

# College Students Help Install Irrigation System in Community Garden

July 11, 2020 by Madison Schlegel

Teaching agriculture online can be difficult, but finally, some students got to come together to complete their irrigation class course.

Even though COVID-19 has taken away opportunities for many college students, Northwestern Michigan College and Michigan State University students got hands-on opportunities at Traverse City at the Seeds community garden.

They spent the day building an irrigation system for a plot that grows food for local community organizations.

For student Thomas Folker, giving back is what matters most.

“It’s nice to see that what we’ve been learning this whole time can actually go towards helping the community,” said Folker.

Instructor Zach VanDyke says this lab portion of their agriculture technology class is vital to learning how to properly irrigate a plot.

But a key part is getting your hands dirty.

“It’s one thing to learn about it in a classroom but it’s a whole other thing to do it in the field. These are the experiences that just can’t be taught in the classroom. You need the hands-on experience,” said VanDyke.

Today, his four students are getting just that.

He says, “Everything from the design of the irrigation system all the way to the actual install and all of the steps in between.”

VanDyke says he hopes they are able to provide this opportunity for more students over the course of this summer.

