School of Medicine Naming Announcement

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School of Medicine Naming Announcement
March 11, 2014
Remarks

**Opening**

1:15 a.m.--The crowd is welcomed by Bob Miller. He thanks them for coming and thanks them for their patience and curiosity as about our announcement. Notes that it is about the School of Medicine and points out that a Grand Opening is set for September. He says Dr. Dunn will be making that important announcement, and there will be an opportunity for members of the media to ask questions. He then introduces President Dunn.

**President John M. Dunn remarks**

Good afternoon. Thank you for taking time to be with us today. Like all days, this is a great day to be a Bronco. If you are not an official member of the Western Michigan University family, I stand ready to welcome you as an honorary member so you can enjoy this moment fully.

Before I tell you the news, though, there are some people I'd like to introduce. I'd like to acknowledge our Board of Trustees, represented today by Trustee Ken Miller. Our board's support for the work that has led to today's announcement has been unparalleled and they have our gratitude.

Also with us in this wonderful crowd are members of the administration, faculty and staff members--and at least a few students from this university, including our student leadership. We're also joined by alumni and donors and by members of our local business and medical communities and by local governmental leaders (as well as some of our state legislators--iffy).

And finally, there are some very special guests here to introduce before our announcement--my colleagues Paul Spaude, president and CEO of Borgess Health; and Frank Sardone, president and CEO of Bronson Healthcare. For some five years
now, they have been our partners in the wonderful initiative that has been known as
the Western Michigan University School of Medicine-- at least until now. They're
joined by Dr. Hal B. Jenson, founding dean of the medical school.

It was just three years ago--three years next week, in fact--that many of us
gathered here to celebrate a historic moment. I stood at this spot, and shared with
you a wonderful transformational event in the life of this University and this
community.

**The announcement three years ago**

It was my intense pleasure and privilege to tell you on that day that a $100
million cash gift had been made to establish the Western Michigan University
School of Medicine--a private medical school at our proud public university. That
foundational funding for an innovative new school of medicine has allowed us--
together as a community--to develop a medical school that taps the expertise of our
two world-class teaching hospitals and leverages the Kalamazoo community's 125-
year legacy of life science innovation.

On that day and still today, only a few people were privileged to know the
identity of those generous donors. Those few of us who did, did our best to convey
this community's gratitude--both on that day three years ago and again when those
donors chose to add to their original $100 million gift.

Our donors were firm in their desire to make their gift anonymously, and of
course, we honored their wishes. I said at the time, though, that I hoped someday to
thank them for their generosity in a very public way.
That day is today. They are ready to reveal their identities and we are delighted to honor them by naming the medical school for someone who was extraordinarily important to them—and to our entire community. To do this properly, I'd like to ask Dean Jenson to join me along with Borgess CEO Paul Spaude and Bronson CEO Frank Sardone. Gentlemen.

**The name**

Starting today our new medical school will be known as the Western Michigan University Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine. (Pause for applause and while Spaude and Sardone remove the covers on the two graphics to reveal the new WMed logo and Homer Stryker's picture)

The first class of students will enroll this fall in a medical school named for the WMU alumnus who founded Stryker Corporation and whose name has become an international symbol for medical innovation and better patient care. I can't think of a more appropriate namesake for a school that will be dedicated to those qualities of innovation and patient care. (Pause for more applause.)

**The donors**

This has all been made possible by the extraordinary generosity of the donors of that foundational gift. They are Homer Stryker's granddaughter, Ronda Stryker, and her husband William Johnston, who is a member of the WMU Board of Trustees. Please join me in a long, enthusiastic and very loud round of applause to acknowledge their vision and their confidence in this university and in this community. (Lead applause.)

Standing here, I notice everyone looking around to see where we have seated our donors—or if they're about to emerge from a holding area. We haven't, and they
aren't. They are not here because they are traveling internationally for a few weeks. And they are not here because they wanted the focus today to be not on them, but on the legacy of Homer Stryker and on the medical school they so ardently support. They know the impact this school will have on our community.

It is not a coincidence that they are traveling while this announcement is being made. They preferred that we do it this way. They will be home later this month, and when you see Ronda and Bill please reach out and thank them for what they're doing for our community and for generations of students.

Ronda Stryker has told us she thinks her grandfather perhaps would not have cared so much about having a medical school named for him, but he would have loved knowing the school is here and that medical education and innovative research is alive and well in Kalamazoo. His focus, she says, was never on himself, but on making life better for his patients and making sure patients had the best possible care outcomes. It is easy to see that family trait was passed on to his granddaughter.

Ronda Stryker and Bill Johnston have given our city, state and nation a wonderful gift that honors Homer Stryker in the most appropriate way possible. Their generosity is allowing our community to create a medical school that will enable generations of young people to make their own marks in the same arena he helped revolutionize. The Western Michigan University Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine is the ideal name for a school that is being developed around the principle of medical innovation that serves the needs of patients.

**Corporate gift**

There's an additional piece of news I need to share with you. Dr. Homer Stryker began a company that has become Stryker Corporation. It is a Fortune 500 company with $9 billion in annual sales and 25,000 employees around the world. Stryker Corporation is one of the world's most admired companies and it has a long and deep commitment to this community. With the knowledge that our medical school
would be named for Homer Stryker, Stryker Corporation recently made a separate and significant gift to the medical school that will bear its founder's name. The company has asked that we not reveal the details, but I can tell you that this major gift will have a lasting impact on the Western Michigan University Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine. (Intro the Stryker delegation if there is one.) All of us here today and this entire community are grateful. Thank you. (Lead applause).

