

# **CORPS PROJECT WITH OKAW VALLEY SCHOOLS**

## **Community Occupational Research Partnerships**

The CORP Project is a partnership between Okaw Valley School District and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Lake Shelbyville. The school is seeking to empower their students with work and life skills that will allow them to become responsible citizens in the business and social community. This Partnership will incorporate STEM principles to provide a challenging learning environment for students in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. The goal is to maximize student potential and provide them with authentic educational experiences by developing a strong work ethic and the higher-level critical thinking skills needed to solve problems in the real world.

During the school year students assist USACE employees with hands-on projects twice a month. To date, the students have participated in park cleanup, installing split rail fencing and fisheries management. In May, 2016, permission to lease two agricultural leases for four years on an in-kind basis were granted by Jon Summers, Operations Manager. Cleanup has begun on the Kirksville Ag Lease and preparations for planting pollinators this fall have begun. McCabe's Ag lease needed less intensive work and soybeans were planted in early June. The group has volunteered a total of 895 hours with an estimated value of \$21,086.20.

The Okaw Valley Staff has also partnered with several local businesses who share in their vision. The Sloan Implement Company is providing all farm equipment the students will need to successfully establish and harvest their crop. Monsanto Seed donated the soybean seed and Pheasants Forever is donating the pollinator seed mix for the prairie establishment and field borders. Van Horn provided all the chemical and fertilizer applications while Agri-Fab contributed a 25 gallon sprayer and safety glasses. Barker Implement will provide a grain wagon for use during the fall harvest. Trail cameras were donated by Rural King Supply, and a special donor gave money for the purchase of chain saws and trimming tools to keep the lease entrances in good shape. Shelby County State Bank has recently committed to donating 40 chrome books for students to use at the agricultural field sites over the next two years. Current partner's contributions to date is currently \$33,465.00.

This partnership continues to grow and the educational opportunity and experience is truly endless. Please be on the lookout for more things to come!

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