Washington University in St. Louis
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Wrighton: ‘Our work awaits us’

Mark S. Wrighton’s installation as Washington University’s 14th chancellor commences a new era for the institution. For the first time in 24 years, a new chancellor has assumed the University’s top leadership role. Since 1971, William H. Danforth has guided the University into the ranks of the most respected research universities in the world.

On Friday, Oct. 6, Danforth presented the symbol of the University’s leadership to Wrighton by placing the Chancellor’s Medallion around Wrighton’s neck at the Installation Ceremony. The golden medallion, a symbol of the office of the chancellor, glistened under the lights of Beaumont Pavilion as it landed softly against Wrighton’s chest.

Danforth then presented Wrighton with a specially crafted copy of the University’s charter. Danforth said the charter was “a symbol of the vision, the idealism, the hope and the optimism that has inspired the people of this institution for 142 years.”

Wrighton concluded his Inaugural Address and commenced his chancellorship by saying: “I pledge to work to build a brighter future for those who follow us, and I ask your support in this effort. Danforth to the podium to present the opening remarks at the Installation Ceremony, and he was quick to sing the praises of the University’s 14th chancellor.

“Washington University works hard at choosing a new leader,” Danforth said. “A 24-person committee ... searched the world over for the ideal person. After about a year, they came to the unanimous conclusion that that individual was Mark S. Wrighton.”

Wrighton was recognized and respected in the highest circles of academia, industry and government.

“It was the qualities of heart and mind that made Mark so attractive to the search committee and the board. All were excited by his wide-ranging intellect, his quick, retentive mind, his imagination, his ability to listen, to understand and then to come to judicious, sensible conclusions. All were impressed by his energy, his reputation for integrity and the admiration of those who worked most closely with him.”

At the beginning of the ceremony, Danforth and Wrighton walked side-by-side at the end of a 465-person academic procession. The audience erupted in applause as the two leaders, dressed in traditional academic attire, entered Brooks Quadrangle. The applause grew to a crescendo as they walked toward a large section of students, who bursted the applause with cheers. Those cheers were directed at both Danforth, the symbolic father figure of what he calls the “Washington University family,” and Wrighton, the new head of that family.

Moments later, when Grand Marshal Burton M. Wheeler, Ph.D., professor of English and of religious studies, called Danforth to the podium to present the opening remarks, the audience immediately leapt to its feet and again offered a round of applause. In a sense, the audience members were saying their final goodbyes to Chancellor Danforth and, at the same time, were offering a warm welcome to Chairman Danforth.

Eight members of the University community greeted Wrighton. Speaking on behalf of the faculty, staff, undergraduate and graduate students, parents, alumni, trustees and other college and university presidents, the greeters welcomed Wrighton to the family. (The greeters’ remarks appear on page 2.)

Music was woven into the ceremony. Elizabeth Peterson, a 1993 alumna, sang “America the Beautiful” at the beginning, with accompanying music by the Mighty Mississippi Concert Band of St. Louis, directed by Dan Presgrave, director of instrumental ensembles and lecturer in music. The University Chamber Choir, directed by John H. Stewart, associate professor of music, sang Randall Thompson’s “Alleluia” midway through the ceremony. The choir also led the audience in singing the alma mater at the end of the ceremony.

Gray skies hovered over Brooks Quadrangle throughout the event, and blustery winds whipped through the audience. When Wrighton began his Inaugural Address, he quipped that perhaps Peterson should sing one additional song, “The Sun Will Come Out Tomorrow.”

Wrighton began his Inaugural Address by accepting the invitation to lead the University: “Members of the Washington University community and distinguished guests, I accept appointment as chancellor of Washington University in St. Louis. I do so with enthusiasm, mindful of the confidence and trust placed in me, the responsibilities before me, and the high expectations that accompany such an appointment. My promises are to do my very best for Washington University and to work hard to sustain the trajectory of improvement that has characterized this great University under the leadership of Chancellor William H. Danforth and his life partner, Elizabeth. It is an honor to be selected to follow such a distinguished and accomplished university leader.” (Wrighton’s speech appears on pages 4-5.)

