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Dennis Archer Reception

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Dennis Archer Reception
President's Dining Room, Bernhard Center
Wednesday, Feb. 29, 2012 – 12:30 p.m.

Event Schedule and Talking Points

Noon           Room review
12:15 PM       Students arrive
12:30 PM       Guests arrive
12:30 PM       Photo of Dennis Archer and students (Mike Lanka)
12:40 PM       John Dunn – Opening remarks (5 minutes) – Talking points attached
12:45 PM       Lunch is served
1:00 PM        Program Begins
                      Jim Thomas – Scholarship overview (5 minutes) – Talking points attached
1:05 PM        Each student introduces him/herself, course of study, year, and remarks how the scholarship has helped them (10 minutes)
1:15 PM        Student presents gift to Mr. Archer (5 minutes) – Darren Tilles, Archer Scholar
1:20 PM        Jim T. introduces Trustee Archer, who addresses students, group (10 minutes)
1:30 PM        Students needing to get to class depart, others invited informally to ask Dennis questions about WMU experience, career, etc. – Sarah Troup to coach
1:45 PM        Conclude
John M. Dunn Remarks

• (Greetings and introductions. Please introduce Sally Foster, Scholarship Coordinator for the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan, which oversees the Archer Scholars Fund (John Greenhoe will introduce Sally to President Dunn beforehand).

• Because we have so many blessings, it is sometimes tempting to take what we have for granted. We're here to today to make sure that does not happen in the case of one of our most esteemed alumni, and greatest supporters, the Honorable Dennis W. Archer.

• Many know that Trustee Archer comes from humble beginnings himself. A native of Cassopolis, Dennis worked as a special education teacher in Detroit after graduating from WMU, and has gone on to enjoy a great career in the legal profession and in public service. After being appointed to the Michigan Supreme Court, Trustee Archer served two terms as the Mayor of Detroit, and now serves as chairman emeritus of Dickinson Wright, a prestigious Detroit law firm.

• While Dennis’ story is well known to many of us, what is not as widely known is his intense commitment to education opportunities. It is this commitment that led to the establishment of one of our most critical scholarship funds at Western Michigan University, the Dennis W. Archer Foundation Scholarships.
• Since 2003, the Archer Foundation has granted a total of $450,000 in scholarship awards to WMU undergraduate students, making the Archer Fund one of the longest running and largest scholarship programs at WMU.

• Many of our current Archer Scholars are with us today. I hope will take the opportunity to visit with them during our lunch. Our program will begin shortly.

Jim Thomas Remarks:
• Since its establishment 12 years ago, the Dennis W. Archer Foundation has assisted dozens upon dozens of young college students at Western Michigan University and Wayne State University in their pursuit of an undergraduate degree.

• It started in the winter of 1999, when Trustee Archer shared with his family and friends a desire to create an educational foundation to help college-age students. Through much hard work, the Dennis W. Archer Foundation was created, with an endowment to permanently sustain the scholarship program.

• The Archer scholarship program is designed to support principally Detroit-area high school graduates who are able to thrive in a University setting. The program also attempts to make one award each year to a graduate of Trustee Archer's high school alma mater in Cassopolis.

• There are a total of 11 Archer Foundation Scholars at WMU during the 2011-12 academic year, and the majority are in attendance today.

• I also want to call to your attention to the many Archer Scholar Alumni who have preceded our current students. One of them, Jarel Jackson, is 2010 WMU
graduate with a degree in aeronautical engineering. Jarel wrote us a note recently to say that unfortunately he could not be with us today because he just started a new position at an engineering firm. He did ask us, however, to deliver a message to Trustee Archer. His note reads:

• "Thank you for all you have done. Because of you, my dreams are now being realized."

• At this time, I would like to turn things over to the stars of our event, our 2011-12 Archer Foundation Scholars, so that they might introduce themselves.