SOUTH PORTLAND - With a goal of connecting kids to their community and their environment, the South Portland-based Riverview Foundation, a martial arts school, created the Kids Who Care program six years ago.

On Saturday participants in the program, along with their family and friends, turned out for a clean up event at Fort Preble, which is adjacent to the Southern Maine Community College campus.

Carol Mecsas, the director of universal movement at Riverview, said the goal of the event was to remove invasive species from the site, as well as do a general spring grooming of the grounds at the fort.

In the past, Kids Who Care has completed similar projects at Fort Williams Park in Cape Elizabeth, Wolfe’s Neck State Park in Freeport and Bradbury Mountain State Park in Pownal. Participants in the program have also cleared land at the Riverview Foundation property in Topsham.

Mecsas said Kids Who Care was created as “a community service initiative designed to inspire children to actively invest in their neighborhood, environment and future. Now, we’re proud of the impact (the program) has made to strengthen Maine communities and preserve it’s natural resources.”

She said the Kids Who Care program is important because it “encourages the (development of) values like selflessness, responsibility and an appreciation of nature that’s critical for growing healthy, sustainable Maine communities.”

Mecsas said the Riverview Foundation school of martial arts is celebrating its 25th year of offering “a peaceful approach to traditional martial arts for all ages.” And said the school was founded on “the guiding principles of positive character development, respect and benevolence.”

The school offers classes in diverse disciplines including Okinawan Karate, Chinese Kung Fu, Korean Moo Duk Kwan Tang Soo Do, Chi Gung, Goju Ryu and Tai Chi Chuan.

See www.riverviewfoundation.org for more information.