



Ceremony and Vision

Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin is installed as leader of the University of Missouri. ✨ Story by Mark Barna

CHANCELLOR INAUGURATION

Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin was inaugurated as the 22nd chief executive officer of the University of Missouri in stellar fashion Sept. 18, 2014, at the Missouri Theatre. Loftin joined MU Feb. 1, 2014, after retiring as president of Texas A&M the prior year.

The afternoon installation ceremony included a procession of 324 MU faculty and delegates representing colleges and schools from across the nation, an aria performed by two students, the premiere of a wooden ceremonial mace, and Bowen and Karin Loftin waving to well-wishers from a black show wagon pulled by the Missouri Mule Team, Tim and Terry.

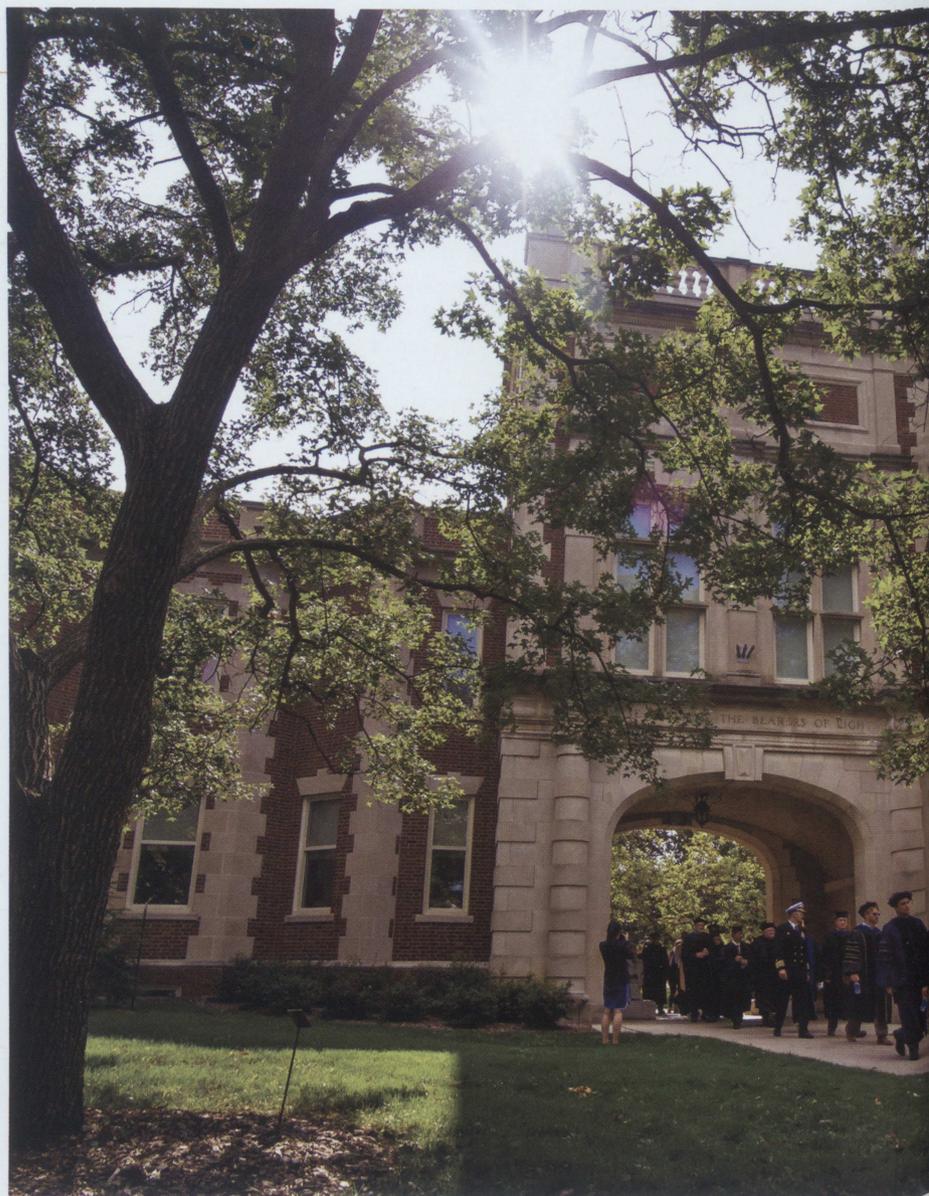
The installation was part of a week of events celebrating MU's 175th anniversary. Pulitzer Prize-winning author Jon Meacham kicked things off with a lecture on Thomas Jefferson and higher learning, and throughout the week, symposia on topics such as the merits of a liberal arts education were held. Friday evening was a light show that used the Columns on Francis Quadrangle as its canvas to depict the fiery end of Academic Hall and its aftermath.

