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Transfer Student Orientation

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Good morning. It's my job and my delight today is to offer the official formal welcome to you as new members of the Bronco family. We're glad you're here. You made a great decision when you chose Western Michigan University.

We expect great things from you while you're a student here, and we know you'll accomplish great things when you're a proud Bronco alum--and believe me, that will happen sooner than you might think it possible at this point. Your next few years will be full ones and they will fly by with exceptional speed.

You did your research well, and you may think you already know a lot about this university. Don’t’ get too comfortable with that feeling. You'll be surprised at every turn. I've been here for more than nine years now. Every time I think I know everything about WMU, I learn something new or someone discovers something terrific about the University or the community that is worthy of praise.

This week, for instance, the social media site WalletHub ran its annual list of the nation's top college towns. Kalamazoo is #32 on the list--out of hundreds of cities and towns considered. This comes just months after Kalamazoo was ranked No. 3 in SmartAsset.com's list of best cities for creative people to live and No. 14 on Buzzfeed's list of top cities for twentysomethings.

This is your community now, and we want you to enjoy every minute of your time here--in and out of the classroom. Take advantage of everything this
university offers and you'll truly understand what it means to be part of a university that is--learner centered, discovery driven and globally engaged.

• I hope to see you here in Miller watching Broadway shows; across the plaza at the Richmond Center for Visual Arts or at the Dalton Center; in Bronco Stadium, Lawson Arena and Read Fieldhouse for athletic events; and on the intramural fields. Think about joining a student organization and plan on playing a leadership role now or in the future. Consider a study abroad program. Explore. Make friends with a faculty member and volunteer to help with research. (you'll be surprised at how easy that is).

• I'm looking forward to getting to know you. When you see me on campus, don't be shy about introducing yourself and talking. I try to greet and talk with as many students as I can, but I'd love it if you tap me on the shoulder as we're standing in line at Bigbees and just tell me who you are and how your student experience is going.

• As the next couple of years speed by, I will watch your progress with pride. And, before we know it, I'll be standing on the Miller Auditorium stage to shake your hand and present your diploma. It will be a moment in which we both will feel a great sense of accomplishment.

Welcome to WMU. Enjoy your transition and orientation activities, get ready for the ride of a lifetime and remember to "Grab the Reins."