



RENEWING THE LEGACY
THE INAUGURATION OF HOWARD
UNIVERSITY'S 16TH PRESIDENT
(April 17, 2009)

AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY

**RENEWING THE LEGACY
THE INAUGURATION OF HOWARD UNIVERSITY'S 16TH
PRESIDENT**

CHAIRMAN RAND AND DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF THE HOWARD
UNIVERSITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES, FAMILY, FRIENDS, ALUMNI, FACULTY
STAFF, STUDENTS AND THE HOWARD UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

IT IS MY GREAT HONOR TO STAND BEFORE YOU AS HOWARD
UNIVERSITY'S 16TH PRESIDENT.

WITH EACH PASSING DAY AS YOUR PRESIDENT, I HAVE LEARNED MORE
ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THIS GREAT AMERICAN UNIVERSITY AND SEEN
MORE OF THE PROMISE IT HOLDS FOR TOMORROW. TODAY IS AN
EXCITING TIME TO BE AT HOWARD'S HELM –TO BE A PART OF HOWARD'S
LEGACY.

A MERE THREE MONTHS AGO THE WORLD—AND MANY OF US ASSEMBLED
HERE—WITNESSED THE INAUGURATION ON HOWARD'S DOORSTEP OF
OUR NATION'S 44TH AND FIRST AFRICAN-AMERICAN PRESIDENT.

WE HAVE SEEN IN SUCH A SHORT TIME THE CREATION OF AN
ADMINISTRATION AS DIVERSE AND TALENTED AS THE NATION ITSELF.
THE YOUNG FAMILY THAT NOW RESIDES AT 1600 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE
HAS TRULY TAUGHT US THE AUDACITY OF HOPE . . . AND THE REALITY OF

ACHIEVEMENT. THIS MOMENTOUS YEAR HAS SHOWN US ALL THAT AFRICAN AMERICANS CAN TRULY ASPIRE. WE CAN INSPIRE. WE CAN CHANGE THE WORLD THROUGH THE POWER OF OUR EXAMPLE...

AND THIS EXCITING NEW ADMINISTRATION HAS CLEARLY DEMONSTRATED HOW INTELLIGENCE, UNDERSTANDING, KNOWLEDGE AND RESPECT FOR WORLD CULTURES CAN LEAD TO OPPORTUNITY UNFORESEEN AND UNFORESEABLE MERE MONTHS AGO.

WE'VE COME A LONG WAY SINCE THAT DAY IN 1963 WHEN GOVERNOR GEORGE WALLACE STOOD IN A UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA DOORWAY ATTEMPTING TO BAR VIVIAN MALONE AND JAMES HOOD, TWO YOUNG BLACK STUDENTS INTENT ON EXERCISING THEIR RIGHTS TO PURSUE A COLLEGE EDUCATION.

SOME MIGHT REMEMBER THAT EVENT ... SOME MIGHT DOUBT IT COULD HAPPEN IN AMERICA ... WITH THE ELECTION OF OUR YOUNG, BLACK PRESIDENT, AMERICA HAS DEMONSTRATED ITS ABILITY TO LOOK TOWARD INTELLIGENCE, TO REWARD VISION, TO RESPOND TO LEADERSHIP. THROUGHOUT OUR NATION, AN AUTHENTIC VOICE SPOKE THE LANGUAGE OF HOPE ... A BELIEF IN POSSIBILITIES.

YES, WE'VE COME A LONG WAY; BUT WE STILL HAVE A WAY TO GO.
TEMPTING THOUGH IT MAY BE TO REST ON THE REMARKABLE PROGRESS
OUR SOCIETY HAS JUST DEMONSTRATED, WE STILL HAVE SIGNIFICANT
WORK TO DO.

AS YOUR NEW PRESIDENT, I AM STILL LEARNING ABOUT THIS AUGUST
INSTITUTION'S TRADITIONS, LEGACY, CULTURE AND THE EXCEPTIONAL
WORK IN TEACHING, LEARNING AND RESEARCH THAT GOES ON IN ITS
CLASSROOMS, LECTURE HALLS AND LABORATORIES EVERY DAY.

