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Make-a-Difference Awards

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Make a Difference Awards
Dr. John M. Dunn
Dec. 5, 2011

• Good afternoon and thank you all for being here to celebrate the extraordinary service of the staff members we're honoring today. We see their work as extraordinary, but I know from experience that these employees usually don't see what they do as extraordinary. They see what they do as a labor of love.

• These are people who have built their careers at Western Michigan University. Every day, those around them see them reach out to our students and their colleagues in a way that is driven not by their job descriptions, but by their genuine commitment to and concern for those who are part of our community.

• I have the privilege of seeing this kind of service in people across the University. Often, someone will point out an employee who falls into this category--just because they think I should know.

• What has been deeply gratifying to me as the president is the number of people at our University who fall into this category. Awards programs like this one frequently begin with dozens of nominations. After a few years, sometimes the nominations begin to slack off or the caliber of the nominees decline as people feel the truly special people have already been honored.

• That's not the case at Western Michigan University. One of the things that has impressed me most since I've been here is the continuing outstanding caliber of the employees we honor through the Make a Difference program and the level of the service they provide every day. Today we honor 10 people from every area at the University--academics, student services and administrative support. They help us
recruit students and help us serve those students once they are enrolled. These are people who truly make this a special place.

• Thank you to each of you for what you do each day for our University. Thank you for making our students safe, healthy and ready to succeed. And thank you for giving all of us role models to emulate as we continue about the important work we do.

• You make us proud, and you continually reinforce our view of this as a wonderful place to work.