Social Work Awareness

VFTH

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The important role social workers play in the lives of vulnerable families and communities is being highlighted throughout the month of March.

WKU’s first annual Social Work Career Fair is giving students a look at all the various local organizations they can plug into as Amy Bingham shows us in this week’s View from the Hill.

Between the pandemic and the 2021 tornadoes, there are so many reasons why mental health struggles are on the rise in the area. Social workers have more and more avenues to assist people and WKU students are ready for the challenge.

 Shannon Sales \ MSW Field Director

Princess Reed \ WKU Senior

Abigail Hendrix \ WKU Senior

“Especially those that operate in social work, we’ve realized our relevance, now everyone else does.”

More than sixty agencies turned out for WKU’s first Social Work Career Fair, giving students a chance to network for themselves.

“We just connect with these agencies and see if they are interested in our interns kind of serving them and a lot get employed so it’s a great opportunity.”

Senior Princess Reed started out in music education before changing her major to social work.

“I kind of just realized that although I enjoyed music and I enjoyed working with kids, I felt like a classroom would limit me honestly.”

She says being surrounded by social workers when she was younger played a big part in her decision.

“I remember social workers all the way back to elementary school. I’ve had encounters with good ones, with bad ones and the good ones made such an impact on me that I don’t even remember the bad ones anymore.”

Senior Abigail Hendrix also switched from elementary education to social work and says her internship this year at the Family Enrichment Center quickly solidified her decision.

“I definitely feel like I have gotten a lot of experience and have gotten my feet wet and so I feel like that has helped me decide to go ahead and get my masters starting in the fall and pursue my social work career because I wasn’t always set on doing social work.”

Both students say they’re well aware this isn’t a career that will make them rich but say that won’t deter them.

“I think when people major in social work, they definitely don’t go into it for the money because they know why are underpaid and understaffed. I think it’s something with their personality and they want to see a change and they’re willing to do it.”

With mental health needs being prioritized, so is the need to bring awareness and appreciation to the important contributions of social workers.

“Our job is to make a difference and I think now it’s being highlighted of how important we really are in meeting that mission and goal.”

Workshops and events have been held throughout the month at WKU to bring awareness to social work.

With this week’s View from the Hill

The national theme for Social Work Awareness in 2023 is Social Work Breaks Barriers.

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