

## Duke University president: Diversity forces new view of problems

By Emery P. Dalesio  
Associated Press

(AP) - As questions about the Trump administration's direction on race and college admissions swirled this week, the new president of Duke University said his tenure would seek to expand diversity at the elite private campus while preserving fairness.

Diversity of views and knowledge is fundamental to higher education's task of pushing the limits of research and training problem-solvers, Vince Price said in an interview a month after starting his job July 1.

Price, 60, won awards as a political science and communications professor before becoming the University of Pennsylvania's chief academic officer. He was selected from that Ivy League post late last year to take over Duke University, which like Penn is located in a city that is

more than 40 percent black and has a growing teaching presence in China.

One of Price's first messages upon arriving in Durham was that he would work to make Duke a model for diversity in higher education.

"I see no disjunction between our quest for diversity and our fundamental commitment to fairness in the way we manage all aspects of the university," Price said recently. "I mean diversity in a deep way. That is to say, we are about open inquiry. That's what universities are about. And the only way to produce high-quality, open inquiry is to go out and seek out difference and bring different points of view, different perspectives together, so they can be brought to bear on challenging problems."

Price spoke after The New York Times reported the U.S. Justice Department was seeking internally for attorneys interested in race-based discrimination in college and university admissions. The department later said it had no broad plans to investigate whether university admission programs discriminate against students based on race, but was focused on an administrative complaint by Asian-American associations against Harvard University.

Recent years have seen America's elite private colleges, many of which have drawn criticism over race-conscious admission policies, become increasingly diverse.

Minority students made up more than 40 percent of the freshman classes at nearly all Ivy League schools in 2015, according to the most recent federal data, while only two topped that mark in 2010.

Duke's 6,600 undergraduates last fall were 41 percent minorities and 46 percent white, according to National Center for Education Statistics data. Racial data on Duke graduate programs training more than 9,000 physicians, lawyers, business executives and others were not included in the federal data.

Diversity is "not a one-and-done. You don't say, we're going to be diverse in five years and check it off your list. It's an ongoing commitment we make as institutions of higher learning," Price said.

Price's academic specialty includes the effects of political polls and TV news coverage on helping shape public opinion. He became a university president the same month a Pew Research Center poll last month found that nearly six out of 10 Republicans and Republican-leaning independents believe colleges have a negative effect on the U.S. Two years ago, a Pew poll found that a majority of the same people believed colleges had a positive impact.

Price believes the poll reflects an abstraction of universities "that bears little resemblance perhaps to what's actually going on on college campuses today" similar to poll findings that Americans hate Congress as a whole but tend to approve of their specific representatives.

"I think the challenge is to help make people aware of what goes on, every day, on a great college campus like Duke. The kinds of discoveries we make. We advance those discoveries, commercialize those discoveries," he said. "We could do a better job of telling those stories."



Demonstrators took the statue of a Confederate soldier in front of the old Durham County Courthouse. The base of what is left.

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