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Commencement Exercises-12:00pm

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WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES

Saturday, December 15, 2007, 12 noon

John M. Dunn, President, Presiding

PROCESSIONAL
The Western Brass Ensemble
Steve Wolfinbarger, Conductor

President Dunn: “Good afternoon, I am John Dunn, president of Western Michigan University. This is my first commencement at WMU and I am delighted to be part of this great university.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and the entire University community I want to welcome you to our two hundred ninety-first (291st) commencement ceremony.

Will the audience please stand, as able, for the National Anthem, sung by the Brothers of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia conducted by Nicholas Michiels (MI-kels).”

(President Dunn steps away from the microphone)

THE NATIONAL ANTHEM
Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia
Nicholas Michiels, Conductor
WELCOMING REMARKS AND INTRODUCTIONS

President Dunn:

“Commencement is a very special occasion - a time for celebration, a time for reflection, a time for closure, and a time for new beginnings.

Graduates, I applaud and thank you for choosing to participate in today’s event. Your presence allows us to recognize you and, equally important, to permit expressions of happiness, pride, and love which is so evident in the faces of those gathered here to observe you graduate.

This is YOUR day! You have only two responsibilities: 1) to allow us to honor you and; 2) to reflect and say thanks to those---and you know best who they are---who have contributed to your academic, professional and personal development.

The latter first---the THANKS part. Graduates, please stand and those in front of me, turn and face the audience and remain standing. Would the Moms and Dads in the audience please stand? (PAUSE) How about the Grandparents? And Great Grandparents? (PAUSE) Spouses, those special partners, and children? (PAUSE) Brothers and Sisters? (PAUSE) Aunts, Uncles and other Relatives? (PAUSE) And, Friends? (PAUSE)

This day is a very special day for you, our graduates, and it is my privilege and honor to preside at your commencement ceremony.

You will join more than 165,000 WMU alumni from all over Michigan and from around the world.

We shall award over 2000 degrees today.

More than 1500 of you will receive bachelor's degrees.
Almost 450 will receive master's degrees.

And 44 of you will be receiving doctoral degrees today.

The next group that deserves recognition is our faculty. They are the very heart of this University. Their intellect, creativity and passion for teaching inspire each of us. Their faith and confidence in your abilities throughout your college years has built the foundation for your professional future. Without them this institution would not exist. Therefore, it is to our faculty that we express special appreciation today. I ask the faculty members to stand and all of you to please join me in applauding them for the fine education they have provided to you! (PAUSE)

Let me now turn to my other colleagues on the stage and I ask each of them to rise as I mention them by category.

They are the executive officers, deans and chairs of the University, and representatives of the Faculty Senate, the University Chapter of the American Association of University Professors, the Administrative Professional Association, the Professional Support Staff Organization, and the Alumni Association. (PAUSE)

Our University is governed by an autonomous Board of Trustees, appointed by the governor of the State of Michigan. The trustees are private citizens who serve the University without remuneration and who set policy direction for the campus. The University is very grateful to these men and women. Representing the Board of Trustees are Vice Chair Ken Miller, Trustee Bill Johnston, Trustee Bill Martin, and Trustee Emerita Carol Waszkiewicz (WAH-sko-wits).

At this time, I would like to recognize those of you who are graduating with honors. Will those with honor cords, McNair Scholars and all honorary society members, please rise so that we can recognize the special distinctions you have earned. (PAUSE)
We also wish to acknowledge participants of our "Study Abroad Programs." These graduates participated in study programs around the globe. (PAUSE)

All of our graduates have their own stories of the determination, commitment and sacrifice that go into achieving what we celebrate today. I now ask Vice President for Student Affairs Diane Anderson to share a few stories that reflect the spirit each of you and your families have brought to today’s commencement and to remind you of how special the class of 2007 truly is.”

(President Dunn to his seat and Vice President Anderson to the podium.)

