Saudi Delegation to WKU

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For the second time since October, a delegation of educators from Saudi Arabia is visiting WKU to learn best practices in gifted education.

In this week’s View from the Hill, Amy Bingham shows us why WKU is a world wide leader in the field of gifted studies.

The Saudi Arabian government is investing millions of dollars in three different academies for gifted education in that country. Educators from there are looking at WKU for tips on how to successfully engage gifted and talented students.

Dr. Julia Roberts \ Dir., Center for Gifted Studies

Dr. Tim Gott \ Dir., Gatton Academy

John Biechele-Speziale \ Gatton Academy Senior

Samantha Dinga \ Gatton Academy Junior

Abduliah Ali-Saywed \ Saudi Arabia, Gifted Studies

Dr. Sam Evans \ Dean, College of Education

The Director of the Center for Gifted Studies at WKU is more than happy to host a delegation of educators from Saudi Arabia.

“I think it’s always important when people seek us out to learn from us.”

The nearly two week visit is packed with information about programs like SKyteach and the GEMS Academy, the Center for Gifted Studies and of course, the Gatton Acadamy for Math and Science.

“They’re just hungry for information and they’re so sincere and no matter what the cultural or language differences are, it’s funny, people are people and these are fine educators and we found a common ground very quickly.”

The delegation even participated in a panel discussion with Gatton students to get their take on this type of learning.

“I wanted them to know this is truly and amazing experience. I think everyone would agree. It’s changed my life, made me a better person and more intellectual at that.”

“We got to talk to them a lot about how all the administrative staff are such a big deal to us and how all our personal relationships with our teachers and our friends all make a big difference.”

The educators will take this knowledge home as they prepare to build academies in three major cities in Saudi Arabia.

“We are now in the planning process so when we talked to these students we learned a lot from them for a student perspective and talked to the director, learned a lot from him as well.”

The Saudis even received a red towel to commemorate their trip to a place they consider role model for education.

“To identify WKU as a place they want to visit and view what we’re doing to take back to their home country, to me its important and an extremely prestigious opportunity.”

During their two week stay, the Saudi Arabia delegation will also tour Mammoth Cave, the Kentucky Horse Park and the Huntsville Space Center.

With this week’s View from the Hill, I’m Amy Bingham.

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