Margaret Munday Feature

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It’s been almost a week since the very first black student to attend Western Kentucky University had a residence hall dedicated in her name.

But Margaret Munday says she came very close to dropping out her senior year. Amy Bingham has the story in week’s View from the Hill.

The Ivan Wilson Fine Arts Center, the former Margie Helm Library, the McChesney Field Campus. All names associated with WKU. But for Margaret Munday, these were people who provided a huge support during her time at WKU.

85 year old Margaret Munday of Auburn is still on cloud nine after last week’s dedication of Munday Hall, in honor of her being the first black undergraduate student to enroll at WKU.

“I can’t believe it’s me.”

Munday started at Western in 1956 and remembers early on being approached by a tall woman in the library who knew her grandmother.

“I said well who are you and she said I’m Margie Helm. She told me, she said, anything that you want and need in this library, you let me know.”

After the first year of commuting from Auburn, Munday found both a job and a place to stay near campus.

“My second and third year I lived with the McChesneys, Mariah and Susan were there, the girls, and I looked after them.”

She recalls walking to class from the McChesney’s home in Forest Park.

“We’d see Kelly Thompson go running over to College High, a young Kelly Thompson. We’d see John Carpenter running out of his house.”

Munday, who was a music major, was on the verge of dropping out of school at the start of her senior year when her mother became ill, but Professor Ivan Wilson convinced her not to.

“He wrote me a letter and said Margaret, this is a challenge in life. We all have crisis. Don’t let this get you down. Stay in school. The year I graduated she was back to the picture of health. That was in August. I was grateful, grateful, grateful. I thank God for that, I tell you the truth.”

After a teaching career that spanned more than three decades, Munday has impacted so many lives along the way.

“She was a no-nonsense person. Whatever she did, if you were a part of it, you had to be serious. So this is really exciting and I’m glad to be a part of it.”

A Munday Hall Scholarship, made possible by a gift from George and C.J. Nichols, will provide funding for two students each year who reside in Munday Hall.

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

Munday Hall was formerly known as Northeast Hall.

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