WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES

Saturday, December 18, 2010

John M. Dunn, President, Presiding

PROCESSIONAL
The Western Brass Ensemble, Steve Wolfinbarger, Conductor

President Dunn: "Good morning, I am John Dunn, president of Western Michigan University.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and the entire University community I want to welcome you to our milestone three hundredth (300th) commencement ceremony.

Will the audience please stand, as able, for the National Anthem, sung by the Brothers of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia conducted by Jack Bertrand."

(President Dunn steps away from the microphone)

THE NATIONAL ANTHEM
Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia
Jack Bertrand, 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 are so evident in the faces of those gathered here to observe you graduate.

Graduates, 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 as able and those in front of me, turn and face the audience and remain standing. Would the Moms and Dads in the audience please stand? How about the Grandparents? And Great Grandparents? Spouses, special partners, and children? Brothers and Sisters? Aunts, Uncles and other Relatives? And, Friends?

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

You will join more than 175,000 WMU alumni from all over Michigan and from around the world.

We shall award 1876 degrees today.

Almost 1400 of you will receive bachelor's degrees.

452 will receive master's degrees.
And 45 of you will be receiving doctoral degrees.

The next group that deserves recognition is our faculty. They are the very heart of this University. Their intellect, creativity and passion for teaching and research inspire each of us. Their faith and confidence in your abilities throughout your college years have built the foundation for your professional future. 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!

Besides your professors, there have been many, many others on this campus who have protected, encouraged, facilitated, and brightened the academic journey that has led you to this moment of celebration. They are the cooks, the custodians, office personnel, medical staff, police officers, landscape crews...the list goes on and on. They give their all, every day, to make your educational experience at WMU what you deserve: the BEST. Although they many of these fine people are not in attendance, I would like to recognize them with a round of applause.

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.

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 at this ceremony are Trustee Jeanne Carlson and Trustee Ken Miller.
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.

Western Michigan University is truly an international institution. We enthusiastically welcome students from other lands and we encourage all other students to experience a portion of their learning in one of our many study abroad locations around the globe. Will those students who were participants in one of our fine study abroad programs and all our international students please stand and be recognized.

I now ask Trustee Jeanne Carlson to share with you some Western Michigan University “Points of Pride” that will remind you of how special this university truly is.”

(President Dunn to his seat and Trustee Carlson to the podium.)

Trustee Carlson: WMU POINTS OF PRIDE

“Graduates, you and your families should be proud of what you've accomplished. You've successfully completed your degree programs and will leave this auditorium today as WMU alumni. All of us here on the stage share your families' pride and look forward to seeing you succeed as you move on to the next passages in your lives.

Today's graduates come from an array of backgrounds and they will go on to diverse post-graduate roles. Among WMU graduates today are 12 local students who were among first Kalamazoo students who were eligible for the Kalamazoo Promise. That's the program that began in 2006 and guarantees tuition for Kalamazoo Public Schools graduates. It has captured the interest of cities and organizations around the nation. The Promise is being fulfilled today at WMU. Today's Kalamazoo Promise graduates, like all of you, have been successful.
The stories that brought our graduates here today are tales of personal accomplishment and proud supporting families and friends. I wish I could share hundreds of wonderful stories about all of today's grads, but there isn't time to do them justice. So instead, I'll take this time to relate the kind of information our graduates can share as they start their careers, head for graduate school or take a short break to reconnoiter the terrain and plan for the next step.

Too often, we take it for granted that you all know the truly special points of pride about your university. I’d like to remind you of some of things that you can boast about whenever someone asks about your University.

Let's start with the basics. Graduates, today you become alumni of one of the nation's top public universities. In a nation that has more than 4,000 colleges and universities, your alma mater is one of fewer than 200 public universities designated by the Carnegie Foundation as research universities. The Carnegie Foundation classification is the nation's gold standard when it comes to defining higher education.

All of you graduating today will take your place among a proud group WMU alumni worldwide. Some 113,000 WMU graduates live in Michigan, but there's not a state or territory in the nation that is missing the Bronco touch. And no matter where you travel in the world, you should not be surprised to encounter a fellow alum.

So who else will be joining our alumni base today? I'm going to describe just some of them in a way that tells you something I hope you remember about your university.

• Let's start with an important group we always need to acknowledge--our veterans. There are 35 veterans who will graduate today. As we honor them, I think it's important to note that of all of Michigan's four-year colleges and universities, WMU has the largest population of veterans -- some 500 of them. We're proud of the service they and the rest of our veterans have given our nation and enormously proud that they chose
WMU to prepare for their futures. The veterans graduating today have been awarded red, white and blue honor cords to signify their service to our country.

• Graduating today are 25 members of the Lee Honors College. That is one of the nation's oldest honors colleges and boasts a student profile as impressive as that the most elite private colleges in the United States.

