Lifeworks at WKU adds Satellite Library location

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It’s a new chapter for Lifeworks at WKU thanks to a collaboration with the Warren County Public Library.

Amy Bingham has more on Kentucky’s first library dedicated to the neurodiverse population in this week’s View from the Hill.

One of my very first segments back in April of 2008 centered around a child on the autism spectrum who benefitted greatly from the Suzanne Vitale Clinical Education Complex. Now a young adult, Henry Pepper is still receiving services, but now from Lifeworks at WKU, a transitional program that has added a satellite library to its growing list of opportunities.

Harris Pepper \ Parent

Courtney Stevens \ Dir., Warren County Public Library

Mary Lloyd Moore \ CEC Executive Director

When I first met Henry Pepper he was eight years old and the new clinical education complex at WKU was about to be named for Suzanne Vitale.

Now at age 23, Henry is a part of Lifeworks at WKU, a transitional space that serves the needs of young adults on the autism spectrum.

“The thing I probably enjoy doing most is giving these parents hope. ‘Hey, this is not the end of the world when you get a diagnosis of autism or being on the spectrum. I can show you a plan for your child’s early life all the way through adulthood.”

Henry and his dad Harris were on the front row this week when Lifeworks at WKU made history by opening a satellite campus for the neurodiverse population.

“It’s been a match made in heaven.”

Warren County Public Library Director Courtney Stevens had the idea for this collaboration months ago when she was asked to speak at Lifeworks about her career as an author.

“We had this amazing conversation and it really just kind of set my heart on fire and I started looking around this space and realizing what David, Molly, Darius and the whole team here are trying to accomplish.”

Stevens says 20 year veteran librarian Earl Willis is the perfect person to lead the program.

“I’ve been so excited not just to see him be great at his job but him to be great here and meeting a need that there’s no way we could meet without him.”

This is just the latest offering in this two year transition to work and independent living program.

“We opened in 2020 right smack dab in the middle of the pandemic. We pushed forward and are thrilled to be in existence for three years now.”

And for Henry, it’s been a journey his family embarked on without ever leaving his hometown.

“I’ve looked all over the country and it’s amazing what we have in Bowling Green Kentucky”

For now the satellite location only serves those participating in the LifeWorks program but will be expanding access to clients of the Suzanne Vitale Clinical Education Complex.

On a personal note, I want to thank WKU and WBKO for the opportunity to create and share the View from the Hill segment each week for the past fifteen years.

I’m retiring from WKU at the end of this month.

For the final time for me, with this week’s View from the Hill, I’m Amy Bingham.

You can learn more about Lifeworks at WKU by logging on to www.LifeworksatWKU.org.

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