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## Western Michigan University Commencement Exercises-4pm

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WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY  
COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES

Saturday, December 13, 2014

John M. Dunn, President, Presiding

PROCESSIONAL  
Western Brass Ensemble  
Steve Wolfinbarger, Conductor

President Dunn: "Good afternoon, I am John Dunn, president of Western Michigan University.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and the entire University community I want to welcome you to our three hundred and twelfth (312th) commencement ceremony.

Will the audience please stand, as able, for the National Anthem, sung by the Brothers of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia conducted by Derek Pothoff."

(President Dunn steps away from the microphone)

THE NATIONAL ANTHEM  
Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia  
Derek Pothoff, Conductor

## WELCOMING REMARKS AND INTRODUCTIONS

President Dunn:

"Commencement is a very special occasion - a time for celebration, a time for reflection, a time for closure, and a time for new beginnings.

Graduates, I applaud and thank you for attending today's event. Your presence allows us to recognize you and, equally important, to permit expressions of happiness, pride, and love which are so evident in the faces of those gathered here to observe you graduate.

Graduates, this is YOUR day! You have only two responsibilities: 1) to enjoy the day and allow us to honor you and; 2) to reflect and say thanks to those---and you know best who they are---who have contributed to your academic, professional and personal development.

The latter first---the THANKS part. Graduates, please stand as able and those in front of me, turn and face the audience and remain standing. Would the Moms and Dads in the audience please stand? How about the Grandparents? And Great Grandparents? Spouses, special partners, and children? Brothers and Sisters? Aunts, Uncles and other Relatives? And, Friends? We also realize that there are loved ones who cannot be with us today but who we remember now and thank for their support and affection.

This day is a very special day for you, our graduates, and it is my privilege and honor to preside at your commencement.

You will join alumni from all over Michigan and from around the world.

We shall award nearly 1,900 degrees today.

More than 1,400 of you will receive bachelor's degrees.

More than 400 will receive master's degrees.

And 32 of you will be receiving doctoral degrees.

Please join me as we turn our attention to our faculty. They are the very heart of this University. Their intellect, creativity and passion for teaching and research inspire each of us. Their faith and confidence in your abilities throughout your college years have built the foundation for your professional future. Therefore, it is to our faculty that we express special appreciation today. I ask the faculty members to stand and all of you to please join me in applauding them for the fine education they have provided to you!

Besides your professors, there have been many, many others on this campus who have protected, encouraged, facilitated, and brightened the academic journey that has led you to this moment of celebration. They are the cooks, the custodians, office personnel, medical staff, police officers, landscape crews...the list goes on and on. They give their all, every day, to make your educational experience at WMU what you deserve: the BEST. Although many of these fine people are not in attendance, I would like to recognize them with a round of applause.

Let me now turn to my other colleagues on the stage and I ask each of them to rise as I mention them by category.

They are the executive officers, deans and chairs of the University; our partners in shared governance: representatives of the Faculty Senate; the University Chapter of the American Association of University Professors; the Administrative Professional Association; the Professional Support Staff Organization; and the Alumni Association.

Our University is governed by an autonomous Board of Trustees, appointed by the governor of the State of Michigan. The trustees are private citizens who serve the University without remuneration and who set policy direction for the campus. The University is very grateful to these men and women. Representing the Board of Trustees at this ceremony is Trustee Ken Miller.

At this time, I would like to recognize those of you who are graduating with honors. Will those with honor cords, honorary society members, and those with recognition cords please rise so that we can recognize the special distinctions you have earned.

Western Michigan University is truly an international institution. We enthusiastically welcome students from other lands and we encourage all other students to experience a portion of their learning in one of our many study abroad locations around the globe. Will those students who were participants in one of our fine study abroad programs and all our international students please stand and be recognized.

I now ask Trustee Miller to share with you some Western Michigan University "Points of Pride" that will remind you of how special this university truly is."

(President Dunn to his seat and Trustee Miller to the podium.)

Trustee Miller: WMU POINTS OF PRIDE

"Good afternoon, Broncos!

Graduates, you and your families should be proud of what you've accomplished. You've successfully completed your degree requirements, and you will leave this auditorium today as WMU alumni. All of us here on the stage share your families' pride and look forward to seeing you succeed as you move on to the next passages in your lives.