Yet the defining moment, the one that summed up and underscored the week's aspirations, was Loftin's installation speech. In academic regalia and wearing the Jefferson medallion, Loftin spoke of his upbringing in a pinprick Texas town, of being a first-generation college student, his reliance on academic scholarships and his 40 years in higher education. He praised MU's rise in scholarship offerings and first-generation students but also challenged the campus community to think about a long-term vision commensurate with the greatness he sees at the institution.

"I am perfectly confident that Mizzou will become, in 25 years and beyond, the standard," Loftin said. "We will be the one that institutions seek to be like."

The Installation

The event began with a midafternoon procession under a patchy blue sky. Loftin, delegates and faculty wearing academic robes marched almost single file from the Reynolds Alumni Center to the Missouri Theatre, crossing Francis Quadrangle in front of the Columns. A mild breeze curled the edges of a huge black-and-gold



anniversary banner strung from the north porch of Jesse Hall.

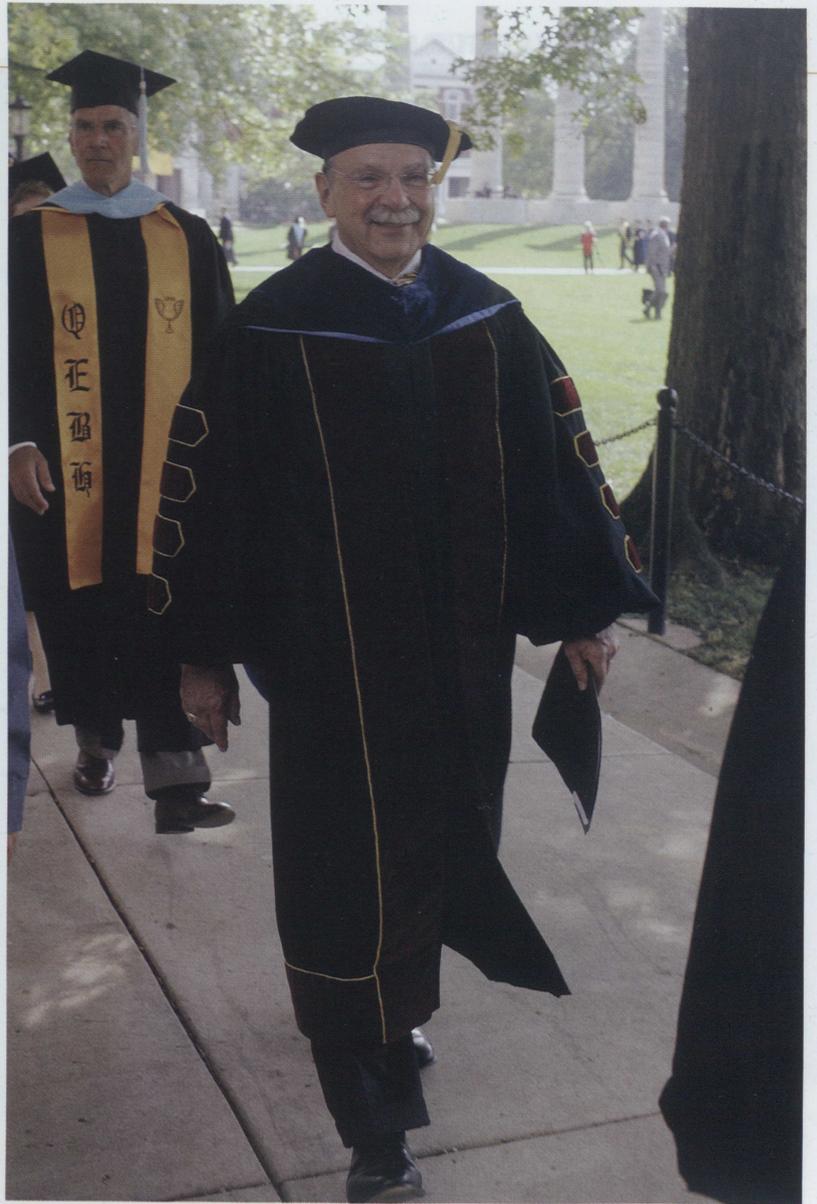
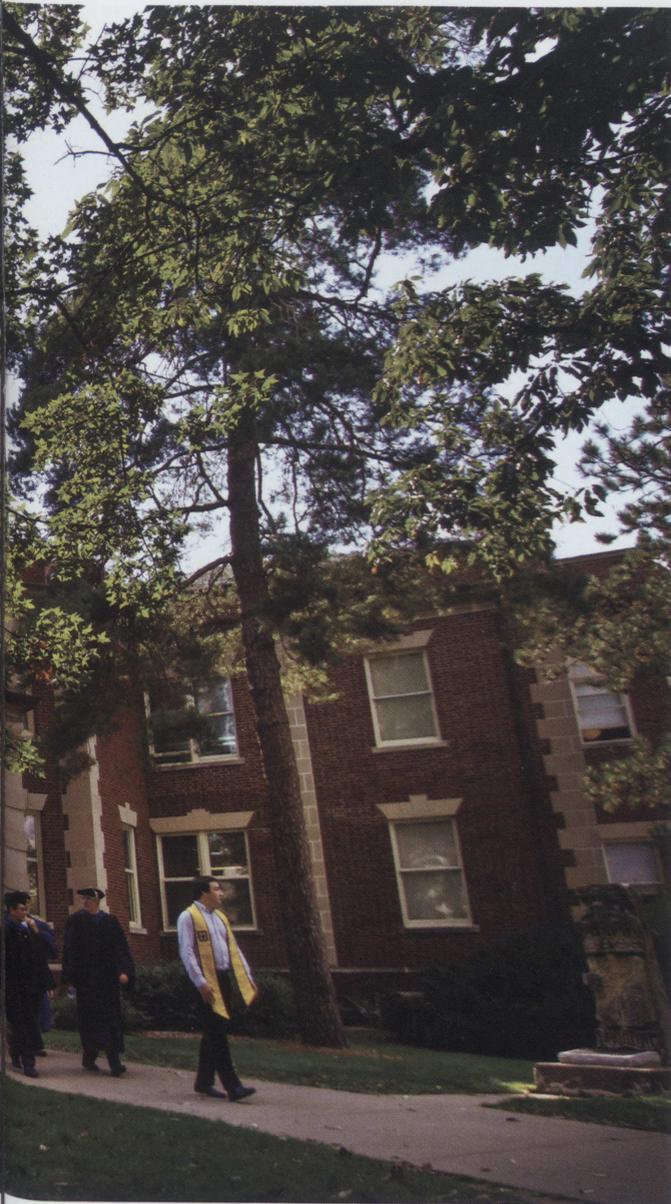
Interim Provost Ken Dean led the group carrying a mace, a ceremonial staff used in formal academic events since the Middle Ages. MU's mace was created this year by campus employees and students and funded by the Mizzou Alumni Association.