OVER THE YEARS, A NUMBER OF UNITED STATES PRESIDENTS (TAFT,
COOLIDGE, HOOVER, JOHNSON), AFRICAN AMERICAN HEROES AND CIVIL
RIGHTS LEADERS (FREDRICK DOUGLASS, MARY MCLEOD BETHUNE, W.E.B.
DUBOIS, MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.), AND NATIONAL AND FOREIGN
LEADERS (NELSON MANDELA, JOHN F. KENNEDY, ELEANOR ROOSEVELT,
WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON, DESMOND TUTU, JUST TO NAME A FEW)
HAVE DELIVERED LECTURES AT THIS HISTORIC INSTITUTION.

IN EIGHT SHORT MONTHS I'VE COME TO APPRECIATE THE
EXTRAORDINARY CONTRIBUTIONS HOWARD UNIVERSITY HAS MADE AND
CONTINUES TO MAKE TO THE WORLD THROUGH THE WORK OF ITS
DISTINGUISHED STUDENTS, ALUMNI AND ITS FACULTY.

ALTHOUGH I AM NOT A HOWARD GRADUATE, I SHARE IN FULL MEASURE THE RICH HERITAGE THIS INSTITUTION HAS CONTRIBUTED TO AMERICA.

THERE ARE NUMEROUS BOLD AND BRAVE PIONEERS IN A VARIETY OF FIELDS WHO HAVE BEEN EDUCATED HERE—

- JUSTICE THURGOOD MARSHALL, FIRST AFRICAN-AMERICAN SUPREME COURT
- EDWARD BROOKS, FIRST AFRICAN-AMERICAN U.S. SENATOR
- TONI MORRISON, PROLIFIC AUTHOR
- JESSYE NORMAN, INTERNATIONAL OPERA STAR
- STOKELY CARMICHAEL, CHAIR OF THE STUDENT NONVIOLENT COORDINATING COMMITTEE
- DOUGLAS WILDER, AMERICA’S FIRST AFRICAN-AMERICAN GOVERNOR AND HU TRUSTEE
- ADRIAN FENTY, CURRENT MAYOR OF WASHINGTON, D.C.
- SHIRLEY FRANKLIN, ATLANTA MAYOR
- VERNON JORDAN ATTORNEY, BUSINESSMAN AND FORMER HEAD OF THE URBAN LEAGUE, AND ADVISOR TO U.S. PRESIDENTS
- DR. LASALLE LAFALL, FIRST AFRICAN-AMERICAN PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS
- ANDREW YOUNG, AMBASSADOR AND CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER
- DEBBIE ALLEN, CHOREOGRAPHER AND DANCER
- PHYLICIA RASHAD, AWARD-WINNING ACTRESS

- BERNICE JOHNSON REAGON, MACARTHUR FOUNDATION “GENIUS”
AWARD-WINNER

HOWARD STUDENTS HAVE LEARNED ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES AS WELL AS LIFE’S LESSONS ON PEACE, FREEDOM AND RESPECT FOR THEMSELVES AND THEIR FELLOW BEINGS FROM DISTINGUISHED PROFESSORS LIKE--

- CARTER G. WOODSON, HISTORIAN AND AUTHOR OF *THE MIS-EDUCATION OF THE NEGRO*
- E. FRANKLIN FRASIER, SCHOLAR AND SOCIOLOGIST, WROTE *BLACK BOURGEOISIE*
- NOBEL LAUREATE TONI MORRISON
- THE LATE, AND UNDENIABLY GREAT JOHN HOPE FRANKLIN
- FORMER DEAN OF THE CHAPEL, HOWARD THURMAN, AN INFLUENTIAL AMERICAN AUTHOR, PHILOSOPHER, THEOLOGIAN, EDUCATOR AND CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER, WHO WROTE 20 BOOKS ON ETHICAL AND CULTURAL CRITICISM
- ALAIN LOCKE, WRITER, PHILOSOPHER, EDUCATOR AND FIRST AFRICAN-AMERICAN RHODES SCHOLAR
- RAYFORD LOGAN, AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORIAN AND PAN-AFRICAN ACTIVIST. WROTE *HOWARD UNIVERSITY, THE FIRST 100 YEARS*.

