University of Burgos Relationship: 15th Anniversary Celebration

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Thank you, Dr. Lopez, for that kind introduction.

Good evening. It is my distinct pleasure to welcome you all here to this 15th anniversary celebration of the strong and growing relationship between the University of Burgos and Western Michigan University. My pleasure at seeing you all here is enhanced by my own fond memories of a time in 2009 when we gathered at the University of Burgos campus to celebrate the 10th anniversary. I was, at that time, a fairly new college president. Today I consider myself a seasoned veteran and I find real pleasure in celebrating a new anniversary with all of you.

President Al-PHONE-zo Moo-REE-yo VEE-yar (Alfonso Murillo Villar), you were our gracious host in 2009. It is a pleasure to be able to welcome you to our campus for this celebration. Thank you for taking the time to travel and be with us this evening.

I want to welcome as well Provost Elena Vee-SEN-tay Do-MING-go (Elena Vicente Domingo) and Professor and Study Abroad Coordinator Maria del Pee-LAR Ah-LONE-so Ah-BAHD, (Maria del Pilar Alonzo Abad) who also have traveled from the University of Burgos to be with us this weekend.

Since its inception in 1999, more than 200 WMU students have traveled to Spain to be part of this very successful program. And we have welcomed 19 graduate
students from the University of Burgos to study here and share their scholarship in such disciplines as Spanish language and literature. Another graduate student will join us in August. Without a doubt, the opportunity to live, study, eat and exchange ideas with people from diverse cultures and backgrounds is one of the greatest gifts we can give our students. I know it has had a profound effect on them. That alone is cause for celebration.

We have with us this evening more than 50 alumni of this study abroad program who have come here this evening with their guests to celebrate the difference that study abroad at the University of Burgos made in their lives. We are so happy to welcome all of you back this evening and eager to hear your recollections of your time in Spain.

Enjoy your evening and let me be among the first to congratulate us all on a successful partnership. Hopefully, we'll be gathering again in 2019 to mark the next big milestone--a 20th anniversary. Thank you.