Mother/Daughter Graduating

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More than thirteen hundred fall graduates will be recognized in ceremonies on Saturday, including a mother/daughter marking this milestone together.

The two also have the shared experience of serving in the military as Amy Bingham explains in this week’s View from the Hill.

All the hard work and sacrifice is about to pay off for Jennifer Theiry and her daughter Tori. Family commitments and military service have been a big part of their journey toward higher education.

 “I didn’t even notice it until this semester. I was like holy cow you’re graduating, I’m graduating. It was so coincidental.”

And unique. Jennifer Theiry and her daughter Tori have been hammering away at their degrees while also serving in the military.

 “It was a juggling act but I’m so glad that I did what I did the way I did it because it really made me into a stronger person. “

 “The hardest part was when I was deployed because I was in an austere location and our internet was crazy all the time, you never knew if it was gonna be up or down.”

Jennifer, now a single mom of three who is still on active duty, is getting her masters in Organizational Leadership more than fifteen years after receiving her undergraduate degree at WKU.

 “ I was a non-traditional student, I was 25 when I started, she was seven when I graduated, and then I also had my second daughter while I was a student here.”

 “I remember walking up giant hills all the time with my mom because when we were out of school she’d have to take me to class with her.”

Victoria, now 24, married and expecting her first child just wrapped up six years in the Kentucky air national guard while getting her degree in interdisciplinary business studies.

 “I never even really questioned that I was gonna go to college because it was pretty much ingrained in me that I was going.”

It hasn’t been easy, but mom and daughter have been there for each other….

 “Moral support (laughs) listening to each other complain.”

…And are looking forward to crossing the finish line together.

“I think it’s amazing.”

“I still managed to get it done in a little over four years which is a miracle.”

The recognition ceremonies for WKU’s five colleges begin at eight am Saturday with the last one starting at six pm in Diddle Arena. All fall graduates are encouraged to participate in Topper Walk as part of WKU’s 187th commencement ceremony on May 15th.

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