WMU/Cooley Articulation Agreement Signing

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(John Dunn to be introduced by Don LeDuc)

• Good afternoon and thank you Don. This is truly a wonderful opportunity to both celebrate the affiliation and spend some time allowing our communities to get to know one another better.

• It's been my pleasure to get to know Don LeDuc well over the past several years and to learn more about Cooley Law School and the achievements and quality of its faculty and its graduates--many of whom are here today. One of the most appealing qualities of the Cooley community is that it shares our values. Both communities are committed to excellence, opportunity, access and diversity.

• I am convinced that this affiliation is good for our entire University community and good for our Cooley colleagues and the students, alumni and communities they serve. The energy and cross-disciplinary advances that may result from an affiliation could benefit many of our academic offerings and allow us to have a greater positive impact on the professional and legal environments of our state and nation. After today, all that remains before our affiliation can begin will be the final review by our accrediting agencies.

• Throughout the process, I've learned to follow Cooley news with intense interest. I've come to take pride in what I've learned about Cooley because I've come to value the special relationship that is so quickly developing between our two schools. These days, when I learn--as I did last week--that a new book by Harvard Press calls two Cooley faculty members among the 26 best law professors in the nation, I feel real pride in the accomplishments of our new colleagues.
And when I learned that Cooley's Professionalism Program has won the ABA's highest recognition for excellence, I couldn't help but think of the ties we can forge between that program and WMU's celebrated Center for the Study of Ethics in Society. The beneficiaries would clearly be students--WMU students and Cooley students.

The possibilities for this affiliation are truly unlimited. We already have people on both campuses talking about the mutual areas of interest--intellectual property rights; health care, life science and environmental law; entrepreneurship; and a 3+3 program that would allow WMU students to earn both a bachelor's and law degree in less time and at lower cost.

The potential for what Don LeDuc and I began talking about informally three years ago is enormous. After we affix our signatures to the documents in front of us, we need to await feedback from the review of the American Bar Association and the Higher Learning Commission. We can then move forward accordingly. With all that in mind, I'd say it's time to do this. President LeDuc, if you'll join me at the signing table, we'll formalize this.

(Following those remarks, you and Don LeDuc sit at the table and sign the two copies of the agreement and you each keep one. Then Ken and Larry Nolan, the dual alums, return to the podium to introduce some gear that can be described as part of an incredibly limited edition collection. They are sweatshirts with dual logos.) Ken then thanks everyone again and invites them to enjoy the reception.