



Not Your Ordinary Job – Episode Six Transcript

- Jasmine:** Hello, everyone, welcome to the Bureau of Land Management, Eastern State podcast, Not Your Ordinary Job. I'm your co-host, Jasmine.
- Ashley:** Hello, everybody. I'm Ashley.
- Jasmine:** Each week, we will highlight a Jackson Hotshot team member by allowing them to speak about their experience working in the career of fire. We are very excited for you to listen to their stories. We also encourage you to head over to NIFC.gov for the latest fire news every weekday.
- Ashley:** We would like to welcome Jordan on the show.
- Jasmine:** We are so happy that they were able to talk with you. What made you want to get into the career of fire?
- Jordan:** I think it all started when I was in college. I always had an interest in fire, but thought differently, because I was already at the college, and just wanted to get my degree. So, I got a degree in psychology. But then once I graduated, I realized that I didn't really want to utilize that degree. And in 2016, the Gatlinburg fires were going on. And I was watching the news on that, and it just really piqued my interest. So, I then began doing my research and found this and fell in love with it.
- Ashley:** How long have you been in the career?
- Jordan:** So, this is my second year on the crew. Second year, total in fire.
- Jasmine:** Great. Well, throughout your time you've been in the career of fire, what do you feel are the biggest challenges that are faced when working in fire?
- Jordan:** I think the biggest challenges for at least is I'm a very family-oriented person. And so, being away from my family, and my friends for six months at a time, can be really, really difficult. But in the end, when you're on a crew like this, essentially becomes your second family. So, you always have that family portion around you.
- Ashley:** What's your favorite part about working?
- Jordan:** I think my favorite part is really just being with the crew and being able to learn so much. I mean, when you're doing this type of field, you're constantly learning new things about, you know, nature and fire, and how to work with people. So, you're always constantly learning new things.
- Jasmine:** In your career of fire, are there any goals that you've accomplished during your career? Or are there any goals that you would still like to accomplish in the career of fire?

Jordan: As far as goals go, I, you know, it's every year, you come up with new goals to get yourself through the season and things that you want to learn throughout the season. So, my first year, I definitely just had a goal of really learning as much as I could from experienced leadership and being able to then take that knowledge that I gained. And then this year, I really started to apply all the things that I learned from last season to this season. And then really just, you know, as qualifications go, just I would like to get a T1 maybe signed off, which is Firefighter 1, signed off this season, or maybe early next season. And then also, again, just learning as much as I possibly can from my leadership.

Ashley: If you could name a success story, what would it be?

Jordan: So last season was my first season. And, you know, not really knowing a whole lot about, I think, just that success sort of finishing last season, you know, with the knowledge that I have and be able to, you know, be a better hiker, be better firefighter be a better person all around. I think that's really just my success story so far.

Jasmine: There are a lot of different opinions when it comes to fire in general...from the general public. What do you feel are the biggest misconceptions when it comes to the general public about fire?

Jordan: I think one of the biggest misconceptions about you know us, is that people don't really know fully, exactly what we do. And I feel like it's our job to educate people and tell people that, you know, not all fire is bad fire. So that falls into the prescribed burning portion of our job. You know, you know, putting fire to the ground in some areas, you know, helps rejuvenate the ecosystems and prevent invasive species and things like that. So, I think it's just knowledge and just passing that information along to the general public of what exactly we do, and how we can help and how we protect, you know, the nature all around.

Ashley: And what does it take to become a great team member?

Jordan: We just want people that are motivated, have that willingness to learn from experienced folks. And then also, taking that knowledge and being able to apply it, and then gain more knowledge and then being able to pass that knowledge along. So, and really, it's work and determination. But, you know, being able to, you know, do your work, and then also, you know...

Ashley: ... to do your work, but also give a lending hand.

Jordan: Exactly.

Jasmine: That's great. We would like to thank you for allowing us to interview you, Jordan, and we thank you for everything that you're doing to help out and just continue to inspire everyone.

Jordan: Thank you so much for the opportunity. I really appreciate what you guys are doing.

Ashley: Listen to our podcast every Friday to learn more about our Jackson Hotshots.