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Grand Rapids Foundation Remarks, delivered at the Eberhard Center on October 13, 1988

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GRAND RAPIDS FOUNDATION – OCTOBER 13, 1988

I am pleased that the Grand Rapids Foundation is entertaining at the L. V. Eberhard Center this evening. The Foundation provided the lead gift in the campaign for private funds to match the State of Michigan appropriation for the construction of this building. We hope the Foundation members are proud of the result, just as we at Grand Valley are proud of it.

The Grand Rapids Foundation has been supportive of Grand Valley since its inception. Starting in 1960, the Foundation gave the institution $50,000 toward start up costs. An additional pledge of $150,000 was made in 1961 to continue the growth of the college.

Since 1960 the Grand Rapids Foundation has supported Grand Valley State University with 1.1 million dollars. Most of these dollars have come to the University to launch new, important programs or to build facilities that marked a significant stride forward in the mission and the size of the institution. The L. V. Eberhard Center is the latest sample of that kind of giving, adding academic strength to our community and our region.

There is no doubt that this new facility is responsible for a 9.2% increase in the University enrollment this fall. It is here to serve all students, but especially the employed and older adults who need more education or retraining. It makes possible a state supported School of Engineering in our community, so necessary for the long range industrial
development of our region.

In this building University level applied research for industry and business is just beginning - another first in our area. Here the teachers, the business people, and the social workers are among the professionals who will be educated and turned loose to make their way in west Michigan. A new place, an expanded mission, greater service, the beginning of a downtown campus to compliment the growing Allendale campus - that is what the L. V. Eberhard Center represents. That is what the Grand Rapids Foundation gift has wrought.

"Bounty always receives part of its value from the manner in which it is bestowed," wrote Samuel Johnson. The Foundation gifts to Grand Valley have always been so valuable because they have been bestowed at a time when the institution needed a pace-setting gift to make something new and good happen. I think it is accurate to say that the Grand Rapids Foundation was there at our beginning, and has been there at every major step forward in the life of the University.

Thank you Grand Rapids Foundation for coming tonight to this building in which you hold partial ownership so I can thank you for what you have done for your fellow citizens through the Grand Valley State University.