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Make-a-Difference Awards

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Make a Difference Awards
Dr. John M. Dunn
April 17, 2017

- Good afternoon, and thank you all for being here to celebrate the extraordinary service of the staff members we're honoring today. We see their work as extraordinary, but I know from experience that these employees usually don't see what they do as exceptional. They see what they do as a labor of love and the right thing to do.
- There are 10 people being honored. Today's honorees represent a broad swath of our campus. They come from four academic colleges and such areas as Academic Affairs, Aviation, Business Services, Education, Music, Research, Spanish and University Libraries.
- What they all have in common is that they are people who are building their careers at Western Michigan University and they reach out to our students and their colleagues in a way that is driven not by their job descriptions, but by their genuine commitment to and concern for those who are part of our community. Together, they represent our commitment to being learner-centered, discovery-driven and globally-engaged.
- Every year, when we honor employees for consistent service above and beyond their job descriptions, I am always grateful for the stories I hear about extraordinary work and about people who take every extra effort to help our students. They solve problems and set a tone of civility and respect with every conversation. If there was a Job Content Tool for the personal characteristics that make someone successful in their role here at the University, the qualities pointed out when these award winners

were nominated would certainly lead the description. Their work reminds us daily of just how critical every person's role at this university is to our students' success.

- You know, we've been honoring employees this way for more than 20 years. We won't run out of people to honor, because employees like those being honored today serve as role models who inspire all of us to take that extra step, spend that extra moment assisting a student or make sure a project is done just right. I expect some of the people who work with these 10 employees to be honored in the future. Doing the right thing is contagious.

- To those of you honored today, I simply say, "Thank You." What you do in your job everyday makes this a very special environment for our students, for our colleagues and for all the audiences we serve. You set the tone for our campus, and you've set the bar very high as you lead by example.

- Thank you to each of you for what you do each day for our University. Thank you for making our students safe, healthy, and ready to succeed in a beautiful and welcoming environment. And, thank you for giving all of us role models to emulate as we continue about the important work we do.

- Enjoy the celebration today and keep up the extraordinary work.

Spring 2017 award winners

- Barbara Adams, School of Music
- Kelli Bond, Research
- Regina Buckner, University Libraries
- Eric Epplert, College of Aviation
- Tom Grossman, College of Aviation
- Michelle Hruska, Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

- Deborah O'Keefe, School of Music
- Carol Reid, College of Education and Human Development
- Colleen Sante, Spanish
- Laura Weber, Business Services