



Western Michigan University
ScholarWorks at WMU

WMU President John Dunn

Office of the President

1-9-2017

President's Perspective (Jan. 2017)

John M. Dunn

Western Michigan University, john.dunn@wmich.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/dunn>



Part of the Higher Education Commons

WMU ScholarWorks Citation

Dunn, John M., "President's Perspective (Jan. 2017)" (2017). *WMU President John Dunn*. 45.
<https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/dunn/45>

This Message to University is brought to you for free and open access by the Office of the President at ScholarWorks at WMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in WMU President John Dunn by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at WMU. For more information, please contact wmu-scholarworks@wmich.edu.



President's Perspective: Jan. 9, 2017

Dear Colleagues:

The spring semester is upon us, and with the dizzying speed of events over the past few weeks, this promises to be an action-packed semester that unfolds quickly. It will be a period of change, growth, accomplishment, thoughtful analysis and celebration.

In six weeks, on Feb. 26, we will mark the 60th anniversary of the day WMU became Michigan's fourth public university. Gov. G. Mennen Williams signed legislation that day to formally designate what had been Western Michigan College as Western Michigan University.

I have had the privilege of leading this University over the past 10 years, and am looking forward to what will be a period of review and the opportunity to meet and greet many University friends before my June 30 retirement. If all goes as planned, we will welcome the ninth president of WMU to our community sometime late this spring. My focus in the immediate future will be to ensure the University is on the most sound footing possible for the new president, so WMU can continue its strong move into the future under new leadership.

A season for the history books

It will be a long time before memories of the 2016 football season even begin to fade. The student athletes who made up our MAC Championship/Cotton Bowl team reflected the qualities we want always to represent our University. Along with the 13-1 season on the field, they saw tremendous success in the classroom. Among the 70-plus "firsts" for the team was the designation of a record seven team members as MAC Distinguished Scholar Athletes and quarterback **Zach Terrell** was named the Campbell Trophy winner. The latter is known as college football's "academic Heisman." Add in All-American designations for **Corey Davis** and **Taylor Moton**, and it was pretty much the kind of success story any university could wish for.

As Athletic Director **Kathy Beauregard** noted in a press conference last week, having a season like that may mean losing your coach to another school, and that's what has happened. We wish P.J. Fleck all the best in his new opportunity. Kathy Beauregard, though, clearly has an eye for talent, and I'm confident that we will find another exceptional and motivated coach, who understands the essential combination of winning on the field as well as a commitment to player academic success and service to the community.



Cotton Bowl experience a huge plus for University

The Cotton Bowl provided a great opportunity to showcase the University. Our student athletes and their conduct received numerous favorable comments. Our players were courteous, appreciative, and respectful of the staff and others who manage the Cotton Bowl, including the cooks and others who provided special touches to accommodate the needs of our athletes. The Bronco Marching Band, dance and cheer teams were spectacular and served to showcase the talent of our student body. While I admit being biased, our marching band clearly won the battle of the bands over a very strong Wisconsin band.

The pre-game Bronco Stampede headed by Tim Terrentine provide a memorable event that attracted a sold-out crowd of more than 3,000 fans. And certainly not to be overlooked, Bronco alumni and friends turned out in record numbers. The fan response to our team as the players left the field was loud in applause and appreciation—a tribute well deserved! Losing is never easy, but our team and fans understood the more important message about the totality of the season and the pride we all feel for our University.

Athletic success not confined to football

Our student athletes were in overdrive over the winter closure. While the football team was in Dallas, our hockey team captured Michigan honors by winning the Great Lakes Invitational

Tournament Dec. 30 at Joe Louis Arena. Our team defeated Michigan State University to make it to the tournament championship round, where they defeated Michigan Technological University in overtime. They're another group of fine WMU student athletes raising the University's profile.

The semester ahead

MLK events

Beginning this week, our annual celebration of the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. will take place. Our yearly visitation event for middle school students and their families is Saturday at the Bernhard Center. The communitywide celebration is Sunday at Mt. Zion Baptist Church. And Monday, the official MLK holiday, will see a day of community service, a convocation at Kalamazoo College's Stetson Chapel, our annual commemorative walk and a community celebration. Additional events, centered around this year's theme, "The Transformative Power of a Unified Dream," will take place before and after the officially designated holiday.

Spring convocation

The annual spring convocation and awards ceremony--one of our newer campus traditions—is set for Feb. 17. The event will include a series of Scholar Talks featuring some of our faculty colleagues.

Special guests

Throughout the semester, some of our marquee lecture series and fine arts presentations will bring to campus important guests. Guest artists and speakers will enhance the vitality of our learning environment and lead discussions on important topics—economics, diversity, science, entrepreneurship and ethics.

