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## Kappa Delta Pi Remarks

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"Education and Motivation"  
Kappa Delta Pi remarks  
Dr. John M. Dunn  
Dec. 5, 2009

- Good afternoon. I'd like to welcome the new members of this organization and extend my personal congratulations to the graduating seniors being honored today. You've done well--all of you. As an institution, we'll watch your progress with pride in the coming years.
- You are the latest representatives of a proud WMU tradition that is now 106 years old. That tradition, of course, is teacher preparation. We turn out teachers whose professional preparation is second to none. Our graduates are coveted by districts not just in Michigan, but around the nation. Every spring, as our newest crop of professionals get ready to enter the classroom, scores of districts from across the country came to campus to recruit new teachers at our Teacher Education Career Fair.
- We began as a teachers college, and have held on to that tradition even as our university has grown into a national research university. Our tradition of teacher education simply grew along with the university that is its home. We still produce great classroom teachers, but we also have applied the tools of a research university to the K-12 education arena. You are all part of a college--The College of Education and Human Development--that embodies our historical strengths and our more recent focus on research.
- At the very core of what we do is a commitment to student success. I could not be more proud to be leading a university devoted to student success--success from students' earliest days in the classroom to the time they walk across the stage at Miller Auditorium to receive a bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree. Student

success is what WMU is all about, and student success is the core mission of teachers who prepare for their careers at Western.

- I feel a special kinship with all of you. I began my career as a high school teacher, and I believe I was drawn to teaching because of the teachers in my youth who motivated me to do more, be more and give back more. That ability to motivate is certainly the key ingredient to being a good teacher.

- I became a teacher because others motivated me to take that path--some by example and some more directly suggesting that teaching might be a good career path for me. But what I found as a teacher was that motivation is a two-way street.

- I drew as much motivation and encouragement from my students as I believe I gave them. Thinking back on my early days in the classroom, the start of the path that eventually brought me to Western Michigan rests with the motivation I got from working with one special student who showed me what my calling truly was and how I could best contribute. I may have thought I was doing my best to motivate my students, but in truth, they were motivating me.

- (Story about working with student with disabilities in Lake Forest who first got you interested in working with that population and eventually propelled you on to graduate school.)

- That motivational synergy proved to be the hallmark of my career. I still am motivated by what I know of students--you--to make this the best university it can be. I want all of our student body to be as successful as you are. If I can motivate students to take advantage of all that this great school has to offer, then I've done my job.

- I wish all of you the same kind of joy in teaching and working with young people. May every student you work with motivate you to reach and excel. And may your students be motivated by what they learn from you and from watching you succeed.
- Again. Congratulations to all of you being honored today. Seniors, I'll see you in two weeks on the stage at Miller Auditorium.