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Distinguished Alumni Awards Dinner

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Distinguished Alumni Awards Dinner
President John M. Dunn Remarks
Friday, Oct. 1, 2010 - Bernhard Center

(Notes from Jamie: Bob Bradley is attending the dinner with Karl Sandelin. Bob was the alumnus from Grosse Pointe that wrote the letter to the Gazette last spring about East Campus. I just wanted to give you a heads up.

For dinner, you and Linda, if she is able to attend, will be seated at a table in front of the podium with Leslie and Matt Braksick, and Margean Gladysz. I am waiting to hear from Bill about where he and Ronda want to sit, with you and Leslie or at the next table with their children, as Ken did last year.

Again this year, many of the College of Arts and Sciences Alumni Achievement Award recipients, the College of Engineering Alumni Academy inductees and the College of Health and Human Services outstanding alumni will be with us.

Following dinner, Margean will call on you to make some brief welcoming remarks, 5-6 minutes.)

- Thank you, Margean, for that kind introduction. Alumni, students, community members, faculty and staff, Welcome to your University. We're glad to have you here with us for this Homecoming celebration.
- I want to welcome all of our honorees who are being recognized over the course of the weekend and add my best wishes to the winners of the College of Arts and Sciences-Achievement Award, the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences Alumni Academy inductees and those being named outstanding alumni of the College of Health and Human Services. Congratulations.

- And it is my privilege and honor to extend my personal welcome and congratulations to the Distinguished Alumni we have gathered here this evening to recognize.

-Judge Griffin--**the Honorable Richard Allen Griffin**—was unable to be with us this evening. Despite his “failure to appear for sentencing” tonight, we all want him to know how much his career in the law is admired. His accomplishments and public service are reflective of the qualities we try to instill in all of our students.

-**Leslie Wilk Braksick**. I've been able to spend some time with Leslie this weekend. Leslie, your professional accomplishments are remarkable. You possess the ability to analyze and communicate in ways that propel the organizations you counsel to the next level. Thank you for being here early this week and sharing your expertise as a Distinguished Speaker at the Haworth College of Business. You are phenomenal.

-**William D. Johnston**, Bill, it has been an honor to know and work with you for the past three years. Your work as a member of our board of trustees and your economic development efforts to boost our campus, community, region and state are a personal inspiration. I am proud to call you a friend and even prouder to point to you as an alumnus of our University.

- Our three honorees join a distinguished group of past recipients of this important award. Let me share with you that for this particular University president, this annual event serves as a signature moment each year--a reminder of the achievements and contributions of those who are alumni of this great University. Our alumni make a difference all over the world, and through their accomplishments, they elevate the profile of Western Michigan University as a school with faculty and academic programs of enormous quality.

- There's a saying that is attributed to a one-time Princeton University president, Robert Gohen. He once said to graduates, "If you feel that you have both feet planted on level ground, then the university has failed you." I think that captures exactly the balancing act that educators face. We want to both inform and inspire--to set the stage for our alumni to do things we never imagined--to soar.
- Leslie and Bill (and Judge Griffin) you and your fellow Distinguished Alumni are quite simply exemplars of the level of achievement to which we hope all of our current and future alumni aspire. You are a source of pride.
- For the students here this evening I hope you leave this event newly committed and determined to succeed. I hope you are firmly fixed on building a life of service and accomplishment that may see you honored at an event like this in the future. And I hope you realize that graduating from a University that can boast alumni like these makes your degree all the more valuable.
- And to all the alumni here with us this evening, I want you to know that all of us work hard to continue to make this a University in which you can take pride. It is wonderful to have you all here for the traditional Homecoming weekend, but I want to make sure you always feel that this is your home, your University. Please don't miss any opportunity to visit campus or reconnect with fellow alumni in your home communities.

Enjoy this Homecoming weekend. I look forward to spending time and talking with each of you. Thank you, and Go Broncos!

*(At the conclusion of the dinner, you will be needed for 10-15 minutes for some **photos** with the recipients as a group and individually.)*