

# New Directions

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## Newsfile

Editorial Staff

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## NEWSFILE

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**Tom Bradley, the mayor of Los Angeles,** along with Quincy Jones, the renowned composer, producer, arranger, conductor and instrumentalist, and Raoul Pierre-Louis, the rector of the State University of Haiti, were awarded honorary degrees at Howard University's Opening Convocation on September 27.

Mayor Bradley, who received the honorary degree of doctor of laws, was the speaker at the ceremony marking the beginning of Howard's 118th academic year, which was held in Cramton Auditorium on the main campus. Jones received the honorary degree of doctor of music; Pierre-Louis the honorary degree of doctor of humane letters.

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**A laudatory article on Howard** is featured in the September issue of *Ebony Magazine*. Entitled "Howard University: A Unique Center of Excellence," the five-page article highlights the university's traditions, achievements and attractions. The text, written by *Ebony* associate editor Walter Leavy, is

accompanied by a dozen photographs depicting campus scenes.

Two excerpts:

"Since Howard was founded in 1867, excellence has been synonymous with this unique university whose beautiful campus is located in the heart of Washington, D.C. Because of its history and curricula, Howard (which has made its mark in both the academic and research worlds) has become one of the United States' most cherished institutions of higher learning and is described by many as 'the intellectual home of Black America.' . . .

"Under the direction of Dr. [James E.] Cheek, Howard has successfully confronted the ongoing problem of funding and maintaining its stature and leadership position in the higher education community. However, the school's greatest challenges could lie ahead as it continues to deal with deficiencies in American society where Blacks are either underrepresented or not represented at all. 'I've always thought of this university as being one that's responsive,' Dr. Cheek says, 'and no matter the obstacle, Howard will continue to strive toward achieving greater excellence.' "

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**The U.S. Department of Education** has allocated \$1 million to the university for its new endowment fund. The grant matches \$1 million which the university has raised from private donors.

The special allocation for the endowment fund, formally known as the Howard University New Direction Endowment Fund Cam-

paign, was made possible by an agreement signed between the university and the Education Department last May.

The fund aims to provide an incentive for increased financial support of the university through a partnership between the public and private sectors. During 1984-1985 fiscal year, a total of \$5,307,911 was raised through the fund, 20 percent of which came from alumni.



**William E. Keene,** a 1966 graduate of Howard University, has been appointed dean of residence life at the university. He succeeds Edna M. Calhoun who was dean of residence life for 20 years before her retirement last year.

Prior to his new appointment, Keene was acting director of residence life and before that he was executive assistant to the vice president for student affairs and associate director of student activities.



**William H. Sherrill, Howard's dean of admissions and records**, spent a month in China this summer leading a workshop on computerized management systems in higher education.

The workshop, which was held at Huazhong University, was attended by 50 administrators from 38 universities and colleges in China. "They are just beginning to look at the computer in terms of managing student records," Sherrill says of his Chinese counterparts. "They wanted to know more about the way American colleges and universities utilize the computer in their daily work."

Sherrill was one of three members of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers selected to go to China to lead the workshop. (The other members were from Duke and Washington State Universities.) For the past three years, he has been a member of the association's systems development committee. He currently chairs that committee.

The workshop was part of a larger assistance project, the Chinese University Development Project, which is financed jointly by the World Bank and the People's Republic of China.

On our side of the ocean, Howard University Hospital was the site of another type of Chinese-American interchange on August 6 when the Department of Radiation Oncology hosted a delegation of cancer specialists and medical purchasing officials from the People's Republic of China.

The Chinese delegation expressed special interest in interoperative radiotherapy, an innovative cancer treatment pioneered by the department.

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**Dr. Charles H. Epps, Jr.**, professor of surgery in the College of Medicine and chief of orthopaedic surgery at Howard University Hospital, was recently installed as president of the American Orthopaedic Association at the organization's annual



meeting in Coronado, Calif.

He is the organization's first Black president.

Epps is the author or co-author of more than 75 medical articles and 12 textbook chapters on orthopaedics, is editor of a two-volume textbook, "Complications in Orthopaedic Surgery," and has lectured throughout the U.S., the Caribbean, Canada, South America, Europe and the Middle East.

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**The Department of Defense** has awarded the university a \$477,000 grant to support a national pilot training project designed to accelerate the education of gifted minority students in science, mathematics and technology, as well as to strengthen the skills of teachers in these areas.

The project is headed by James H. Williams, associate professor of educational psychology.

The grant provides funds for graduate students enrolled in the Graduate Leadership Program in Gifted Education as well as for the Satellite Summer Enrichment Program for Gifted and Talented Students which serves about 180 students each summer in grades 2 through 11. (See New Directions, July/October 1983 "Meeting the Needs of Gifted Children.")

