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Meds and Eds Panel

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I. WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY – DR. JOHN DUNN - The following are some possible topics or questions that relate primarily to WMU’s contributions and opportunities.

- Establishment of a new medical school that is supported by two well-known regional health care systems in an urban area embodies the ultimate medical and educational anchor. Can you speak to the process you went through to achieve this success? In addition to establishing a successful new college, what other benefits do you see arising from establishing this facility education in its downtown location?

The Western Michigan University School of Medicine will indeed embody the ultimate medical/educational anchor in an urban setting. Kalamazoo, however, provides an urban setting that is unlike any other. It is a setting that really called out for a medical school. The infrastructure was there.

Jonathan Swift once said: "Vision is the art of seeing the invisible." The idea of having a Kalamazoo-based medical school WAS such a vision.

In 2007, when I was new in town and first met our partners in this effort, Frank Sardone of Bronson and Paul Spaude of Borgess, our conversations led us to conclude that this town was uniquely prepared to launch a medical school. It had:

- A Carnegie-designated research university--WMU
• Two world-class teaching hospitals with a 35-year history of graduate medical education

• A heritage built around the discovery of pharmaceuticals and medical devices.

It was a good idea. The timing was right because of a looming doctor shortage, changes to the medical education paradigm and our nation's demographic and health care status.

We had communitywide involvement. We've had more than 300 members of the community involved in med school development work--development of the curriculum, facilities, library and information technology; handling communication; building a business plan; and developing a vision for student life.

And we've had the commitment of the staffs of our three organizations as well as governmental leaders, economic developers and, of course, donors who are helping us turn our vision of a private medical school at a public university into a reality--first with a $100 million anonymous gift and then with the gift of a life sciences research facility to use as the school's downtown Kalamazoo home.

Today, we have achieved preliminary accreditation from the LCME. We will quickly begin recruiting for a first class that will begin in fall 2014 and we are renovating a downtown, seven-story life sciences building to be the home of the new medical school.

We also believe the medical school will generate new life science research in our city. Additional economic development for Kalamazoo will come from new
faculty and student residents and their families, visits by patients and their families and growth in the service sector to meet the needs of all those new people and facilities.

- In addition to the new medical school, what other interests does WMU have in urban areas? How have you seen WMU’s presence contribute to growth in surrounding areas or vicinities? For example, WMU has campuses in downtown Battle Creek and Grand Rapids – do you feel that WMU’s presence enhances those urban areas?

We do have regional locations in such urban settings as Battle Creek, Lansing, Grand Rapids, Muskegon, Benton Harbor and Detroit. Our growth in those areas is closely pegged to the value we can add to higher education in those areas through top-notch programs like our MBA offerings, health care disciplines.

Our locations also provide a venue for important community initiatives. In Battle Creek, for instance, our wonderful Kendall Center has been providing training space for professionals who travel from around the nation to attend course work offered by the new Global Food Protection Institute.

Having one of the nation's top 100 universities offering classes and other services is an automatic enhancement to a community's ability to attract top talent and remain attractive to its citizens.
• Does WMU have future plans for additional urban growth in Kalamazoo or elsewhere? If so, what elements attract WMU to particular locations and what can cities do to make themselves more attractive?

The opportunity for service and a population desirous of higher education advancement are the two most important things we look for in partner communities.