Howard University unrolled the red carpet for the inauguration of its 14th president, Franklyn Green Jenifer, April 5, 1991. Indeed, it was a memorable occasion for the campus community, dignitaries, the alumni, and special guests, who participated in a day-long program of tradition, history and continuity.

The formal inauguration ceremony took place inside the university’s John H. Burr Gymnasium. It started with The Academic Procession, followed by The Invocation by the Rev. Evans E. Crawford, dean of the University Chapel, and closed with The Benediction by the Rev. Thaddeus Garrett, Jr., associate pastor of Wesley Temple, A.M.E. Zion Church, Akron, Ohio—a trustee of the university.

John E. Jacob, then-chairman of Howard’s Board of Trustees, presided during the mid-morning program, which was followed by
a luncheon in the Armour J. Blackburn University Center, and an evening Inaugural Concert in Cramton Auditorium.

Music for the inaugural program in Burr Gymnasium was performed by the Howard University Choir (J. Weldon Norris, conductor) and the Howard University Brass Ensemble (Richard Lee, conductor).

Among the invited dignitaries were three nationally-prominent Howard graduates, Sharon Pratt Dixon, mayor of Washington, D.C.; David N. Dinkins, mayor of New York City; and L. Douglas Wilder, governor of Virginia.

More than 300 colleges and universities, as well as 12 learned societies sent delegates. More than 100 colleges and universities sent greetings.

The Investiture, by John E. Jacob, and the Inaugural Address, by Franklyn G. Jenifer, follow:—

THE EDITOR.
Staff: The Inauguration of Franklyn Jenifer
One hundred and twenty-four years ago this noble venture called "Howard University" was begun. The history of Howard extends over a period of time covering a substantial portion of the life of this country. Its roots go deeply into the soil of American tradition. And as we stand poised to boldly enter the 21st Century, we can look back with justifiable pride that we have remained true to the course charted in the beginning by our founders. Our achievements have been astonishing—from the deep belief of our founders that slaves and children of slaves could be educated in the same manner as all others, and that the advantages of higher education should be made available to all persons, without regard to distinctions of race, sex, creed, or nationality—we have evolved to a stance today as the most comprehensive university in the world dedicated to the education of peoples of African descent.

The traditions and heritage which constitute our legacy have been forged by the collective efforts of many talented and dedicated people over the years: trustees, presidents, teachers, students, administrators, staff and benefactors who in the comingling of their efforts are the creators and sustainers of this community of scholarship.

Selecting a new leader to carry on in the rich and vital tradition of the past, presented a formidable task for the Board of Trustees. Both difficult and exhaustive was the search for this new leader, for few individuals possess the criteria of excellence and achievement that mark the
distinguished person sought to fill this challenging role.

On December 16, 1989, the Board of Trustees decided that you, Franklyn Green Jenifer, possess the leadership qualities needed to propel this institution to even greater heights in the future. Because of the outstanding calibre of your leadership, your extremely broad and varied academic background, and the scope of your vision, you were deemed to be the person to lead Howard into what may prove to be the most exciting era of her existence.

For these reasons, with due solemnity and high expectations, the trustees of Howard University have chosen you to become Howard's new president and leader. And, by virtue of the authority vested in me and on behalf of the Board of Trustees, it is my honor to now declare you the 14th president of Howard University, to present you with its charter, to rest upon your shoulders this chain of office as a symbol of your authority and leadership.

With this authority goes the confidence of the trustees that you will have the full support of this university community, of the larger educational world, and of those persons everywhere who believe that education is the gateway to the solution to the problems of mankind and the bedrock on which will rest a society where people will live as equals and dwell together in peace. Congratulations!
II. The Inaugural Address
As I formally don the mantle of leadership of Howard University, I feel reverence, pride and a profound sense of responsibility—responsibility, because I know that had it not been for the struggles of our forefathers and foremothers, I would not be standing here today.

So today, I want to use this special occasion to speak with you about the debt all of us owe those courageous souls who paved our way, and of how we must honor that debt in this time and from this place. I want to share with you, then, my deep appreciation of Howard's great past and my heartfelt aspirations for its even greater future.

But I don’t want you to think of Howard’s past and its future as separate topics. For they are part of a long, continuous and, indeed, wondrous story.

The Beginning

To contemplate the story of Howard University is to contemplate the story of a people who came out of slavery with a passion—a passion for education. Hear the words of one slave: “There is one sin that slavery committed against me, which I will never forgive. It robbed me of my education.”

