



Western Michigan University  
ScholarWorks at WMU

---

WMU President John Dunn

Office of the President

---

3-31-2017

## Michigan Geographic Bee

John M. Dunn

Western Michigan University, [john.dunn@wmich.edu](mailto:john.dunn@wmich.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/dunn>



Part of the Higher Education Commons

---

### WMU ScholarWorks Citation

Dunn, John M., "Michigan Geographic Bee" (2017). *WMU President John Dunn*. 839.

<https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/dunn/839>

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 [wmu-scholarworks@wmich.edu](mailto:wmu-scholarworks@wmich.edu).



Michigan Geographic Bee  
Welcome by President John M. Dunn  
March 31, 2017

Good afternoon.

- All of us here at Western Michigan University are excited to have you here today and pleased to be the host--for the tenth year--of Michigan's statewide Geographic Bee.

- Just to get you started, I have two warm-up questions to pose to today's contestants. Raise your hand if you can tell me how many other locations in the U.S.--besides our beloved hometown—are named Kalamazoo? Four. Follow-up question. Where?

- **Arkansas** - (20 miles West of Knoxville on banks of the Arkansas River.)
- **Florida** - (not actually city, but private property named for Michiganders who lived there.
- **Nebraska** – incorporated community in the middle of nowhere. Named for our town.
- **West Virginia** – Another incorporated town without a post office.

Although there are other spots in our nation named “Kalamazoo,” clearly we live in the best one.

- That's it, You're ready for today and a chance to win that trip to Washington D. C. and a shot at the national championship prize--a \$50,000 scholarship.

- There are 100 of you from cities across Michigan. You come from public schools, private schools and home schools. You come from as far away as Houghton and Escanaba, and as close by as Plainwell and Portage. Today, you all have two things in common: You all love geography and, for today at least, you're all Broncos! *(Mention the gold "W's" if you see students wearing them)*

We have high hopes for whoever wins the state bee and heads to Washington. Michigan has had four national champions. Our state's last national champion won the title in 2002. In 2009, 2013 and 2015, we came close when the Michigan winners became national finalists. It's time for another Michigan champion.

- Whether or not you win and move to the next level, I hope you enjoy your day on our campus, and I hope you view it as a preview of the kind of opportunities that are in your future. No matter the size of the community you come from and no matter how much you already know about the world's nation's, cultures, economies and people, I guarantee that your world will be changed forever when you go to college and have the opportunity to live, study and work with people from other nations around the globe.

Because geography is your passion and because you may be asked why that is, I'd like to share a quote with you. President Obama told competitors at the 2012 National Geographic Bee that the study of geography is:

*"about understanding the complexity of our world, appreciating the diversity of cultures that exists across continents. And in the end, it's about using all that knowledge to help bridge divides and bring people together."*

- We need to bring people together, and I can't think of a better reason to excel in this wonderful discipline. Good luck today. Have a wonderful competition. We're counting on you to represent our state well in Washington.

Thank you and Go Broncos!