About 50 delegates represented institutions that are, like MU, members of the Association of American Universities. Among the schools represented were Harvard, Princeton, Vanderbilt and Brandeis. The procession arrived at the Missouri Theatre to join an audience of elected officials, directors of academic associations, embassy representatives, One Mizzou Campaign Cabinet members, Jefferson Club trustees, and MU students and employees.

Two School of Music students performed "Shannon's Aria" from the *Corps of Discovery*, an opera co-commissioned by MU that premiered

← Previous spread: Interim Provost Ken Dean, carrying the mace, leads the procession. Immediately behind him are Tim Wolfe, University of Missouri System president, and Don Downing, UM Board of Curators chair.

↑ Top, clockwise: The procession started at the Reynolds Alumni Center, crossed Francis Quadrangle and culminated at the Missouri Theatre. • For R. Bowen Loftin, it was his third installation in 10 years. • Loftin shares a laugh with son Ben in the mule wagon. • From left are John Murray, senior director of auxiliary and service operations and a contributor to the mace's creation; W. Dudley McCarter, JD '75, Mizzou Alumni Association president; and Todd McCubbin, M Ed '95, association executive director.



LOFTIN: ROB HILL; LOFTIN & SON: LIZZ CARDWELL; MACE: ROB HILL



† Singer Brandon Browning, BS Ed '12, and pianist Jenna Braaksma, MM '14, both School of Music graduate students, performed at the installation ceremony.

