



REMARKS ON THE INSTALLATION OF JEREMY HAEFNER AS CHANCELLOR

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You know, inaugurations provide a unique opportunity to look at shared history, to reflect on foundation building that brought you to this moment in your organizational journey, and to gaze, with optimism, and indeed, with hope, into the future with a new leader. I can't think of a better leader to reflect and project with than your 19th Chancellor, Dr. Jeremy Haefner.

I've known Chancellor Haefner for over ten years, serving with him at Rochester Institute of Technology. I saw him lead courageously, with integrity, humility, respect, and a profound optimism for our institution, region, nation, and the world during our time together. It was because of the faculty, staff, and students who were making transformative contributions daily. He embodies those same characteristics today, as his gratitude for this leadership opportunity and his belief in and commitment to the DU and the local community knows no end. But most important to me is Chancellor Haefner's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The University of Denver's Vision statement says that "In all we do, we strive for excellence, innovation, engagement, integrity, and inclusiveness." I can only imagine that reading your vision statement aloud was music to Chancellor Haefner's ears because he recognizes that differences, in and of themselves, fuel creative energy and insight. They are the points of tension that spark alternative viewpoints and ideas and ignite the kindling forces behind creativity and innovation (they allow for this bantering of intellectual insights if you will). They are the reference points for probing the meaning behind beliefs and core values and refining our understanding of who we are in the world.

He understands that differences are intrinsically valuable to individual development and growth, and diversity, which simply stated is the various mix or combinations of human differences, is essential to growth and synergy in any organization—bar none. Thus, people and their differences make up the foundation of the University of Denver's ability to develop broad perspectives and approaches to dealing with business and academic opportunities in new and creative ways. He feels deeply that the goal for inclusion should be to create an environment in which all people are treated as irreplaceable assets, because the most productive environments are the ones in which the different perspectives, talents, and abilities are allowed and enabled to interact to create an enhanced result.

So, to the University of Denver community, Chancellor Haefner possesses the action that matches the rhetoric of your powerful vision statement. He knows that creating a culture of inclusion is not an optional exercise but rather an indispensable precondition that enables you to capitalize on your diverse skills, perspectives, and experiences so that you can better advance the fundamental teaching, research, and educational mission of DU, and that to maintain this fine University's unrelenting standards of excellence, all members of your community must contribute at the apex of their abilities, because a productively diverse community at DU will make you better at what you do: broader and more profound as thinkers, more effective as collaborators, more creative as faculty, staff, and students and more understanding as colleagues and friends.



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Your present and future are bright, and the captain of your academic ship will continue charting you on a course that combines your diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts with your organizational pursuits of excellence to reach your ultimate shore of inclusive excellence! He'll stay the course as he partners with Dr. Christopher Whitt on this important DEI journey. I anticipate smooth sailing, calm waters, and the destination will be worth it. Still, Chancellor Haefner will move thoughtfully, intentionally, and expeditiously, so buckle up, be sure to stay on the ship, and enjoy the ride. Above all, remember that it's often the journey that teaches you a lot about your desired destination. Thank you.