This medical school--the Stryker School of Medicine--is truly a community partnership. I'd like to invite two of the most important members of that partnership to join me now at the podium to make a few comments. Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome first, Paul Spaude of Borgess and then Frank Sardone of Bronson.

**Paul Spaude remarks**

Thank you, John. You know, I hope you keep inviting us all back to this room for such occasions. I very much like the feel of this space.

This is a wonderful development for our community and for this new medical school. Worldwide, the Stryker name evokes a sense of medical innovation and quality. Here in Kalamazoo, it is synonymous with the idea of community commitment. What better name could there be for a medical school that is a true community collaboration?

For those of us at Borgess, the Stryker name holds a very special place. Dr. Homer Stryker went to work at Borgess in 1939 after completing his medical studies, and he was the only certified orthopedic surgeon in the region. It was in his basement workshop at Borgess that he developed many of his inventions. He literally served as a role model for the idea that there are no limits to what we can do to make patient care better, and that there is always room to improve the tools and methods we use.
We named our orthopedic department after him in 1972. Three years later, we named our renovated nursing school building the Stryker Center. The center was renovated again in 2005 and is now a 140,000 square foot outpatient center.

Homer Stryker represents the epitome of innovative thinking in the context of care for patients. His is certainly the ethos we want to instill in a new generation of medical professionals. I want to add my personal note of thanks to Ronda Stryker and Bill Johnston for their support and to Stryker Corporation for its commitment. You all make me very proud to be part of this community and to be involved in a new medical school that will set the bar for 21st century medical education. Frank...

**Frank Sardone remarks**

Paul and I agree. We've been comparing calendars and have identified a number of dates when we're both free to be part of future announcements here or at the wonderful new medical school facility downtown. The bar has been set very high by our past two experiences here.

This is a wonderful development. Having the Western Michigan University Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine on the W.E. Upjohn M.D. Campus acknowledges the special life sciences legacy that is unique to Kalamazoo. Both names reflect the storied traditions that are so much a part of this community--traditions we'll want to introduce to new generations of medical professionals.

I have had the privilege to live and work in this rare environment and every day have seen the impact of the Stryker and Upjohn legacies on the intellectual and philanthropic lives of this community. I am delighted that with these names so prominently in evidence, we'll be reminded every day of both our history and potential.

There really is no other community in the world that has the history, the commitment and the depth of experience in the life sciences that this community does. Thanks to those visionaries who have made today possible, we will be able to
remind prospective students, community visitors and ourselves of that fact with every mention of our medical school and every viewing of spectacular facilities now being completed.

To say this all bodes well for the success of the medical school and the future prospects of the students who study here is something of an understatement. Today's news is quite simple transformational, and I add my deep and heartfelt thanks to those who have made this possible.

*(Sardone and Spaude return to their seats. Dunn thanks them and then introduces Jenson.)*

The last time we were here, Dr. Hal Jenson, founding dean of the medical school, was about two hours into his first day on the job. We told him then there would be days that would be less celebratory and all about hard work. He was up to the task and has beautifully shepherded this initiative to the strong position we are in today. I'd like to ask him to say a few words as well.

**Hal Jenson remarks**

Good afternoon. I am one of the newer members of this community, but I have been part of the national medical community for decades. The Stryker name and all it evokes has enormous distinction in the medical community. I am thrilled, and honored, that the medical school I have the privilege to lead will be named for Dr. Homer Stryker.

Because of the generosity of Ronda Stryker and Bill Johnston and other donors in the region, we had the opportunity to start with a blank canvas and create the medical school of the future. We did so recognizing the need for innovative medical education that would allow us to prepare new generations of medical professionals who would be able to follow the exemplary career of Dr. Homer Stryker.
The medical school we have developed continues the exceptional legacy in Kalamazoo of innovation in the life sciences. Dr. Stryker was an outstanding clinician, whose care for patients was the basis for his other achievements. He was a teacher before he went to medical school, and as the first certified orthopedic surgeon in the region also was an educator of future physicians in a new orthopedic residency program. His entrepreneurship and innovation continues in the corporation he started. He was an exceptional leader, and advocate for patients and the medical profession. The graduates of our medical school will continue in the footsteps of Homer Stryker and will excel as clinicians, educators, researchers, leaders, and advocates.

Our donors' investment in this medical school will pay dividends not only in medical education, but for the physical and economic health of our community as well. This is a wonderful gift to our state and nation, but for this community, this medical school will be transformational.

Thank you all for supporting our work over these past few years. And on behalf of incoming classes of bright young, enthusiastic medical students who want to make a difference in the world, let me simply tell our donors that you have our gratitude. Thank you.

Dunn returns to podium and says he is open to questions from reporters and says.

"I'm, counting on you, Hal, Paul and Frank, to help me answer as thoroughly as possible questions about the school we've built together."

**Closing**

As questions begin to lag, which happens very quickly, Bob Miller steps forward and says he knows there are reporters who want to pose additional questions in more of a one-on-one setting, but before those interviews begin, we're going to take a
couple of moments to take some photos. He invites everyone there to stay and enjoy some refreshments.