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## First Global Ambassadors Scholarship Competition

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## First Global Ambassadors Scholarship Competition

Dr. John M. Dunn

Nov. 11, 2016

- Welcome to Western Michigan University. You are the first students to compete in our Global Ambassadors Scholarship Competition. We consider the scholarship an important addition to our financial outreach.
  
- Among the promises we make and pride ourselves in keeping for enrolled students, are our commitments to ensuring
  - 1) students have a transformational experience here and
  - 2) students leave prepared for not just a job, but prepared for a career and a lifetime of accomplishment.
  
- Study abroad opportunities are a major tool in making sure we are able to fulfill those commitments, and this new scholarship program is designed to jump start the study abroad experience for today's successful competitors. For everyone competing here, though, study abroad will be a real possibility, since you've earned a \$1,000 study abroad scholarship by being selected to compete here today.
  
- When you do travel, your appreciation for the diversity of our world and its citizens will grow by leaps and bounds. I am passionate about the importance of students having the opportunity to talk, live, study and eat with people from diverse backgrounds. The ability to do that is the greatest gift we give our students. I have known that ever since I was a student from a small town in Illinois who had his view of the world changed by attending a university that attracted people from around the globe.

- There is perhaps nothing that will transform your world view and prepare you for the global economy the way a study abroad opportunity will. As president of WMU, I get to visit our study abroad locations around the world. I talk with students whose world has changed forever and whose outlook on learning, diversity and citizenship has been dramatically altered.
- They've learned that what Mark Twain once said is true-- "Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness."
- Everyone of the students I've talked to about the study abroad experience has been effusive about how important that study abroad opportunity has been to his or her career prospects and to what they expect for themselves. Those students know they'll have an edge with employers, and employers tell us that being comfortable in an international environment is a critical skill they assess when making hiring decisions.

Once you study and travel abroad, you'll quickly learn why that comfort level is so important. You'll discover the truth of what author Henry Miller once said. "One's destination is never a place, but a new way of seeing things."

Best of luck in today's competition. And safe travels whenever you plan to study abroad.