Armbrust/McGee Scholarship

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WKU’s international reach is not only impacting Warren County’s economic development but has led to a new scholarship opportunity as well.

Amy Bingham explains in this week’s View from the Hill.

German based plant Bilstein recently opened in the Kentucky Transpark bringing a half dozen German families to Bowing Green. Intercultural training was provided to help them make a smooth transition. As a result of that training, a scholarship has been created to help WKU students study abroad in the future.

 “Bilstein really wanted to take care of their people and make sure they were ready to come here and do well here in Bowling Green.”

Ralf and Nicole Lessmeir say they were excited to pick up and move their family to Kentucky with the Bilstein plant this summer even though they needed a crash course on living in the United States.

 “They told us a lot about the culture, about the city here. They show us pics from Bowling Green.”

 “dos and don’ts, what is different between Americans and Germans.”

The intercultural training they received came from German educator Heike Armbrust who has worked with WKU’s International student teachers for years.

 “I actually cover absolutely everything. Cultural differences. They have to be aware of culture shocks they might meet.”

Armbrust was assisted by WKU Professor Laura McGee who has spent extensive time in Germany.

 “We presented together and modeled what we were trying to teach that Germans and Americans work well together.”

When it came time for Bilstein to pay for the training, Armbrust had other plans for the money.

 “I had already decided what to do with it and that was to start a scholarship.”

 “Bilstein offered her an honorarium and rather than accept that personally, she really wanted to give that to WKU.”

The Armbrust/McGee German Culture & Work Experience Scholarship Fund was created for students who want to experience studying abroad.

 “I really want to help the students and the more that can go, the better.”

Armbrust and McGee are continuing to seek donations for the scholarship. To find out more, log onto www.wku.edu/chf/armbrust-mcgee-sf.php.

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

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