9/11 Exhibit – 20 years later

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When the United States was attacked on September 11th, 2001, some photojournalism students from WKU felt compelled to go and cover the story.

Now on the 20th anniversary of the terrorist attacks, their pictures will be on display for the public to see as Amy Bingham tells us in this week’s View from the Hill.

It’s a day many of us will never forget. But the memories of 9/11 are even more poignant for a group of WKU photojournalism students and two professors who drove to New York City and captured not just images of despair, but also hope and resilience.

“Still to this day even though I’ve traveled all over the world, I’ve been in war zones and different third world countries and all kinds of social unrest, probably still one of the biggest, maybe the biggest, news story of my career. “

Jed Conklin was the photo editor of the College Heights Herald in September 2001. He was among a handful of photojournalism students who decided to travel to New York City shortly after the attacks.

“It was so much quieter than I anticipated it being when we first got there because daily, you know, life had halted for the most part. It felt almost disrespectful for there to be noise.”

Professor James Kenney, who joined the group that weekend, points out it was the students idea to go.

“Students were really waiting for me when I came in in the morning saying we are going. It wasn’t me talking to them. They were telling me, we’re going up there, what do you think?”

Twenty eight of those photos captured that week have been pulled out of storage and displayed at the Pushin Building in downtown Bowling Green so the public can view them.

“I think it will allow people to remember the day, what they were doing, what transpired, those that they may have known that were even in New York at the time.”

Even though a haze of smoke still filled the sky when they arrived, the WKU contingent focused not on twisted metal but the sea of humanity they witnessed in the aftermath.

“They wanted their stories told, they wanted the word to get out about their loved one.”

“I look back on that as an early reminder of the impact of journalism and how important it is not only in the moment to inform but as a historical record.”

The 9/11 20th anniversary photo exhibit will open tomorrow from twelve to four at the Pushin Building at 400 East Main Street in Bowling Green. Remarks will be at one pm. The public can view the exhibit from ten to four on weekdays through the month of September.

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

The exhibit is sponsored by Ridley and Hull Wealth Management Group of Stifel and the WKU School of Media.

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