Ogden Foundation Scholar – Zena Pare

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Eleven hundred fall graduates from WKU’s five academic colleges will be recognized during ceremonies on Saturday.

Amy Bingham talks with the university’s top academic award recipient, the Ogden Foundation Scholar, in this week’s View from the Hill.

“The biggest theme is that I feel like a lot of my dreams came true.”

Alvaton senior Zena Pare says it’s tough to pin down the best part of her WKU experience.

“The internships I’ve had and the friendships I’ve made, the professors who really encouraged me along the way.”

Home schooled her entire life, Pare has always taken charge of her education.

“Home schooling really gave me the space to have my own academic interests and take a lot of initiative with my learning and involvement.”

That same initiative resulted in Pare setting sail on Semester at Sea during the second half of her freshmen year.

“Really opened up my eyes to perspectives on the world, the opportunities available and kind of what else was available through WKU.”

She’s now visited twenty countries, even though the pandemic derailed her business study abroad experience in France, twice.

“The pandemic threw off a lot of my plans but I think it also had me readjust and shift and you never know what would have happened if things didn’t work out the way they did.”

The shift meant Pare ended up applying for and getting an internship as an analyst at JP Morgan in New York City.

“Being in New York City was an absolute dream. I have wanted to move or least experience New York in like a little bit more local and not quite a tourist way for a very long time.”

Pare has now secured a full time job at JP Morgan starting in June. She says her WKU experience truly prepared her for a global society.

“I’m just excited to see where my career unfolds and where it goes. I have vague ideas of wanting to work abroad and I see steps I could take to do that.”

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

Pare is a triple major in Economics, Corporate and Organizational Communication and International Business with a minor in American Sign Language Studies.

She will give a speech during the Gordon Ford College of Business ceremony at 8 am on Saturday.

Recognition ceremonies will be held throughout the day at E.A. Diddle Arena.

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