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Western Michigan University Commencement Exercises-12pm

John M. Dunn
Western Michigan University, john.dunn@wmich.edu

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WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES

Saturday, June 29, 2013

John M. Dunn, President, Presiding

PROCESSIONAL

Sara Martin,
Organist

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 eighth (308th) commencement ceremony.

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

(President Dunn steps away from the microphone)

THE NATIONAL ANTHEM

Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia
Michael 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 nearly **1400** degrees today.

Almost **900** of you will receive bachelor's degrees.

And **460** will receive master's degrees.
And 21 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 Vice Chair James Hettinger and Trustee Ronald Hall, Sr.
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 Vice Chair Hettinger 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 Vice Chair Hettinger to the podium.)

Vice Chair Hettinger: WMU POINTS OF PRIDE

“Graduates, you and your families should be proud of what you've accomplished. You've successfully completed your degree programs, and you 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.

Today's graduates come from an array of backgrounds and they will go on to diverse post-graduate roles. The stories that brought our graduates here today are tales of personal accomplishment and proud supporting families and friends. I could share hundreds of wonderful stories about all of today's grads, but there isn't time to do them justice. So instead, I'll take this time to relate the kind of information our graduates can share as they start their careers, head for graduate school or take a short break to plan for the next step.
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 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 just over 200 schools designated a research university by the Carnegie Foundation classification system that is the nation's gold standard when it comes to defining higher education.

For those in the audience who wonder what the practical implications of that level of quality might be, let me explain it to you this way. If there were ever a bracketed competition pitting colleges and universities against one another in the academic arena, this University would be in the "Final Four" every year for individual programs in each of our colleges--arts and sciences, aviation, business, education, engineering and applied sciences, fine arts and health and human services.

All of you graduating today will now take your place among a proud group of more than 180,000 WMU alumni living worldwide. Nearly 125,000 WMU graduates live in Michigan, but 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 alum.

So who else will be joining our alumni base today?

- Let's start with an important group we always need to acknowledge--our veterans. There are 25 veterans who will graduate today. Please join me in offering a round of applause to express our gratitude for their service. 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. Today's graduating veterans have been awarded red, white and blue honor cords to signify their service to our country.
• Graduating today are 21 members of the Lee Honors College. The Lee Honors College is one of the nation's oldest collegiate honors programs and boasts a student profile that is as impressive than that of students attending the most elite private colleges in the United States.

• Today's graduates include six members of Phi Beta Kappa. Phi Beta Kappa is the oldest and most prestigious academic honor society in the nation. Just 100 public universities in America have been authorized to shelter a Phi Beta Kappa chapter, and Western Michigan University is one of them.

• Western Michigan University is an international university with students from 95 nations. Our graduates today come from countries that include China, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, the Dominican Republic, India and Egypt. Families have traveled from around the globe to be here today to celebrate their students' achievements.

Now here are some college-specific Points of Pride for this morning's graduates to remember and hold close:

• With some 6,000 students, the College of Arts and Sciences is the University's largest college and is the academic home to 26 departments and award-winning programs that range from creative writing and physics to psychology and mathematics.

• Our College of Aviation is the first in the nation selected for a special Pilot Pipeline hiring agreement to fill the cockpits of future American Airlines and American Eagle flights.

• The College of Fine Arts is home to a School of Music that has just joined an elite group of the world's top music programs as an "All Steinway" school, with 118 of the famed instruments at home in fine arts studios, classrooms and performance venues.

• The Haworth College of Business is among an elite group of fewer than 5 percent of business schools worldwide that are accredited at both the undergraduate and graduate levels by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business.
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 we know that the more people know about Western Michigan University, the more likely they are to recognize what an incredibly valuable asset WMU graduates are for the state and nation.

Telling our story works. I invite you to remember and share all of these facts liberally as you move into your professional life. I also ask that you remember that these facts were made possible through the work of our faculty and through your efforts as well. I urge you to continue building WMU's reputation in your chosen field. Starting today, you're a Bronco alum--one of our new 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. 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. We are confident that wherever life's journey takes you, the degree you will receive today and those friendships you have thoughtfully established will serve you well.

And now, it is time to award the degrees you have worked so hard to earn and will become an important lifetime credential.”

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 Doctoral or 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 Doctoral or 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: “Will Dean Alex Enyedi, College of Arts and Sciences, please come forward. Dean Enyedi’s son, Nathaniel, is one of this afternoon’s graduates.”

Dean Enyedi: “Will those receiving a Bachelor's degree through the College of Arts and Sciences 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: “Will Dean David Powell, 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: “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.”

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

Provost Greene: “Will Dean Margaret Merrion, College of Fine Arts, please come forward.”

Dean Merrion: “Will those receiving a Bachelor's degree through the College of Fine Arts 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 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 DOCTORAL DIPLOMAS
(NAMES ANNOUNCED)

President Dunn: “Will the doctoral candidates please come forward as Dr. Susan Stapleton, Dean of the Graduate College, announces their names.

