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Western Michigan University Commencement Exercises-3pm

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WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES

Saturday, April 28, 2012

John M. Dunn, President, Presiding

PROCESSIONAL

The Western Brass Ensemble
Deanna Swoboda, Conductor

President Dunn: "Good afternoon, I am John Dunn, president of Western Michigan University.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and the entire University community I want to welcome you to our three hundred and fourth (304th) commencement ceremony.

Will the audience please stand, as able, for the National Anthem, sung by the Brothers of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia conducted by Andrew Miller."

(President Dunn steps away from the microphone)

THE NATIONAL ANTHEM

Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia
Andrew Miller, Conductor

WELCOMING REMARKS AND INTRODUCTIONS

President Dunn:

“Commencement is a very special occasion - a time for celebration, a time for reflection, a time for closure, and a time for new beginnings.

Graduates, I applaud and thank you for attending today’s event. Your presence allows us to recognize you and, equally important, to permit expressions of happiness, pride, and love which are so evident in the faces of those gathered here to observe you graduate.

Graduates, this is YOUR day! You have only two responsibilities: 1) to enjoy the day and allow us to honor you and; 2) to reflect and say thanks to those---and you know best who they are---who have contributed to your academic, professional and personal development.

The latter first---the THANKS part. Graduates, please stand as able and those in front of me, turn and face the audience and remain standing. Would the Moms and Dads in the audience please stand? How about the Grandparents? And Great Grandparents? Spouses, special partners, and children? Brothers and Sisters? Aunts, Uncles and other Relatives? And, Friends?

This day is a very special day for you, our graduates, and it is my privilege and honor to preside at your commencement.

You will join alumni from all over Michigan and from around the world.

We shall award **2733** degrees today.

Over **2100** of you will receive bachelor's degrees.

More than **500** will receive master's degrees.

And **34** of you will be receiving doctoral degrees.

The next group that deserves recognition is our faculty. They are the very heart of this University. Their intellect, creativity and passion for teaching and research inspire each of us. Their faith and confidence in your abilities throughout your college years have built the foundation for your professional future. Therefore, it is to our faculty that we express special appreciation today. I ask the faculty members to stand and all of you to please join me in applauding them for the fine education they have provided to you!

Besides your professors, there have been many, many others on this campus who have protected, encouraged, facilitated, and brightened the academic journey that has led you to this moment of celebration. They are the cooks, the custodians, office personnel, medical staff, police officers, landscape crews...the list goes on and on. They give their all, every day, to make your educational experience at WMU what you deserve: the BEST. Although many of these fine people are not in attendance, I would like to recognize them with a round of applause.

Let me now turn to my other colleagues on the stage and I ask each of them to rise as I mention them by category.

They are the executive officers, deans and chairs of the University; our partners in shared governance: representatives of the Faculty Senate; the University Chapter of the American Association of University Professors; the Administrative Professional Association; the Professional Support Staff Organization; and the Alumni Association.

Our University is governed by an autonomous Board of Trustees, appointed by the governor of the State of Michigan. The trustees are private citizens who serve the University without remuneration and who set policy direction for the campus. The University is very grateful to these men and women. Representing the Board of Trustees at this ceremony are Chair Bill Johnston and Trustee Emerita Maury Reed. Trustee Reed has a niece,

Jordan Stuu [Stoot], and a nephew, Bryant Stuu, graduating this afternoon.

At this time, I would like to recognize those of you who are graduating with honors. Will those with honor cords and all honorary society members, please rise so that we can recognize the special distinctions you have earned.

Western Michigan University is truly an international institution. We enthusiastically welcome students from other lands and we encourage all other students to experience a portion of their learning in one of our many study abroad locations around the globe. Will those students who were participants in one of our fine study abroad programs and all our international students please stand and be recognized.

I now ask Chair Bill Johnston to share with you some Western Michigan University "Points of Pride" that will remind you of how special this university truly is."

(President Dunn to his seat and Chair Johnston to the podium.)

Trustee Johnston: WMU POINTS OF PRIDE

"Welcome to Western Michigan University's 304th commencement ceremony! Graduates, you and your families should be very proud of what you've accomplished. You've successfully completed your degree programs and will leave this auditorium today as WMU alumni. All of us here on the stage share your families' pride and look forward to seeing you succeed as you move on to the next passages in your lives.

Too often, we take it for granted that you all know the truly special points of pride about Western Michigan University. I want to take a few moments, one last time before you graduate, to remind you of some of things that you can talk about whenever someone asks about your University.

Let's start with the basics. Graduates, you are about to become alumni of one of the country's top public universities. In a nation that has more than 4,000 colleges and universities, your alma mater is one of fewer than 200 schools designated a research university by the Carnegie Foundation classification. That is the nation's gold standard when it comes to defining higher education.

All of you graduating today will now take your place among a proud group of alumni living worldwide. There's not a state or territory in the nation that is missing the Bronco touch. And no matter where you travel in the world, you should not be surprised to encounter a fellow Bronco alum.

