



Wayne White/Herald-Chronicle

Westar Energy Green Team member Brad Loveless helps teammate Aaron Holthaus align a power drill to secure hardware on a new walking bridge across a small tributary of the Marais des Cygnes River along Melvern's hiking and biking trail.

Melvorn Trail

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make a small community in Kansas a better place," he said.

Melvorn's project came at the right time to put the idea to a test, and the community was receptive to hosting the group of students who gave up a weekend to travel to Melvern to work.

Brungardt said the concept of the organization is that groups of students can assist the public in many different ways, such as working on civic projects, assisting in disasters, or helping to solve other community problems.

He said he believes that not only do students of public institutions owe a debt to the state's citizens, valuable lessons are learned from the students' involvement.

"They come from public institutions, their tuition is subsidized by citizens of Kansas," Brungardt said, "so I believe they have more responsibility to serve Kansas because citizens of Kansas

have committed to them."

But the Kansas Corps program has another value, he said. "I hope they learn the lifetime lessons of citizenship and volunteerism. Our country has multiple problems ... and it's going to take lots of people serving as volunteers to transform the communities.

"I hope they volunteer

now, I hope they volunteer everyday from now on, and as adults mentor other volunteers, but it all starts here in Melvern. Not only do we serve Kansas, but these young people are going to learn the importance in engagement in civic responsibility and citizenship."

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The Osage County
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From Back left; Darrell Simpson, Martha Jolly, LaVon Harris, Deanna Anderson, Kent Needham, Diana Hulings, Sarah Graham.

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