Graduates, you come from an array of backgrounds. The stories that brought you here today are tales of personal accomplishment and proud supporting families and friends. I could share hundreds of wonderful stories about your achievements, but there isn't time to do them justice. So instead, I'll relate the kind of information you can share as you start your

career, head for graduate school or take a short break to plan your next steps in life.

Too often, we take it for granted that you all know the truly special points of pride about Western Michigan University. Let me take a few moments, one last time before you graduate, to remind you of some facts you can share whenever someone asks about your University.

Let's start with the basics. Graduates, you become alumni of one of the country's top public universities. In a nation that has more than 4,000 colleges and universities, your alma mater is one of just over 200 schools designated a research university by the Carnegie Foundation classification system that is the nation's gold standard for defining higher education.

All of you graduating today will take your place among a proud group of WMU alumni that now stands at about 200,000 living worldwide. More than 125,000 WMU graduates live in Michigan, but there's not a state or territory in the nation that is missing the Bronco touch. In fact, graduates from 27 other states join our alumni ranks today.

- And no matter where you travel in the world, you should not be surprised to encounter a fellow alum. We have students from 100 nations, and today's graduates hail from countries that include China, Saudi Arabia, Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, Malaysia, India and Japan. Families have traveled from around the globe to celebrate with us--and some of those family members are returning alumni as well.

- So who else will be joining our alumni base today?

- Let's start with an important group we always need to acknowledge--our veterans. There are 40 veterans who will graduate today. We're proud of the service our graduates and their fellow veterans have given our nation and enormously proud that they chose WMU to prepare for their futures, and we are especially grateful for their service.

- Today 32 people will receive doctoral degrees. These graduates, from more than 20 disciplines, mean that once again this year we will award well more than 100 doctoral degrees.

- Graduating today are 39 members of the Lee Honors College. It is one of the nation's oldest collegiate honors programs and boasts a student profile that is similar or even more impressive than that of students attending the most elite private colleges in the United States.
- Today's graduates include 8 members of Phi Beta Kappa. Phi Beta Kappa is the oldest and most prestigious academic honor society in the nation. Just 100 other public universities in America have been authorized to have a Phi Beta Kappa chapter, and Western Michigan University is one of that elite group.
- And for more than one family celebrating today, Bronco alumni status is a second or even a third generation situation. The Bronco experience is one that crosses geographical and generational boundaries.

We pride ourselves on being learner centered, discovery driven and globally engaged. Our incredibly talented faculty leads the way on all three fronts. Great people and programs--our points of pride--define Western Michigan University. We intend to share these Points of Pride every chance we get, because we know that the more people know about Western Michigan University, the more likely they are to recognize what an incredibly valuable asset WMU graduates are for the state and nation.

Telling our story works and I invite you to share our story--and add to it. Starting today, you're a Bronco alum--one of our newest points of pride. We look forward to following your progress, and we plan on boasting about your success in life for many years to come. Congratulations. You already make us proud.

(President Dunn to the podium)

President Dunn: "Graduates, we are indeed proud of all of you. You have demonstrated the determination and commitment to achieve what we celebrate here today. Many of you held down jobs working long

hours while being full- or part-time students. And what is important, you finished, you accomplished your goal.

A great number of you are international students who have studied far away from your home and family for many years. Your families are proud of your accomplishments. We acknowledge a particularly large gathering of Dominican Republic family members today. As you journey back to your home countries, you have our best wishes and the hope that you take fond memories of Michigan, Kalamazoo, and your University with you.

And many of our graduates are non-traditional students with spouses and job obligations and for whom being a student came after family and work. We have great admiration for your achievements.

While you have worked hard we hope that you have also enjoyed your time here at the University. For many of you, this has been your first experience away from home. So while you have learned much from your course work, we are sure that you have also learned much about life and living.

We hope that the many friendships you have formed will stand the test of time and that you will include among them associations that you have made with our faculty and staff. For just as we have been an important part of your life, you too have become a part of ours.

We have now reached a very important point in this ceremony, the conferring of your degree---the degree that you have worked so diligently to earn; the document that is sure to become one of your most important lifetime credentials.

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## CONFERRING OF DEGREES

President Dunn: "Provost Greene, please come forward for the conferring of degrees."

