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Collaboration for a better city In Franklin:

Students from Franklin High School helped clean up downtown Franklin on Thursday by washing windows and vacuuming empty storefronts.

The community service effort by about 20 high school volunteers was part of the Collaboration project, started by volunteers from Choose Franklin who wanted to spruce up downtown in advance of Community Day on May 9.

Representatives from 28 organizations have committed time and energy toward the completion of three special downtown projects. Choose Franklin Collaboration Success Teams are engaged in makeover projects that they hope will encourage building owners, business owners and the city to continue taking pride in the appearance of the downtown area.

Three projects arose from the effort. The first project was to equip each downtown business with a flag to display in front of its store on Central Street. The second project will engage volunteers in a general cleanup of Central Street. The third project involves decorating and improving empty storefronts with artwork and visually pleasing materials to improve the aesthetic quality of the downtown area and have the downtown storefronts look full and beautiful.

Since the project began in January, the group has received donations and raised funds to complete the projects. The group has raised more than \$300 for the flags and Home Depot has donated 50 wooden flag poles. Home Depot also donated enough pressure-treated wood to include a fourth mini project: to ensure that every business downtown and in West Franklin has flower boxes that will be filled after Community Day.

Students from the high school came in waves on Thursday, in groups of two to five, during each class period throughout the day. Some students came for two rounds.

Choose Franklin volunteer and Collaboration project coordinator Denise Sharlow said the community service project was not just intended to help out that project. She helped the students as well by showing them that service jobs are available to them after graduation and they can use their individual talents to find or make work for themselves.

While teaching them how to wash windows the industrial way, Sharlow asked the students how much they thought a professional window cleaner might make. She asked them to multiply an hourly wage by the day, the week, and the month to show them just how much money they could make doing the somewhat non-glamorous job.

The students got excited about the work and even made a competition out of it, seeing who could leave the least amount of streaks. They all had fun helping out despite the chilly

weather.

"In economic times when people are out of work, they go into their talents," Sharlow told the students as she tried to broaden their career horizons.

"Kids are very smart but they don't think a lot about turning something simple into a job," Sharlow said.

She wanted to teach them to think outside the box and said even though being a professional window washer might not be that glamorous, it's a fun job and it's not incredibly strenuous as some other service jobs are.