→ The Columns on Francis Quadrangle were the canvas for a light show that concluded a weeklong 175-year anniversary celebration.

in 2003. Professor Emeritus John Cheetham wrote a composition for the event that was played by the Mizzou Wind Ensemble Brass.

During remarks, Tim Wolfe, BS BA '80, president of the University of Missouri System, alluded to the challenges MU has faced since Loftin's arrival, such as Title IX issues. Through it all, Loftin has shown "careful composure" and "stellar guidance," Wolfe said. Then, he and Don Downing, BS BA '79, JD '82, chair of the University of Missouri Board of Curators, presented Loftin with the Jefferson medallion, first given to Chancellor Emeritus Brady J. Deaton in 2004 to be worn at commencement ceremonies and other formal occasions.

"I hereby vest in you the power and obligations of the office that is signified with the Jefferson medallion that we now place around your neck," Wolfe said.

The Vision

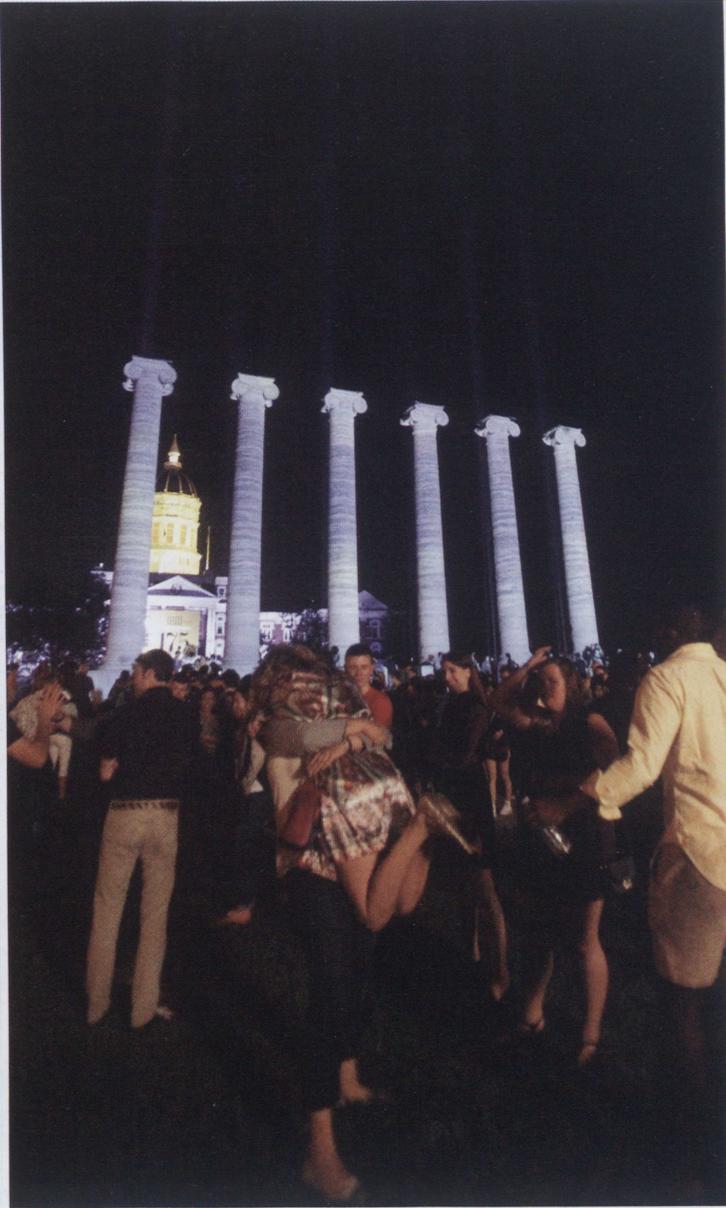
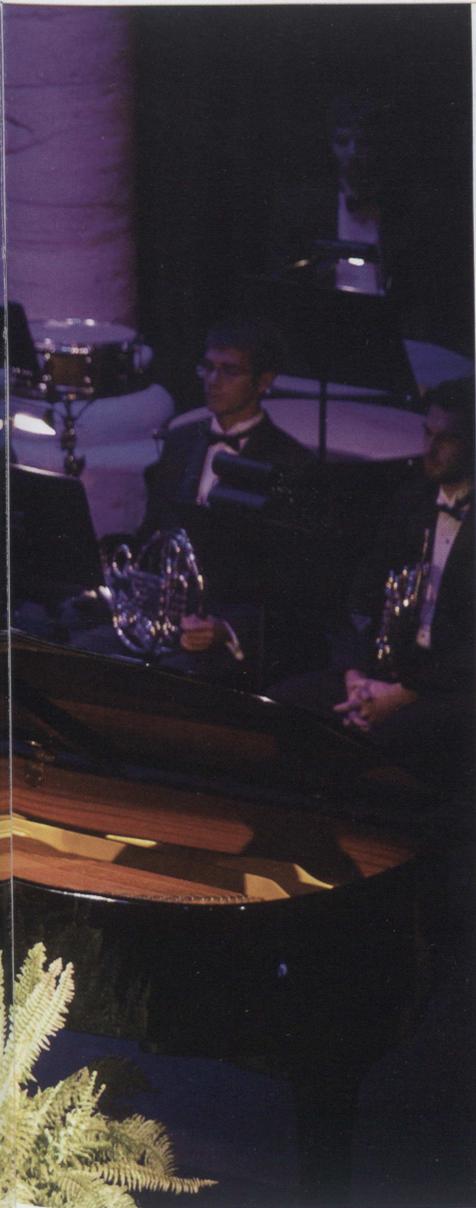
The installation was Loftin's third. His first was in 2005 as chief executive officer of Texas A&M's branch campus in Galveston. In 2010, he was installed as A&M president after serving as interim president since June 15, 2009.