Howard University was created to help rectify that sin.

When it was announced that the nation’s capital would be home to a university that was to be dedicated to the education of former slaves and their descendants, many were elated. They also were curious. When word got out that this institution was to be open to Blacks and whites, and men and women, this curiosity soared. “Exactly what kind of education would be offered at this Howard University?” asked some. “To what purpose?” asked others. “How can I attend?” asked still others.

Applications flooded in. And many of those who were accepted brought with them a pick or shovel or spade to help grade the hill on which our main campus stands today, and to clear the way for the streets we know so well—streets that would lead them to knowledge. Yes, my friends, those early Howardites literally dug their way to that which they so cherished: an education.

What a proud heritage we have!

Consider the man for whom this university is named. Oliver Otis Howard was a white man who had the audacity to believe that not only were the descendants of slaves capable of learning, but that they also should receive the best and broadest education possible. Consider all those early students who took that belief to heart.

Mere vocational education was not for them. They came to Howard to develop the skills that would enable them to earn a living, of course. But they were after far more than that. They wanted to contribute to the intellectual life of America. They also wanted to use their education to help bring about the full emancipation of their race. They did both, often against great odds, but they did so infused with the glory of hope.

As the years rolled on, this institution’s scholars served as living, breathing refutation of the idea that Black people were intellectually inferior. Charles Drew...Ralph Bunche...Ernest Everett Just...William Leo Hansberry...Inabel Lindsay...E. Franklin Frazier...Alain Locke...Patricia Roberts Harris...Sterling Brown...and others—so many others. Their fields were different, their personalities as well. But what united them was their unyielding commitment to excellence.

As the years rolled on, this institution understood that it must nurture leaders who would uplift the race. But it also understood that it must nurture leaders who would uplift the nation. Whether the field was politics or social work, the arts or the military, medicine or education, Howard graduates went forth from this “hilltop high” to climb other, steeper hills.

As the years rolled on, a wide variety of people made signal contributions to the growth and development of this institution. I think of our students, our faculty, our staff, our alumni. I think of our financial and moral supporters in the public and private sectors. I think of our presidents, particularly our three prior African American presidents: the magnificent orator, preacher and teacher Mordecai Wyatt Johnson; the brilliant legal strategist and scholar James M. Nabrit Jr.; and the consummate institution-builder James E. Cheek, who spearheaded Howard through a period of unprecedented growth.

Oh yes, we have a proud heritage! It is a heritage indelibly marked by a commitment to knowledge and justice and excellence and leadership and progress—commitments that are vital to the fulfillment of our destiny as a people.

Historian-theologian Vincent Harding has described the freedom struggle of Black people in this nation as “a long, continuous movement” that “flows like a river.”

The story of Howard University is ideally positioned to respond to the challenges posed by a world without borders.
The history of African Americans clearly shows that Howard University has been a major force in that river.

Howard University Today

In speaking of our proud heritage, I used the past tense. But this heritage is not dead. It lives today in the very soul of this institution.

Let us draw sustenance, inspiration and wisdom from this heritage. Let us proclaim it; let us share it; and let us celebrate it. But let us never, ever become so fixated on it that we refuse to see the challenges before us in this new age. Indeed, we must not blindly hold on to the past without a clear idea of how to make that past bend to the future. Just as the river of our struggle bends as it moves toward a freedom that, in Vincent Harding’s words, “liberates the whole person and humanizes the entire society, pressing beyond the boundaries of race, class, and nationality...” so shall Howard bend. Like the river of struggle, Howard shall never cease its relentless quest for freedom, justice and equality for all people who suffer under the yoke of oppression.

I’d like to turn to just two of these challenges before us in this new age, and then to some of the ways Howard University will address these challenges and others in the days and years ahead.

There is, first of all, the challenge posed by the changing face of poverty. Poverty has always been with us. For so many of our people, life most certainly “ain’t been no crystal stair.” Many of us grew up under conditions others labeled as “disadvantaged,” but somehow we never believed these conditions must define our fates. We had hope. If we kept “a-climbin’ on,” as the mother in Langston Hughes’ poem told her son, we believed we could improve our own lives and those of our children.

Today, however, we are faced with a poverty that seems intractable. A whole group of people appear to be permanently locked out of any present or future prosperity this nation can offer. And the situation seems to be getting worse. In the past decade, while the top fifth of the population has been getting richer, the bottom fifth has been getting poorer.

