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Everyone Counts Fall 2011 Semester Kickoff

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Everyone Counts Fall 2011 Semester Kickoff
Dr. John M. Dunn
9/23/2011

- Good morning. I am so pleased to be with you here today to kick off the second year of Everyone Counts. Last year we launched this as a pilot project engaging more than 50 faculty and staff member. It worked incredibly well, so we did the logical thing--we decided to offer the opportunity again. That's why we're gathered here today.
- The Everyone Counts mission is to build a supportive learning community that helps create a campus community that is inclusive and welcoming to all of its members. That's a mission that central to what I've worked for my entire professional life. I think we have carved out a reputation--a justified reputation--for being an inclusive campus and one that is welcoming to the broad range of students, faculty and staff in our community. But we're not there yet. There's still a lot of work to do.
- News from the past week indicates how important our work is. Our enrollment figures for this year, announced last Friday, include two striking pieces of data:
 - Our international enrollment increased by 10.5 percent
 - Our minority enrollment increased by 10.2 percent
- Those figures tell us students already feel comfortable here. They respond to the climate we've established. But we have to work every day to make sure we are conscious of every decision we make and how it will impact the diverse population that has put its trust in us. It's too easy to slip and fall back into old patterns--to

slight some part of our community unintentionally, but in a very real way.(Yom Kippur example.)

- When we offend some members of our campus, we offend all of the members of our campus. You know that. That's why you've made a commitment to this initiative.

- Those of you who have been part of Everyone Counts since the beginning have set the bar high for this year. After just a few months worth of work, for instance, this initiative has led to a dozen initiatives. Among just a few of the results are:

- A Diversity Book Club that is raising awareness and building a diversity library and

- new signs that say "Welcome" to WMU in all of the home languages of our international students.

The bar has been set high, but I know you'll match and surpass it. Thank you for being willing to be part of this important effort.