



NCPTT News Release

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Contact: Jeff Guin, jeffery_guin@contractor.nps.gov

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YOUTH CONSERVATION CORPS EXPERIENCES THE SCIENCE OF PRESERVATION

NATCHITOCHEES – Summer youth workers of the Cane River Creole National Historical Park were introduced to a new side of preservation July 16 when they visited the National Center for Preservation Technology & Training (NCPTT). Six Youth Conservation Corps members were given a crash course in the science that underpins historic preservation work in the NCPTT labs.

The high school-age YCC workers have been involved in restoration and maintenance projects at Oakland and Magnolia plantations over the summer. At the NCPTT, another National Park Service agency, the teens learned that many of the decisions guiding preservation and restoration are formulated by scientists, art conservators and historians working together. Their first hands-on activity was a visit to the American Cemetery where they learned about the history and conservation of the cemetery through a scavenger hunt. The YCC teens fanned out to look for dates, unusual statuary, tomb types and inscriptions in the 290-year-old cemetery.

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Returning the NCPTT on the Northwestern State University campus, the visitors watched experiments in the laboratories and participated in exercises identifying stone types by using a sophisticated microscope hooked up to a computer screen.

“It was extraordinary,” said Shanina Adams, one of the YCC teens. “We learned so much and it was a blast, so interesting! It was off the chain.”

The teens won prizes donated by local merchants for their scavenger hunt. In addition to Adams, who is from Natchitoches, the other summer YCC workers are Jessica Cedars of Kisatchie, Christina Freeman of Campiti, Robert Liles of Natchitoches, Spence Morgan of Natchitoches and Travis Thompson of Natchez. Dusty Fuqua, a heritage ranger with the Cane River National Heritage Area Commission, is the group’s supervisor.

The National Center for Preservation Technology and Training is using technology to serve the future of America’s heritage through applied research and professional training. Since its founding in 1994, NCPTT has awarded over \$5 million in grants for research that fulfills its mission of advancing the use of science and technology in the field of historic preservation including archaeology, architecture, landscape architecture and materials conservation. NCPTT is located in Lee H. Nelson Hall on the campus of Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, Louisiana. For more information about NCPTT, visit the Center’s website: www.ncptt.nps.gov.



Christina Freeman of the Youth Conservation Corps learns about the chemical composition of stones at the National Center for Preservation Technology & Training.



Dusty Fuqua, far left, of the National Park Service, with Youth Conservation Corps summer workers, from left, Travis Thompson, Shanina Adams, Spence Morgan, Robert Liles, Jessica Cedars and Christina Freeman.