

Higher standards are installation theme



Photo by Bob Price
Provost Ruth Leventhal

By Tony Perry

Our survival as a nation "clearly depends on the kind of education our citizens receive," according to the keynote speaker at the installation ceremonies for Capitol Campus' new provost last week.

Donna E. Shalala, president of the City University of New York's Hunter College, called for a "fundamental change in philosophy" in higher education during ceremonies in which Ruth

Leventhal, former dean of the School of Health Sciences at Hunter College, was officially installed as provost of the campus.

In her challenge to higher education's leaders, Shalala called for:

- An increased effort to retain talented science students in academe to provide state of the art research and development here instead of within private industry.
- An elimination of sexism and racism in higher education.

"It's time higher education got its own house in order," she said.

- An increased support of "dissent and debate" in the classroom. Shalala welcomed the "change from ivory towers to marketplace for ideas."

"The great social movements for civil rights, for women and for peace grew upon our campuses," she said, and indicated that she believes the issue of the nuclear arms race has been too slow in becoming a

dominant issue on college campuses.

"There is an unfinished agenda between now and the end of the century," she said. "We must be vigorous, tough-minded, humane and caring," in striving for perfection, she added.

"We will need new leaders and you have one in Ruth Leventhal."

The September 11 ceremonies, which were housed in a large green and yellow tent on the campus' main lawn, also featured remarks of good will from Student Government Association President Peter Mekosh, Board of Trustees President Walter Conti, Board of Advisors Chair John O. Hershey, Secretary of the Commonwealth William Davis, Faculty Council President John Wade, Campus Alumni Association Darlene Crawford and Donald Rentschler, Executive Assistant to the Commissioner for Higher Education for the state Department of Education.

The overall tone of the evening ceremonies was tinged with a note of excitement in the voices of the speakers for the "new beginning" of Capitol Campus' growth in the community. Shalala said Leventhal was "one of the bright young and fearless leaders in this country," and said the campus was "lucky to get her."

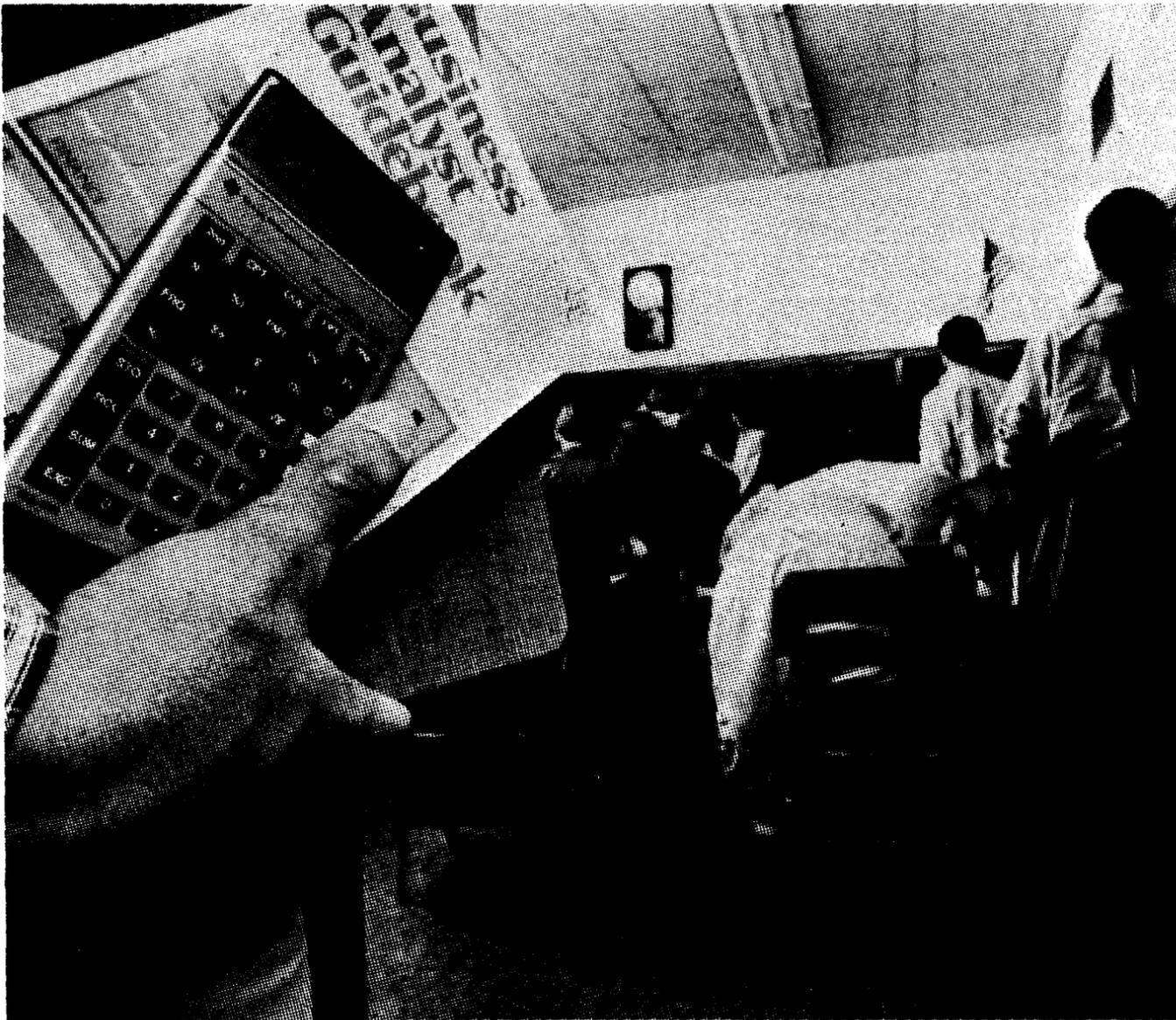
Conti said Penn State University President Bryce Jordan best portrayed the administration's attitude toward Leventhal when Jordan phoned him with news of the appointment.

"He's a pretty cool cat," Conti said, "but there was a twinge of excitement in his voice."

Mekosh said he was "anticipating an exciting future for the college," and said he perceived Leventhal as being very supportive of Capitol's students.

Leventhal accepted a medallion from Jordan as a symbol of her appointment and said she will strive to make Capitol Campus "a resource of value and pride for every one in central Pennsylvania."

Adding that the campus is "particularly well-suited" for recruiting minority students, she added that the university is in full support of the future plans for Capitol Campus.



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