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25-Year Club

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25-Year Club
Dr. John M. Dunn
12/2/14

- Good evening. Thank you, Peter, for that kind introduction. It is my pleasure to be here this evening. I always like to note that this event, which honors a significant part of the Western Michigan University success story, is one of the year's highlights for me--every year. I hope that's true for all of you as well,
- This is a simple, uncomplicated, joyful event with just one goal--to say "Thank You" to each of you here this evening for choosing to build your professional life around this great university. Thank you for committing your energy, intellect and passion to making Western Michigan University the vibrant institution it is today.
- Welcome to each of tonight's honorees to the WMU 25-year Club. It's a wonderful club, with no regular meetings except this annual celebration. There are no committees to chair, no reports to write and no fundraising to undertake. And, best of all, you have long since paid your dues in full, so your membership is guaranteed.
- For those of you here with a loved one being honored this evening, I offer a note of thanks to you as well. It is a sentiment every bit as heartfelt as the one I have for tonight's honorees. Thank you for being a supportive part of the Western Michigan University family.
- As you know, 1989 was a great year. It was the hiring year for 53 people who went on to build their careers here. Those 53 join a rather storied group of past inductees to become part of the 471 active employees and 731 retired employees

who comprise the 1,202 members of the 25 Year Club.

- Think carefully about that for a moment. More than 1,200 people represented here this evening by you, collectively have spent in excess of 30,000 years building this university we all love. And if you look even more closely, you'll realize that's a low-end estimate because we have many members who have continued on with their work well past the 25-year mark.

- We have an opportunity this evening to honor two people who did not stop at 25 years--or 30, 40 or even 50 years. These two noteworthy people are **Doralee N. DeRyke**, director of budget, operations and service support in the Haworth College of Business, and **Dr. Laurel A. Grotzinger**, reference services librarian and professor of University Libraries. Both celebrated their 50th anniversary as WMU employees in August.

- I'd like to take a few moments to recognize them with a symbol of their extraordinary service. I'd also like to reflect on some of the qualities that kept them here. I suspect they are qualities that will resonate with everyone in this room. (Call the two honorees up to podium).

- Doralee DeRyke, who has worked with every dean in her college's history, is a familiar figure to generations of students in what is now the Haworth College of Business. Those students knew her empathy was always sincere and that she, too, was a learner who earned two degrees while working full time. The college's family atmosphere she helped build has left Doralee with strong friendships--some decades old--and she is the source of institutional memory for the college. Her career in the business college began when it occupied old North Hall on the East

Campus, and it persists today in the college's state-of-the-art home. Locations and facilities change, but Doralee's commitment to her beloved college never has.

- For Laurel Grotzinger, the memorable moments don't involve things or even the heady changes that time has brought. For her, the motivation was always and remains, the chance to interact every day with minds that inquire. Quoting from a colleague, she talks about how "these young [and not so young], growing, impatient, distracted, intelligent, and inquisitive individuals have been, at times, a frustration and a challenge, but in the end, a joy. They are the stuff, the forever moments, that make the job whole." They are, she says, what has made her half century of life here more than memorable.

- I think we may have here the beginnings of the WMU 50-Year Club. This is, I always like to say, a great day to be a Bronco. We have a token to remind these two colleagues always of that fact. (Present crystal Broncos). Ladies and gentlemen please join me in a round of applause for two great Broncos.

- All of you--Doralee and Laurel, past inductees and the new members being honored this evening--have built this University. You have built this University's physical structure and, more important, its reputation. You have provided the credentials and structure that allow us to stake our claim as a learner centered, discovery driven and globally engaged national research university.

- We celebrate your dedication and recognize you for your talent and long service to WMU. The success of any great university is directly related to faculty and staff who are focused, passionate and proud of their contributions to the University and its students. We salute your many years of service.

Please enjoy the rest of your evening and reflect on how the service and accomplishments of tonight's honorees have added to making Western Michigan University a better place. Thank you.

[Go to the certificate table. Dr. Krawutschke will read names. You shake hands and present certificates]