Black Cultural Center

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African American students at WKU have a new place to call home thanks to the creation of a Black Cultural Center.

Amy Bingham takes us inside the new center in this week’s View from the Hill.

When the International Center moved into the new Honors Building last year it created a vacancy in the Zuheir Sofia/Dero Downing building on State Street. But now it has a new occupant that will fill a need of the African American community.

Andrea Garr-Barnes \Dir., Black Cultural Center

LaRosa Shelton \ Student Leader

Marcus Stubbs \ Student Leader

Chris Currin \ Student Leader

 “The possibilities are endless”

Director Andrea Garr Barnes is excited about WKU’s new Black Cultural Center. “We want this to be their home away from home. A place where they know we all need a place where you can feel rooted and that’s here for students of color.”

The Center is located in the Sofia Downing Building on State Street.

Dr. Ransdell informed a group of African American student leaders late last semester that this building would house the center.

 “A lot of people just didn’t expect it and whenever we found out we were going to get this location we were all really happy and excited to see what the spring semester had in store.”

 “When I first walked in here I was just amazed at how big it is and I saw a lot of opportunity through here.”

The transition is well underway.

 “We’ve got quiet study space on the second floor, we’ve got an office for student organizations for the under-represented students.”

Garr-Barnes says a working fireplace inside a cozy living room will make the perfect setting for events student leaders will be helping her plan.

 “The majority of us are going to help with the center and different events. We will meet with the director and discuss things that would be cool for students to come to.”

Events like Group discussions, movie nights, skyping sessions…. Or just being together.

“Sororities and fraternities have their houses, the International students and the honors students have their place to go, as a black community, it’s important for us that we can come together, hang out, study.”

Leaders say a center like this will help with retention and degree completion which is always the goal in higher education.

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

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