View From The Hill
(12/10/09)

Jody Richards - Honorary Doctorate

When WKU’S 166TH Commencement Ceremony is held on December 19th, it will be extra special for State Representative Jody Richards.

Amy Bingham tells us why in this week’s “View from the Hill”.

It will be an early Christmas present for Representative Jody Richards as he receives an honorary doctorate from WKU this month.

President Gary Ransdell says it’s most deserving for a man who’se had such an enormous impact on the University.

“Western is easily the most important entity in Bowling Green and Warren County and our region of Kentucky.”

The man who served as Kentucky’s longest running Speaker of the House doesn’t just make those kinds of statements about WKU, he has the track record to back it up.

“Gosh, since I’ve been President, he’s delivered on more than 100 million dollars in just buildings, new buildings to the campus.”

Among them,  the new College of education building, Mass Media and Technology Hall, the Engineering building and the new Snell hall.
But Richards says two projects at WKU stand out as his most proud accomplishments.

“The Gatton Academy is certainly one of the gemstones of this institution- “Another entity I am proud of is the Center for Research and Development.  I think in many ways that and the academy together are the future of Western Kentucky University and Kentucky.”
President Ransdell agrees those are Richard’s crowning jewels.

“Those are the kinds of things Jody has been passionate about and personally been the champion for , that’s helped transform this campus and in my opinion the entire region.”

Richards also has high praise for Ransdell calling him the most outstanding president that has served WKU  in his lifetime.
…Which is another reason Richards was so humbled by plans for the degree.

“Very excited and look forward to the day.  I think it’s such an honor to be one of the few that have been presented an honorary doctorate by the institution that I revere and admire most.”

Richards is a native of Adair County.  He received a bachelor’s degree from Kentucky Wesleyan College and a master’s from the University of Missouri.

He taught journalism and English at WKU from 1963 TO 1970.  He will receive his honorary doctorate at commencement on December 19th.
With this week’s View from the Hill, I’m Amy Bingham.