WKU Police

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A special response team ---or S-R-T---with-in the WKU Police Department has been in the planning stages since 2004 and is about to become a reality.

In this week’s View from the Hill, Amy Bingham tells us how the unit will provide even more protection on the hill.

With thousands of students, faculty, staff and visitors, WKU is the size of a small city. For year’s the WKU Police department has worked to keep the campus safe---and overcome some common misconceptions about the department.

 “We have same police powers as whenever you think of a typical police department.”

Corporal Brandon Humphries is one of 28 officers on WKU’s police force. He says people often don’t realize they have the same authority as other law enforcement agencies.

We’re trained the same as they are, go to the same police academy, Western is an accredited agency within the state.”

While they can make arrests, WKU does not have it’s own jail.

 “They think we take you to a University Police Jail, that’s a misconception.”

24 hours a day, 365 days a year you will see WKU cruisers on patrol - and not just on the main campus.

 “Western owns a lot of property besides this campus, if incidents happen at those properties, we deal with them there.”

 And at least once a week the department is asked to provide back up for the Warren County Drug Task Force or some other agency.

 “They may call and say can you assist, it may take us anywhere in the county if they need a marked car or police presence at that residence.”

Founded in 1974 as the Department of Public Safety, it became the WKU PD in the early 90’s.

Now a Special response Team is being added. Seven officers are currently involved in readiness drills like this one wearing an extra fifty pounds of equipment.

 “We hope we never get deployed but if something happens, we have that capability and it won’t be quite as chaotic.”

The S-R-T will be fully functional next year, that’s also when the police department will move into the new parking structure being built on 13th and Kentucky street. If you still think of WKU Police as the ones writing parking tickets, that’s another misconception. That duty was handed over to Parking and Transportation five years ago.

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

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