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Miller Auditorium Program Following Chavez March

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Miller Auditorium Program Following Chavez March
Welcome by President John M. Dunn
April 2, 2015

Good morning. It is my pleasure to officially welcome you to Western Michigan University. I hope you're ready to sit back and be inspired by our guest speakers today, artist-activist Nora Mendoza and Dr. George Vargas of Texas A&M University.

The march this morning was a beautiful sight to behold. There's nothing quite like a good idea that has found good people to carry it out. The march was founded at WMU in 1994 by **Mike Ramirez** of our Division of Multicultural Affairs and a few WMU students. The intent was to celebrate the life and achievements of the late César Chávez. And that remains the goal today.

The event has grown steadily in size and scope over the years, with the help of the Kalamazoo Central High School Bilingual Students Club, which became the prime organizer in 2002. This morning's turnout speaks volumes about what a terrific job those dedicated students have done with this annual event. There is indeed strength in numbers--strength, pride and inspiration. Thank you for making today's event such a success.

Now the largest such march in southwest Michigan, the event not only honors Chávez, but also celebrates the Hispanic community's rich cultural history and serves as a way to teach us all about nonviolent social justice and change.

We're proud that you chose to be here today to end the march here at WMU and spend a few hours with us to reflect on Cesar Chavez's work and the work he left for all of us to continue.

Enjoy your time here today and please come back often to visit, wander the campus and feel at home on the campus of your community's university.

Thank you.