International Year of South Africa

VFTH

11/19/15

Western Kentucky University is immersed in it’s second “International year of “ study.

This year the focus has shifted to South Africa as Amy Bingham explains in this week’s View from the Hill.

One person most closely identified with South Africa is the subject of a quilt collection currently on display at the Kentucky Museum.  
“I am one of many quilters, it’s about 81 quilters that had an opportunity to think, contemplate and create outstanding works of arts in Mandela’s memory.”

Artist Cynthia Lockhart from Cincinnati shared the story of her quilt and many others that are part of the “Conscience of the Human Spirit, the life of Nelson Mandela Exhibit.”

“We begin to learn about the struggle of apartheid that is South Africa. We begin to learn how two different races had been in turmoil for so many years.”

The quilt display is just one of many ways the campus is bringing South Africa to WKU though the International Year of program.

“That’s one of the things that’s really wonderful about this program. It’s not just one person or one office doing everything. It’s really across campus collaboration to bring countries to campus every year.”

Senior photojournalist major Tyler Essary was selected to travel to South Africa as part of the Zuheir Sofia Endowed International Faculty Seminar. He documented the trip with photos and video.

“Seeing how they live and the conflict, it was life changing and it definitely humbles you.”

So much so that Essary has displayed his photos at Spencer’s coffee house and is selling them in order to send the proceeds back to the areas he visited.

“The money from the photos will go toward this organization. It will help fund schools in South Africa, mainly townships where kids can’t really afford to go to school.”

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

To view the current calendar events for the International Year of South Africa, visit wku dot edu slash IYO. Next year’s country will be South Korea followed by Bosnia/Herzigovinia.

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