Reach Conference Preview

VFTH

3/22/18

WKU’s position as a student centered , applied research institution will be on full display at this weekend’s 48th annual student research conference.

Amy Bingham talks to some students about what they are presenting in this week’s View from the Hill.

More than 350 students in all disciplines will showcase their research and creative projects this Saturday at Downing Student Union. Here’s a sample of what some of these scholars will be sharing.

We all like to multi-task.

But how effective is studying while exercising?

 “We actually had people read and do math tasks while they were exercising to see what happened to their performance on the reading and math tasks.”

Last fall psychology graduate student Carrie French had participants answer math problems as well as read passages at their own pace while exercising on a stationary bike.

 “We actually had them do similar tasks sitting down at a desk and compared the differences in performance. That’s how we got our results.”

So what did she find out?

 “Their math performance got worse, but reading performance didn’t change.”

 “I’ve tried to give 110 percent to both the research and academics and just make the most of my time here.”

Sophomore Alex Henson has been involved in research since he first arrived on the hill.

The project he’s presenting involves water filtration.

 “This is what we initially put through the membrane and after some time of filtering we got this back as you can see this is almost purely clear water.”

He used another technique to filter ocean water he grabbed from Delaware.

 “We actually saw a 60 percent removal of salt ion content in the ocean water which is absolutely amazing and really promising.”

And Gatton Academy Senior Wendy Cecil is looking into the amount of mercury in the environment.

 “My research is coordinated in conjunction with Mammoth Cave National park to analyze bald eagle samples for mercury content.”

Cecil used the mercury analyzer machine at the Advanced Materials Institute to test the bald eagle feathers.

 “We discovered that our bald eagle had mercury concentration in its feathers ranging from eight parts per million mercury to over 30 parts per million.”

Cecil says that’s higher than a previous study done in the 80’s.

Carrie, Alex and Wendy will be among hundreds of students presenting their research at 8:15 Saturday morning at DSU. They will conclude at 4:15. The Reach Conference is free and open to the public.

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

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