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Kellogg Community College Opening Panel Remarks

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• Good morning. What a great way to begin a day. Thank you for inviting me to join you as you kick off the 2014-15 Bruin academic year. It's a pleasure to be here, and I always welcome the chance to catch up with President Bona, who I've known now for many years.

• The success of what you do and how that lays the groundwork for the success of your students is critically important to Western Michigan University. Some of your students are already dually enrolled--and are both Bruins and Broncos. Many more head to our campus in Kalamazoo or to our WMU-Battle Creek campus once they complete their associate degree studies.

• In fact, over the past two years, more than 300 KCC students have made the transition from KCC to WMU. Every year, KCC is among the top five of Michigan's 28 community colleges sending students to Western Michigan University. It's been that way for many years, and this is a relationship we feel strongly about--and one we're always trying to strengthen. Whatever we can do to strengthen the relationship and work together to be innovative is done for just one reason--to provide more opportunities for students. We want to respect the choices students and families make and ease the path forward once they complete their studies at KCC.
• We have articulation and reverse transfer agreements with KCC for that reason—to provide opportunity and help students complete their associate degree requirements along the way to earning a bachelor's degree.

Of all the KCC students coming to WMU, the top five majors (not in any order) they choose are:
- Psychology
- Nursing
- Social work
- Business, including accountancy, finance
- Education--elementary and secondary

• Those five majors remain popular. Four years ago, our institutions decided to leverage some very specific areas of strength. Together, we developed the Joint Program Plan--JPP for students interested in both engineering and aviation. That makes your students our students--literally--so that they can take advantage of all the resources of both schools from their very first days as a freshman. These are small but important programs for the right students with strong career goals in these disciplines.

• Without doubt, the part of our partnership that is the most unique is the VetSuccess on Campus initiative that combines the resources of KCC, WMU and Kalamazoo Valley Community College to help reach out to veterans who are current or prospective students. The program puts VetSuccess coordinator Brett Haddow on the KCC campus to serve vets one day each week, with the rest of his time spent at WMU and KVCC. It's all about the success of our students who served their country, and it's all about opportunity for them.
• That's the kind of relationship Western Michigan University has had with Kellogg Community College for many years. Going forward, there are incredible new developments at WMU that we hope will provide even more opportunity for those students who choose to transfer and continue their education.

• Last week, we announced our formal affiliation with the Thomas M. Cooley Law School. It's an expansion of a long relationship we've had with that school. It also will allow us to develop a number of new legal education opportunities.

• And yesterday, we welcomed our first class of students to the WMU Homer Stryker M.D. Medical School--54 students from across the nation, but some from right here in Michigan, and one who earned a bachelor's degree at WMU.

• Every new opportunity we develop at Western Michigan University is one more opportunity potentially available for students who choose WMU as their transfer destination when they finish their associate degree studies. My vision for the future of the partnership between Kellogg Community College and Western Michigan University is for more opportunities for students and deeper relationships between the two schools.

• My wish for you is for a 2014-15 academic year full of success, discovery and accomplishment.

Thank you.