Special Olympics – WKU Weather Team

VFTH

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Anchor Intro: When the Special Olympics USA Games were held in Orlando earlier this month, weather was the epicenter of the whole thing.

WKU’s meteorology and emergency management programs played a huge role in making sure the games went off without a hitch as Amy Bingham explains in this week’s View from the Hill.

Supers:

John Bowen \ Grad student, Homeland Security Sciences

Casey Archey \ Grad student, Homeland Security Sciences

Star Robertson \ Grad student, Homeland Security Sciences

Josh Doyle \ Grad student, Recreation and Sport Administration

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:49 “Our job was to monitor the weather, pay attention to lightning, heat stress, different variables that they were looking for in order to protect the athletes.”

Graduate student John Bowen was one of more than twenty students, faculty and staff from WKU tasked with providing weather and support services for the 2022 Special Olympics USA Games.

1:01 “Everything that we looked at had a direct impact on the rest of the games.”

Students in Meteorology and Homeland Security Sciences were put to work in the Main Operations Center or MOC as well as out doing field observations at various venues.

13:16 “I was in charge of kind of managing the communication between different sports when they finished, when they started and if there were gonna be any delays.”

Star Robertson started out the week as a Geographic Information Science analyst but got called in to assist with transportation and safety.

5:54 “I helped load the buses and I made sure athletes were in there. I counted fifty seats on a bus, fifty people need to be on it. If athletes are lost, if they lost their items, just making sure everybody’s where they need to be at the same time.”

Josh Doyle who is pursuing his masters in Recreation and Sport Administration came along to assist with sports communication and wound up helping ESPN.

9:44 “Throughout the whole week I had the opportunity to work with their production crew and help out with athletes, working shot put and working the long jump then track and field.”

It was a multifaceted operation set inside Disney World. Giving WKU students unbelievable access and responsibility in a real world setting.

3:59 “That is something I never anticipated I would be doing while still in school.”

7:20 “I had the book experience, now I have the real life experience of putting those things I learned in the classroom on to the field on a big venue.”

17:24ish “So for us to be picked and to be able to participate is big for us, excited to see what else we get into.”

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

ANCHOR TAG

The students were accompanied by White Squirrel Weather Director Josh Durkee and Environmental Health and Safety Director Dave Oliver.

The model used in Orlando is exactly what the WKU team has used for events here on campus over the last few years.

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