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United Way Kick-Off Welcome

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United Way Kick-Off Welcome
President Dunn
October 10, 2016

Good morning, and welcome to the kick-off of Western Michigan University's 2016 United Way campaign.

This is an exciting year for the Kalamazoo area. When the local United Way merged with the Battle Creek organization to form the United Way of the Battle Creek and Kalamazoo Region, it became a part of the second largest United Way agency in Michigan—a powerful change agent for our community.

Our campus goal this year is to merge our university's "Strike Gold" campaign with the forces of the United Way's "Change the Story" theme. Together, we want to deliver a GOLD impact on our community. That's a perfect match for our institution. Western Michigan University is all about improving lives, opening new paths through education and caring for those in our community who need assistance. Broncos are generous – with their time, their talents and their resources. I expect--as in the past--our University will give generously to help make the greater Kalamazoo area a better place to live, learn and work.

This year, the United Way campaign has targeted 4 principal goals:

- Improve high school performance and graduation rates
- Increase stable and affordable housing for those in need

- Improve the survival rates of infants and the long-term health of children throughout our region, particularly those in low-income families.
- Put in place safety net programs for individuals and families in dire need of shelter and access to daily meals.

You know the phrase “Every little bit helps.” It’s so true. For example, giving just \$1 a week provides 20 patients with round-trip bus fare to necessary doctor’s appointments. Five dollars a week sends a child in foster care to a week of residential summer camp. And \$10 a week ensures that a senior citizen would never be without life-saving utilities like heat.

I hope you’ll join me again this year by generously supporting the United Way. Let’s share our Gold Standard with the great community that Broncos call home. Thank you.