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Brown & Gold Gala-Grand Rapids

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Brown & Gold Gala-Grand Rapids
Dr. John M. Dunn
11/11/11

- Thanks you, Anne, (Doyle) for that kind introduction. Good evening and welcome to Western Michigan University's first Brown & Gold Gala--it is an event we intend to become an annual celebration of our strong WMU community--our WMU FAMILY--in this great city.

- What a delight it is for us to be here in this beautiful setting. Our evening here at the Frederick Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park is made all the more memorable by the presence of Fred and Lena Meijer. Please join me in recognizing these two people whose generosity and love for the arts made this spectacular setting a Michigan point of pride and a destination for sculpture lovers around the world.

- I would be remiss if I did not also introduce some people who have helped make Western Michigan University's strength and reputation possible. We're joined this evening by Trustees Emeriti James Brady and Joan Krause and by (?how many?) of our current trustees, (?who?).

- This is the first Brown & Gold Gala, but it is so focused on tonight's honoree, Suzanne Geha, the campus shorthand for tonight's event became "G²"--the Geha Gala. That's because we have always taken enormous pride in Suzie Geha, her professional accomplishments and her ties to WMU. A big part of tonight is all about that pride we all feel.

- Suzanne Geha is a Bronco. She was a communication major at WMU, a Dorm Council President, and a student advisor to the WMU President's Committee on

Housing. Her fellow students knew what kind of star was in their midst. She was voted Most Outstanding Senior Woman as she was getting ready to graduate and launch her radio and TV career.

- Since leaving WMU student life, Suzie has stayed active in the Bronco community, serving on the WMU Alumni Association Board of Directors. She also was inducted into the School of Communication Alumni Academy--a recognition of her professional accomplishments from her discipline and her school.

- But you know, I think that in addition to the terrific communication grounding she received from WMU, it was her flair for the theatrical and her stage presence that helped her connect with audiences over the years. She had a dual major that included theatre performance, and she regularly appeared in University Theatre productions. She loved acting under the direction of the late Dr. David Karsten, one of the University Theatre's leading stage directors. She'll tell you, though, that she didn't think she had the talent to make a living on the stage. That's why she turned to broadcasting.

- Our longtime theatre department director D. Terry Williams, who's here this evening, will tell you something different. He's known Suzie for years and will tell you she has all the traits that would have made her just as successful on the stage--poise, confidence, charisma, honesty and a keen sense of what the audience wants. Suzie, he notes, has all of these traits in spades.

- That's the Cliff Notes description of a great news anchor. Coming up, you'll be hearing from a few people who will give you more of an "in -depth" look at the

woman we invited into our homes for all these years. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for being here this evening. Get ready to sit back and enjoy yourselves.

(four minutes)