- An important group we want to acknowledge is our veterans. There are 64 veterans who will graduate today. As we honor them, I think it's important to note that Military Times ranks WMU 33rd on its list of the country's best schools for veterans. That's the highest rating for any Michigan school. We're proud of the service our graduates and their fellow veterans have given our nation and enormously proud that they chose WMU to prepare for their futures. The veterans graduating today have been awarded red, white and blue honor cords to signify their service to our country.
- Today we'll award 34 doctoral degrees in 17 different disciplines, putting us well on track to award more than 100 doctoral degrees this academic year.
- Graduating today are 115 members of the Lee Honors College. That's the largest group of honors college graduates ever. The Lee Honors College is one of oldest collegiate honors programs in the nation.
- Our graduates include 44 members of Phi Beta Kappa. Fewer than 100 public universities in America have been authorized to shelter a chapter of this prestigious academic honor society, and Western Michigan University is proud to be one of them.

- Western Michigan University is an international university with students from 92 nations and we welcome the many families who have traveled from around the globe to be here to help their students celebrate.

We pride ourselves on being learner centered, discovery driven and globally engaged. Great people and programs--our points of pride--define Western Michigan University. We'll keep adding to them in the coming years, and with each new quality marker, the value of the already-valuable degree you hold will only increase. We intend to share these Points of Pride every chance we get, because the more people know about Western Michigan University, the more likely they are to recognize what an incredibly valuable asset WMU graduates are for our state and nation.

Telling our story works. I invite you to remember and share these facts liberally as you move forward in your career. I also ask that you remember that these facts were made possible through the work of our faculty and through your efforts as well. Continue building WMU's reputation in your chosen field. Starting today, you're a Bronco alum--one of our newest points of pride. What you accomplish will reflect positively on your family, your community and your university. We look forward to following your progress, and we plan on boasting about your success in life for many years to come.

Congratulations. You already make us proud."

(President Dunn to the podium)

President Dunn: "Graduates, we are indeed proud of all of you. You have demonstrated the determination and commitment to achieve what we celebrate here today. Many of you held down jobs working long hours while being full- or part-time students. And what is important, you finished, you accomplished your goal.

A great number of you are international students who have studied far away from your home and

family for many years. Some of your parents have traveled half way around the world to be here with you today. A particularly large group has come from the Dominican Republic. As you journey back to your home countries, you have our best wishes and the hope that you take fond memories of Michigan and your University with you.

And many of our graduates are non-traditional students with spouses and job obligations and for whom being a student came after family and work. We have great admiration for your achievements.

While you have worked hard we hope that you have also enjoyed your time here at the University. For many of you, this has been your first experience away from home. So while you have learned much from your course work, we are sure that you have also learned much about life and living.

We hope that the many friendships you have formed will stand the test of time and that you will include among them associations that you have made with our faculty and staff. For just as we have been an important part of your life, you too have become a part of ours.”

CONFERRING OF DEGREES

President Dunn: “Provost Greene, please come forward for the conferring of degrees.”

(Provost Greene joins President Dunn at podium.)

Provost Greene: "Will those receiving a Master's Degree please rise, as able.

President Dunn, it is my pleasure to present these candidates who have completed all the requirements for a Master's Degree as prescribed by the graduate faculty of this University."

President Dunn: "By the authority of the State of Michigan, vested in the Board of Trustees, I hereby confer upon you the appropriate degrees indicated in your programs with all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities appertaining thereto.

Please be seated."

(Provost Greene introduces Deans)

Provost Greene: "Will Dean David Powell of the College of Aviation please come forward."

Dean Powell: "Will those receiving a Bachelor's degree through the College of Aviation please rise.

President Dunn, it is my pleasure to present these candidates who have completed all requirements for the Bachelor's degree as prescribed by the faculty of this College.

Please be seated."

(Provost Greene introduces Dean Palan and returns to his seat.)

Provost Greene: "Will Dean Kay Palan, Haworth College of Business, please come forward."

Dean Palan: "Will those receiving a Bachelor's degree through the Haworth College of Business please rise.

President Dunn, it is my pleasure to present these candidates who have completed all requirements for the Bachelor's degree as prescribed by the faculty of this College.

Please be seated."

President Dunn: "Will all those receiving a Bachelor's degree rise once again please.

By the authority of the State of Michigan, vested in the Board of Trustees, I hereby confer upon you the appropriate degrees indicated in your programs with all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities appertaining thereto.

Please be seated."

PRESENTATION OF MASTER'S DIPLOMAS
(NAMES ANNOUNCED)

Provost Greene: "Will the graduates receiving Master's degrees please come forward to receive their diplomas as

Ms. Michele McLaughlin and Mr. James Williams
announce their names." (PAUSE)

(SHORT MUSICAL INTERLUDE AS GRADUATES COME TO STAGE)

(Ms. McLaughlin and Mr. Williams will go to microphone at rear of platform.
Deans Powell and Palan will assist President Dunn with the presentation of
diplomas.)

PRESENTATION OF UNDERGRADUATE DIPLOMAS
(NAMES ANNOUNCED)

Provost Greene: "Will the graduates receiving Bachelor's degrees
please come forward to receive their diplomas as
their names are announced by Ms. McLaughlin and
Mr. Williams."