While Wrighton praised Danforth’s leadership, Danforth himself assured the audience that Wrighton, too, will make a great leader. Danforth told the audience: “I predict that a quarter of a century from now, people will be saying, ‘How can Washington University ever replace Chancellor Wrighton? No one can fill his shoes. Under his leadership, we have experienced Washington University’s golden age.’”

And so the Wrighton Era begins.

Nearly 3,000 people in Brooks Quadrangle gave a standing ovation to Mark S. Wrighton, Ph.D., (center) as he was formally installed as Washington University’s 14th chancellor. Moments earlier, William H. Danforth (right), chairman of the Board of Trustees, placed the Chancellor’s Medallion around Wrighton’s neck.

Coverage of the Inaugural Symposium appears on page 7.
Greeters welcome Wrighton to University family

During the Installation Ceremony in Brookesions Quadrangle, eight greeters, speaking on behalf of various Washington University constituencies, welcomed Mark S. Wrighton as the University’s 14th chancellor. The following are excerpts from their remarks.

For the faculty:
Gustav Schoenfeld

“As Mark Wrighton undertakes this daunting challenge, he will find the faculty supportive of his efforts. He has impressed all who have met him with his clear appreciation of the requirements of research institutions. He seems to know what is needed, but he does not impose; rather, he seeks ideas and consults widely. ... Chancellor Wrighton knows that to acquire and hold first-rate faculties, administrations must provide a challenging atmosphere wherein the highest levels of scholarly activity, including teaching, are encouraged, expected, indeed demanded, and where interactive and collegial relations are welcomed and enabled.”

Schonfeld, M.D., is the William B. Kouutz Professor of Medicine and chair of the Senate Council.

For the graduate students:
Jennifer Rodi

“Chancellor Wrighton will set a stage that invites every professional and graduate student to maximize their time here. ... Dr. Wrighton realizes the value that each of our contributions has for our school, the University, and the community, and, more importantly, ourselves. Under his leadership, professional and graduate students and their programs will achieve and maintain greatness and success in their respective disciplines. ... Chancellor Wrighton’s appointment clearly acknowledges the dedication that our University has for excellence.”

Rodi is the president of the Graduate Professional Council.

For the undergraduate students: Mark Klapow

“We the students feel a special sense of excitement in welcoming this outstanding individual to our community. This special sense is partly a reflection of the pride that we as students feel toward Chancellor Wrighton and of our enthusiasm at the opening of this promising new era in our University’s history. Today, however, is not only about one man. Today is truly about a University in the midst of a critical period in its history. Let us use this great day as an opportunity to look ahead toward our future. ... Today is about reaffirming our University’s commitment as a leading national research center and more importantly, as an educator of young adults.”

Klapow is the president of Student Union.

For the staff:
Gloria W. White

“It is an honor to represent the administration and staff on this occasion. ... It is important to all constituents that this momentum continues. The trustees certainly had this in mind when they elected Mark Wrighton as chancellor. We alumni strongly support Chancellor Wrighton.”

Because of his intelligence, experience and commitment to excellence in both teaching and research, we believe in the future of the University under his leadership. ... We alumni definitely have a stake in the future of this University. Our degrees from here are something to be proud of, and it is important that we all participate in the growth and development of our University as we enter the 12th, the 13th and now the 14th chancellor.”

White is professor of art and director of the Core Program, and Sarah Spurr, associate professor and assistant dean of the School of Art, created and designed the charter, which will be handed down to future chancellors at their inaugurations. The broadside pictured here carries the full text of the University’s original 1853 charter, as well as two of the 1857 amendments and a linoleum-cut illustration of Brookesions Hall. The charter presented to Wrighton was printed by Charles Devan Press, co-founded by Dowd and Patrick C. Renchen, in photography at the art school.

