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Sustainability Roundtable

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WMU President John M. Dunn
Sustainability Roundtable
"What Sustainability Means to Me"
Oct. 22, 2013

(3-minute intro)

- Good evening. I'm so glad you are all here, and I'm delighted to be part of this very diverse panel of campus and community leaders. The depth and variety of people who are part of our panel this evening helps illustrate the importance of bringing different perspectives to a common goal.
- I've always viewed sustainability in a holistic way. Being sustainable--in the very broadest sense of the term--is the goal for our entire campus. It's also a tool that helps us maximize what we want to accomplish when we think of all of our goals in a broad, thoughtful way. Sustainability, diversity, learning, student success, discovery, global citizenship--they're all tied up in creating the kind of environment we want here on campus and in our world in general.
- Each of the pillars that drive our strategic plan stands in service to what I see as true sustainability. We're learner centered, discovery driven and globally engaged. By definition, that compels us to strive for sustainability. And so, **WeSustain**.
- It's pretty simple. Sustainability is about using our resources wisely. That includes every resource, beginning with the most important, our wealth of human resources. As a society, we simply can't afford NOT to have every one of our students reach their full potential. That happens by ensuring members of our university community feel welcome, valued, respected and successful. If that sounds a lot like diversity, that's just fine. That is my point.
- We also, as citizens of a global environment, cannot afford to do anything that depletes our resources in a way that limits their availability to future generations. That's a value

we work hard to inculcate in every member of our University community. And since we're a discovery-driven community, we can use the expertise of our community members and leverage their talents in service to our goal of conserving physical resources.

- And finally, being sustainable and using resources wisely allows us to shift resources to accomplish our overarching goals. Conserving energy preserves resources for the future. It also saves us money. And that money that can be directed to add value elsewhere in our enterprise--for additional scholarships or services that help sustain and enhance the lives of students who in turn will help add value to our communities.

Background:

Since 1996 (17 years)

- *95 energy conservation projects*
- *15% energy reduction (Square Footage increase – 19%)*
- *Results: Reduced 281 million lbs. of CO₂ emissions (We're going to announce more tomorrow).*

- *Seven LEED certified buildings, 10 in certification process, includes first higher ed building in nation to achieve LEED-EB gold.*

- *First university in the nation to establish a quasi green revolving fund (1980)*

- *Leveraged \$5.85 million in energy efficiency spending in the past 15 years into savings and cost avoidance of nearly 17 million*

- *Stormwater management leadership*

- *Installation of electric vehicle charging stations across the campus, including massive solar array and stations at Miller*

- *New solar array on rooftop of Sangren Hall--975 panels generating about 15-20 percent of building's usage.*

- *Student sustainability fee, EcoMug distribution*
- *Signatory to ACUPCC*
- *Recognized by U.S. Green Building Council and Princeton Review*
- *2013 Detroit Free Press Green Leader in public sector*
- *Founding member of the national \$1 billion Green Challenge*
- *Recognized as one of the nation's 80 campus green leaders by the Sustainable Endowment Institute.*