in our society, and hopefully make myself of more worth to it."

"In a short question-answer period I found that most of the girls did not resent me. In fact, they were quite anxious to exchange the visit and see what life in our university classes was like. They seemed a lot more mature than a lot of my university friends in their acceptance of us."

"Talking to one of the girls alone, I found she closely resembled any of her NMU student counterparts living in West Hall."

"The girls by learning to become better citizens will then be able to teach their future children and family some citizenship. Also they will add to the labor market."

"If the National Government and State legislatures want to eliminate the Job Corps, my advice is: First visit the girls, talk to them, sympathize with them, then make a decision."

"I think that the Job Corps is very important and definitely should not be discontinued as rumors have it happening. Most of the girls I talked to believe this also and the ones who don't usually don't make it to graduation."

"The Job Corps must have many positive values. The understanding that I have settled with is if it has taken since the time of Plato and Aristotle, which is over 2,000 years, to develop our educational system maybe we should give the Job Corps a little more time to work out some of its kinks!"

"You must remember they are dealing with girls who have problems even before they arrive at the center. A lot of the girls I talked to said they wouldn't know where they would be today if it weren't for the Job Corps. Most of them are sincere and are working hard to graduate."

"She is really sincere about her work and she says she has worked hard to get the most out of the Job Corps as possible. Without the Job Corps she said she would probably be wandering the streets of her home town in South Carolina."

"This was a very worthwhile visit and I hope that all Northern students will visit the center. Maybe some of their foolish attitudes concerning Job Corps students would be changed. I have worked with some Job Corps girls on job training and have found them to be wonderful individuals."

SOME REASONS FOR THE RETENTION OF
THE JOB CORPS CENTER ON CAMPUS

"I believe that my visit to the Job Corps was one of the most interesting experiences of my four years at Northern."

"I have reflected on my morning at the Job Corps at length. I hope the program can continue and be successful in helping girls like (and those less gifted) who seem to desire more than anything else to help others in return. The experience was worthwhile and meaningful to me."

"Every Northern student and perhaps every faculty member should spend a day at the Job Corps. Only then would they have the right to judge and evaluate fairly the worth and effectiveness of the program."

"This class assignment should, I think, be required for every student on Northern's campus. Sometimes having your eyes opened is not so painful as expected, and is very enlightening."

"After talking to some of the key people at the center concerning individual trainees, it is obvious to me that many of the girls are here only because it provided a change in atmosphere."

"I think that if the girls are helped even to become better citizens, the Job Corps is of value. The girls by learning to become better citizens will then be able to teach their future children and family some citizenship. Also they will add to the labor market."

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"Compare this with freshmen at college and all of the problems they run up against. But at college the school has three more years to work with the people. Just think what the Job Corps is up against orientation, education, and graduation all in eight months."

"My concern is no longer with the wasteful spending that I thought I saw but with the productive spending I did see. Unless I received only a partial picture of the situation, I feel that this endeavor must be preserved."