THE LIST OF DISTINGUISHED GRADUATES AND GREAT INSTRUCTORS WHO HELPED SHAPE THEIR TALENTS AND THEIR INTELLECT GOES ON AND ON.

THIS COUNTRY WE LIVE IN IS A BETTER PLACE FOR THE CONTRIBUTIONS THEY HAVE MADE TO EVERY ASPECT OF AMERICA'S POLITICAL, CULTURAL, BUSINESS AND CIVIC LIFE. HOWARD THURMAN ONCE SAID, "A DREAM IS THE BEARER OF A NEW POSSIBILITY, THE ENLARGED HORIZON, THE GREAT HOPE."

THE VALUE OF LIFE—AND THE IMPACT OF HOWARD UNIVERSITY—LIES AS MUCH IN THE FUTURE AS IT DOES IN THE PAST. IT IS THURMAN'S DREAM, IT IS OUR HOPE, IT IS THE CURRENT GENERATION'S ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES.

THEY, PERHAPS BETTER THAN THOSE OF US WHO CAME BEFORE, SENSE THE TRUE MEANING OF "YES WE CAN."

- YES, YOU CAN FIND A CURE FOR CANCER AND HIV/AIDS
 - YES, YOU CAN WIN AN OLYMPIC MEDAL OR ACADEMY AWARD
 - YES, YOU CAN WIN A NOBEL PRIZE
 - YES, YOU CAN WIN A PULIZER PRIZE
 - YES, YOU CAN FOLLOW IN THE SPIRIT OF PEACE AND LOVE
- EXEMPLIFIED BY THE LIVES OF JESUS CHRIST AND MAHATMA GHANDI.

OUR HOPE FOR THEM IS THAT THEIR AMBITIONS WILL BE TEMPERED ONLY BY THE DEPTH OF COMMITMENT TO THEIR CHOSEN COURSE, THEIR

QUEST FOR INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE SHEER HUMAN
LIMITS OF THEIR ENERGY.

YES, THIS IS AN EXCITING TIME TO BE PRESIDENT OF HOWARD
UNIVERSITY. AND FOR THOSE OF US WHO PLAY A ROLE IN EDUCATING
THIS POWERFUL AND AMBITIOUS GENERATION, THE CHALLENGES ARE
GREATER THAN EVER.

NEVER HAVE HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES—
INDEED, THIS HISTORICALLY BLACK UNIVERSITY—BEEN MORE CRITICAL
OR MORE RELEVANT.

DID YOU KNOW?

- HOWARD PRODUCES MORE AFRICAN-AMERICAN DOCTORATES THAN
ANY COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY IN THE UNITED STATES, ACCORDING TO
THE NATIONAL OPINION RESEARCH CENTER?
- THAT THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION RANKED HOWARD
UNIVERSITY FIRST NATIONALLY AS THE PRODUCER OF THE HIGHEST
NUMBER OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN BACHELOR'S DEGREE RECIPIENTS
WHO CONTINUED ON TO EARN SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING DOCTORAL
DEGREES?

- THAT THIS YEAR ALONE, THREE OF OUR SENIORS—FLORENCE MAYER, KELLY MCCRAY AND JUSTIN DUNNAVANT—HAVE BEEN NAMED FULBRIGHT SCHOLARS?
- THAT ANOTHER HOWARD STUDENT, HAMILTON CUNNINGHAM, HAS BEEN NAMED A TRUMAN SCHOLAR? CUNNINGHAM IS A TRANSFER STUDENT FROM GEORGIA PERIMETER COLLEGE WHO WILL RECEIVE UP TO \$30,000 FOR HIS GRADUATE STUDIES.

FOR 142 YEARS, HOWARD HAS EDUCATED SOME OF THE NATION’S—AND THE WORLD’S—MOST OUTSTANDING YOUNG SCHOLARS—AMBITIOUS AND TALENTED YOUNG PEOPLE WHO HAVE GONE ON TO MAKE THEIR MARKS IN SOCIETIES AROUND THE WORLD.