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**Physicians, health administrators and human development specialists** gathered at Howard's Blackburn Center on September 9 to share their views and data on the

high incidence of Black infant mortality and morbidity in the United States and to develop strategies to combat these problems.

Entitled "Factors Affecting Pregnancy Outcomes in Black Populations," the research conference was cosponsored by the School of Human Ecology and the College of Medicine.

In opening remarks, Cecile Edwards, dean of the School of Human Ecology, brought home the urgency of the conference's focus by sharing some distressing facts:

- Black babies die at almost twice the rate of white babies.
- Black babies are more than twice as likely as white babies to be of low birth weight, which is the major reason for neonatal deaths.
- Those Black babies of low birth weight who do survive face increased risks of mental retardation, birth defects, growth and development problems, visual and hearing defects, delayed speech, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, learning difficulties, abuse and neglect.



- Children born into poverty are far more likely to be of low birth weight than those born under more affluent circumstances and more Black children in the nation are in poverty today (approximately 46 percent) than ever before.

The story told in such statistics, Edwards said, represents "a serious crisis for the Black community and for the nation."

Speakers at the conference cited a number of specifics which influ-



ence whether or not a woman will be able to deliver a healthy baby, among them: adequate nutrition before and during pregnancy, both in terms of getting sufficient calories overall and getting enough crucial nutrients (such as calcium, iron, zinc and folic acid); availability and accessibility of health care; exposure to environmental hazards; use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs before and during pregnancy; age; presence of a support system; ability to handle stress; and, of course, income.

**Channel 32, Howard University's television station, WHMM-TV,** recently was the recipient of a \$292,465 grant from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce.

The money is earmarked for improvements at the station and repair work on a damaged transmission tower line.

**More than 100 faculty,** students and administrators attended a day-long seminar on philanthropy, "Giving by Individuals", sponsored by the Howard University Department of Development.

The seminar, which was held at the Howard Inn in September, was the first of a series supported by a \$50,000 grant from the Exxon Educational Foundation.

**The 15th Annual Communications Conference,** sponsored by the Howard University School of Communications, will be held next February 13-16 in Washington, D.C.

The conference theme is "Communications: The Key To Economic and Political Change." Organizers expect students from throughout the country, scholars and other media practitioners to participate in a number of workshops, panels and plenary sessions.

For more information, contact Oscar H. Gandy, Jr., acting director, Center for Research in Communications, C.B. Powell Building,

Howard University, Washington, D.C. 20059, or call (202) 636-7491.

**J. Weldon Norris, director of university bands and choirs** and assistant dean of the College of Fine Arts, selected and prepared the choir which sang with the Boston Pops during a special summer performance on the grounds of the Washington Monument.



The performance, which was shown live over the Public Broadcasting System (PBS) coast-to-coast, was the only concert on the Boston Pops' 100th Anniversary Tour to include choral music. Featured were medleys of traditional patriotic music as well as what seems to have become a popular anthem, "We Are the World."

Norris recruited the choir's 300 members from music groups and church choirs throughout the Washington metropolitan area and led it in five rehearsals at the request of Boston Pops conductor John Williams.

The Howard University Choir, under Norris' direction, plans a busy fall season with concerts scheduled at two Washington churches in early October, a tour of the New England states set for October 10-14, performances at Howard's Rankin Chapel in November and a festive annual Christmas concert on December 8 at Howard's Cramton Auditorium.

**Law professor J. Clay Smith**

received the National Bar Association's (NBA's) highest award, the C. Francis Stradford Award, at the association's 60th annual convention in Chicago.

The prestigious award is named for a co-founder of the NBA.

Smith, a 1967 graduate of Howard's Law School, has been a professor of law at the university since 1982. Among the highlights of his career: serving as acting chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), as an EEOC commissioner and as deputy chief, associate general counsel and acting general counsel of the Cable Television Bureau of the Federal Communications Commission.

**A four-week residential leadership training program** brought a diverse group of 500 junior and senior high school students to the Howard campus in July.

Mayor Marion Barry's Youth Leadership Institute, as the program is called, aims to strengthen the potential leadership abilities of D.C. teenagers and to provide a forum for them to address issues which have an impact on their lives.

Participants in the program lived on the campus, working at assigned job sites around the city during the day and attending leadership training sessions at the university in the evenings. Among their activities were establishing a youth government headed by a mayor and a city council to serve as spokespersons for teenagers in the nation's capital; publishing a newspaper, producing a weekly radio show, and meeting with local and national leaders.

The linkage between the institute and the university continues. According to Johnnie L. Fairfax of the Department of Physical Education and Recreation, who served as the institute's community affairs specialist, this fall some 30 Howard students are slated to work with institute youngsters to help them undertake volunteer work with community, religious, political and business leaders. □