Geology Graduate

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WKU’s five academic colleges will recognize more than 14-hundred fall graduates in ceremonies on Saturday.

Amy Bingham has the story of one WKU graduate whose nearly decade long educational journey is leading him to a six figure salary in this week’s View from the Hill.

Mike Arthur is getting his Master of Science degree this weekend . In the spring he will join Exxon, the largest oil company in the world as an exploration geologist. It was a unique path that led him to WKU and eventually his dream job.

Mike Arthur has always loved to climb.

“When I was younger I was rock climbing a lot and traveling but school wasn’t something that was always at the forefront.”

Never the less he started college back in 2009 in California.

“I was just there. I didn’t have a goal.”

After floating between community colleges Arthur finally got serious about his education and transferred to the University of Montana.

“I went from being a really bad student to being a 4.0 student.”

Arthur spent a year trying to get into graduate school. That’s where he crossed paths with Dr. Royhan Gani.

“I had actually applied with him at a different university. He basically emailed me back and said ‘you have a great package but I’m actually switching universities.”

Turns out Dr. Gani was transferring here, to WKU.

“A couple months later he actually emailed me and said hey I’m at my new university now. Would you like to submit your package? And we’ll see if maybe you can be a fit down here.”

“The first question I asked was what’s career objective, he said I’d like to have a good job in oil and gas exploration company, challenging. I said fine, right up my ally, come on over.”

Arthur fit right into Dr. Gani’s plan to start an Imperial Barrel Award team at WKU. Advancing to the world competition in Houston, WKU didn’t win, but Arthur got the attention of Exxon and snagged an important internship.

“After that I knew that was the goal I wanted to do.”

From there Arthur had to outshine 35 other interns to get a job with Exxon which he is set to begin in the spring.

“It’s many, many years of hard work that finally comes together for something like that.”

“There’s no chance I would be where I am if I had not come here.”

Dr. Gani isn’t at all surprised that the student who loved to climb rocks as a kid has gotten his dream job.

“His hobby is rock climbing but as a Hilltopper he learned pretty well how to climb to success.”

Again Arthur is among 1400 fall graduates that will be recognized at ceremonies this Saturday at Diddle Arena. The first one starts at eight am and the final one starts at six.

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

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