



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

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**REMARKS FROM AMERICAN UNIVERSITY  
PRESIDENT-ELECT NEIL KERWIN  
July 20, 2007**

It is really difficult to express what it means to me to stand here today.

I want to begin by expressing my appreciation to the search committee and to the Board of Trustees; and to chairman Gary Abramson, and his leadership, and by the way, in whose room we sit, for this expression of confidence in my ability to lead this great university. The process has been long and the process has been challenging—as it should be for a position of this importance—but I learned a great deal and I will put that knowledge to use in the coming years.

What has been accomplished here since the founding of this institution is nothing short of remarkable.

Every day on this beautiful campus, in this city and the region that surrounds it, throughout the nation and all around the globe the people of American University are making the world a smarter and better place.

Our faculty do that through their scholarship, professional contributions and their art, and they do it through their teaching and their service.

Our tens of thousands of alumni do it through their career achievements, leadership in key organizations in the private, public and non-profit sectors, and their countless hours of volunteer work in their own communities.

Our students do it through their remarkable ability to balance the rigors of our curricula with deep commitments to engage the world and bring about positive change, a characteristic of AU students in which we take great pride.

Our staff do it through tireless efforts on behalf of our students and faculty, our alumni and friends, and through the contributions they make to their professional associations and in the towns and cities from where they come.

I know this is not the time to present an elaborate plan for this institution's future, but such a plan must be developed, and when it is, it will be with the full participation of every constituency on this campus.

But I can say today that American University is a strong, influential, and confident institution. We are proud of our past, we are proud of what we are today, but restless and aware that we have not yet reached the full measure of our potential.

As we move forward, we will be true to our mission. We will be an integral part of the City of Washington and it will benefit from our deep involvement, as we benefit from our home.

We will be a presence on the national stage, providing ideas, insights, and leaders to influence how America develops and now shares its strength with the world.

We will continue to function as a premier, global university, bringing the world to AU and bringing AU to the world.

We will maintain our rightful place among the nation's leading institutions of higher education and observe together with pleasure as our stature and reputation grows to meet our performance.

Forty years ago, Ann and I were preparing to leave our homes—she in Indianapolis and me in Waterbury, Connecticut—to embark on a journey that would bring us together for a lifetime, with each other and with AU. It has been a great trip. For my part, I pledge my best effort in leading this university in the next exciting stage of a very, very bright future.

Thank you.