National Park Intern

VFTH

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A recent WKU graduate has put herself on the right path toward her dream job.

In this week’s View from the Hill, Amy Bingham talks to the Glendale native about her three year internship at Mammoth Cave National Park.

“Being out here is the best part of my job.”

Sara Wigginton loves to be “in the field”, or in her case, “in the park.”

 “The experience I’ve gained here is so valuable because I think I want to do exactly this when I grow up.”

For the past three years Sara has worked as an intern with the Cumberland Piedmont Network, which monitors natural resources in fourteen parks including Mammoth Cave.

 “All these measurements are used to quantify the health of the cave-fed springs of Mammoth Cave National Park which all feed into the Green River.”

Sara recently graduated from WKU’s Honor College with a degree in biology.

 “My focus is on ecology which is really good for this internship which is focused on monitoring ecological systems.”

 She’s hoping her field work will set her apart when it comes time to apply for grad school.

 “I have a lot, er, a little experience on a lot of things so my options are wide open for labs I could work in in graduate school because I have so much hands on experience.”

That experience includes housing and collecting various specimens.

 “Most of the projects I’m doing now are curatorial projects so we’ve gotten large collections of specimens that are just things that people have collected from all parks in the Cumberland Peidmont network.”

Now that she’s had a dream internship…Sara’s already looking ahead to her dream job.

 “I would really like to work for the Department of Fish and Wildlife but if I end up back in the National Park Service I will not be sad. I’ve really enjoyed all the people I’ve worked with and all the projects I’ve worked on.”

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

After wrapping up her internship last week, Sara’s next adventure is hiking part of the Appalachian Trail.

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