CI Building Dedication

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Seven years after WKU started a Confucius Institute, a new building on campus is dedicated as the Chinese Learning Center.

Amy Bingham has more in this week’s View from the Hill.

CI Directors from other universities, superintendents who have welcomed Chinese teachers into their schools and a host of others came together recently to witness the opening of a building that gives a strong foundation to WKU’s Confucius Institute.

The rain may have drastically altered the parade route but it didn’t dampen the spirits at the ribbon cutting of WKU’s Chinese Learning Center.

“We just really wanted to put on the best show that we could.”

The festivities included a dinner for all the special guests from other Confucius Institutes in the United States.

And it provided an opportunity to give a proper send off to Madam Xu Lin who retired last fall as the director of China’s Confucius Institute program.

“I have left Hanban and Confucius Institute but my heart really staying here in all of the Confucius Institutes.”

“We were blessed to have Madame Xu Lin come as the official Han Ban representative even though she retired, she’s still the figure head of the Confucius Institute because they have not named a replacement for her just yet. “

The new building is located next to the Mahurin Honors College on Normal Avenue.

It features two IVS rooms, a flex room and a fully functional kitchen.

“Since the building’s been open we’ve had multiple units come in and utilize the kitchen outside of Chinese.”

“The building itself is not for the Confucius Institute per se, it’s a campus building. It can be utilized by any department for any purpose that they have.”

Martin says the building creates a solid foundation for the CI at WKU which has seen incredible growth since it’s inception.

“Over the last seven years, we’ve worked really hard growing our program from 11 Chinese teachers to over 60 coming this year, from 1600 students to 16,297 students and to increasing our school districts from four to now 23.”

Xu Lin had nothing but praise for the partnership she says builds cooperation and cultural exchange.

This is a good example why we should gather together to go ahead, that means cooperate, learn each other, understand each other. This is Confucius Institute. Our mission realized here.”

The Chinese Learning Center building was funded through a joint partnership with Hanban/ Confucius Institute Headquarters and WKU. Anyone wishing to rent the building can contact Terrill Martin at 270-745-2530.

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

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