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Gold Pride Reception--Romulus

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Good evening.

- Being president of a great institution like Western Michigan University sometimes means my best-laid plans are interrupted to attend to developments on campus. This is such a time. I had planned to be with you this evening but a last-minute schedule change makes that impossible. You're in good hands, however. You'll be meeting some of WMU's most compelling advocates at tonight's event.

- I am enormously pleased you're here this evening to hear more about Western Michigan University. Our job tonight is to make sure you know what is so powerful about WMU, why so many students from your area have chosen this university and why it may be the right choice for you.

- This is a university that is focused on student success. We want you to succeed. Our entire university is devoted to helping our students live up to their potential.

- We have nationally and internationally known programs that range from aviation and engineering management to vocal jazz, geosciences and medieval studies. In fact, if there were a "Final Four" for academic programs, WMU would have dozens of programs in the top slots every year.

- I'll let the people there in person do most of the bragging this evening. The programs I just mentioned and many, many more, are just the tip of the iceberg. In addition to great academics, world-class faculty members and outstanding instructional facilities, we have wonderful social, cultural and athletic opportunities for you to enjoy.
• We also have something we call the Western Edge. It's one way we describe the benefit of being a WMU student. You may already have heard about the Western Edge. When people first learn about it, most of their interest centers on the four-year degree commitment and the retention scholarship. I hope many of you are able to take advantage of those opportunities.

• But when I talk about the Western Edge, I'm always careful to point out that the Western Edge is more. It is the total experience that comes from being part of the WMU community. The Western Edge is something our students take with them when they leave us.

• While being a University president sometimes means having an unpredictable schedule, one of the great joys of the job is seeing students like you make a great decision. I'll be looking for you during Welcome Week on our campus next fall. I'll also be on the stage at Miller Auditorium to shake your hand when you receive your bachelor's degree a little more than four years from now.

• Thank you for your interest in Western Michigan University and thank you for being here this evening. Ask lots of questions. I know you'll be impressed by the answers you receive.