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Cesar Chavez Scholarship Dinner Welcome

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Good evening. I'm John M. Dunn, president of Western Michigan University. It is my distinct pleasure to welcome all of you here this evening. This is the eighth time WMU has been privileged to act as host to the Cesar E. Chavez Scholarship Fundraising Dinner.

This annual dinner, sponsored by the Southwest Michigan Cesar E. Chavez Committee, has three basic goals. First, it raises funds for the committee's need-based scholarship, which is available to Michigan college or college-bound students living in Allegan, Calhoun, Kalamazoo and Van Buren counties.

And second, it brings the Southwest Michigan community together to celebrate the life and work of Cesar Chavez and to do so around the anniversary of his March 31 birthday. Each year when we do this, we also celebrate the determination he always showed with his achievements and signature perseverance and commitment to getting things done.

And finally, this annual dinner is a chance to hear the views of a keynote speaker who has made a life's work of the kind determination and joyful spirit that Cesar Chavez practiced. This evening, a colleague from Northeastern Illinois University will fill that role. Samuel Betances (samWELL bayTAHNsis), professor emeritus of sociology and a consultant in the field of diversity training Dr. BayTAHNsis we're so pleased you are here.
I'm also extraordinarily pleased that you have chosen to honor this evening one of Western Michigan University's greatest advocates for providing opportunity to a broad range of students. Mark Delory, director of student financial aid and scholarships at WMU, is being honored with the Tri Community Award.

• And finally, I have the great pleasure this evening of being able to welcome to WMU two students who have won the Chavez Scholarship AND who have chosen to attend Western Michigan University in the fall. **Luz Maria Hurtado Becerra** (Loose Maria herTAHdoh behSARAH of South Haven and **Rigoberto Cardoso**, of Hartford.

• As always, I'm so proud to be part of a community and region that is determined to nurture and support the goals our young people have set. Please join me in a round of applause for the work done by the Southwest Michigan Cesar E. Chavez Committee in partnership with WMU's Division of Multicultural Affairs. They continue to do a wonderful job of keeping Chavez's vision and hopes for the future alive.

• Enjoy the evening.

(3 minutes)