(Provost Greene joins President Dunn at podium.)

Provost Greene: "Will those receiving a Doctoral or Master's Degree please rise, as able.

President Dunn, it is my pleasure to present these candidates who have completed all the requirements for a Doctoral or Master's Degree as prescribed by the graduate faculty of this University."

President Dunn: "By the authority of the State of Michigan, vested in the Board of Trustees, I hereby confer upon you the appropriate degrees indicated in your programs with all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities appertaining thereto.

Please be seated."

Provost Greene: "Will Dean Alex Enyedi, College of Arts and Sciences, please come forward."

Dean Enyedi: "Will those receiving a Bachelor's degree through the College of Arts and Sciences please rise. President Dunn, it is my pleasure to present these candidates who have completed all requirements for

the Bachelor's degree as prescribed by the faculty of this College.

Please be seated.

(Provost Greene introduces Assc. Provost Gaymer and returns to his seat.)

Provost Greene: "Will Associate Provost Dawn Gaymer, Extended University Programs, please come forward."

Assoc. Provost: "Will those receiving a Bachelor's degree through Extended University Programs please rise. President Dunn, it is my pleasure to present these candidates who have completed all requirements for the Bachelor's degree as prescribed by the faculty of this University.

Please be seated."

President Dunn: "Will those receiving a Bachelor's degree rise once again please.

By the authority of the State of Michigan, vested in the Board of Trustees, I hereby confer upon you the appropriate degrees indicated in your programs with all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities appertaining thereto.

Please be seated."

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## PRESENTATION OF DOCTORAL DIPLOMAS (NAMES ANNOUNCED)

President Dunn: "Will the doctoral candidates please come forward as Dr. Susan Stapleton, Dean of the Graduate College, announces their names.

The graduates' advisors will place the hoods on the shoulders of these doctoral graduates." (PAUSE)

(SHORT MUSICAL INTERLUDE AS GRADUATES COME TO STAGE)

(President Dunn and Trustee Miller to diploma table and Dean Stapleton to podium. Dean Stapleton will call candidates/advisors forward. She will indicate the candidates by name and announce their degrees. The advisors will place the hoods on the shoulders of the doctoral graduates. President Dunn will present labeled diplomas on diploma table and shake their hands. Trustee Miller will also shake hands of doctoral graduates.

### College of Arts and Sciences

Matthew Abernathy  
Ibtesam Alja'afreh  
Tamara Coleman  
Kelly Kohler  
Jessica Korender  
Chira Lumduanhom  
Edwin Mghanga  
Setare Nick  
M. Melissa Peet  
Kathleen Quardokus  
Jyoti Rai  
Christina Triezenberg  
Jennifer Walters

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PRESENTATION OF MASTER'S DIPLOMAS  
(NAMES ANNOUNCED)

Provost Greene: "Will the graduates receiving Master's degrees please come forward to receive their diplomas as Ms. Michele McLaughlin and Dr. David Little announce their names."

(SHORT MUSICAL INTERLUDE AS GRADUATES COME TO STAGE)

(Ms. McLaughlin and Dr. Little will go to microphone. Dean Enyedi and Associate Provost Gaymer will assist President Dunn with the presentation of diplomas.)

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PRESENTATION OF UNDERGRADUATE DIPLOMAS  
(NAMES ANNOUNCED)

Provost Greene: "Will the graduates receiving Bachelor's degrees please come forward to receive their diplomas as their names are announced by Ms. McLaughlin and Dr. Little."

(SHORT MUSICAL INTERLUDE AS GRADUATES COME TO STAGE)

(Dean Enyedi and Associate Provost Gaymer will assist President Dunn with the presentation of diplomas.)

## ALUMNI ASSOCIATION INDUCTION

President Dunn: "Will Mercedes Verestek Dordeski, Vice President of the Alumni Association, please come forward. Ms. Dordeski is an attorney with the Foley and Mansfield Law Firm."

(President returns to his seat and Ms. Dordeski to the podium)

Ms. Dordeski: REMARKS

(Ms. Dordeski returns to her seat and President returns to podium.)

President Dunn: "Thank you, Mercedes."

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## CONCLUDING REMARKS

President Dunn:

"We're near the end of our ceremony. After all these years on campus, you know I can't let you leave without a few words from the heart.