(SHORT MUSICAL INTERLUDE AS GRADUATES COME TO STAGE)

(Deans Powell and Palan will assist President Dunn and Trustee Miller with
the presentation of diplomas.)

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION INDUCTION

President Dunn: "Will Mr. Philip Chludzinski [Clue-GIN-ski], President
of the Alumni Association, please come forward.
Mr. Chludzinski, C.P.A., is a partner in Brink, Key
and Chludzinski, P.C."

(President Dunn returns to his seat and Mr. Chludzinski to the podium)

Mr. Chludzinski: REMARKS

(Mr. Chludzinski returns to his seat and President Dunn returns to podium.)

President Dunn: "Thank you, Phil."

CONCLUDING REMARKS

President Dunn:

"Graduates, this is a commencement ceremony. Commencement, by definition, is a beginning, not an ending. We are celebrating today what is ahead of you--what you will achieve now that you are a graduate of this great University. I am very optimistic that you have the "right stuff" to make a difference in your personal life and our greater society.

You are now alumni and ambassadors. Your every accomplishment will reflect for your families, employers and community, just how valuable a true university education is. You are well prepared for your first job or for graduate school, certainly, but I am confident that what you've learned at WMU has prepared you for a lifetime of career, civic and personal achievements that you may not yet even imagine.

Many of you already realize that some of the most valuable lessons you've learned here may have been a product of the broad range of classes and experiences we built into your degree requirements. You know firsthand the benefits of being technically prepared in your field but also being able to view your discipline through the lens of history, philosophy and literature. I'm confident that the education you have received from this University has prepared you well to match your skill set with a range of roles--now and for many years to come. My wish for all of you is that you remember that the word "vocation" comes from Latin, *vocatio*, which means a calling - something for which you have passion!

I hope you will always remember your experiences here and become advocates for the kind of broad-based education that keeps you learner centered, discovery driven and globally engaged throughout your lives.

We--the faculty and I--believe that you are ready to lead a life that will add immeasurably to the betterment of our society. Through work, you will contribute to our economy and help create opportunities and jobs for others. You will create and nurture families, and in turn, build communities that will enrich and enhance civilization and our democratic way of life.

We'll be watching proudly as you carve out your career and make your contributions. As you go about determining your role, there are still many lessons about life that you will confront. Not all days will be pleasant. When those tough days arise, remember Winston Churchill's advice: "If you are going through hell, keep going!" Churchill also reminded his citizens during the second World War that when days seem overwhelming – "Keep Calm and Carry On". I look at that slogan every morning when I head down stairs to begin the day with a workout – the reminder has served me well.

Life is a bit of a roller coaster with lots of ups and downs. The most important lesson in life may be trying to achieve the kind of balance that always allows you to remain true to yourself and your core values. Nothing is more important than being able to sleep at night, realizing that you have conducted yourself with integrity, civility, humility and tolerance, as well as respect for and kindness to others.

Be generous with your time, talents and resources, and if you do, the rewards--extrinsically and intrinsically--will be plentiful. Some of the world's most brilliant humanists--Albert Schweitzer and Mother Teresa, to name just two--remind us time and time again that true happiness is gained only when we give generously to others.

George Washington Carver may have said it best, 'How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving, and tolerant of the weak and the strong. Because, someday in your life, you will have been all of these.'

You are now alumni of this great University, and we want you to stay connected. We need your help in preparing the next generation of professionals. You are partners in this endeavor and we, the faculty and I,

want you to know that you will always be a part of us. Stay connected, stay tuned and stay in touch.

Go Broncos!

And now, please enjoy the slide presentation prepared for you and remember the good times, the people, places and things from your years here at Western Michigan University.”

(Slide Show- Music by Professor Steve Zegree)

President Dunn:

“In closing, I would like to announce that in Fountain Plaza (--Brown Hall if it's raining--) the alumni association is hosting a congratulatory reception for all graduates and their families to enjoy these final moments on campus. Be sure to stop by.

There are many people who work very hard to make this commencement ceremony meaningful and memorable for you.

Thank you to Andrew Miller and the brothers of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia; Professor Deanna Swoboda and the Western Brass Ensemble; Professor Steve Zegree, pianist for the slide production; the commencement committee; and the many people who work behind the scenes and contribute so much to our commencement.

And finally graduates, thank you for all that you have given to us and for all that you will be giving to society in the years to come. Make your mark on

this world, fulfill your dreams and always remember those who helped to make this all possible for you!

May you enjoy happiness, peace, and health.

At this time the Brothers of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia will present the Alma Mater of Western Michigan University. After their performance, the Alma Mater will be repeated, at which time, all of you are invited to sing. Please rise for the Alma Mater and remain standing until the platform party leaves the stage."

ALMA MATER

Western, we sing to you Brown and Gold
Western, we bring to you faith untold,
You challenge and inspire,
Your hope is our desire,
We sing to you our Alma Mater, Brown and Gold

RECESSIONAL

The Western Brass Ensemble

(President Dunn and Chair Johnston lead to march off stage.)