WKU Retention Rates

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Exciting news released at WKU this week. First-time, first year students returned for the spring semester in record numbers.

Amy Bingham has more on one of the reasons for the impressive retention rate in this week’s View from the Hill.

The newly opened First Year Village, which is home to Living, Learning Communities for first year students, has been a key part of WKU’s retention strategy - and it’s paying off.

“One of the things I’ve really gotten here, especially being part of an LLC as well, I’ve been able to see a lot of different perspectives.”

Freshman Jake Jones from Morton’s Gap Kentucky says being part of the Citizenship and Social Justice Living Learning Community at Normal Hall has helped make his transition to college a smooth one.

“I can speak for all the LLC’s in saying that they offer a plethora of things to you. You’ll always be on your feet.”

Normal is one two brand new residence halls anchoring the First Year Village where a bulk of WKU’s Living Learning Communities exist for first year students.

“It takes an institution of this size and it breaks it down so that you’re connecting with a smaller group of students that have your shared interests.”

The concept is paying off. For example students like Jake, who participated in an LLC last fall, were retained at a rate of 95.2 percent, nearly six percentage points higher than non-LLC participants.

“Everything that we’ve done around financial aid, around student support, around the First Year Village, has aided in growing those retention numbers. More work to be done but we’re proud of where we are today.”

“It has taken us working alongside each other to work across divisional lines between academic affairs and student affairs to create partnerships with the student at the center.”

Creating programming and an atmosphere that keep students like Jake on the path toward student success.

“They have so much to offer and I feel like there’s an LLC essentially for anyone.

The retention numbers also show WKU closing the gap by almost ten percentage points for underrepresented students.

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

A ribbon cutting for the First Year Village will be held next Wednesday at one pm in the lobby of Regents Hall.

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