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Make-a-Difference Awards

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• Good afternoon, and thank you all for being here to celebrate the extraordinary service of the staff members we're honoring today. We see their work as extraordinary, but I know from experience that these employees usually don't see what they do as exceptional. They see what they do as a labor of love and the right thing to do.

• There are 10 people being honored. Today's honorees represent a broad swath of our campus. They come from four vice presidential areas and include people from two academic departments, student services, development and business and finance. They are people I see everyday and people I only see once or twice each year.

• What they all have in common is that they are people who are building their careers at Western Michigan University and they reach out to our students and their colleagues in a way that is driven not by their job descriptions, but by their genuine commitment to and concern for those who are part of our community. Together, they represent our commitment to being learner centered, discovery driven and globally engaged.

• Every year, when we honor employees for consistent service above and beyond their job descriptions, I am always grateful for the stories I hear about extraordinary work and about people who take every extra effort to help our students. They solve problems and set a tone of civility and respect with every conversation. If there were a Job Content Tool for the personal characteristics that make someone successful in their role here at the University, the kinds of qualities pointed out when these award winners were nominated would certainly lead the description. Their work reminds us
daily of just how critical every person's role at this university is to our students' success.

• To those of you honored today, I simply say, "Thank You." What you do in your job everyday makes this a very special environment for our students, for our colleagues and for all the audiences we serve. You set the tone for our campus, and you've set the bar very high as you lead by example.

• Thank you to each of you for what you do each day for our University. Thank you for making our students safe, healthy, well-fed, plugged in and ready to learn and succeed in a beautiful and welcoming environment. And thank you for giving all of us role models to emulate as we continue about the important work we do.

• Enjoy the celebration today and, please...keep up your extraordinary work

FYI
Fall 2015 award winners

• Sheila Atherton, accounts receivable
• Jayne Fraley Burgett, disability services
• Kathleen Mackenzie, theatre
• Delores Minshall, IT
• Johnny Paige, Bernhard Center
• Renee Pearl, development
• Emma Perk, Evaluation Center
• Teri Schrimpf, institutional research
• Karen Steeno, Student Employment Services
• Joe Vanderbos, Sindecuse