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Medallion Spring Brunch for Graduating Seniors
Welcome

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Good morning. Welcome to all of you. I'm so pleased that you are here for what has become one of my favorite spring events. I never tire of hearing about the success and future plans of our Medallion Scholars.

I've seen some of you at awards events on campus, but this is the event that brings all of you graduating Medallion Scholars together to celebrate with some of the people who make the Medallion program possible.

I have come to know many of you well. We perhaps first met when you were prospective students or new freshmen. Your accomplishments as students and your plans for the future are nothing short of inspiring. Congratulations on your success so far. Please know you carry with you the best wishes of our entire campus community as you move on to the next steps in your lives and careers. And please know you will be missed.

Those next steps you take will be successful. I know that because you have had the opportunity to develop specific skills that will make you immediately valuable in graduate school or in the work force. But even more important, is the fact that you've also enjoyed the advantage of a broad-based liberal arts education that has helped you develop critical thinking and analytical skills as well as the ability to write and speak well and express your passions and goals with conviction.

While the discipline-specific skills you've mastered are important, its those broader skills that will prepare you not just for your first job or next degree, but also for that
opportunity decades into your futures that will be the culmination of all that you've worked to achieve. I can say with great certainty that you are destined to be wonderful professionals in your chosen fields and the kind of citizens we all want in our communities.

• Over the years, and especially at an event like this, I've developed the habit of making a promise to students successfully completing their degrees. It is simply this. We will work every day in the years to come to continue to build the profile and enhance the already substantial reputation of your alma mater. Those efforts will make the value of the degree you've earned here grow with every passing day, month and year.

• But I'd like to expand that one-sided promise into a two-sided deal. I'm asking for a promise from you in return. I know will be an easy one for you to keep. As you move through your successful lives and careers, be sure to let everyone know that you are a proud alum of Western Michigan University. Your accomplishments will then serve to enhance the stature of WMU and increase not only the value of your own degree but the degrees of students who follow in your footsteps. I hope we can consider that a deal--a "Dunn deal."

• For the parents here today, I want to reiterate what I know you heard from me the first time we met--perhaps at a Medallion Scholarship competition or during a campus visit or admissions open house. Thank you.

• You did a great job in preparing these young people for college and then supporting them as they took full advantage of the opportunities along the way. You deserve now to sit back and enjoy the next few weeks as your student is honored, embraced
and sent off with commencement festivities. Thank you for entrusting your student to us.

• And to our donors here today, thank you. None of this would have been possible without you. These students have a world of opportunity in front of them because you chose to invest in them. I know you, like all of us, will be watching these young people with keen interest, and I know you'll be feeling your own pride and pleasure in what they will accomplish.

• Thank you all, and enjoy yourselves here this morning.