Vice President Anderson: STUDENT STORIES

“All of our graduates have inspiring stories to tell about the dedication, hard work and support that it took for them to get here for this important occasion. There isn't time to tell everyone's story, so I'll just share a little information about a few of the wonderful people we're graduating today.

But before I do, I'd like to mention that WMU enrolls about 300 military veterans, and 29 of them are receiving their degrees today. Many of these students have served in Afghanistan or Iraq, and some will be redeployed once they graduate.

In addition, five of the students graduating today have been participating in the Army ROTC program offered through our Department of Military Science and are slated to be commissioned as second lieutenants.

They include Kari Drescher of Bay City, Michigan, whom we'll hear more about in just a moment, as well as Raul Galvan of Hartford, Michigan, who is earning a bachelor's degree through our Extended University Programs and will serve in the Adjutant General's Corps.

We're immensely proud of these cadets, as we are of everyone who participates in ROTC and everyone who has served in the military. We're
enormously grateful for your dedication and the sacrifices you've made on our behalf.

I'd like to say a little more about Kari Drescher, who is earning a bachelor's degree in dietetics with high honors through the College of Education and will serve in the Army Reserve's Medical Service Corps. Kari joined the reserve as a military police soldier in 2002 while furthering her education at Delta Community College. Eight months after graduating from training and with one semester to finish, she was deployed to Baghdad, where she served as a detainee processor, battalion radio operator and prisoner escort. After returning home, Kari followed in the footsteps of her father and older brother and enrolled at WMU. While an ROTC cadet, she completed the Leadership Development and Assessment Course as one of the top five cadets in her 400-person regiment. Later, Kari's outstanding performance won her a ranking of 182nd out of the 4,000 cadets on the 2007 National Cadet Order of Merit List. After graduating, Kari will complete her basic officer training, then continue her dietetics training.

Another College of Education student graduating today is Christopher Sell of Williamston, Michigan, who is earning a bachelor's degree in elementary education English with high honors. A member of the Lee Honor College, he has been an impressive undergraduate researcher and was named by the School of Communication as its 2007 Presidential Scholar. Chris, who would like to become a university administrator, has also working closely with our admissions, orientation and residence life offices.

Another of our students, Emily Hoke of Hastings, Michigan, has continued a long family tradition of both attending WMU and entering the education profession. This tradition was started by her great grandfather and is particularly special today because Emily is earning her bachelor's degree in elementary education while her dad, Stephen, is earning his master's degree in educational leadership. Emily's mother, Kathy, and sister, Amanda, are already education alumni and her younger brother, Jackson, soon will be as well.
Like Emily's father, many of our graduates today are nontraditional students who have consistently worked either full or part time while attending college. They include Melody Pillow of Coloma, Michigan, who is earning a bachelor's degree in family studies with highest honors after eight years of effort and study. Melody was working full time for most of these years, so she took the majority of her classes through our branch campus in Benton Harbor. As a student in the TRIO Student Success Program, Melody is the first person in her family to earn a college diploma—summa cum laude no less. She plans a career as a parenting educator and child advocate, and has been a wonderful inspiration for her two young daughters.

Among the many other graduates today who can relate to Melody's persistence and hard work are Betty Dennis and Erika Carr of Kalamazoo. Both are WMU staff members who every day help students enter college and succeed in their studies. Now, both women have earned doctoral degrees in educational leadership while working full time and they have tailored their educations to better serve WMU students. Betty directs our University Curriculum program in the Center for Academic Support Programs and oversees advising for students who haven't declared a major. Erika directs our GEAR UP/College Day Program, which helps low-income middle and high school students discover firsthand the potential of a college education and then helps prepare them to enter and succeed in college.

Our employees are not only students themselves, they also recommend WMU to the people most important to them. For one staff member in Extended University Programs, that has included her mother, Carol Kenaga, of Pinckney, Michigan. Carol is earning a bachelor's degree today in a student integrated curriculum. This special curriculum allowed Carol, who left WMU in her final semester of study in the early 1970s, to realize her dream of a college diploma as she earns a general bachelor's degree today.

