



ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
MID-SOUTH

For more information, contact
Diane Hampton
(870)733-6880

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Weaver Clean-Up Project Perfect Spring Break for ASU Students and Employees

It was a labor of love as Arkansas State University Mid-South students and employees gathered at the start of Spring Break week to help give Weaver Elementary School in West Memphis, a spring cleaning. Forty-four members of the ASU Mid-South family including students, faculty and staff gathered early on a chilly, sunny March 21st to trim and weed flower beds, add mulch, pressure wash buildings and equipment and spruce up the school with paint.

“The community has been so kind to the college and this was a way for us to give back in a small way. We hope to make this an annual event,” said Dr. Debra West, Chancellor at ASU Mid-South. “We intend to make more targeted efforts to contribute to our community, and it was obvious that everyone who worked on this



project felt that it was a great start to a new tradition.”

“We have been involved with Weaver Elementary in the past through our honors society, Phi Theta Kappa,” offered Michelle McMillan, ASU Mid-South’s Director of Institutional

Effectiveness and one of the organizers of the event. “The children at Weaver are

always so grateful for our help, and the faculty and administration are wonderful to work with and are so appreciative.”

The half-day clean-up efforts included sprucing up the gazebo memorial originally created by a local Cub Scout troop. Called the Weaver Reading Grove, the area was created in memory of scout members Steve Branch, Christopher Byers and Michael Moore who were in the second grade at Weaver when they were tragically murdered in May of 1993.

“The Reading Grove needed some attention and that was probably our biggest reason for coming out that day,” said Dr. Michael Lejman, history instructor for ASU Mid-South and faculty sponsor for Phi Theta Kappa an



Kim Ezell, ASU Mid-South staff member and graduate of Weaver Elementary, cleans memorial.

international honor society for two year colleges. “Once we pressure washed the area, gave it a fresh coat of paint and re-did the flower beds around it, it looked so fresh and pretty – a more fitting memorial to these young students.”

Studies have shown that companies whose employees give back to the community improve employee cohesion and job satisfaction in general. “Working together as a team is motivating,” noted Jackie Leech, Mid-South’s Director of Human Resources. “The daily grind is difficult and employees need all the inspiration they can get. Good morale is essential to a successful business, and this is one of the best ways to bolster it.”

In addition to students from Phi Theta Kappa, another honor society group participated in the event. Students representing Sigma Kappa Delta, the English Honor Society for two year colleges participated in the community service project. “I enjoyed working alongside my Sigma Kappa Delta members during the

community service project. SKD is thankful for the opportunity to make a positive difference in the lives of others,” offered Christopher Tindall, Instructor of English and Developmental Communications at ASU Mid-South.

At the end of the community project, Weaver Elementary School Principal Sheila Grissom

commented: “The whole school looks so much better; so fresh and clean looking. We are so grateful that our friends at ASU Mid-South would take time while on Spring Break to come out here and do



Weaver Principal Sheila Grissom and ASU Mid-South Chancellor Debra West

all this work. Today, these folks literally put the tools of education in their own hands. This allows our students and our neighbors to learn by this great example of community pride.”

“Actions speak volumes,” added Dr. West. “The team building aspects of this event let students and employees work toward a common goal and collaborate, strategize, and celebrate their success together. While we are very happy with the aesthetic changes around Weaver, our work on this project translates to a stronger, happier, and more efficient and cohesive institution.”