Duke TIP Speaker

VFTH

5/30/13

A successful Louisville surgeon says his association with WKU’s Center for Gifted Studies has impacted his life in ways he never imagined.

Amy Bingham has more in this week’s View from the Hill.

As a middle school student from Richmond in the mid-80’s, Dr. William Gump spent part of his summers at Western Kentucky University. He says the programs offered to gifted and talented students provide a gateway to the world.

Will Gump has a message for the smartest seventh graders in Kentucky.

 “I went to MIT and became a brain surgeon and you can do that if you want.”

The Duke Talent Identification program recognizes students who score the same as college bound seniors on one part of the ACT or SAT.

And Will was once in their shoes. His middle school ACT score qualified him to attend the VAMPY camp for gifted and talented students here at WKU.

 “As a 7th grader who had not really gotten out all that much it was a little bit of a daunting prospect to spend three weeks away from home in far off exotic Bowling Green.”

After the first summer, you couldn’t keep him away.

 “I’m certain that I would not be where I am today if not for this program.

Where he is today is performing brain surgery on babies at Kosair Children’s Hospital in Louisville.

(Welcome to the first day of the rest of your life)

 “When they have the opportunity to see young people, young adults who have done exceptionally well and speak to the importance of working harder than they currently are, I think that’s a win.”

These students are also prime candidates to attend the Center’s summer camps and the acclaimed Gatton Academy.

“It’s a wonderful opportunity to let them know of the many opportunities and advantages we have here.”

Dr. Gump knows first hand it’s the perfect setting for gifted students poised to reach for their dreams.

 “The world is yours do something good with it.”

This is the 31st year the Center for Gifted Students has hosted the Kentucky Recognition Ceremony for Duke Tip. For information on the Center, log onto wku-dot-edu forward slash gifted.

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

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