Presidential Scholarship Process

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This week, WKU is picking the best and brightest high school seniors from around the country to receive the prestigious Presidential Scholarship.

In this week’s View from the Hill, Amy Bingham finds out what it takes to achieve such a high honor.

To even apply to be a Presidential Scholar at WKU, you must have a 3-point 95 GPA and a composite score of 31 on the ACT. But the competition doesn’t stop there. Tonight, the story of one finalist trecking through the process.

 “I’ve played volleyball for five years for high school and for a club team, I have a job..I’ve worked at Old Navy for a almost a year now.”

Alexandra Oldham’s busy schedule makes her role as a Presidential Scholarship finalist all the more impressive.

I’ve really gotten good at balancing my time. I need to spend this much time on homework before I go to work.”

It’s that well-rounded approach that WKU is looking for as conduct face-to-face interviews in the Presidential Scholarship screening process.

 “We wanted to be able to meet the students and communicate with them and find out a little more about them on a personal level.”

It’s nerve wracking, waiting for the interview, but for Alex’s mom, well she’s been here before.

 “My oldest daughter was a finalist two years ago, not a new experience for me but it is for my youngest.”

So is there added pressure on Alex knowing her older sister made it to this point?

 “It didn’t pressure me necessarily, it just put more motivation behind my school work, positive encouragement to do it cause I wanted to live up to her standards.”

 “I think I did good.”

Once the interview is done, it’s time for a photo-op, a visit with Big Red before lunch in the Topper Club where red towels are placed on each student’s chair.

 “We try to make it as personal as we can…we want these students here, they are the cream of the crop.”

Heady competition but rewarding for these bright students who know they’ve earned the right to be here.

 “It’s taken a lot of hard work and it’s a big deal.

The Presidential scholarship pays full in-state tuition, housing , a book allowance and a meal allowance. Out of the initial 16-hundred or applicants…twenty-three presidential scholarships were awarded this week, including one to Alexandra Oldham. Congratulations!

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