Spring 2013 Commencement Preview (Burton)

VFTH

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WKU will confer degrees to more than two thousand graduates in four different ceremonies this weekend at Diddle Arena.

In this week’s View from the Hill, Amy Bingham talks to the Ogden Scholar award winner about his unexpected rise to the top.

The Ogden Foundation Award is the school’s highest academic honor. This year’s recipient is a first-generation college student who dug deep to reach his full potential.

WKU Senior Daniel Burton is always looking for ways to prove himself.

“I need to get my foot in the door somewhere, if I can do that, if someone gives me an opportunity, I’m going to take advantage of that opportunity.”

That’s what he’s done at the Preston Center where he went from one shift a week to being a student facilities supervisor.

“From day one he made a positive impression on our staff and in patrons that use the Preston Center. He goes out of his way to help people, we saw that immediately.”

Daniel says he wasn’t always this way.

“Coming up through middle school and grade school and all that I wasn’t exactly your ideal student and that’s behavior wise and academic wise.”

When Daniel was in eighth grade, his older brother dropped out of school. Daniel made a decision not to follow that path when he entered high school.

“The best thing that ever could have happened to me is that I knew no one and I had no friends.”

With no distractions, Daniel earned all A’s his first quarter and has never looked back.

“I’ve been lucky. I kept a 4.0 all the way through high school. The streak became an obsession and it’s driven me.”

That drive has led to a whole slew of awards for the management major including Most Outstanding Junior and Senior in the Gordon Ford College of Business.

His work family couldn’t be more pleased.

“We stress academic excellence as the top priority for all our student workers in recreational sports. It comes back to us as well as their futures.”

Daniel’s real family is also ecstatic about his success, and while they didn’t have high academic expectations, his dad did pass along a very important trait.

“He wasn’t great at school but one thing he had was a work ethic and so he has transferred that work ethic to me. He does it in a different way but it’s the same concept.”

As the Ogden Foundation Award winner, Daniel Burton will give a speech at the two o’clock commencement ceremony on Saturday. For a complete list of commencement activities log onto wku.edu forward slash commencement.

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

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