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## Western Michigan University Commencement Exercises-9am

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WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY  
COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES

Saturday, December 14, 2013

John M. Dunn, President, Presiding

PROCESSIONAL  
Western Brass Ensemble  
Steve Wolfinbarger, Conductor

President Dunn: "Good morning, 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 ninth (309th) 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? We also realize that there are loved ones who cannot be with us today but who we remember now and thank for their support and affection.

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 **1900** degrees today.

Over **1400** of you will receive bachelor's degrees.

And more than **400** will receive specialist's and master's degrees.

And **46** of you will be receiving doctoral degrees.

Please join me as we turn our attention to 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 Trustees Mary Asmonga-Knapp and Ken Miller.

At this time, I would like to recognize those of you who are graduating with honors. Will those with honor cords, honorary society members, and those with recognition cords 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 Trustee Ken Miller 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 Trustee Miller to the podium.)

Trustee Miller:       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 was 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 47 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 65 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 similar or even more impressive than that of students attending the most elite private colleges in the United States.
- Today's graduates include 10 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 105 nations. Our graduates today come from countries that include China, Saudi Arabia, Ethiopia, the Dominican Republic, India, Kenya and Japan. 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:

- The **College of Education and Human Development** is among the top producers of educational personnel in the nation and routinely attracts prospective employers from around the nation and world to its annual job fair.
- The education and human development college is this university's largest producer of master's degree graduates, and boasts a 100 percent rate of undergraduates completing an internship of field experience.
- The **College of Health and Human Services** has six graduate programs ranked among the top 100 such programs in the nation, with three of them--occupational therapy, physician assistant and speech-language pathology--in the top 50 and holding the title of best in Michigan.
- Each year for the past decade, health and human services researchers have been awarded National Institutes of Health research funding, making

WMU's one of only a few of the nation's allied health schools and colleges to receive these prestigious research awards so consistently.

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 have now reached a very important point in this ceremony, the conferring of your degree---the degree that you have worked so diligently to earn; the document that is sure to become one of your most important lifetime credentials."

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## 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, Specialist's 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, Specialist's 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 Associate Dean Kathy Cummings, College of Education and Human Development, please come forward."

Dean Cummings: "Will those receiving a Bachelor's degree through the College of Education and Human Development 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 Washington and returns to his seat.)

Provost Greene: "Will Dean Earlie Washington, College of Health and Human Services, please come forward."

Dean Washington: "Will those receiving a Bachelor's degree through the College of Health and Human Services 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."

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## 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.

Trustee Asmonga-Knapp, Trustee Miller 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 Asmonga-Knapp 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. The advisors and Trustee Asmonga-Knapp will place the hoods on the shoulders of the first ten doctoral graduates. Trustee Miller and advisors will place hoods on shoulders of the remaining doctoral graduates.

### College of Education and Human Development

(Asmonga-Knapp)      David John Alban  
                                 Paul James Ballard  
                                 Robin K. Buchler  
                                 Brian Edward Cole  
                                 Derek Ryan Cooley  
                                 Kristin Marie Everett  
                                 Bradly Hinman  
                                 Eric Macleod  
                                 Peter Muir  
                                 Bernice Patterson

(Miller)

Robert Powell  
Daniel Romero  
John Severson  
Michele Siderman  
Kathleen VanderVeen  
Geoffrey Whitehurst  
Kelsey Woodard

College of Health and Human Services

(Miller)

Theresa Green  
Amy Yorke

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PRESENTATION OF MASTER'S DIPLOMAS  
(NAMES ANNOUNCED)

Provost Greene: "Will the graduates receiving Specialist's or Master's degrees please come forward to receive their diplomas as Ms. Michele McLaughlin and Dr. David Little announce their names."

(SHORT MUSICAL INTERLUDE AS GRADUATES COME TO STAGE)

(Ms. McLaughlin and Dr. Little will go to microphone. Deans Cummings and Washington [or Vice President Anderson) will assist President Dunn 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 and Dr. Little."

(SHORT MUSICAL INTERLUDE AS GRADUATES COME TO STAGE)

(Deans Cummings and Washington [or Vice President Anderson] 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], Immediate Past President of the Alumni Association, please come forward. Mr. Chludzinski, C.P.A., is a partner in Brink, Key and Chludzinski, P.C."

(President returns to his seat and Mr. Chludzinski to the podium)

Mr. Chludzinski: REMARKS

(Mr. Chludzinski returns to his seat and President 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 winter 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.

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.

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 death 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

what some at that time called 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--25 years ago-- because it was the right thing to do. Your university recognized early that any society based on the premise of exclusion threatened everyone. Today, our honorary degree is one of more than 50 Mandela has since received from the world's leading international universities. But WMU's was among the very 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 purposeful vision, the courage to take action and the intense satisfaction of having your dreams fulfilled. Never forget that there will be others who will look to you for direction, guidance, and assistance – a helping hand. Please be among those who develop a deep and abiding commitment to compassion and helping others.

We are in the midst of the season of giving, the time when we stop, soften our hearts a bit, and reflect on what is important in life and the many gifts we have. No gift is greater than the example of forgiveness so evidently displayed by Nelson Mandela. After 27 long years of being wrongly imprisoned and mistreated, Mandela embraced and forgave his jailers--he later invited them as honored guests to his inauguration as President.

My wish for you graduates and all assembled here today is that we, too, all strive to emulate Mandela's ability to fight for justice and a truly inclusive society. Even in times of great differences and longstanding disputes, we can learn to forgive. These are the traits of a life lived well, and the signs of a truly educated person.

Graduates, you are now alumni of this great University. Know that wherever you go from this day forward, you will always be a part of us. Please, 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)

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President Dunn: “In closing, I would like to announce that in the Gilmore Theatre Atrium the alumni association is hosting a congratulatory reception for all graduates and 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; Professor Steve Wolfinbarger and the Western Brass Ensemble; Professor Steve Zegree, pianist for the slide production. 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 good 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

Western Brass Ensemble

(President Dunn and Trustee Miller lead to march off stage.)