New inaugural tradition begins with 142-year-old charter
William H. Danforth (right), chairman of the Board of Trustees, presents a specially crafted copy of the Washington University charter to Mark S. Wrighton, who was installed as the 14th chancellor on Friday, Oct. 6. Douglas Dowd, assistant professor of art and director of the Core Program, and Sarah Spurr, associate professor and assistant dean of the School of Art, created and designed the charter, which will be handed down to future chancellors at their inaugurations. The broadside pictured here carries the full text of the University’s original 1853 charter, as well as two of the 1857 amendments and a linoleum-cut illustration of Brookesions Hall. The charter presented to Wrighton was printed by Charles Devan Press, co-founded by Dowd and Patrick C. Renchen, in photography at the art school.

For college and university presidents and international alumni: Ja Song

“It is important to recognize the fact that our world, and in particular our universities, can no longer be limited by national or cultural boundaries. ... Chancellor Wrighton, your sister universities, and broad and abreast look to you with great expectation, and your encouragement, particularly those of us serving outside the United States, expect that you will lead our alma mater to a new place in this shrinking world, that Washington University will be one of the first in breaking down the walls that continue to exist in the global village and will be a leader in building a sense of community that inspires and challenges us to do all the things we can. I congratulate Washington University on its selection of such an able scholar and dynamo leader to take it into the next century.”

Song is a W.U. alumnus and president of Yonsei University in Seoul, Korea.

For the trustees:
W.L. Hadley Griffin

“Trustees have no higher responsibility, and certainly none with more lasting impact, than the selection of the chancellor. They do not do this very often, but when they do have a record of doing it very well. That process, having been carved out with great care and with great success, we have every confidence that you will do this very right, indeed the duty, to celebrate this occasion with all the pageantry, tradition and solemnity you see here today. ... So to you as our new chancellor and to you, our new chancellor, we wish you warm welcome on behalf of the Board of Trustees. Exciting times lie ahead.”

Griffin is an alumnus, a life trustee and former chairman of the Board of Trustees.

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Students toast chancellor: ‘Here’s to Mark Wrighton’

Chancellor Mark S. Wrighton is known as a gifted teacher, scholar and administrator who has published more than 400 research papers and holds 14 patents. In 1972, at age 22, Wrighton received a doctorate in chemistry from the California Institute of Technology.

In 1981, at age 32, he became one of the youngest people to hold a named professorship at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

On Friday, Oct. 6, 1995, during the student Inaugural Gala at the Athletic Complex, Wrighton marked another milestone in his career that was equally as impressive to the hundreds of Washington University students attending the festivities — he danced.

“He’s a very good dancer,” said Estelle-Marie Montgomery, a doctoral candidate in psychology who danced with Wrighton as the local band Galaxy performed a rousing rendition of the song “Shout.” Montgomery wasn’t the only student who danced with the chancellor on the crowded dance floor in the Field House. Amid flashing computer-controlled lights, and Galaxy performing such songs as Aretha Franklin’s “Respect,” Wrighton danced with groups of students.

Dancing with the students “was a bold move on his part,” said Montgomery. “He’s simply awesome, very personable. This shows that he will mix with students no matter what the circumstances,” said Montgomery, adding that she also respects Wrighton on an academic level.

During the gala in the Field House, Todd Davis, who is pursuing a doctorate in American literature, and Lisa Jericho, who received a bachelor’s degree in business from the University last May, toasted the chancellor and delivered brief remarks as members of the Chancellor Search Committee.

Davis told the packed crowd that during the Thursday, Oct. 5, inaugural dinner, he talked with two chemists from MIT about his first few “wonderful” months at Washington University. “They always ask me, ‘But Mark, are you having any fun?’ Tonight I’m having fun!”

It was difficult for anyone not to have fun at the Inaugural Gala, which was organized by the student subcommittee of the Inaugural Planning Committee in conjunction with the Campus Programming Council. The atmosphere at the Athletic Complex was comparable to a nightclub or casino. Students donned their most festive evening wear, including glittery dresses and suits and tuxedos.

While students were dancing in the Field House, others were using play money to “gamble” at blackjack, craps, roulette and a money wheel at the casino in Francis Gymnasium.

