KAP Graduate – Special Education

VFTH

5/23/19

A recent WKU graduate made history by becoming the first special education major from the Kelly Autism Program.

Amy Bingham has more on how KAP made such a difference in this week’s View from the Hill.

Clay Harville says his experience with special education gives him a unique ability to relate to his students. And he’s thankful the Kelly Autism Program gave him the support he needed to pursue his dream.

 “These M & M’s are going to represent giant rocks.”

 “I tried teaching and I got hooked on it my sophomore year and I’ve loved it ever since.”

Clay Harville wrapped up his student teaching assignment with an edible lesson on glacial erosion.

 “Do not eat experiment until I tell you to.”

It’s the kind of hands on lesson Harville likes to teach.

 “I simply have a conversation and building relationships with the students first, that’s because what they want to see, your human, they’re human they want to see that interaction.”

Harville, who has autism spectrum disorder, or ASD, chose to come to WKU because of the Kelly Autism Program.

 “They have helped me through so much and adjusting to the college life, the campus life.”

His KAP mentor was crucial in helping him pursue his degree in special education.

 “The one thing I really like about Clay is that he’s very focused on making sure all the students know the material and that there’s no student that’s kind of left behind.”

“That’s what I wanted to happen.”

Clay says it’s because he knows what it’s like to sometimes need things explained in a different way.

 “I’ve always been fascinated by how well a student thinks and since I’ve been down the road of special education I feel like with the experience I’ve been through I can totally relate to this.”

That relatability is what Clay hopes to one day take into a classroom of his own.

 “Just because you have what you have doesn’t mean you should stop pursuing your dreams. That’s the way I’m trying to make my mark at WKU is to represent other up comers in the KAP program as well as many other students with or without autism to achieve their goals.”

The Kelly Autism Program was founded in 2003 and the college program was implemented in 2006. For more information log onto wku.edu slash Kelly autism program.

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

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