• Today's graduates include seven members of Phi Beta Kappa. That's the oldest and most prestigious academic honor society in the nation. Fewer than 100 public universities in America have been authorized to shelter a Phi Beta Kappa chapter, and Western Michigan University is one of them.

• If you're graduating from the College of Arts and Sciences, please remember that your college is WMU's largest and is the academic home to nationally and internationally known programs that range from atomic physics, creative writing and psychology to geosciences, science and math education and medieval studies. And those are just a few of the many highly regarded programs in this college.

-This year, for instance, our nonprofit leadership program in the School of Public Affairs and Administration was named the best such program in the nation during the American Humanics national conference in Phoenix.

-And this fall, a faculty author who has taught in our creative writing program since 1981, was named the winner of the National Book Award for fiction. The honor belongs to Dr. Jaimy Gordon for her novel "Lord of Misrule," putting her in an elite group that has included William Faulkner, W.H. Auden and John Updike. This is the second WMU author to make it into the finals of that prestigious award program.

• Some of you are earning degrees from the College of Aviation. Your degree may come from WMU's smallest college, but it packs a big reputation. You'll enter the work force able to say you graduated from one of the top aviation schools in the nation--and one that's been in the collegiate aviation business for more than 70 years. You can tell people
that when the Federal Aviation Administration recently looked for a few good schools around the nation to train the next generation of air traffic controllers, it selected WMU's College of Aviation.

- Today's **College of Fine Arts** graduates leave us with the knowledge that their degrees were earned at one of only eight fine arts colleges in the nation and the only one in Michigan to have all of its programs fully accredited by their disciplines' professional organizations. Just how highly regarded are our fine arts programs? Here is an example.

- Dr. Steven Wolfinbarger, who today is conducting the Western Brass Ensemble, is a winner of our 2010 Distinguished Teaching Award. During his more than 20 years teaching trombone at WMU, Dr. Wolfinbarger has inspired and trained many students who have gone on to win major solo competitions at such places as the Julliard School of Music, the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, Tanglewood, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and the U.S. Army Band. In 2009, he received an International Trombone Association Award honoring his career as a teacher and mentor.

People and programs--our points of pride--define Western Michigan University. We'll keep adding to them in the coming years, and with each new quality marker, the value of the already-valuable degree you hold will only increase. Share these Points of Pride. The more people know about Western Michigan University, the more likely they are to recognize what an incredibly valuable asset WMU Graduates are for the state and nation. I urge you to continue building WMU's reputation in your chosen field.

Starting today, you're a Bronco alum--one of our new points of pride. What you accomplish will reflect positively on your family, your community and your university. We look forward to following your progress, and we plan on boasting about your success in life for many years to come. Congratulations. You already make us proud.”

(President Dunn to the podium)
President Dunn: “Graduates, we are indeed proud of all of you. You have demonstrated the determination and commitment to achieve what we celebrate here today. Many of you held down jobs working long hours while being full- or part-time students. And what is important, you finished, you accomplished your goal.

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.

And many of our graduates are non-traditional students with spouses and job obligations and for whom being a student came after family and work. We have great admiration for your achievements.

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. So while you have learned much from your course work, we are sure that you have also learned much about life and living.

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.”
CONFERRING OF DEGREES

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

(Provost Greene joins President Dunn at podium.)

Provost Greene: “Will those receiving a Doctoral or Master's Degree please rise, as able.

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.”

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 Greene introduces Deans)

Provost Greene: “Will Dean Alex Enyedi, College of Arts and Sciences, please come forward.”

Dean Enyedi: “Will those receiving a Bachelor's degree through the College of Arts and Sciences please rise.

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 Greene: “Will Dean David Powell of the College of Aviation, please come forward.”

Dean Powell: “Will those receiving a Bachelor's degree through the College of Aviation please rise.

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 Greene introduces Dean Merrion and returns to his seat.)

Provost Greene: “Will Dean Margaret Merrion, College of Fine Arts, please come forward.”

Dean Merrion: “Will those receiving a Bachelor's degree through College of Fine Arts please rise.

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.“

President Dunn: “Will all those receiving a Bachelor’s degree rise once again please.

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.”

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PRESENTATION OF DOCTORAL DIPLOMAS
(NAMES ANNOUNCED)

President Dunn: “Will the doctoral candidates from the College of Arts and Sciences come forward as Dr. Gene Freudenburg, Interim Dean of the Graduate College, announces their names.

Trustee Miller and the graduates’ advisors will place the hoods on the shoulders of these doctoral graduates.” (PAUSE)

(SHORT MUSICAL INTERLUDE AS GRADUATES COME TO STAGE)
(President Dunn and Trustee Miller to diploma table and Dean Freudenburg to podium. Dean Freudenburg 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. Trustee Miller and advisors will place hoods on shoulders of doctoral graduates.)

