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Fall Open House Welcome for Prospective Students

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Fall Open House Welcome
John M. Dunn
December 6, 2013

- Thank you all so much for being here this morning. Welcome to all high school juniors and seniors who have traveled to Kalamazoo to discover what is so special about Western Michigan University. Welcome also to your parents, family members and teachers. It is because of your nurturing, encouragement--*and discipline*--that these soon-to-be-college students are prepared for the next steps in their lives.
- You're here because you want to know what Western Michigan University has to offer and whether it's the right fit for you. In other words, you are on the search for your next home—your academic home.

I can and will gladly give you a litany of reasons why you should carefully consider WMU and why you should listen closely and look carefully at what you'll hear and see today. I have a tendency to get pretty excited and go on too long when I tell people about all of the wonderful options they'll find here.

- We've got a lot to boast about. Many WMU programs are known nationally and internationally. As a matter of fact, if there was a "final four" in areas like jazz studies, engineering management, aviation, geosciences, creative writing or medieval studies, we'd be there every time.
- No matter what academic program you choose—and there are more than 230 of them— we want you to be totally engaged, so we've invested ourselves and our resources in making our programs the very best they can be. We have people in every college and in every office whose first priority is to make sure our students

succeed in class, find their career path and prepare to be the citizens and job-ready professionals who will lead our nation forward.

- We want you to be Broncos who look for fulfillment in every aspect of college life. We want you to be energized by what you learn here and we want you to boast about your college experience--while you're a student and long afterward when you're a graduate and making your mark on the world.

- Your university experience will be transformative--because of what you learn both inside and outside the classroom. I know that because I had the good fortune to attend a diverse public university as a student. My worldview was changed dramatically by what I learned from my professors, of course, but also from what I discovered by studying, eating, living and working with students from around the globe and from every conceivable background. That was--a few--years ago, but that experience guided my career path and still influences and inspires me every day. That transformative experience is what we all wish for you.

- What kind of people will you meet here?

- Students from every ethnic and economic background

- Students of all ages and all the world's major belief systems

- Students from every state in the nation and all of Michigan's counties

- Students from more than 90 other countries on around the globe

- And Veterans--we have more vets who served in Iraq and Afghanistan than any other Michigan university, and we've been honored for being one of the nation's best colleges for vets.

- This fall, WMU was ranked among the top 50 universities in the nation that deliver the "best bang for the buck." Their analysis was based on the academic value

student receive per dollar tuition dollar spent. And, a public policy blog ranked WMU as #5 on their list of the top 12 value-added universities, schools that already meet many of the performance measures called for in recent weeks by President Barack Obama.

- World-class academics await you here, and so do caring faculty who not only know how to teach their subjects, they are researchers, innovators, and experts in their fields. Opportunities to broaden your horizons at Western Michigan University are limitless.

- So, keep you eyes open and ask lots of questions today. I hope your visit is enlightening and very enjoyable. As you explore our campus, picture yourself in the classroom, hanging out in the resident hall, and working out in the student rec center. I hope this visit provides you with the information you need to make the right decision to *Go West* and become a Bronco. I'd like nothing better than to see you all again next fall (or the fall after), right here on this campus, as you take your next academic giant-step forward.

It's a great day to be a BRONCO.