4-1-2016

Miller Auditorium Program Following Chavez March

John M. Dunn
Western Michigan University, john.dunn@wmich.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/dunn
Part of the Higher Education Commons

WMU ScholarWorks Citation
https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/dunn/663

This Speech is brought to you for free and open access by the Office of the President at ScholarWorks at WMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in WMU President John Dunn by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at WMU. For more information, please contact maira.bundza@wmich.edu.
Good afternoon. 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 speaker today, sociologist and diversity consultant Dr. Samuel Betances.

As always, your presence on campus is very special. There's nothing quite like a good idea that has found good people to carry it out and keep the tradition of honoring Cesar Chavez moving forward. 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.

This event is now the largest such march and celebration in southwest Michigan. It not only honors Cesar Chávez, but also celebrates the Hispanic community's rich cultural history and serves as way to teach us all about nonviolent social justice and change.
We're proud that you chose to be here today 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.

Today is about pride ---the pride you have in your heritage, the pride you have in your families, the pride you have in yourself, AND the pride we have in you. Si, se puede.

Thank you.