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Ten Years After

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Staff: Ten Years After

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Editor's note — The following was excerpted from the summary of the President's Report, 1976-1978



The past decade has constituted a period of investigation and exploration for Howard University. The university has ventured into new educational frontiers as it expanded the scope of its academic offerings and intensified its capacity for research and public service.

It was not without purpose, for the university shaped its programs and mobilized its resources to meet the real concerns of society. That is the test of relevancy.

A Response to Necessity

A decade has passed since Howard began a systematic restructuring of the university. The university had no choice. Necessity dictated a thorough institutional transformation, particularly in the critical areas of professional and graduate education. Anything less would have meant the betrayal of a special trust now dating back some 111 years.

Judging by the accomplishments so far, the university's response has been timely, appropriate and productive. Much of what was envisioned as quintessential in 1969 already has materialized. As for the balance of the plans, the rest is well within the reach and schedule of Howard.

A Record of Achievement

The university can point to a 10-year record of achievement today because of careful planning and vigilant follow-through. It is a direct consequence of a set of hard, uncompromising decisions made in the past and rigorously maintained throughout the university structure.

Howard decided to upgrade the standards of academic and professional excellence. The standards have been elevated and are still rising.

Howard decided to insist on strict and rational allocation of scarce financial and educational resources. Priorities were established to channel allocations and determine accountability.

Howard decided that education, research and service demanded an unflinching devotion to the practical application of knowledge. The academic and professional divisions of the university were reorganized and reoriented to meet that commitment.

The Relevance of Learning

So, when the university stresses the relevance of learning, it means something very specific: an educational process that not only is enlightening but leads to performance and personal fulfillment; that not only emphasizes self-advancement but public duty.

It is the only way Howard knows to develop the scholars and professionals, the artists and leaders—people with concerns broader than their individual needs or ambitions; people with vision as well as insight, with roots deep in their culture and pride in their capacity.

That is what Howard University is about. In fact, it has been the tradition that has remained unyielding since the founding of the university in 1867. The recent transformation of the university is its way of continuing to honor that tradition. The signs are everywhere to give Howard cause for optimism.

Signposts of Progress

The period between 1969 and 1978 was marked by actions and activities that signalled Howard's rise to equity and parity with the ranking universities in the nation.

More than most ranking institutions, Howard University operates on the leading edge of social change and social justice in the country.

Seldom is the university far removed from the forces that shape society's critical questions or shake its complacency and inertia.

The issues that remain the most relevant to Howard are those that work to elevate the human spirit or depress the human condition. □

Toward a University of the First Rank . . .