The final group of students graduating today represent the College of Aviation. Among those taking to the skies after graduation will be Morad
Leeal of Farmington Hills, Michigan. He's earning a bachelor's degree in aviation flight science and has landed a job as a pilot and first officer for Delta Airlines. While at WMU, he's been a member of the Sky Broncos precision flight team and he completed a double minor in German and finance.

Classmate Lauren Becker of Commerce Township, Michigan, is earning a bachelor's degree in aviation science and administration with honors. She has already accepted a job in airport operations in New Jersey. Lauren has a history of leadership and service here and worked for the orientation office and as an admissions ambassador. In addition, Lauren was a sorority member, an officer for the Panhellenic Conference and represented WMU this year as homecoming queen.

Congratulations and the best of luck to all of you.”

(Vice President Anderson to her seat and President Dunn to the podium.)

President Dunn: “There are many more stories that could be told. Many of you held down jobs working long hours while being full- or part-time students.

Some finished your studies in record time while others enjoyed the University so much that you extended your stay and became what has become affectionately known as "super seniors."(PAUSE)

A great number of you are international students who have studied far away from your home and family for many years. Some of your parents have traveled half way around the world to be here with you today. As you journey back to your home countries, you have our best wishes and the hope that you take fond memories of Michigan and your University with you. (PAUSE)
And many of our graduates are non-traditional students who have family and job obligations and for whom being a student came after family and work. We have great admiration for your achievements. (PAUSE)

While you have worked hard we hope that you have also enjoyed your time here at the University. For many of you, this has been your first experience away from home and family. So while you have learned much from your course work, we are sure that you have also learned much about life and living. (PAUSE)

We hope that the many friendships you have formed will stand the test of time and that you will include among them associations that you have made with our faculty and staff. For just as we have been an important part of your life, you too have become a part of ours. (PAUSE)

Vice Chair Ken Miller will now extend a welcome to you on behalf of the Board.”

(President Dunn to his seat and Trustee Miller to podium)

Trustee Miller: “Good afternoon!

This is a great day for all of us because Western Michigan University--its governing board, faculty and staff--and your families, friends and peers are all very proud of your academic achievements. Congratulations to the members of the Class of 2007. Please accept our best wishes for your continued success. We hope that you will keep in contact with our alma mater and that you will come
back to visit us from time to time. Again, congratulations, and good luck!”

(President Dunn goes to podium)

CONFERRING OF DEGREES

President Dunn: “It is now time to call upon Provost Harik to come forward for the conferring of degrees.”

(Provost Harik joins President Dunn at podium.)

Provost Harik: “Will those receiving a Doctoral or Master's Degree please rise, as able. (PAUSE)

President Dunn, it is my pleasure to present these candidates who have completed all the requirements for a Doctoral or Master's Degree as prescribed by the graduate faculty of this University.” (PAUSE)

President Dunn: “By the authority of the State of Michigan, vested in the Board of Trustees, I hereby confer upon you the appropriate degrees indicated in your programs with all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities appertaining thereto.

Please be seated.”

(Provost Harik will introduce the Deans/Professor as they come forward.)
Provost Harik: “Will Professor Robert Aardema of the College of Aviation, please come forward.” (Acknowledge Prof. Aardema’s upcoming retirement)

Professor Aardema: “Will those receiving a Bachelor's degree through the College of Aviation, please rise. (PAUSE)

President Dunn, it is my pleasure to present these candidates who have completed all requirements for the Bachelor's degree as prescribed by the faculty of this College.

Please be seated.”

Provost Harik: “Will Dean Gary Wegenke of the College of Education, please come forward.”

Dean Wegenke: “Will those receiving a Bachelor's degree or a teaching certificate through the College of Education, please rise. (PAUSE)

President Dunn, it is my pleasure to present to you these candidates who have completed all the requirements for the Bachelor's degree as prescribed by the faculty of this College.

Please be seated.”