Five students won the raffle for a Whitney House dinner with the chancellor in November. The dinner will include these students and their guests. The winners, whose names were announced at midnight, are senior Gary Eisenberg; juniors Kate Hyde and Chris Nelson; and sophomores Debbie Harris and Dinesh Rao. In addition, other students won prizes such as a 20-inch color television, a compact disc player and a trip to Chicago, all donated by local businesses.

Surrounded by students, Chancellor Mark S. Wrighton dances to the song “Shout,” popularized by the Isley Brothers.

‘Mocha Mark’: commemorative custard

At the student Inaugural Festival Friday, Oct. 6, the famous custard king of St. Louis — Ted Drewes, A&S ‘50 — was the star attraction in an all-campus raffle.

Above: Hubert Chuang, a third-year student in the Medical Scientist Training Program, won a trip to Drewes’ custard shop with Chancellor Mark S. Wrighton in the chancellor’s 1984 bronze-colored Corvette. Alyson F. Jacobson, a senior pre-medical major, also won a trip. Drewes donated 2,000 cups of “Mocha Mark,” a flavor he specialty created for several inaugural events. Also pictured is Allison O’Sheen, a senior in Arts and Sciences and a member of the Inaugural Committee.

Top left: Wrighton samples some “Mocha Mark” and chats with students at the student Inaugural Festival in Bowles Plaza. The festival drew about 800 people.

Top right: Students admire a caricature of Wrighton in his Corvette that was painted on one of the walls of the Forsyth Boulevard pedestrian underpass.

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The following is the complete text of Mark S. Wrighton's Inaugural Address, which he presented at the Installation Ceremony in Brookings Quadrangle.

Chancellor Mark S. Wrighton delivers his Inaugural Address at the Installation Ceremony in Brooks Quadrangle.

Our relationships with St. Louis are symbiotic in many ways. University College provides formal educational offerings for the large number of area residents who are not in school full-time, but our engagement goes well beyond such formal educational and research programs. Washington University brings new vitality to the region. About three national students to come and learn in America, and, importantly, will attract Americans to learn about America. St. Louis was the thriving economic center of an emerging great community. We were founded in 1853 when St. Louis was the thriving economic center of an emerging great community. We were founded in 1853 when St. Louis was the thriving economic center of an emerging great community. We were founded in 1853 when St. Louis was the thriving economic center of an emerging great community. We were founded in 1853 when St. Louis was the thriving economic center of an emerging great community. We were founded in 1853 when St. Louis was the thriving economic center of an emerging great community. We were founded in 1853 when St. Louis was the thriving economic center of an emerging great community. We were founded in 1853 when St. Louis was the thriving economic center of an emerging great community.
The guiding principle underlying our commitment to excellence should be that for Washington University to be great, every one of our schools must have an opportunity to excel in its area of intellectual activity. But excellence cannot be established by drawing down the resources of one school to directly assist another. Rather, the commitment to excellence demands the expansion of support for academic units which are not blessed with the most affluent alumni. Thus, securing new support for our Schools of Art, Architecture, and the School of Social Work will be a priority. Uniformity of excellence will bring both distinction and distinguishability—both essential in being recognized as one of the best universities. For our students and graduates, we will work to sustain our path to excellence so that you will become even more proud to be linked to Washington University.

We will be successful when we draw together as one institution, unite in our efforts to seek excellence, and partner internally to address complex, interdisciplinary problem areas. One example of this spirit of cooperation is the development of plans for biomedical engineering linking our School of Medicine with the School of Engineering and Applied Science. There are many other examples of internal partnerships upon which we thrive: law and Arts and Science; Business and Social Work; Architecture and Art and Architecture; to name a few relationships among our academic units. Our work will engage our faculty, the University as a whole, expanding our educational impact.

Commitment to Excellence: People, Programs, and Facilities

A great university is characterized by an excellent student body and by an excellent faculty. These are enduring characteristics of all great universities. Attracting and retaining distinguished faculty and having the opportunity to work with the most outstanding students depends on having world-class-based excellence in other elements of the University, including its staff and facilities.

