KY Teacher Hall of Fame

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Three more outstanding Kentucky teachers have been inducted into the Kentucky Teacher Hall of Fame following a ceremony this week in Frankfort.

Amy Bingham has more on the teachers from Butler, Jefferson and Boyd counties in this week’s View from the Hill.

One inductee is still in the classroom, one has been retired for only one year and sadly, one did not live to see this accolade bestowed on her.

But all three had proud family and friends on hand to witness the prestigious honor.

“Teaching is more of a calling than it is a profession.”

Governor Steve Beshear was among many offering congratulations to the newest class of the Kentucky Teacher Hall of Fame.

Among them, the late Artie Johnson Hankins of Morgantown who taught for 44 years in Butler County. She died one year ago this week.

“She would have loved it, she would have loved it. I wish she could have been here.”

Hankins daughter says during the depression, her mother borrowed 250 dollars from an uncle to attend Western Kentucky State Teachers College, now known as WKU.

After Mrs. Hankins death last year, the family established a 250 dollar scholarship for Butler County students attending WKU.

Now, ironically, 250 dollars is part of the reward of being named to the Kentucky Teacher Hall of Fame.

“We loved her and were proud of her and were glad others loved her and were proud of her too.”

Patricia Morris of Louisville says she feels like a novice compared to someone like Ms. Artie.

Morris taught for 30 years in Jefferson County before retiring last year. She says she always knew what career she wanted.

“I always have taught. My mother let me teach school when I was eight in our basement and I would bring in the neighborhood kids in the summer. I was the teacher though, they had to be the pupils.”

Morris says being recognized by of the legislature is a true honor but the real reward is sending students on the right path.

“I’m honored but I also feel I should be humbled because I’ve had the icing on the cake and this is more.”

Deidra Patton has been a teacher for 28 years. She still coordinates the Gifted and Talented program in Boyd County.

She says her creative spirit and varied interests all led to one thing.

“It always came back to teaching. Basically as a teacher you can be an architect because you design lessons, you can be an actor because you have a captive audience.”

The excitement surrounding the events at the Capitol prompted her to recall a favorite quote from her junior high grammer teacher.

“She said good better best, never let it rest until your good becomes your better and your better becomes your best and that’s my class motto.”

The Kentucky Teacher Hall of Fame was created in 2000 through a gift from former Governor Louie B. Nunn. WKU was selected as it’s home because of the school’s more than 100 year history in teacher education. The Hall of Fame plaques are displayed in Gary A. Ransdall Hall on WKU’s campus.

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

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