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TOP STORY

## WKU dedicates new mobile weather classroom

By AARON MUDD [amudd@bgdailynews.com](mailto:amudd@bgdailynews.com) Sep 7, 2018



Western Kentucky University unveiled a new Mobile Weather Classroom on Friday equipped with an on-the-go weather station that meteorology students can use to make forecasts in the field.

For WKU President Timothy Caboni, the mobile classroom is a perfect example of the kind of university he hopes WKU will become.

“This is the best example that you can imagine of applied learning and applied research,” he said, adding the new classroom illustrates the department’s successful approach.

“Because of this unit you, our students, will have a remarkable and improved experience and I’m thankful for that.”

The mobile classroom is the latest initiative of White Squirrel Weather, which involves students in providing real-time weather observations and forecasts for emergency planning and management.

The classroom is an 18-year-old trailer repurposed by students during a summer project. Outfitted with several large monitors and its own weather station, the classroom uses the same type of software and equipment students would use on the job.

“We’re proud to say that we’re going to initialize the operation of this tomorrow at the Cage the Elephant concert and the first home football game of the season,” said Josh Durkee, an associate professor of meteorology and geography and the director of White Squirrel Weather.

Just under two years old, White Squirrel Weather was designed to “recruit and attract high-quality students,” Durkee said.

Over time, it involved into a project to retain students and give them employable skills, he added.



Now, White Squirrel Weather has six weather stations across WKU’s regional campuses and its Bowling Green campuses.

“We’re measuring all sorts of hyperlocal, WKU weather variables within our community,” Durkee said, adding the project includes an app and a website at [www.wkuweather.com](http://www.wkuweather.com).

Carson Meredith, a Louisville senior studying meteorology, sees the new classroom as an asset for WKU’s meteorology program.

“We can apply what we learned in class to the real world,” he said.

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## **Aaron Mudd**

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