

# New Directions

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## Notes

Editorial Staff

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# From the Editors Notebook

## OUR COVER STORY

The cover story by staff writer Harriet Jackson Scarupa is about our institution, Howard University. It provides an overview of recent developments at the university, and some of those planned for the future. It is the second Special Report we have published on the status of the university. The first was published in July 1979 in commemoration of President James E. Cheek's first decade of service to Howard University. Today, that issue is a collector's item.

Since 1979, as our cover story attests, the university has experienced further expansion and enhancement of its programs as it seeks to prepare itself to meet the challenges of the next century. This enhancement is particularly noteworthy in the area of research and research-related activities. Just this July, The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching identified Howard as one of only 70 institutions of higher education in this country to be categorized as a "research university I institution."

Then, as we were closing the October issue, came two additional markers pointing to the university's importance in helping meet some of the scientific and technological needs of the country, and in increasing the minority presence in the scientific/technological disciplines.

■ The National Science Foundation (NSF) at a joint press conference with top university officials, announced a \$5 million grant to the university, under the umbrella of NSF's new Minority Research Centers of Excellence program (MRCE), for the creation at Howard of a Materials Science Research Center of Excellence. The center, which will be based within the School of Engineering, will be under the direction of Michael G. Spencer, an associate professor of engineering.

At the Howard press conference, Erich Bloch, director of the National Science Foundation, said: "Howard University is an appropriate recipient of the first MRCE award. It is the leading producer of Black doctoral scientists and engineers in the country, awarding almost one of every six Ph.D.'s granted to a Black scientist or engineer in 1985."

President Cheek said the NSF award "is consistent with and supportive of" the Carnegie designation of Howard as a major research institution. He called the consumation of the Howard-NSF pact "a momentous occasion in Howard's history."

"The contract which Mr. Bloch has announced represents a milestone in many ways. The size of this award — five million dollars over a five-year period — is a remarkable expression of confidence in our scientists and engineers.

"The outcomes of the research effort to be undertaken will make substantial contributions to the nation's initiatives to improve both its basic and applied research capabilities," he noted.

■ At an earlier press conference, this one on Capitol Hill during the Congressional Black Caucus 17th Annual Legislative Weekend, the formation of a think-tank institute on science and technology, which will be housed on the Howard campus, was announced by Congressman Mervyn M. Dymally, D-Cal.

The Institute on Science, Space and Technology, now in the development stages, is aimed at increasing minority presence and input in science and technology, as well as sponsoring studies and assessments of programs and policies that may impact on minority education, employment and business opportunities.

Roger D. Estep, Howard's vice president for development and university relations, who represented President Cheek at the congressional press conference, said: "Howard University is pleased to offer its capabilities, its leadership and its support" to this cooperative effort.

Here you have it. Howard University continues to strengthen its thrust in new directions with remarkable skill while maintaining its commitment to its historical mission as an educational institution.

The university's reach and impact, as one can read in our 24-page special cover story, extends far beyond the boundaries of its campuses. □

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