(After introducing Dean Johnson, Provost Harik returns to his seat)

Dean Johnson: “Will those receiving a Bachelor's degree through Extended University Programs, please rise. (PAUSE)
President Dunn, it is my pleasure to present to you these candidates who have completed all the requirements for the Bachelor's degree as prescribed by the faculty of this University.

Please be seated.” (PAUSE)

President Dunn: “Will all those receiving a Bachelor's degree rise once again please. (PAUSE)

By the authority of the State of Michigan, vested in the Board of Trustees, I hereby confer upon you the appropriate degrees indicated in your programs with all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities appertaining thereto.

Please be seated.” (PAUSE)

PRESENTATION OF DOCTORAL DIPLOMAS
(NO MUSIC - NAMES ANNOUNCED)

President Dunn: “Will the doctoral candidates please come forward as Dr. Lewis Pyenson, Dean of the Graduate College announces their names.

The Trustees and the graduates' advisors will place the hoods on the shoulders of the doctoral graduates.’ (PAUSE)

(President Dunn and Trustee Miller to diploma table and Dean Pyenson to podium. The doctoral candidates will rise and proceed to the stage. Guides will assist in directing the candidates. Dean Pyenson will call
candidates/advisors forward. He will indicate the candidates by name and announce their degrees. President Dunn will present labeled diplomas on diploma table. Trustees Miller and Martin and advisors will place hoods on shoulders of doctoral graduates.)

Trustee Miller and Advisors:
   Erika Carr
   Betty Dennis
   Kelli Exteves
   Brett Geier
   Paul Giroux
   Shamika Hall - August graduate
   Michael Jansen
   Barbara Johnson
   Barbara June

Trustee Martin and Advisors:
   Kay Keck - August graduate
   Jafar Momani - August graduate
   Bobbi Morehead
   Eugene Okoli
   Christopher Richmond
   Mark St. Martin
   Monica Thiagarajan
   Gayle Thompson
   Stephen Worst

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PRESENTATION OF MASTER'S DIPLOMAS
(NO MUSIC – NAMES ANNOUNCED)

Provost Harik:  “Will the graduates receiving Master's degrees please come forward to receive their diplomas as Ms. Michele McLaughlin announces their names.” (PAUSE)
(Ms. McLaughlin will go to microphone at right of platform. Deans Shields, Greene, and Hopfensperger (two at one time) will assist President Dunn, Trustees Martin and Miller (one at a time) with presentation of diplomas.)

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PRESENTATION OF UNDERGRADUATE DIPLOMAS
(NO MUSIC – NAMES ANNOUNCED)

Provost Harik: "Will the graduates receiving Bachelor's degrees please come forward to receive their diplomas as their names are announced by Ms. McLaughlin and Mr. James Williams." (PAUSE)

(Mr. Williams joins Ms. McLaughlin at microphones. Professor/Deans assist President Dunn and Trustees with presentation of diplomas.)

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ALUMNI ASSOCIATION INDUCTION

President Dunn: "Will Mr. Kirk Hoffman, president of the Western Michigan University Alumni Association, please come forward. Mr. Hoffman is vice president of the King Trust Company, Spring Arbor.

(President Dunn returns to his seat and Mr. Hoffman to the podium)

Mr. Hoffman: REMARKS

(Mr. Hoffman returns to his seat and President Dunn returns to podium.)
CONCLUDING REMARKS

President Dunn: “Congratulations, Class of 2007!

We are at the end of our ceremony. Please permit me a few minutes to share a final thought or two. I intend to heed the words of Franklin Roosevelt who, in giving advice about speech making, quipped “Be sincere, be brief, be seated.”

Graduates, we are proud of you. The receiving of this degree is a significant accomplishment; an honor of which you should be justifiably proud. You are the recipient of a first-class education at a world class university, provided by an outstanding faculty and made possible through the support and affection of family and friends---many of whom are gathered here.

You join an elite group of men and women who have successfully achieved an undergraduate or graduate degree. You have accomplished this in a challenging time in the history of the world. Domestic and international crises consume much of our media attention and thought.