One highly anticipated visitor on March 29 will be **Sybrina Fulton**, mother of Trayvon Martin. She will talk about her work to turn grief into advocacy for empowering youth. She is the Lee Honors College Lyceum Lecture Series keynote speaker this spring.

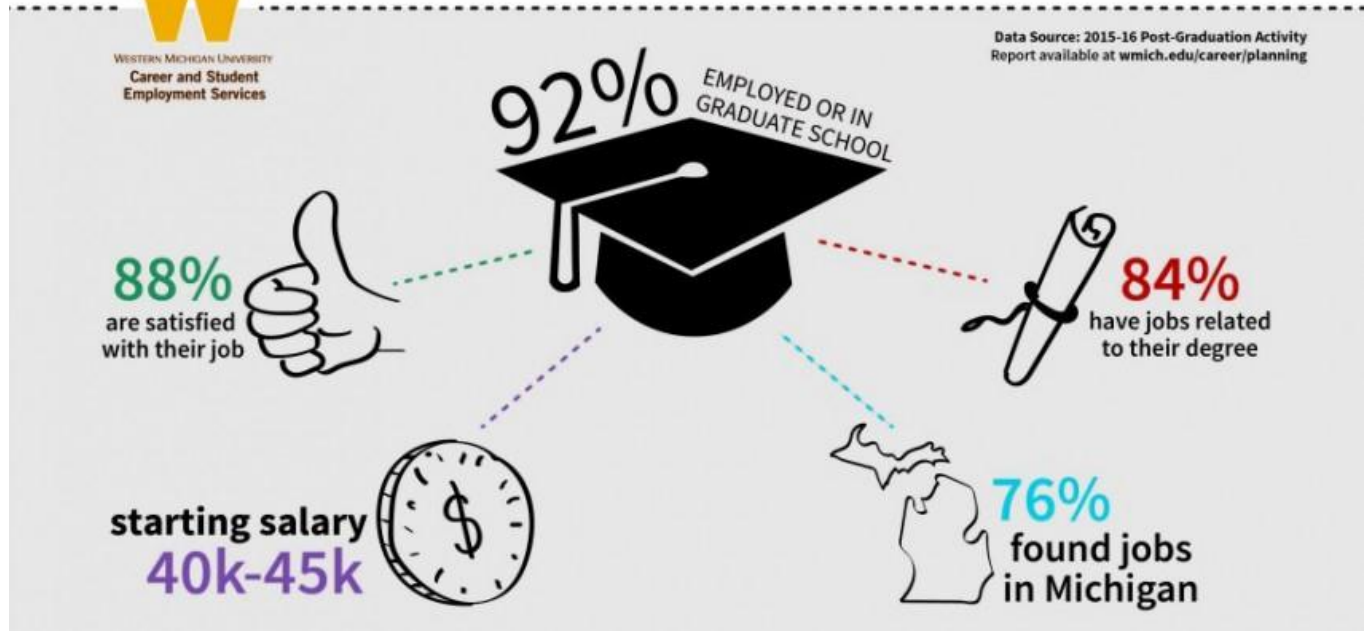




WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
Career and Student
Employment Services

Post Graduation Success

Data Source: 2015-16 Post-Graduation Activity
Report available at wmich.edu/career/planning



Success metrics

I usually like to close messages like this one with news of faculty, staff and student accolades and accomplishments. There are always many from which to choose, but I've decided this time to focus on data just compiled that illustrates the success of every member of the WMU community.

For several years, we've made an extraordinary effort to track the success of our recent graduates. **Dr. Ewa Urban** of our Student Career and Employment Services has been documenting the employment and graduate studies plans of our students. For those who graduated in the 2015-16 academic year, we now know that 92 percent of our graduates are actively engaged three months after graduation—up 4 percentage points from the previous year's information.

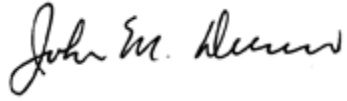
Dr. Urban found that 71 percent of our graduates were employed full time, with 84 percent of them working in a jobs related to their degrees. An additional 14 percent are enrolled in graduate programs, and the rest are self-employed, employed part time, in postgraduate internships or fellowships, in the military or in a full-time volunteer position.

[Complete data broken out by academic program and degree level](#)

Please remember these figures. And if you ever are called on to defend the importance of a college education, feel free to do a bit of boasting about what we do so well here at Western Michigan University. Every member of our campus community can claim credit for this fulfillment of our goals.

Thank you for all you do to make our University community a success. My wish for all of us is that this be a happy, productive and exciting new year.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John M. Dunn". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a stylized "M".

John M. Dunn
President