This is surely cause for alarm. But what is even more alarming is that this bottom fifth includes a disproportionate number of those representing our future. I’m talking about African American children. They and
their families are literally trapped in poverty and in the destructive culture such poverty all too often breeds: a culture marked by crime and drugs and teenage pregnancy and homelessness and illiteracy or near-illiteracy—the whole depressing litany—a culture without hope.

To attack this seemingly hopeless poverty requires a new generation of leaders honed with a new set of skills. Howard University must—and Howard University will—produce these leaders. We must do this for many reasons. One of the most compelling is the heavy debt we owe to our forebears. What were their struggles for, if we were to end up like this?

A second challenge I want to address is far different. But it is also about change—in this case, technological change—and what this change means for this nation and the world in which we live.

Computers, satellites, facsimile machines and high-speed forms of transportation are just some of the most obvious examples of the technology that is shrinking the world. These breakthroughs have made the rapid transmission of information and money the norm. Increasingly, they are making national boundaries obsolete. Today, it is just as easy for a corporation’s headquarters to be physically in Tokyo or Paris or Lagos as in New York City.

Indeed, more and more, we are moving toward a world without borders and a globalized economy. In this world, trying to define a national corporation becomes problematic. In the coming years, an American worker will be as likely to be employed by Nissan or Sony as by General Motors or Westinghouse. And the contrary is also true, as citizens of other nations work for American corporations.

We find ourselves in a world in which the potential for people of different races and backgrounds to come together for the common economic good is immense. But we are still far from realizing that potential now. And we may never realize it unless we develop a more global perspective.

For African Americans, this means that even as we continue to wage a struggle to ensure our full equality in this nation, and even as we continue to examine and celebrate our own unique heritage, we must never forget that we are also citizens of the world. As Martin Luther King Jr. once said: “Our loyalties must transcend our race, our tribe, our class and our nation; and this means we must develop a world perspective.”
Howard University is ideally positioned to respond to the challenges posed by a world without borders. Historically, Howard has drawn students from around the globe. John Gordon, Howard's seventh president, in the inaugural address he delivered in 1904, observed that Howard was "drawing young men from Cuba, Puerto Rico, Barbados, Jamaica... and from South America and Asia and Africa." He said, "the directing hand of God" was assisting in making Howard University a school for the "colored races of the continents."

Today, our students come from 107 nations; our faculty and staff represent some 50 nationalities; our faculty includes some 120 men and women whose research and teaching focus on international issues; and our illustrious alumni include leaders not only for America, but for many, many nations around the globe.

**Vision and Will**

As Howard University’s new president and its only alumnus to become president, I find my alma mater perhaps better prepared to respond to some of the major challenges confronting this nation than any other institution of higher education. The only obstacles that will prevent us from converting these new challenges into opportunities are a lack of vision and a lack of will.

The self-examination, self-analysis and recommendations for change that I initiated over the past year represent my attempt to steer this university toward a new future, and to widen our vision and forge our will to do so. This process, undoubtedly, has been difficult, painful and stressful. But the rod and the staff that comfort us have been our enduring love and respect for this institution.

Today, we mark the end of that process. On this day—a mere 8 years, 8 months and 25 days before the dawn of a new century—we, the members of the Howard University family, have come together to celebrate a new beginning. This is not just my personal inauguration as president of Howard University. It represents an inauguration of a new Howard, but a new Howard inspired by its illustrious past.

As a part of this new Howard, we have committed ourselves to creating a number of new structures and renewing others. These structures will enable the university to address more clearly some of the challenges facing our nation and our people as we approach the 21st century.
Let me briefly describe some of them.

☐ We will create a Center for International Affairs where Howard scholars and other scholars whose research focuses on the problems of developing nations can come together to share existing knowledge and pursue new knowledge. It will be a place where students and scholars can exchange views with diplomats, business executives, journalists and others with professional interest in international affairs; where world leaders will find both a public forum and an intellectual retreat; where such crucial issues as war and peace, and development and underdevelopment will be examined from a scholarly perspective.

Other universities have international centers. But no other university's international center will be able to boast that it is home to the largest cadre of scholars of African descent in the world. These scholars will bring their precious talents and unique perspectives to some of the leading international issues of the day.

☐ We will create a Center for Urban Affairs to address the seemingly unsolvable problems afflicting our urban poor and the communities in which they live. The underpinning of such a center has, in fact, always been at Howard. It has existed in the research and teaching of our faculty in economics and sociology and social work and history and still other disciplines.