Yet, we see positive signs that inspire and motivate us to even greater heights. As you make your way in the world, I promise you will be struck by how often you learn about or meet a fellow WMU alum. They are literally everywhere and playing significant roles in their professions and world affairs.

You'll find our nearly 165,000 alumni in some surprising places.

- You might meet or hear of James Leisenring (LIE-zen-ring), a 1964 alumnus who is in London as part of the International Accounting Standards Board that is developing a single set of understandable and enforceable global accounting standards.
• If accounting is your field, you might also want to know about 1974 alumnus Dennis Nally, who is the chairman and senior partner of the US firm of PricewaterhouseCoopers.

• As you watch news reports next year about the U.S.S. Kitty Hawk, one of America's 11 aircraft carriers, and learn of its final journey home from the Middle East for decommissioning, take note of the commander in charge of that warship and its 5,000-sailor crew and full complement of aircraft. He's Capt. Todd Zecchin (ZECK-in), a 1980 WMU alumnus.

• Should you head to the University of Minnesota for graduate school, you might want to know that the Big Ten university's president, Dr. Robert Bruininks, is a fellow alum. He graduated from WMU in 1964.

• If you're a radio fan and fond of listening to ABC Radio's national news correspondent Jim Hickey, please know, he's a 1969 alumnus.

• If you're addicted to the wonderfully successful Television Food Network--the Food Channel--it will interest you to know it was founded by 1956 alumnus Jack Clifford.

• And the opera fans in the audience, will enjoy knowing that internationally known Susan B. Anthony, a 1975 WMU alumna, is a favorite in the leading opera houses of Paris, Tokyo, Madrid and Vienna.

That's just a snapshot--information about a few WMU alumni who, like you, left WMU determined to do great things. Doing great things requires dedication of one's chosen profession. It also means committing to serve others--your family, friends and those less fortunate. Be generous with your time, talent and resources, and if you do, the rewards--extrinsically and intrinsically-- will be plentiful. Albert Schweitzer, a brilliant philosopher, theologian, musician and physician, in addressing a gathering similar to this one said, "I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who will have sought and found how to serve."
Your faculty and all of our honored guests join with me in wishing you a life filled with service, success and happiness.

Finally, although you have graduated from this University, we invite you to stay connected to us. We need your help in preparing the next generation of professionals. You are partners in this endeavor and we, the faculty and I want you to know that you will always be a part of us. Stay connected, stay tuned and stay in touch. We wish you the very best.

As Capt. Zecchin, said a few weeks ago during an ESPN interview from the U.S.S Kitty Hawk on the other side of the world, "Go Broncos!"

And now, please enjoy the slide presentation prepared for you and remember the good times, the people, places and things from your years here at Western Michigan University.”

(Slide Show - Music by Professor Steve Zegree)

President Dunn: “In closing, there are many people who work very hard to make this commencement ceremony meaningful and memorable for you.

Thank you to Nicholas Michiels and the brothers of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia, Professor Steve Wolfinbarger and the Western Brass Ensemble, Professor Steve Zegree, pianist for the slide production, the commencement committee, and the many people who work behind the scenes and contribute so much to our commencement. (PAUSE)

And finally graduates, thank you for all that you have given to us and for all that you will be giving to society in the years to come. Make your mark on this world, fulfill your dreams and always remember those who helped to make this all possible for you!
(PAUSE)

May you enjoy happiness, peace, and health.

At this time the Brothers of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia will present the Alma Mater of Western Michigan University. After their performance, the Alma Mater will be repeated, at which time, all of you are invited to sing. Please rise for the Alma Mater and remain standing until the platform party leaves the stage.”

**ALMA MATER**
Western, we sing to you Brown and Gold
Western, we bring to you faith untold,
You challenge and inspire,
Your hope is our desire,
We sing to you our Alma Mater, Brown and Gold

**RECESSIONAL**
Western Brass Ensemble
Steve Wolfinbarger, Conductor

(President Dunn and Trustee Miller lead to march off stage.)