You are now alumni and ambassadors for this great university. Your every accomplishment will reflect for your families, employers and communities, just how valuable a true university education is. What you've learned at WMU has prepared you for a lifetime of professional, civic and personal achievements that you may not yet imagine.

If you've had the experience I hope you've had, you know that today's celebration is simply a pause in your education and a time to reflect on what you've learned and what you still need to know. Your years at WMU should have reinforced the perception famed basketball coach John Wooden expressed when he famously said:

"It's what you learn after you know it all that counts."

It IS what you still must learn that counts. And it IS what you accomplish next that will determine your level of success. What you accomplish next will build your reputation and the reputation of your alma mater. And what your alma mater accomplishes next will enhance the value of the degree you celebrate today. You and Western Michigan University are inextricably linked.

Neither you nor your University can rest on the accomplishments of the past--no matter how significant. We want you to reach the top of your professions and we want our University to continue its trek to the summit. Such goals are never completely achieved, but that's a good thing. As the late commentator Andy Rooney once noted:

"Everyone wants to live on top of the mountain, but all the happiness and growth occurs while you're climbing it."

You have been part of this campus community during a time of tremendous growth and change. During your time at WMU, you have seen new facilities open--Sangren Hall, Western View I and II, and a new archive facility--the Zhang Legacy Collections Center. You've seen the dream of a medical school materialize to the WMU Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine, that welcomed its first class of students this fall. You have also witnessed the creation of a new and exciting affiliation which has resulted in the Western Michigan University Thomas Cooley Law School. What wonderful momentum is underway, right here on YOUR campus.

You've watched our faculty and staff develop a comprehensive strategic plan that guides our commitment to being learner centered, discovery driven and globally engaged. And, more changes are on the way--new residence halls at the center of campus, a renovated East Hall that will become your alumni center and a renewed commitment to healthy living as we joined the ranks this fall of other forward-thinking campuses by going tobacco-free.

Our commitment to growth and innovation is always driven by the fact that we owe it to our alumni--you--to continue to enhance the value of degrees have earned today.

And while transformative change has happened to your University, you, too, have been changing. You've become well versed in your chosen field. Your life has been enriched by the arts, the humanities and social sciences. Your study abroad experiences and your international friendships have given you a glimpse of the challenges and opportunities the world faces.

Choose your next steps wisely and well. Share the knowledge you have gained here to enrich the lives of those around you. Remain an eager learner for the rest of your life. Read, listen carefully for the wisdom of others, reach beyond what you know today for new possibilities, and before making any big decision, do your homework.

You are now alumni of this great University, Your studies here are complete, you are finished or as we like to say, "Consider it Dunn."

You will, however, always be a part of us. Stay connected, stay tuned, stay in touch, and always--and especially next Saturday--Go Broncos!"

And now, please enjoy the slide presentation prepared for you and remember the good times, the people, places and things from your years here at Western Michigan University."

(Platform party remains seated and views slide presentation from monitors on the stage)

(Slide Show- Music by Professor Steve Zegree)

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President Dunn: "In closing, I would like to thank the many people who work very hard to make this commencement ceremony meaningful and memorable for you.

Thank you to Derek Pothoff and the brothers of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia; Professor Steve Wolfinbarger and the Western Brass Ensemble; Professor Steve Zegree, pianist for the slide production. Thanks also to the commencement committee; and the many people who work behind the scenes and contribute so much to our commencement.

And finally graduates, thank you for all that you have given to us and for all that you will be giving to society in the years to come. Make your mark on this world, fulfill your dreams and always remember those who helped to make this all possible for you!

May you always enjoy happiness, peace, and good health.

At this time the Brothers of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia will present the Alma Mater of Western Michigan University. After their performance, the Alma Mater will be repeated, at which time, all of you are invited to sing. Please rise for the Alma Mater and remain standing until the platform party leaves the stage.”

### ALMA MATER

Western, we sing to you Brown and Gold  
Western, we bring to you faith untold,  
You challenge and inspire,  
Your hope is our desire,  
We sing to you our Alma Mater, Brown and Gold

**RECESSIONAL**  
Western Brass Ensemble

(President Dunn and Trustee Hettinger lead to march off stage.)