The Commons at Helm Library – Furniture Alum

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A WKU alum who studied interior design played a huge role in choosing the furniture for The Commons at Helm Library.

Amy Bingham takes us inside the reimagined space for a look at her work in this week’s View from the Hill.

“Transformation is an understatement for what’s been happening the past two years at The Commons at Helm Library. An alum who helped choose the furniture and finishing touches recently got a sneak peek inside.”

“I think it came out amazing. You know there’s so many puzzle pieces to create a building like this so actually seeing the final puzzle is so great so see.”

It’s been a year since Ariel Burkhart helped pick out furniture and finishings for The Commons at Helm Library.

“We would come in with totes full of fabric and spend a full day worth of deciding what fabric is going where.”

As a student, the 2014 WKU Alum was an intern for Planning Design and Construction. She’s now an interior designer for Office Resource Incorporated in Lexington.

“Whenever I graduated from WKU and I started working at ORI I knew there was a possibility I would be designing for Western Kentucky and the fact that I’ve gotten to do multiple projects now, it is so meaningful to me.”

Now ORI’s fun fabric designs are helping tell the story of a unique and reimagined library in the heart of campus.

“This is a building unlike any other that we have on campus. I think what’s really interesting about this building is we used a lot of old and mixed it in with the new.”

Designing during the pandemic also brought about some changes.

“We had to kind of adjust our design. We added some screens places. You’ll see some more individual tables, some more individual lounge chairs to allow the students to be able to space out.”

Ariel says her favorite piece of furniture is the joel chairs.

“We picked out a plaid fabric that we just thought kind of represented what we wanted this building to be which was youthful but also very classic and modern.”

Leaving a classic and modern mark on her alma mater.

“I’m able to come back and still spread design cheer everywhere.”

“The Commons at Helm Library will be opening later this semester.

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

The new space will offer multiple dining options including Moe’s, Panda Express and Spencer’s Coffee.

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