Mental Health Capstone Project

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Some WKU Public Relations students are using their capstone project to help change the conversation about mental health.

Amy Bingham shows us how they are getting their message out in this week’s View from the Hill.

Surveys, movie nights, social media even animals. Public Relations students at WKU have pulled out all the stops over the past month to bring awareness to mental health in a national public relations competition.

Alexus Richardson \ WKU Senior PR Major

Vicki Bagwell \ Assoc. Prof., School of Journalism

Sophie Trent \ WKU Senior PR Major

“We have always had great support from Dr. Ransdell and he did that again today and shared some of his time with us.”

Even WKU’s President is taking part in the Campaign to change direction.

“He took the pledge. We shared with him the signs, he understands those and agreed to share with others about the five signs.”

Sharing the five signs- personality change, agitated, withdrawal, poor self-care and hopelessness-is just one part of the effort to draw attention to mental health.

“They get a chance to do all components of a public relations campaign and I think that’s why we think it’s one of the better projects we do as far as a learning opportunity for students.”

Four groups from Vicki Bagwell’s PR Management capstone class have worked from mid-February through mid-March trying to reach different segments of campus.

“It’s really good practice because our professor kind of just gives us the reigns and we have a pow wow every class to see how things are going.”

Star, the therapy dog from the Counseling and Testing Center, came to a tabling event to remind students where they can find help.

“what the Counseling and Testing Center does on top of the hill, carrying that will change direction to bottom of the hill and I think they really appreciate that.”

Whether it’s passing a smile or paying it forward, these students have found unique ways to spread an important message about mental health.

“We’ve had lots of students out petting the dogs. Everyone loves seeing them.”

“I think it’s really preparing us for what’s to come in May when we get our big girl jobs.”

This project is part of the Bateman Case Study Competition put on annually by the Public Relations Student Society of America or PRSSA.

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

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