10-9-2014

SW Michigan High School Counselors Breakfast

John M. Dunn
Western Michigan University, john.dunn@wmich.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/dunn
Part of the Higher Education Commons

WMU ScholarWorks Citation
https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/dunn/785

This Speech is brought to you for free and open access by the Office of the President at ScholarWorks at WMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in WMU President John Dunn by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at WMU. For more information, please contact maira.bundza@wmich.edu.
• Good Morning and welcome to the W.E. Upjohn Campus of the Western Michigan University Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine. I love being able to say that still. The campus has been open for only a few weeks, and I suspect I will never get tired of welcoming visitors like you to this amazing space. I hope you thoroughly enjoy your tour.

• In fact, you are in good company. A bit earlier this week, we welcomed another set of visitors to this building. They were here as part of a Congressional panel that featured two sitting Congressmen, the head of the National Institutes of Health, a director of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and executives from some of the nation's leading health care firms. They took a tour as well and were blown away by what we have here.

• We opened the WMU Stryker School of Medicine this fall with 54 students in the inaugural class. That's a few more than the 50 we had planned. Next year, we'll admit 60 to the incoming class, and eventually there will be 84 new students each year. Among those incoming students each year, we expect several to be from Western Michigan University, which, along with Kalamazoo College, enjoys a preferred student status when it comes to recruitment. This year's class has three WMU alumni and one from K College. That edge is so important when you look at the competitive nature of admission here. There were more than 3,700 applicants for 50 slots this year. We’re in the early stages of recruiting next fall’s class and we're already running about 800 applicants ahead of last year's numbers.

• This school will continue to attract top applicants, I am convinced, because of the nature of this community and its 135-year legacy of health science discovery and
exploration. We also had the good fortune to be able to design the curriculum and surround that curriculum with state-of-the-art teaching facilities because we launched this school at the same time a 100-year-old medical education paradigm was changing.

• We've designed this school to include the most recent thinking in medical education, but it is also about discovery and this community's commitment to finding ways to make patients' lives better--just like the commitment of the men whose names are on the school and health care campus. Our partners in all of this are two world-class teaching hospitals, Borgess Health and Bronson Healthcare.

• In case you're wondering and want to share with your students what it takes to get into medical school these days, let me just share the profile of our inaugural class. The diverse class, which is 56 percent male and 44 percent female, includes students from 14 states. They earned their undergraduate degrees at 35 colleges and universities ranging from Big Ten schools to four-year liberal arts colleges. Their undergraduate majors included the expected areas like chemistry and biosciences, but also included such majors as economics, psychology, public health, foreign languages, nursing and theatre. Average age: 24.8 years. Average college GPA: 3.66.

• This medical school is a transformational initiative for Western Michigan University and for the Kalamazoo community and the region. This has been a year that has been all about transformation and profile enhancement. Let me share with you just a few more things that might be of interest to you.

• This medical school is one of two private professional schools that now are part of the umbrella organization that is Western Michigan University. We spent the better part of this year putting the finishing touches on an agreement and working with our accrediting
agency (HLC) and the American Bar Association to finalize an affiliation that created the Western Michigan University Thomas M. Cooley Law School.

• We are now one of just 90 colleges and universities in the nation that has both affiliated law and medical schools. By this time next year, we will be offering a law minor, and first-year law classes will be offered here in Kalamazoo. Perhaps even more exciting for the really motivated undergraduate is a 3+3 program that means a WMU student can earn both a bachelor's degree and a law degree in just six years--shaving both one full year (and a year's worth of tuition costs) off the traditional seven-year path. I suspect you'll be hearing much more about that in the coming months.

• Why did we undertake these two massive changes at the same time? The answer is simple. The opportunity was there, and in both cases we saw that opportunity as time-limited. A new medical school and a re-envisioned law school benefit our state and nation in ways that we'll be able to document in coming years. And we were able to accomplish both initiatives at no cost to Michigan taxpayers.

• Western Michigan University is all about providing opportunity and access for a diverse student body that ranges from students who are the first in their families to attend college to some of the most highly credentialed students in American higher education.

• We're all about results, output, adding value and making a real and lasting difference in peoples' lives. Over the past several years, we've begun to see a subtle but decided shift in the way college rankings assess U.S. Schools. My favorite is by Washington Monthly magazine, which assesses universities on the good they are doing for students and the nation when it comes to producing Ph.Ds. and new knowledge, encouraging service and adding value and success to the lives of individual students. Washington Monthly gets it. That value-added quality and commitment to the larger community have long been our hallmarks. This is the second year WMU has appeared on Washington Monthly's list of top-100 national universities and its second appearance in the magazine's more recent "best bang for the buck" category.
• Thank you for all you do for your students and for being here with us today. I am confident you’ll be leaving with a wealth of data and contact information, but let me add one more piece. My email is john.dunn@wmich.edu. I answer my own email and I welcome feedback from you. We are partners in helping young people find their paths. Enjoy your morning. Thank you.