



Western Michigan University  
ScholarWorks at WMU

---

WMU President John Dunn

Office of the President

---

4-15-2012

## National Society for Leadership and Success Welcome

John M. Dunn

Western Michigan University, [john.dunn@wmich.edu](mailto:john.dunn@wmich.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/dunn>



Part of the Higher Education Commons

---

### WMU ScholarWorks Citation

Dunn, John M., "National Society for Leadership and Success Welcome" (2012). *WMU President John Dunn*. 486.

<https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/dunn/486>

This Speech is brought to you for free and open access by the Office of the President at ScholarWorks at WMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in WMU President John Dunn by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at WMU. For more information, please contact [wmu-scholarworks@wmich.edu](mailto:wmu-scholarworks@wmich.edu).



National Society for Leadership and Success Welcome  
John M. Dunn  
April 15, 2012

- Good morning. Thank you for inviting me to be part of your celebration. And congratulations to those of you who are being inducted today to the National Society for Leadership and Success. You are the first WMU members of this honorary organization that has chapters at 289 colleges and nearly 200,000 members worldwide.
- I'm very pleased that we have this new organization on our campus to celebrate the process of exploration and discovery. "We Build Leaders Who Make a Better World" is NSLS's motto. The organization basically sets out to ask the question all good educators should ask: "What would you do if you knew you couldn't fail?" Next, it sets out to help its members:
  - Answer the question--pick goals--and
  - Develop the skills to realize those goals.
- Such exploration and discovery is at the heart of what we do as a University. We want you to spend your time on campus in exploration and discovery. More important, we want you to embark on a lifetime of exploration and discovery and have the flexibility to set and reset your goals and grow into and be successful in each new leadership opportunity that comes your way.
- You have made a commitment to develop your own leadership abilities both on campus and in your future lives. As members of this organization, you will have the opportunity to create a community and support each other in the quest for success.

- You know, I'm often asked to speak about leadership and how to develop the skills and traits a leader needs. I think the most important skill is to recognize who you are as a person and not feel you need to adopt a stereotypical set of personality traits that many people assume is part of the leadership mix.
- You don't need to be an extraverted "people person" to lead. You need to be you. You need to recognize and value the strengths you bring to your organization and you need to be honest with yourself and others about those strengths and about your personal style, preferences, goals and dreams. You need to have a belief system--one that motivates you and can inspire others.
- Very recent research and analysis shows that our top leaders--from corporate heads to U.S. presidents--run the gamut from being gregarious, people-loving personalities like Bill Clinton or George W. Bush to introverted, quiet, analytical and even shy people like Bill Gates or Charles Schwab. Time magazine recently reported that about 40 percent of top-level U.S. business leaders fall on the introverted side of the spectrum.
- What those introverts bring to the table includes the ability to focus, analyze and perhaps most important, to listen.
- Discover your own belief system and goals. Listen to others and be respectful of their individual beliefs and goals. Lead by example. show people what you're passionate about and find people who share your passions.
- Don't be afraid to make mistakes--but be sure to learn from those mistakes and allow others the same opportunity.

*(Tell the gas station story.)*

- Things will happen. You'll continue to discover new strengths and new goals, and you will always make your University proud that you're a Bronco. Congratulations and best wishes for a lifetime of exploration.