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## Multicultural Leadership Competition Welcome

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Multicultural Leadership Competition Welcome  
John M. Dunn  
Feb. 21, 2015

Good morning. Welcome to Western Michigan University and to Kalamazoo. For some of you, let me also welcome you to Michigan.

Students, I wish you the best of luck as you tackle today's Multicultural Leader Scholarship Competition.

Parents and families, I want to congratulate you and thank you for the critical role you played in bringing your students to this point in their lives. These young people competing today are bright, accomplished and full of potential. In short, I would love to see every one of them here with us on campus this fall.

**The Multicultural Leader Scholarship Competition**

But today is, indeed, a competition. Through the activities planned today, we'll be on the lookout for students with the character, curiosity, initiative and ability to take full advantage of the opportunities that Western Michigan University presents--and to play leadership roles on our campus in the years to come.

This is the fourth year of this scholarship competition. To date, we've awarded \$24 million in scholarships to 150 students. As a result of today's competition, we expect about 50 of you to be selected for a scholarship and for membership in our Martin Luther King Jr. Academy. The academy offers academic, social and professional development support throughout its members' undergraduate careers.

The opportunity to become part of the Martin Luther King Jr. Academy is particularly significant at our University. Just over a year ago, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of Dr. King's visit to our campus for a major address delivered on Dec. 18, 1963. Our commemoration of that significant historical milestone gave us a chance to reflect anew on his messages. It also gave us an opportunity to reaffirm our university's long commitment to ensure that every individual is able to reach his or her full potential. It's part of who we are.

### **What WMU offers**

You'll make some discoveries today as you learn more about WMU--and those discoveries will revolve around the people you meet as you become more familiar with our campus. We have some of the best instructional facilities you'll find anywhere, but it is the quality of the people who make up this university that makes all the difference in our students' lives.

We're learner centered, globally engaged and discovery driven. This is a place that has all of the resources of a much larger research University but still has kept the focus squarely on teaching and making our students successful.

Students, this is a place where you will discover things you might not yet know you're searching for. This is a place where faculty and staff alike are focused on what it will take to help you succeed. They will help you take control of your own academic experience and you'll find you can literally "Discover Gold" once you decide to "Go West!"

### **An Entrepreneurial University**

We pride ourselves on being an entrepreneurial university that is agile enough to take advantage of opportunity--regardless of the timing and obstacles that may stand

in the way. For example, with our two local world-class teaching hospitals, we have launched a private medical school that welcomed its first class of students this past fall fall. The WMU Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine is a private medical school at a public university that made national headlines in 2011 with our announcement of a \$100 million gift from donors.

And we also have just affiliated with one of the nation's largest private law schools. We've welcomed the Western Michigan University Thomas M. Cooley Law School to the WMU family. And this fall, there are first-year law classes planned for right here on the main WMU campus.

### **Closing**

Finally, let me urge you to take a careful look at our home community while you're here today. This is a wonderful college town with people who go out of their way to make students an important part of the social fabric.

Enjoy your day today. I hope you feel the kind of welcome and focus on success we want all of our students and their families to feel. Regardless of today's outcome, we want you to be part of our campus community.

My message to today's competitors is a simple one. I want to invite you here for four years that I promise will be the most meaningful in your lives. Good luck today. I hope to see each one of you on our campus in the fall.

In spite of some chilly weather outside, I say today what I say every day: "It's a great day to be a Bronco!"

Thank you.