View From The Hill
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**Ogden Scholar**

A Russellville woman will receive WKU’s highest honor during the school’s 166th Commencement on Saturday.

Amy Bingham has her story in this week’s “View from the Hill.”

Rachealle Sanford may have taken a non-traditional path to higher education…but it has afforded her an extraordinary college career.

“It’s a really big honor, when they told me I had won the honor I was so excited I probably made the man on the other end of the phone go a little deaf.”

Rachealle Sanford has calmed down some since getting the news that she is the Ogden Foundation Award winner…but she still can’t believe her time at WKU is almost over.

“Sometimes you don’t  think your going to make it to the end, you just have to keep going, I think that’s one of the biggest lessons I’ve learned is not to give up.”

A  double major in history and anthropology,  Rachealle has made the most of her time at WKU…serving as a peer mentor to freshmen and studying abroad in England for four months.

“The study abroad was a really big deal I enjoyed that so much and I feel like that’s really an experience any college student should have.”
Sanford’s primary and secondary education experience was different than most.  She was homeschooled since the sixth grade and even played a big role in helping her mom choose the  curriculum.

“We went through looking for subjects and the set of publishers that would be the most challenging and help me as far as academics went.”

The effort paid off.   Rachealle says everyone is very accepting of her home school credentials…. and even though some students seem surprised by her success…her teachers aren’t surprised at all.

“They’re like well that explains why you’re doing so well.  I guess  that comes up a lot, they have experiences with other home school students.

They’re usually good. “

Before leaving her WKU experience behind, she has some advice for her fellow students.

“The academics are important but it’s the faculty and friends you’ll make that you’ll remember most.”

Rachealle says graduate school is in her future but she wants some real life experience first.  She begins a job at the Department of Justice in Washington D.C. next month.

WKU’s  166th Commencement  is this Saturday at ten a.m. at Diddle Arena.

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