National Basket Conference

VFTH

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The practice of basket weaving has been used in cultures around the world for thousands and thousands of years.

In addition to landing a national basket conference, WKU is also hosting an impressive basket exhibit as Amy Bingham shows us in this week’s View from the Hill.

A new basket exhibit was unveiled last week in conjunction with the kick off of a national basket conference.

One hundred and forty people (one from as far away as Australia) came to

WKU to learn --and share-- as much about basket making as they possibly could.

 “I’m a graduate of the folk studies program here at WKU.”

Beth Hester is bringing her renowned basket making skills back to her alma mater.

 “I thought what if we have a class that teaches technique? So that’s what my class is about.”

Hester taught at one of the thirteen workshops offered last week during the National Basketry Organization’s 10th Biennial Conference.

 “Baskets have been around for thousands and thousands of years.”

Hester convinced her fellow NBO board members that WKU would be the perfect host for the conference.

 “This area of Kentucky, I can’t speak for the rest of the state, has a wonderful tradition in folk life, folk crafts and basket making.”

Several departments joined forces to maximize this experience.

 “That’s one of the things that we kept telling them how we are a student-centered applied research university and how this can be a touchstone for their learning.”

Bjorkman says an added bonus of hosting the conference was unveiling “Basketry Now: Tenth Anniversary Exhibition” which will remain up through December first.

 “You’re gonna come here and think baskets, but you’re certainly not gonna be seeing the baskets you might have thought you’d be seeing. They’re made of multi-media things like everything from wax to lennon paper to wood to iron and metal.”

Creative exhibits that will impact the campus and community for months to come.

 “What a wonderful opportunity for our conference to see fiber arts, basketry work from all over this country and outside the country as well.”

The “Basketry Now” exhibit features 84 works of art by 55 artists, including those from the Netherlands, the UK, New Zealand, and Canada. You can see it at the Kentucky Museum through December first.

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

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