OUR CURRENT MISSION MUST BE TO BUILD ON THE PAST TO EXCEL IN THE FUTURE. BUT OURS WILL NOT BE AN EASY TASK. AS I’M SURE YOU KNOW, EVEN THE BEST-ENDOWED PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS HAVE SUFFERED IN THE CURRENT ECONOMIC DOWNTURN. LIKE VIRTUALLY EVERY AMERICAN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER LEARNING, HOWARD HAS BEEN HIT HARD BY THE CURRENT ECONOMIC TURMOIL.

AND DAILY WE ARE PROMISED THAT THESE HARDSHIPS WILL CONTINUE, AND POSSIBLY WORSEN.

YET IN THE FACE OF ECONOMIC HARDSHIP, COMES OPPORTUNITY FOR SELF-EXAMINATION AND FOR CHANGE. WORKING TOGETHER WE MUST MARSHALL OUR RESOURCES, FOCUS OUR VISION AND COMBINE OUR CREATIVITY TO CONCEPTUALIZE, DESIGN AND BRING TO REALITY THE HOWARD OF TOMORROW. WE MUST BE OPEN TO CHANGES THAT MAKE US BETTER, SMARTER AND STRONGER.

WE MUST FIND BETTER WAYS TO PROVIDE EXCEPTIONAL OPPORTUNITY AND EDUCATION TO YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE LIMITED ONLY BY THEIR ACCESS TO NEW POSSIBILITIES.

WE FOLLOW IN THE TRADITION OF THE FIRST GREAT UNIVERSITY FOUNDED IN CAIRO, EGYPT IN 969 A.D. AND IN THE TRADITION OF ALL GREAT UNIVERSITIES, WE HAVE EXTRAORDINARY RESPONSIBILITIES.

FIRST, WE MUST FOSTER TRUE ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE. WE MUST BE A CRUCIBLE FOR CREATIVE IDEAS, NEW THEORIES AND A VARIETY OF VIEWPOINTS. WE MUST ENCOURAGE OUR STUDENTS TO IMAGINE THE UNIMAGINABLE. HERE ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND SOCIAL JUSTICE MUST JOIN HANDS IN PURSUIT OF TRUE DEMOCRACY.

WE MUST STRIVE TO MAKE HOWARD UNIVERSITY NOT JUST THE PREMIER HBCU; WE MUST MOVE IT INTO THE RANKS OF THE NATION'S BEST UNIVERSITIES—PERIOD.

WE SHOULD RANK AMONG THE 50 BEST RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING IN THE UNITED STATES—A LOFTY, BUT ACHIEVABLE, GOAL.

WE MUST ALSO FIND WAYS TO MAXIMIZE THE RESEARCH POTENTIAL AND CREATIVITY WE KNOW EXIST WITHIN THIS INSTITUTION.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN? IN OUR RESEARCH, WE MUST FIND FRESH WAYS TO THINK ABOUT OLD PROBLEMS. OUR RESEARCH MUST LEAD TO CURES FOR DISEASES, IT MUST PROMOTE SOCIAL JUSTICE, IT MUST MAKE AUDIBLE THE MUTED LONGINGS OF OUR UNDERSERVED BROTHERS AND SISTERS—NOT JUST THOSE IN AMERICA, BUT AROUND THE WORLD.

WE ARE RICH IN TALENT AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS—BUT WE CAN AND MUST DO MUCH MORE. WE SHOULD NOT STAND ALONE IN OUR RESEARCH ENDEAVORS. WE MUST REACH BEYOND THE BORDERS OF OUR CAMPUSES TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH BUSINESSES, GOVERNMENT, FOUNDATIONS AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS THAT ENABLE US TO BECOME A NATIONAL RESEARCH LEADER.

WE MUST STRIVE TO CREATE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALES AT HOWARD. LIKE MOST UNIVERSITIES, HOWARD'S ENROLLMENT IS DISPROPORTIONATELY FEMALE.

NOT ONLY MUST WE WORK TO ATTRACT MORE TALENTED YOUNG AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALES TO STUDY AT HOWARD, WE MUST PROVIDE THEM WITH THE SUPPORT THEY NEED TO SUCCEED.