College of Arts and Sciences

Shahin Ahmed Abdel Naby
Cheryl Henderson Almeda
Randy Jay Baxter
Brian Nathaniel Becker
Allan Bickle
Song Gao
Michael David Gillespie
Amy Marie Gullickson*  
*hooding by Dean Andreadis & Arlen Gullickson, father, retired faculty, (Trustee Miller, please step aside for this hooding)

Julio Cesar Hernandez-Correa
Christopher Michael Jannings
Alyssa Halalay Kalata
Ravin S.T. Kodikara
Scott Frederick Kosten
John James Panos
Karen Grace Vallarente Rosales
Dayanthi Nishani Samaraweera
Kimberly E. Seckinger-Bancroft
Jamie Marie Severtson
Rachel Swearingen
Nayane Prasange Udawatte
Curtis Alan VanDonkelaar
Sarah Nicole VerLee
Marc Alden Weeden
Brian A. Zeider

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PRESENTATION OF MASTER'S DIPLOMAS
(NAMES ANNOUNCED)

Provost Greene: “Will the graduates receiving Master's degrees please come forward to receive their diplomas as Ms. Michele McLaughlin announces their names.” (PAUSE)

(SHORT MUSICAL INTERLUDE AS GRADUATES COME TO STAGE)

(Ms. McLaughlin will go to microphone at rear of platform. Deans Enyedi, Powell and Merrion [two at one time] will assist President Dunn and Trustees with the presentation of diplomas.)

PRESENTATION OF UNDERGRADUATE DIPLOMAS
(NAMES ANNOUNCED)

Provost Greene: “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.”

(SHORT MUSICAL INTERLUDE AS GRADUATES COME TO STAGE)

(Mr. Williams joins Ms. McLaughlin at microphones. Deans Enyedi, Powell and Merrion will assist President Dunn and Trustees with the presentation of diplomas.)
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION INDUCTION

President Dunn: “Will Mr. Philip Chludzinski [Ch-lud-ZIN-ski], Vice President of the Alumni Association, please come forward. Mr. Chludzinski, C.P.A., is a partner in Brink, Key and Chludzinski, P.C.”

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

Mr. Chludzinski: REMARKS

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

President Dunn: “Thank you, Phil.”

CONCLUDING REMARKS

President Dunn:

“We are nearing the end of our ceremony. You might have noticed that our ceremony--our celebration--does not include a commencement speaker. We do that purposefully. We believe the day belongs to you, and the spotlight should shine only on you, our graduates.

However, I would be remiss if I did not offer a few final words of reflection. First, thank you for choosing to study at Western Michigan University. You have shared with us your gifts--your inquisitive minds, your creative perspectives, and your uncanny ability to question principles in a way that has made us reflect, respond and reaffirm. For that, we are deeply appreciative. You have made this a vibrant and intellectually healthy learning environment.

Your presence here, in turn, has given us the opportunity to enrich your lives by providing you with a top-notch education at one of the nation's finest public research universities.
During your time here, you have learned much. First and foremost, your education here has equipped you with a thorough knowledge of your chosen area of study--you academic major. You have developed practical skills through internships and other experiences that also equip you for a career and the world of work. I trust, too, that you have had out-of-the classroom experiences that have added immensely to the richness of your personal development. And of course, you have made many friends here who you will cherish throughout your life.

We--the faculty and I--believe that you are ready to lead a productive life--a life that will add immeasurably to the betterment of our society. Through work, you will contribute to our economy and help create opportunities and jobs for others. You will create and nurture families, and in turn, build communities that will enrich and enhance civilization and our democratic way of life.

We'll be watching proudly as you carve out your career and make your contributions to society. As you go about carving out your role is society, there are still many lessons about life that you will confront. Not all days will be pleasant. When those tough days arise, remember Winston Churchill’s advice: “If you are going through hell, keep going” And Wilson Mizner reminds us on the good days, “When things are going well and you are on your way up, be nice to people because you'll need them on your way down.”

Life is a bit of a roller coaster with lots of ups and downs. The most important lesson in life may be trying to achieve the kind of balance that always allows you to remain true to yourself and your core values. Nothing is more important than being able to sleep at night, realizing that you have conducted yourself in a manner consistent with the human qualities admired by most – integrity, civility, courtesy, humility and tolerance, as well as respect for and kindness to others.

And finally, in the words of Charles Dickens my wish for you is that you “Have a heart that never hardens, a temper that never tires, and touch that never hurts”
You are now alumni of this great University, and we want you to stay connected. 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. 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 Jack Bertrand 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.

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!

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
The Western Brass Ensemble

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