Climbing to Greater Heights Update

VFTH

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Anchor Intro: WKU is making impressive progress in its ten year strategic plan known as “Climbing to Greater Heights”.

Amy Bingham has an update in this week’s View from the Hill.

“WKU’s ten year roadmap to the future includes some high profile building projects like the Commons, a re-imagined library you see taking shape behind me. But there are other important metrics to the plan that are moving in the right direction.

 “This plan is on people’s desk, its open, people are looking at it, they are activating it and that’s why it’s working.”

“Climbing to Greater Heights focuses on three areas, our Students, our Hill and our Community and Beyond.”

 “The plan is 2018 to 2028 in its formal duration, we are actually 25% of the way through.”

Dr. Bruce Schulte is spearheading the plan’s implementation and it’s already paying off.

“There’s been a real strong emphasis I think on saying you’ve committed yourself to a college education. We have not completed our side of the bargain, of the deal, if we don’t get you through.”

Not only is WKU’s six year graduation rate at its highest ever at 55 percent, but when it comes to retention, a targeted student-support structure has helped increase first to second year student retention almost seven percentage points

“We have to stay in touch with you we have to see what your problems are, we have to solve your financial difficulties so that retaining of students has actually worked out very well. “

Last fall WKU saw the largest one year increase in the size of the freshman class largely because changes to the scholarship model have made the school more accessible than ever.

 “We’re providing scholarships to a much larger percentage of students in their first year so rather than a lot of money to fewer students, we’re spreading that money out.”

Schulte says the metrics are even more remarkable when you consider the limitations of a global pandemic.

 “That shows not only great leadership but it shows a great team.”

“2021 promises to be a big year for big projects that will only enhance WKU’s commitment to applied learning. In addition to the Commons, WKU will open its First Year Village and the Innovative Campus.

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

Learn more about the ten year plan at [www.wku.edu/strategicplan](http://www.wku.edu/strategicplan)

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