AND, FINALLY, AS OUR BUSINESSES, GOVERNMENTS, EDUCATIONAL AND CHARITABLE ENDEAVORS BECOME INCREASINGLY INTERNATIONAL, WE MUST PROVIDE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR STUDENTS TO LIVE AND STUDY ABROAD. WE MUST ENCOURAGE THEM TO LEARN THE LANGUAGES AND CULTURES OF THE WORLD, NOT ASSUME THAT THE WORLD—AND THE WORK THEY DO THERE—WILL ALWAYS CONFORM TO OUR OWN.

ALL OF THESE THINGS ARE ACHIEVABLE, BUT NONE WILL BE EASILY ACHIEVED. AND NONE WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED OVERNIGHT.

AS HOWARD'S 16TH PRESIDENT, THESE ARE MY IMMEDIATE GOALS. AND WHETHER YOU ARE A STUDENT, STAFF OR FACULTY MEMBER, TRUSTEE, ALUMNUS OR SIMPLY A FRIEND OF THE UNIVERSITY, I INVITE YOU TO

JOIN ME IN WORKING TOWARD THESE GOALS. THE SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF HOWARD HAVE A LEGACY OF WHICH THEY ARE JUSTLY AND JUSTIFIABLY PROUD. AND THAT LEGACY IS A FOUNDATION WE MUST RENEW AND UPON WHICH WE MUST BUILD.

TODAY, STUDENTS HAVE A CHOICE TO ATTEND ANY COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY IN THIS COUNTRY, AND IN RECORD NUMBERS, THEY ARE CHOOSING HOWARD UNIVERSITY. I HAVE ENCOUNTERED A NUMBER OF PHENOMENAL STUDENTS WHO WERE ACCEPTED TO OTHER WELL-RENOUNDED UNIVERSITIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY, BUT YET THEY CHOSE THIS PRESTIGIOUS INSTITUTION.

HOWARD WAS FOUNDED IN THE POST-CIVIL WAR ERA. ABRAHAM LINCOLN HAD—AGAINST SEEMINGLY INSURMOUNTABLE ODDS IN A WAR-TORN COUNTRY—ISSUED THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION. IN THE WAKE OF EMANCIPATION BLACKS, NOW FREE, REMAINED LARGELY INVISIBLE TO WHITE SOCIETY. HOWARD WAS FOUNDED IN THIS POST-EMANCIPATION ENVIRONMENT AND SLOWLY IT BEGAN TO FLOURISH. ITS STUDENTS WERE NURTURED BY FACULTY AND STAFF WHO ENCOURAGED THEIR INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT AND TAUGHT THEM NOT JUST TO DREAM AND HOPE, BUT TO ACCOMPLISH.

HOWARD WAS SUPPORTED AND ADVANCED BY COURAGEOUS PEOPLE—BLACK AND WHITE—WHO UNDERSTOOD AND APPRECIATED THE INTELLECTUAL CAPACITY OF AFRICAN AMERICANS, THEIR CREATIVITY, AND WHO WERE COMMITTED TO HELPING THEM FLOURISH AND SUCCEED.

HOWARD BECAME A HOTBED FOR CIVIL RIGHTS, A MAGNET FOR NEW IDEAS AND A CATALYST FOR SOCIAL CHANGE. HOWARD WAS AT THE FOREFRONT OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT, AND THE OPPORTUNITIES THE MOVEMENT CREATED ALLOWED HOWARDS TALENTED AND WELL-TRAINED SONS AND DAUGHTERS TO MOVE INTO A WORLD IN NEED OF THEIR CREATIVITY AND COMMITMENT.

THAT IS THE LEGACY OF WHICH WE ARE ALL SO JUSTLY PROUD. YET THERE IS SO MUCH MORE TO DO. CONTEMPORARY TIMES COMPEL US TO RENEW HOWARD’S GREAT LEGACY –

- BY NURTURING OUR TALENTED STUDENTS—DEVELOPING IN THEM COMMITMENT AND GIVING THEM THE INTELLECTUAL TOOLS TO MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE—A HEALTHIER PLACE—A PLACE WHERE OPPORTUNITY IS TRULY UNBOUNDED.
- BY INSTILLING IN THEM A SENSE OF THEIR PAST AS WELL AS A VISION FOR THE FUTURE.
- BY REACHING OUT TO SERVE THE UNSERVED AND THE UNDERSERVED

