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Lonnie Duncan Memorial Service

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

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Good afternoon. Thank you all for joining us to celebrate the life of a remarkable scholar, colleague and community member. As I look around the gathering today, I see people whose presence reflects and illustrates the impact Lonnie Duncan had. He was a Flint, Mich. native, a family man, a teacher and mentor, and an advocate for education in our larger Kalamazoo community. He was committed to using his expertise and what he knew to be the truth to make a difference at our university, in our schools and in our community.

Here on campus Lonnie Duncan was co-training director of WMU's counseling psychology doctoral program, and he was nationally recognized for his work in mental health treatment with racial minorities.

During his all-too-short time at Western Michigan University he was singled out twice for his efforts to make our Graduate College even more diverse and inclusive. He was honored for that work first by our graduate students in 2009 and then by the broader University community in 2013 for recruiting students from historically black colleges and universities to WMU's graduate programs.

It was his own work and research with youth in this community, I'm convinced, that led to his interest in becoming a member of the board of the Kalamazoo Public Schools. He knew he had insights to share, and he knew he could make a difference.

That total commitment to using what you know and making your world and community a better place is the precise message we want our students to leave with
when they finish their degrees. Lonnie Duncan showed them how to make a
difference—he modeled good citizenship in the most powerful way possible—by
doing some of that heavy lifting himself.

We were fortunate enough to have him as part of our University community for 13
years. It was too short a period of time, but one that we celebrate. The loss of
Lonnie Duncan—especially at such a young age—is a profound loss for those who
were part of his life. His impact on all of us on this campus—his colleagues and
students—was profound as well. We're so much better, individually and
collectively, because he was part of our community

Thank you, again, for joining us today to celebrate and honor the legacy of one of
Western Michigan University's most dedicated, learner-centered and engaged
citizens.