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CSM Semi-Annual Summit Keynote

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CSM Semi-annual Summit Keynote
John M. Dunn
Oct. 30, 2009

- Good afternoon, and thank you (presumably Steve East) for that great introduction and welcome to the WMU campus. I'm delighted to be part of your semiannual summit. I have enormous respect for this company. Nearly every day, I am reminded how much your work is part of the very fabric of the Kalamazoo community.

Every morning when I run before the start of my work day, I pass such CMS project gems as the

- The award-winning Richmond Center for Visual Arts,
- The University Medical and Health Sciences Center,
- Bronson Hospital
- Miller Canfield Building
- The Union Cabaret and Grille
- West Michigan Cancer Center
- Kalamazoo Gazette
- Girl Scouts of Glowing Embers

Literally, every route I travel takes me by some spectacular building that was built by CSM.

- After the run, I start my work day and then I begin running into Steve East--at board meetings for Southwest Michigan First and the WMU Foundation and at meetings of the Haworth College of Business Advisory Council. Then I go home in the evening and my wife, Linda, mentions she ran into Steve at a meeting of the KIA board of directors on which they both serve. He's everywhere.

To say CSM and its leadership is well integrated into this community is an understatement. But that's what makes this community work, and CSM is an example of the kind of civic engagement and commitment we at WMU like to instill in our students.

- In 2008, for instance, CSM team members volunteered over 4,500 hours, benefitting some 150 community organizations. And I understand this company has 100 percent participation in United Way.

This community thrives on the kind of volunteerism and partnerships that are a way of life for you at CSM. This has been a good week--actually a great week--to showcase what community engagement, leadership and commitment can do. I'd like to tell you what happened in town this week by starting with yesterday and working backwards.

Wednesday--MichBio

- Yesterday, I was asked to welcome more than people to Kalamazoo's Radisson for the annual statewide gathering--Mich Bio Expo. Those attending were here for two days to get a look at the hot technologies of the future--and to see what Kalamazoo has to offer to business leaders in the life sciences. We had lots to show them.

They toured Stryker Corp.'s Instruments division manufacturing plant, Kalamazoo Valley Community College's High Throughput Screening Center, Borgess Research Institute...and then they moved to WMU's Business Technology and Research Park to tour the wonderfully successful Kalexsyn operation and the Southwest Michigan Innovation Center.

The BTR visit and the tours there were only possible because a decade ago this community's ability to think and act as partners, paved the way for it to preserve its legacy and focus on education and the life sciences as the two industries that will drive it into the future. I told the crowd that I've lived all over the country and that when it comes to the life sciences industry, "folks, this is a sweet spot." We have a long history of life sciences innovation dating back to figures like W.E. Upjohn And Homer Stryker and we've go the community leadership to leverage that legacy,

Tuesday--MichBio High School Career Day

On Tuesday, we brought the education and life sciences sectors together when Western Michigan University hosted MichBio High School Career Day for high school and college students interested in biosciences careers. About 300 high school students heard an address from Stryker Corp.'s vice president of global development and they took tours of WMU's campus and research facilities.

They saw our:

- Biological Imaging Center,
- Van de Graaff Accelerator Facility,
- Molecular Modeling Lab and
- Colleges of Health and Human Services and Engineering and Applied Sciences.

Again, those are facilities made possible because this University and this community long ago recognized the needs and potential of technical education. We're ready and eager for those young people who visited us on Tuesday.

Monday--Medical School

Moving backward through this important week, we come to Monday, which I have to tell you was something of a marquee day--personally and for this community. The

events of that day, I believe, set the stage for this community's transformation, and I'd like to spend the rest of my time with you today focusing on a Western Michigan University medical school.

On Monday, the WMU Board of Trustees endorsed--unanimously endorse--the idea of establishing a medical school and authorized:

- securing the services of a "dean pro tem" for the medical school,
- filing a notice of intent with the national Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) to begin the accreditation process,
- formalizing planning committees recommended by the LCME, and
- finalizing agreements with partner hospitals.

Not only did they endorse the plan, they did so in enthusiastic terms. Trustees commented on the need to act with vision and the future in mind even during difficult times. They voiced their support for a state-of-the-art academic health center that could bring the University and local hospital resources together to leverage our legacies and establish a great medical center that would drive economic development in Southwest Michigan.

In tandem with that vote by the trustees, I was able to announce a \$1.8 million gift from an anonymous donor to move the process along. It is seed money and a powerful signal that there is support in this community for what we know must be a privately-funded school of medicine.

We've spent two years brining the community to this point. We'll spend at least that long again before we could see our first medical students, but I'm convinced it can and will happen and we will be well positioned to help fill the severe physician

shortage that is about to happen--not just in this state, but in this nation. This community has the infrastructure, heritage and vision that will make this happen.

Why am I so sure? Let's look at what we already have in place

- The community boasts world-class hospitals that already foster medical education
- We have heritage built around the discovery of pharmaceuticals and medical device development
- And we have intellectual capital focused on the life sciences rarely found in a community this size.

I was, in fact, startled to find the depth of resources when I came to this community more than two years ago. It didn't take long for me to open my mouth and say, "Have you folks ever considered building a medical school?"

The community conversation that question triggered took us to Monday's developments. Our work together as a community has crystallized the vision. Here's where it stands today.

The model

- We're talking about an academic health center that is a partnership with hospitals in Kalamazoo and likely Battle Creek Health Systems--also one of your clients. The academic health center model is one that maximizes the potential for growth and economic development that this community desires and deserves.

The Academic Health Center model we propose has been used in communities similar in size and resources to this one, and the growth patterns in research, spinoffs and new graduate programs are significantly more beneficial to those schools' home communities. Hershey, Pa., is a great example and one that we've been examining closely.

In this model, all four years of medical education are conducted in the same location rather than spread across the state as is done in medical schools like MSU's. We believe medical education requires an environment in which scientists and clinicians work hand in hand across the four-year spectrum of a medical school. What happens when you do that is you build synergy between scientific and clinical researchers and you foster research growth that leads to new graduate programs, new companies to commercialize the research being done and a whole new level of scientific vigor in the host community.

Benefits to the community

All of us involved to date see the path we're taking and the model we've chosen as a transformational opportunity for every part of our community. It can result in new jobs; new people in our community; new building projects; new resources for our community government and schools; and dramatic new options for medical care and treatment. It will allow Southwest Michigan to leverage its existing strengths in such areas as the life sciences to maintain and grow its influence as a major economic power in the state and region.

Quality medical education is at the heart of what is being proposed. Anyone who knows this university, its home community and its medical partners will recognize that none of the prospective partners will accept anything less than a medical school

that will be renowned for its attention to quality and its focus on where medicine will be in the future. Personalized medicine, for instance, will be the standard for medical care in the coming years. This will not be a medical school that has to change its focus to accommodate that standard. It will be a medical school founded and nurtured to integrate such a focus.

Conclusion

Everything we've built as a community led to what happened this week in Kalamazoo and will serve us in the future. What we're doing as a community literally feeds off the kind of commitment, community engagement and vibrancy your company represents. I look forward to working with you for years to come.

And as I vary my running route, I look forward to running by many more future CSM projects. Thank you for inviting me here today and thank you for what you do for our community every day of the year.