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School of Medicine Gift Announcement – Historic Moment

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School of Medicine Gift Announcement – Historic Moment
March 22, 2011
4010 Health and Human Services Building

Opening
9:15 a.m.--The crowd is welcomed by Bob Miller, who starts with a countdown--thanks them for coming, and thanks them for their patience and curiosity as excitement has been building toward the unveiling of our historic moment. He says Dr. Dunn will be making that important announcement, and there will be an opportunity for members of the media to ask questions. He then introduces President Dunn.

President John M. Dunn remarks
• Good morning. This is a great week and an important moment to be a Bronco. If you detect an ear-to-ear grin and barely contained excitement in my voice, there's good reason. I must tell you that my personal excitement threshold has been exceeded--dramatically so. Before I share that reason with you, I would like to acknowledge some important members of our community who are here with us today.

  - Acknowledge Board of Trustees, represented today by Ken Miller. Our board's support for the work that has led to today's announcement has been unparalleled and they have our gratitude.
  - Administration, faculty and staff members--and at least a few students from this university, including our student leadership.
  - Members of our local business and governmental leadership, Mayor Bobby Hopewell and our state legislators.
  - And finally, some very special guests--my colleagues Paul Spaude, president and CEO of Borgess Health; Frank Sardone, president and CEO of Bronson
Healthcare. They're joined by Dr. Hal B. Jenson, founding dean of the Western Michigan University School of Medicine.

- They are here with us, and I'm pleased to single them out because our news today revolves around our School of Medicine. We have worked for the past three years to make the case for a School of Medicine at WMU. We have analyzed the resource base in our community, accessed input from talented consultants, met with national leaders of both the AMA and AAMC, engaged local leaders and sought their advice, and conducted a search to identify an outstanding founding dean. We secured the support of our own Board and those of our partners, Borgess and Bronson. Our work has been thorough, thoughtful, and inclusive.

The outcome of all of this has been a groundswell of support and a consensus that we should move forward--quickly. We're now ready to take the next step.

Today I'm enormously pleased to be able to make an announcement, the likes of which has been made by very few colleges or universities in this nation. Many universities identified in national rankings as the very best of the best--places such as Harvard, Yale or Princeton--have never been able to share news of this magnitude with their constituents.

**The announcement**

- It is my intense pleasure to tell you, today, that a **$100 million cash gift**, the largest ever made to a Michigan college or university, has been made to establish the Western Michigan University School of Medicine--a private medical school at our proud public university.
• This anonymous gift is among the 10 largest cash gifts ever made to an American public university. It's actually the 15th largest cash gift ever made in the history of American higher education.

• The gift will serve as the foundation funding for an innovative school of medicine that this University is developing in partnership with Kalamazoo's two major hospitals, Borgess Health and Bronson Healthcare. Note that I said foundation gift — we are not finished yet! Our new medical school will build on this community's incredible strengths. We have a commitment to higher education, a 125-year history in the life sciences and two world-class teaching hospitals that have been delivering via KCMS third- and fourth-year medical education for some 35 years. We're putting those elements together to build a medical school that will be a national model known for its innovation.

• Yesterday, I spoke with our donors to express the extreme gratitude of this University and this community. This is a historic gift and a historic moment. With their gift, these generous donors are endorsing the vision we've developed with our partners. It's a vision that will transform this community by leveraging its legacy and unique resources.

• Education, public/private partnerships and donor commitment are working in Kalamazoo in a way that makes this community an economic development model not just for the state but for the nation. I'm so pleased to be a part of a community with the kind of energy and vision that have become Kalamazoo's hallmarks.

• We've known for some time that this is the right time and place to launch a medical school for the 21st century, and we've also known that it must be a privately funded school. This gift signals the kind of donor confidence in this University and community that will make our initiative take root, thrive and prosper.
• We said from the start that our medical school would be a private medical school, and as I've said many times over the past three years, we would not have gone down this road without a certain level of confidence that there were donors with vision and interest who would step up to bring this school to life. This morning's news is an indicator of that level of shared vision and interest. This is a gift not just to WMU, but to this community and this region as well.

• This community has a tremendous history of attracting the confidence and support of donors. The Kalamazoo Promise, which offers free college tuition to our young people, is another great example. Our donors know this medical school will continue the vision of transformation and economic development through higher education.

• Our donors have also been firm in their desire make this gift anonymously, and of course, we will honor their wishes. We hope that at some point in the future they will agree to let us acknowledge them by name and thank them for their generosity in a very public way. As I look around me this morning, I can already tell from your faces that many of you are speculating and thinking of ways to ask for hints about who they are. You may ask, but I intend not to share any details that will help you ascertain their identity.  (Round of Applause for our donors)

**Coming capital campaign**

• Finally, I'd like to say private fundraising for the school of medicine is part of an overall capital campaign for Western Michigan University that will be formally announced later this year. The gift we're announcing today was made specifically for the medical school initiative, but it serves as an example of the type of historic work we will continue to do at Western Michigan University with the help of our donors. There are more opportunities and a need for donors who want to be part of this
initiative or who want to help make history by supporting work in other disciplines. This gift marks a seminal moment, but we are not finished. We have more work to do.

- This medical school is truly a community partnership. I'd like to invite two of the most important members of that partnership to join me now at the podium to make a few comments, before we open the floor to questions. Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome Paul Spaude of Borgess and Frank Sardone of Bronson.

Sardone and Spaude make remarks then sit back down. Dunn thanks them and then says he is open to questions and says, "I'm, counting on you, Paul and Frank, to help me answer as thoroughly as possible questions about the school we're building together."

Dunn also asks Dr. Hal Jenson to stand and be recognized--noting that today (Tues) is his first day as the founding dean and he is also available to answer questions about school.

Closing
As questions begin to lag. Bob Miller steps forward and says he knows there are reporters who want to pose additional questions, but before any one-on-one interviews begin, we're going to take a couple of moments to have the principals sign several commemorative prints and take some photos. He invites everyone there to stay and enjoy a light breakfast and asks everyone to be sure to sign the commemorative prints as well.