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Students take part in project

By STAFF REPRT

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Many people wouldn't like spending time in the cemetery, but a group of Grambling State University students did just that on Sept. 26.

The students participated in Dr. Frances Staten's long-running Cemetery Preservation and Beautification Service Learning Project.

As part of the project, GSU students gathered at Grambling Memorial Cemetery and cared for gravesites by cutting weeds, cleaning headstones, and replacing old flowers with new ones.

Students recorded data from headstones, such as date of birth and death, taking note of other information such as whether the deceased served in the military. The information will be used by the Grambling Social Research Club, which is led by Dr. Staten.

Prior to students' beautification efforts they were taken on a brief tour of the cemetery by Dr. Staten, who pointed out several gravesites of note, including those of Grambling State University founder Charles P. and his wife Martha Adams.

Participating for the first time was Dr. Matthew Sheptoski, assistant professor of sociology, who joined the GSU faculty in August after having taught at universities in Pennsylvania and Michigan.

"We've got a great group of folks here. Fifteen of my students have come out today, and many of Dr. Staten's students have come out as well, many of whom have worked with her in the past," said Sheptoski.

"I think I speak for us all when I say it is a privilege and an honor to provide this service for those who came before us, and without whom this wonderful institution we know as Grambling would not exist."

Also in attendance were Julius Sumler, pastor of New Rocky Valley Baptist Church and Emma Wilson, longtime faculty member in the Department of Home Economics.