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4-14-2014

Make-a-Difference Awards

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WMU ScholarWorks Citation

Dunn, John M., "Make-a-Difference Awards" (2014). *WMU President John Dunn*. 522.

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Make a Difference Awards
Dr. John M. Dunn
April 14, 2014

- Good afternoon, and thank you all for being here to celebrate the extraordinary service of the staff members we're honoring today. We see their work as extraordinary, but I know from experience that these employees usually don't see what they do as exceptional. They see what they do as a labor of love and the right thing to do.
- There are 15 people being honored. Today's honorees represent a broad swath of our campus. They come from nine academic and academic support areas, public safety, dining services, maintenance services, and one I know very well who represents the president's office.
- What they all have in common is that they are people who have built their careers at Western Michigan University and they reach out to our students and their colleagues in a way that is driven not by their job descriptions, but by their genuine commitment to and concern for those who are part of our community. Together, they represent our commitment to being learner centered, discovery driven and globally engaged.
- Every year, when we honor employees for consistent service above and beyond their job descriptions, I am always grateful for the stories I hear about extraordinary work and about people who take every extra effort to help our students. They solve problems and set a tone of civility and respect with every conversation. I am fortunate to see and hear that kind of service every day in my office, and I'm reminded daily of just how critical every person's role at this university is to our students' success.

- You know, we've been honoring employees this way for almost 20 years--first through our Staff Service Excellence Awards and, since 2004, through the Make a Difference award program. We won't run out of people to honor, because employees like those being honored today serve as role models who inspire all of us to take that extra step, spend that extra moment assisting a student or make sure a project is done just right. I expect some of the people who work with these 15 employees to be honored in the future. Doing the right thing is contagious.

- To those of you honored today, I simply say, "Thank You." What you do in your job everyday makes this a very special environment for our students, for our colleagues and for all the audiences we serve. You set the tone for our campus, and you've set the bar very high as you lead by example.

- Thank you to each of you for what you do each day for our University. Thank you for making our students safe, healthy, well-fed and ready to succeed. And thank you for giving all of us role models to emulate as we continue about the important work we do.

- Enjoy the celebration today and keep up the extraordinary work.

FYI

Spring 2014 award winners

- **Bonnie Ayers**, student financial aid and scholarships
- **Mary Lou Brooks**, geography
- **Shona Drake**, Haenicke Institute
- **Elena Gaudio**, president's office
- **Kevin Hinds**, public safety
- **Tracey Kauppila**, College of Aviation

- **Nancy Landsberger**, civil and construction engineering
- **Edward Maring**, maintenance services
- **James Oswalt**, maintenance services
- **Gerald Schulz**, maintenance services
- **Tammi Smith**, College of Arts and Sciences advising
- **Debbie Uldriks**, Haenicke Institute
- **Mariann Vorva**, Center for Academic Success Programs
- **Paige Warner**, First-Year Experience
- **Carolyn Wiley**, Valley I Dining Service.