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Remarks, delivered at the Enrichment Dinner on June 15, 1998

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ENRICHMENT DINNER

JUNE 15, 1998

REMARKS BY PRESIDENT LUBBERS

There is nothing like a Black Tie Dinner on Monday night to start the working week running. There are many good causes to be served, and our community serves well, nearly every day of the week. It’s Monday and it’s Grand Valley Foundation night; a Foundation originally established to build an endowment for the college. We started with $1.3 million in 1976 and we are over $32 million today. While growing the endowment, the Foundation was helping to build facilities as well. The ancient Roman Publius Syrus wrote it long ago, “Money alone sets all the world in motion.” The money you have given certainly has set Grand Valley State University in motion. In the spring of 2000 the Foundation’s largest building project, the Richard DeVos Center, will open. Speaking of Richard DeVos, he has chaired twelve Enrichment Dinners. He is chairman for life, a factor that was enhanced about year ago in a London hospital. We really don’t know which of his birthday to celebrate. He was born over 71 years ago. He has just celebrated his first birthday with a new heart, and the heart is just 40 years old. Take your pick. Without him, these dinners would not be at the level of success they have achieved. The University thanks him.
The annual Foundation membership drives recently have been guided by Bob Hooker, the current chairman, and Casey Wondergem, the vice chairman, who spurred us into establishing the Foundation in the first place. Membership is over 3,000 this year for the first time – 400 more than two years ago when we attended the Enrichment Dinner. The University thanks them.

Tonight we are honoring two people from Muskegon – Pat Johnson and Roger Andersen. Their energy and leadership made it possible for the University to have a second research and education vessel, the William J. Jackson, when the D.J. Angus could not handle all the demand. Buzz Kersman, a friend and fellow citizen of theirs, chartered a bus so a bus full of their friends could help honor them. Dottie Johnson, Vice Chair of Grand Valley’s Board of Control, will introduce Pat; Seymour Padnos, of Padnos School of Engineering and Padnos Hall fame will introduce Roger.

Dick Lacks is entering our Hall of Fame tonight. When you look around the community, you see a considerable number of active philanthropists. One who spreads as much good around as anyone is Dick Lacks. He helps the University whenever there is a need. He will be presented by Audrey Sebastian, who has been doing good in the community and at the University for a long time. The University thanks all of them.
More than half of our Hall of Fame members are here tonight. Eight of our past Leadership Award recipients are here. Please stand as I read your name. We continue to count on them to build the University, and they always come through. They deserve our applause, not individually, only as a group after all their names are called. The University thanks all of you.

Many of you pitched in to bring the National Science Olympiad to Grand Valley. With 2,000 young scientists on campus, it was an event to remember. We had better remember their names and attract them here for a college career. The next event on the schedule is the dedication of the Meijer campus in Holland on August 26th, the launching of a significant Grand Valley education venture. To all of you who are here tonight supporting a special University, the University thanks you.