Trustees Hettinger and Hall and the graduates’ advisors will place the hoods on the shoulders of these doctoral graduates.” (PAUSE)

(SHORT MUSICAL INTERLUDE AS GRADUATES COME TO STAGE)
(President Dunn and Trustee Hettinger to diploma table and Dean Stapleton to podium. Dean Stapleton will call candidates/advisors forward. She will indicate the candidates by name and announce their degrees. President Dunn will present labeled diplomas on diploma table. Trustee Hettinger and advisors will place hoods on shoulders of the first four doctoral graduates. Trustee Hall and advisors will place hoods on shoulders of the last four doctoral graduates.

College of Arts and Sciences

(Hettinger) Tamer Elbayoumi
Isurika Fernando
Renee Gardner
Khalil Hamam

(Hall) Travis Hayden
David Jeng
Manjula Nandasiri
Diana Stout

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 announces their names.”

(SHORT MUSICAL INTERLUDE AS GRADUATES COME TO STAGE)

(Ms. McLaughlin will go to microphone. Deans Enyedi, Powell, Palan and Merrion (two at one time) will assist President 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.”

(SHORT MUSICAL INTERLUDE AS GRADUATES COME TO STAGE)

(Deans Enyedi, Powell, Palan and Merrion (two at one time) will assist President Dunn with the presentation of diplomas.)

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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.”

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CONCLUDING REMARKS

President Dunn:

“We’re near the end of our ceremony, and there’s a beautiful day out there that is calling for you to continue your celebration. At times like this, I like to remember the advice Franklin Roosevelt once gave to public speakers. "Be sincere, be brief; be seated."

After all these years on campus, though, you know I can't let you leave without a few words from the heart.

You are now alumni and ambassadors for this great university. 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 professional, civic and personal achievements that you may not yet imagine.

Many of you already realize that some of the most valuable lessons you've learned here are the result 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 what you learned prepared you to match your skills with a range of roles--now and for many years to come.

You see, the true caliber of a university is not its size, nor wealth, nor status or ranking, but rather the kind of graduate it produces. For Western Michigan University, this means graduates like you who are well educated, technically competent AND who possess the traits of civility, courtesy and respect for all. It also means graduates who are ethical, moral and committed to the betterment of society.

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. If you do, you will add immeasurably to the well being of our world.
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. If you do, you will add immeasurably to the well being of our world.

Because this is a globally engaged university, you are prepared to represent your nation in the world community. As we watch the world news this week, we are saddened to learn of the critical condition of Nelson Mandela. I think it's important for you to know that Western Michigan University--your university--was among the first to affirm the worth of Nelson Mandela's cause. WMU was one of a handful of U.S. universities that took a risk to recognize Nelson Mandela with an honorary degree when he was still in prison fighting to bring justice to his nation. Your university took action in 1988--nearly 25 years ago--because it was the right thing to do. Today, our honorary degree is one of more than 50 the Nobel Laureate has since received from the world's leading international universities. But WMU's was among the first. We took action and committed the Western Michigan University name to his battle for freedom.

Nelson Mandela famously once said, "A Vision Without Action is Just A Dream." My wish for you is that you have a strong vision, the courage to take action and the intense satisfaction of having your dreams fulfilled.

I like to close my commencement remarks with an inspiring quote. Over the years, I've chosen the words of Abraham Lincoln, Mother Theresa and Albert Schweitzer. Today, as we we celebrate one of life's benchmark achievements, I'd like to change things up a bit and use a quote that is more unconventional. It's one you may recall hearing in a different setting.

"You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose. You're on your own. And you know what you know. And YOU are the one who'll decide where to go..."

These words, of course, belong to Dr. Seuss, from "Oh the Places You'll Go!" And those words will, I hope, remind you that you are ready. We
have helped set the stage. But you now "know what you know" and will be making the critical next decisions.

Choose wisely and well. Share the knowledge you have gained here to enrich the lives of those around you. Remain an eager learner for the rest of your life. Read, listen carefully for the wisdom of others, reach beyond what you know for new possibilities, and before making any big decision, do your homework!

You are alumni of this great University, and we want you to stay connected. 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 the Fountain Plaza [Brown Hall rain site] the alumni association is hosting a congratulatory reception for all graduates, their families and other guests 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 Michael Miller and the brothers of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia; organist, Sara Martin; and Professor Steve Zegree, pianist for the slide production. I wish to also acknowledge the departure of Dean Anthony Vizzini, College of Engineering and Applied Sciences, who is soon to become the provost of Wichita State University. And, congratulations to his wife, Patty, who this afternoon was among the graduates from the Haworth College of Business. We give our best wishes and special thanks to Dean Nicholas Andreadis, Lee Honors College, and Dean Margaret Merrion who are retiring after years of outstanding service to our students. Thanks also to 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
Sara Martin

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