- BY PROVIDING STUDENTS WITH AN ENVIRONMENT THAT IS AT ONCE COMFORTING, BUT PUSHES THEM OUT OF THEIR COMFORT ZONE—THAT GIVES THEM CONFIDENCE AND SPARKS THE PASSION TO QUESTION, TO CONTINUE OUR LEGACY OF SPEAKING TRUTH TO POWER, TO PURSUE AND TO ALWAYS STAND AGAINST INJUSTICE—IN ALL ITS SUBTLE AND NOT-SO-SUBTLE FORMS.
- BY ATTRACTING AND CULTIVATING THE NEXT GENERATION OF THE PROFESSORiate WITH DISCIPLINARY EXPERTISE TO REPLACE THE DEDICATED AND COMMITTED FACULTY MEMBERS WHO HAVE WORKED TIRELESSLY (OFTEN WITHOUT NOTORIETY), TEACHING AND RESEARCHING BECAUSE THEY BELIEVE IN OUR STUDENTS.
- BY ENLISTING OUR ALUMNI TO BECOME BENEFACTORS OF HOWARD’S LEGACY AND HELP TO CREATE A FUTURE FOR OUR STUDENTS AND FACULTY.

HOWARD’S LEGACY WILL BE RENEWED — AS OUR COUNTRY CHANGES AND AS OUR WORLD EVOLVES. AS HOWARD’S NEW PRESIDENT, I CHALLENGE EVERY ONE HERE TO JOIN ME IN RENEWING HOWARD’S REMARKABLE LEGACY.

NOW I AM A PART OF HU'S LEGACY. MY FAMILY AND I CAME TO HOWARD UNIVERSITY BECAUSE IT WAS AN ANSWER TO A CALL. IT WAS NOT FOR A JOB, A TITLE, OR TO BE PRESIDENT. I WAS A PRESIDENT AT A WONDERFUL UNIVERSITY FOR 13 YEARS WHERE WE ACHIEVED A GREAT DEAL. OUR STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF ASPIRED TO DO GREAT THINGS, AND WE DID. I HAD A JOB AND A TITLE; BUT WE CAME HERE BECAUSE WE WERE CALLED. THIS WAS A CALL THAT WAS UNIQUE, NOT A CALL THAT CAME AT TWO O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING. IT WAS NOT MYSTICAL OR A VOICE IN THE QUIET OF THE NIGHT – BUT IT WAS A CALL THAT I FIRST HEARD FROM A FORMER PRESIDENT OF MOREHOUSE COLLEGE, BENJAMIN MAYS. A CALL OF A LEGENDARY LEADER WHO SAID IGNORANCE, FEAR AND DISCRIMINATION IN ALL OF ITS FORMS CAN BE CHALLENGED BY AN HBCU.

IT WAS A CALL FROM HOWARD THURMAN, FORMER DEAN OF THE ANDREW RANKIN MEMORIAL CHAPEL AND PREDECESSOR OF DEAN BERNARD RICHARDSON, WHO SAID IF YOU HEED THE VOICE OF THE SPIRIT, YOU WILL BE GUIDED IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. IT WAS A CALL FROM THE GOSPELS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT TO LOVE OUR BROTHERS AND SERVE OUR GOD WITH COURAGE, CONVICTION, AND PASSION. IT WAS A CALL THAT BROUGHT ME AND MY FAMILY HERE TODAY, TO THIS MOMENT OF RECOGNITION AND HONOR.

IT IS TRULY AN HONOR TO BE THE 16TH PRESIDENT OF THIS EXCEPTIONAL AND UNIQUELY AMERICAN INSTITUTION. I AM HUMBLLED BY THE CONFIDENCE THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES HAS PLACED IN ME. THE RENEWING OF HOWARD'S LEGACY IS AN HONOR THAT I PROUDLY UPHOLD – BECAUSE OUR LEGACY IS INDEED DISTINCTIVE. WE STAND ON THAT RICH LEGACY TODAY – AND HAVE THE ULTIMATE RESPONSIBILITY TO CONTINUOUSLY REMEMBER, RECLAIM, AND RENEW IT.

THANK YOU.