It has been my good fortune to find dedicated, hard-working, and distinguished people at Washington University. In this highly competitive world, it is essential that we work to properly recognize and reward all members of our community. We must sustain our efforts to recruit outstanding faculty and to retain them as their careers develop and flourish. Our special efforts to attract and retain women and members of under-represented minority groups are encouraged, and our continuing faculty will play a larger role in these efforts. The academicians—deans and department chairs—have a responsibility in this regard, but all faculty share the responsibility to enrich our diversity.

Our faculty are dedicated to the important mission of teaching. Assisting others in learning is a core responsibility we have to our entire constituency. Extraordinary commitment to teaching will be nurtured and rewarded.

The considerable investment placed in Washington University by our students and their families, by our corporate, government, and foundation sponsors, and by our graduates and friends will bring larger returns if we strive to improve all that we do. A world-class institution will only be world-class if it is excellent in all aspects of its operations. Thus, there is an important role for every member of the Washington University faculty and staff.

We who work in a university enjoy the privilege of contributing to the development of tomorrow's leaders by contributing to the expanding information marketplace. As learning and discovery approaches to solving problems; we need people to help us. Attracting and retaining distinguished faculty and students find these areas to be meaningful ones in which to learn and contribute; and there is ample room for highly individual contribution within the framework of a well-structured interdisciplinary partnership. No important problem is too complex to be attacked, and we will apply our creative efforts to problems of practical and intellectual significance.
Panelists address change in the 21st century

I n his closing comments to the packed May Auditorium audience at last week's Inaugural Symposium in Science Hall, Chancellor Mark S. Wrighton pointed out perhaps the greatest dilemma facing the world as it heads into the 21st century.

"I know of a lot you are saying, 'I don't want to read a book on a computer.'" Turner said. "Imagine a very different kind of computer — one that is the size and shape of a paperback and has the same print quality of a laser printer. It will even take voice dictation and write your notes in print quality of a laser printer. It will even take voice dictation and write your notes in a matter of seconds."

"The notion of discreet change and how it relates to the mission of the University is one of the panelists," Waterston said. "I was a little surprised by the number of people who learn from others. Indeed, I'm sure we will be able to share some of our techniques and keep our knowledge of behavior that you can't get through social science — learning it is essentially through behavior."
A teacher-scientist becomes chancellor

Professor Mark S. Wrighton took some time out of his busy schedule as chancellor to talk to a freshman-level chemistry class one day recently.

He immediately was hired as assistant professor of chemistry at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). In 1976, he became associate professor. One year later, he achieved full professor rank. In 1981, at age 32, he became one of the youngest faculty members in MIT's history to hold a chaired professorship — the Frederick G. Keyes Professor of Chemistry. In 1989, he became MIT's first Ciba-Geigy Professor of Chemistry. One year later, he was named provost at MIT.

"One in a billion"

Wrighton's career was moving so fast that he began to lose some of the very professors who turned him onto chemistry in the first place.

"I think I made full professor at MIT before I made full professor at Florida State," said Ed Mellon, Ph.D., who was named full professor in 1980, three years after Wrighton. "I'm 110 percent deployed in finding out what's good for Washington University. What's good for me? I'm just an ordinary person, too," Wrighton said.

Although these are some of the questions on Wrighton's mind as of late — not the idea of finding fulfillment but, rather, sustained success — he still has that boyish charm.

Metts, now University Distinguished Teaching Professor Emeritus of Chemistry at Florida State, had the young Wright in his classroom during the 1966-67 academic year. Metts was a full professor at Florida State, and Wrighton approached him to ask about a challenging course in general chemistry.

"He still has that boyish charm," Metts said. "Occasionally, you can still see the twinkle in his eye. He still has the same sort of enthusiasm, and we all wish we did, of course.

"Sure, he's the handsomest kid on campus," said Ed Mellon, who was named full professor in 1980, three years after Wrighton. "I never tossed Wrighton's letter into the trash; he must have had an inkling about his future."