Women’s Legacy Fund

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Clemette Haskins, Claire Donahue, Alyssa Cavanaugh--just a few of the legends that helped put women’s sports on the map at WKU.

The Hilltopper Athletic Foundation launched a Women’s Legacy Fund earlier this year in honor of this month’s fiftieth anniversary of Title IX. Amy Bingham has more in this week’s View from the Hill.

Kathryn Smith \ Associate Director of Development, HAF

Gina Stoll \Senior Associate Athletic Director

Audrey Griffin \ Former student athlete, Class of ‘22

“Just over six months after Title IX was passed, President Dero Downing approved intercollegiate athletic competition for women and WKU never looked back. Now, nearly fifty years later, Downing’s granddaughter has helped launch the Women’s Legacy Fund that will impact programs for generations to come.”

Kathryn Smith currently works for the Hilltopper Athletic Foundation.

But it wasn’t long ago that Dero Downing’s granddaughter was a student athlete at WKU.

“You know I wonder if he ever had an inkling that 41 years later he would have a granddaughter who would benefit from that bill being signed and allowing me to play softball here at WKU.”

“That bill” is Title IX, a law that gives women athletes equal opportunity in sports at federally funded institutions.

“He wanted everybody to have an equal opportunity here at WKU so that’s why allowing women to participate in intercollegiate athletics was so important to him.”

In her role with the HAF, Smith has been instrumental in helping launch a campaign that will raise funds directly impacting women’s sports.

“They will go to things like capitol projects or student athlete development initiatives, different facility upgrades.”

A Women’s Legacy Dinner a few months ago provided a soft launch to raise awareness about this new giving opportunity.

“The event was great. We had a really good time, received a ton of feedback from our donors and the people who were in attendance.”

“Definitely cool because you hear of these names and to see your athletic department you feel vouched for.”

“I think it really speaks volumes for our female student athletes that we have their backs, we support them and we want to continue fundraising for them here on out.”

All the more special for Smith knowing the role her grandfather played in bringing the landmark legislation to the hill.

“It gives me chills to think about him having such a huge hand in that.”

“The Women’s Legacy Fund will live on in perpetuity. If you’d like to donate, log onto wku sports dot com slash women’s legacy fund.

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

The fund will benefit all eight female sports programs as well as cheer and dance.

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