Installation ceremonies have been held at colleges and universities for hundreds of years. They are a public announcement that a university has a new leader and at their best send a message to the broader world about the institution's history, successes and vision. Loftin spoke of all three in his address, "Looking Forward to 200."

The chancellor praised MU's enrollment of first-generation students and pointed out that 25 percent of the 2014 freshman class is first-generation. He was proud of the fall semester's 35,441 students, the most in MU's history, for their hard work and pursuit of MU's core values of responsibility, re-



Watch a video documenting the making of Mizzou's ceremonial mace funded by the Mizzou Alumni Association. mizzoumagazine.com/winter2015



The Making of a Mace

Ceremonial maces in higher education go back to the Middle Ages. A bearer carries one during processions at graduation ceremonies and other formal events.

Most higher education institutions own one. For 174 years, the University of Missouri did not.

This year, MU employees and students crafted a mace that made its premiere at Chancellor Loftin's Sept. 18, 2014, inauguration. The mace combines the old and the new. Its wood is from a beam from Switzer Hall, the oldest academic building on campus. Its four brass medallions and cap, representing the Jesse Hall dome and spire, were produced using computer technology and a 3-D printer, courtesy of the College of Engineering. Etched on the medallions are MU's academic seal and representations of Thomas Jefferson, the Columns and the Memorial Union tower. The Mizzou Alumni Association funded the mace's creation.

"Maces are symbolic of the institution they represent," Loftin says. "And now we have one which will last hundreds of years."



spect, discovery and excellence.

"We owe it to our students to make sure that they are put first," Loftin said. "It's all about the students."

He spoke of MU's cutting-edge research and how the university has become a \$2.1 billion globally competitive higher education institution. But he also said that too often the university emulates other public institutions in the Association of American Universities. MU needs to forge its own path, Loftin said. "Let us band together and define the future we want."

In an interview later in his office, he expanded on the idea. "Why do we want to say these [institutions] are aspirant peers, that we want to be like them? Why not turn it around?" he said. "I want Mizzou to stand tall and be an institution that others look to for guidance and leadership."

At the end of his address, Loftin announced he

was creating a steering committee of faculty, staff, students, alumni and retirees to imagine what the university could and should be on its 200th birthday in 2039. Each representative would lead a group of peers. For example, the student body president would lead and ask for input from undergraduate students. The chancellor asked for a report by April 2015 to be submitted to the UM Board of Curators.

"It is you who will play a role in creating the future that we can define today," Loftin told the audience.

After the ceremony, Bowen and Karin Loftin, son Ben and Karin's brother, Gary Cibula, boarded the College of Veterinary Medicine's Mule Team wagon for a ride to Memorial Union's Stotler Lounge for a reception. The four riders exchanged smiles and waves with passers-by along the winding route. **M**