But now we will bring all these efforts together, give them a stronger focus, and more systematically expose our students to them. The need is urgent. We have become a nation of two Americas—one inhabited by the haves and the other by the have-nots. We must use our scholarly strengths to find ways to halt this division. For, as Lincoln told us, "a house divided against itself cannot stand."

☐ We will create an Institute for Entrepreneurial Studies to serve as a tool for the economic empowerment of our people. For more and more, we have come to realize that political empowerment, of itself, will not guarantee African American progress if it is not matched by economic empowerment.

Underlying this institute is the premise that Howard University must not just train employees. It also must train employers—employers who are prepared, interested and willing to open small businesses in the inner cities of America and who are committed to helping change these economic wastelands into oases of economic opportunity.

☐ We will focus renewed attention on the historic and powerful roles that our College of Medicine and School of Law have played in uniquely addressing problems afflicting people of color.

In medicine, we know that African Americans suffer disproportionately from any number of diseases. These include sickle cell anemia, hypertension, diabetes, cancer and—the newest plague—AIDS. Thus, our College of Medicine will strengthen its research, teaching and community service efforts in such crucial areas. At the same time, it will strengthen its traditional resolve to produce highly trained physicians who are sensitive to the health needs of African American and other minority communities.

In law, we know that, even today, the scales of justice are not weighted equally when it comes to those who are Black and poor. Thus, we will develop a strong concentration in constitutional law. This will enable a new generation of Howard-trained lawyers to carry on the legacy of those gallant legal warriors of the civil rights battles of the '50s and '60s. And we will develop a first-rate legal clinic to serve those the legal establishment has ignored, disdained or outright rejected.

These initiatives in international affairs, urban affairs, entrepreneurship, medicine and law are among those that will shape the new Howard—a Howard University strongly positioned to face the challenges of the next century.

Some may call this new Howard a dream. But that would have been a year ago. This is now a reality. We have had some tough times this past year, but we have emerged slightly bruised, a little tired, but also reinvigorated. Today, strong and steadfast, we take on the challenges before us. We do so not just for the good of our beloved institution, but for the collective good of our people, our nation and, yes, our world. We also do so to repay our forebears for their struggles.

Howard University unquestionably has had a great past. But its future, I promise, will be even greater. Let us march onward and upward toward that future with determination, pride and valor.

In the words of that great anthem of our people:

"Facing the rising sun of our new day began,"
The Inauguration
of
FRANKLYN GREEN JENIFER
as the
Fourteenth President
of
HOWARD UNIVERSITY

Friday, April the Fifth
Nineteen Hundred and Ninety-One

THE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS
Washington, District of Columbia
The Inauguration Program

PRESIDING
JOHN E. JACOB, M.S.W., D.H.L., LL.D.
Chairman of the Board of Trustees

The Academic Procession

The Invocation .................................................. THE REVEREND EVANS E. CRAWFORD, Ph.D.
Dean of the Chapel

Music ......................................................... Triumphal Scene from Aida .... Verdi
THE HOWARD UNIVERSITY CHOIR
J. Weldon Norris, D.Mus., Conductor
THE HOWARD UNIVERSITY BRASS ENSEMBLE
Richard Lee, M.Mus. Ed., Conductor

The Investiture ................................................ JOHN E. JACOB

The Inaugural Address ................................. FRANKLYN GREEN JENIFER, Ph.D.

Music ......................................................... Hush Children .... arr. Norris
THE HOWARD UNIVERSITY CHOIR

The Benediction ........................................ THE REVEREND THADDEUS GARRETT, JR., D.D.
Associate Pastor, Wesley Temple
A.M.E., Zion Church, Akron, Ohio

The Recessional
The Academic Procession

The University Marshal

The Delegates of Colleges and Universities

The Delegates of Learned Societies and Educational Organizations

Marshal

The Faculties of the University

Marshal

The Deans and Directors of the University

The Vice Presidents of the University

The President of the Howard University Student Association

The President of the Alumni Association

The President of the University Senate

The Trustees of the University

The Chairman of the Board of Trustees

The President of the University
Delegates from Colleges and Universities

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Overseer of Harvard College

The College of William and Mary
Cynthia Nash Huddleston, M.Ed.
Alumna

The University of Pennsylvania
Valarie Swain Cade, Ed.D.
Assistant to the President/Assistant Provost

Moravian College
Zora Felton, M.Ed.
Alumna

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Alumnus

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Alumna

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Alumnus

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Alumna

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Alumnus

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A. Divver Martin, M.Ed.
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Alumnus

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