White Squirrel Weather Mobile Classroom

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  WKU’s meteorology department is taking it’s forecasting skills on location and helping with emergency management in the process.

Amy Bingham has more on the White Squirrel Weather mobile classroom in this week’s View from the Hill.

  Thanks to a partnership with Environmental Health and Safety, White Squirrel Weather is able to take the show on the road when it comes to delivering real time forecasting in the field.

  “I’ve always had a fascination with weather every since I was young.”

Louisville junior John Bowen knew WKU was the school for him because of it’s meteorology program.

The recent unveiling of a mobile classroom just solidified his decision.

  “It was super surreal to me seeing them cut the ribbon and knowing this is a tool I can utilize for outreach and public events. “

Public events like last weekend’s Cage the Elephant concert and football game where the White Squirrel Weather Mobile Unit made it’s debut.

 “We had eight or nine students with radios out in the field during the concert king of just being situationally aware of what’s going on.

It’s exactly the type of scenario White Squirrel Weather director Josh Durkee had in mind for the unit.

 “We wanted to provide an improved mechanism for weather safety on campus.”

It’s all possible because of this trailer donated by Environmental Health and Safety.

 “It was used for storage and had been sitting, it was no longer needed.  It’s 18 years old. We retrofitted it and redid it.”

Durkee says the mobile unit is no different than the forecasting lab on campus.

“We have our own weather system so we can monitor weather right at the unit.  We have mobile internet so we can have access to data anywhere we go.”

WKU President Timothy Caboni calls  he mobile classroom  a perfect example of applied research.

Fitting the mission of the university and getting students like John ready for a successful career.

  “This gives students real tangible outcomes.  They get experiences and this provides an opportunity to get those jobs they actually want.”

Durkee says the number of meteorology majors at WKU has grown over the last ten years from ten to close to eighty.

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

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