

Grand Master's Inaugural Address
The Honorable Phillip David
Most Worshipful Grand Master
Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of the
District of Columbia
January 7, 2017

Most Worshipful Grand Master (MWGM) Phillip David was born in Queens New York to the late James David, Sr. and Florence David. The youngest of four children, James, Cheryl, and Randolph, he attended Public School (PS) 169, Intermediate School (IS) 25, and Bayside High School. Upon graduating from high school he enrolled in Morgan State University in Baltimore, MD where after four years of hard work and dedication he was awarded a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration in 1987. While matriculating at Morgan he belonged to many groups and organizations and was fortunate and honored to pledge Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated, Alpha Iota Chapter. He was later elected Vice-Polemarch of the Chapter where he was responsible for the day-to-day operations.

Following college he started his career at the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) where he immediately excelled in computer engineering. After a few years at the Agency, he decided to attend graduate school part-time, eventually earning a Master's of Business Administration (MBA) from the University of the District of Columbia in 1995.

After leaving the CIA, MWGM David worked for a few companies but settled on employment as a contractor for the Government working for the Vencore Corporation as a Senior Systems Engineer, assisting the Government in the development of complex systems that are used to fight terrorists around the world.

Grand Master David is a member of Prudence Lodge No.27 where he was initiated, passed, and raised in July 1990. After many years of hard work, in 2000 he was elected Worshipful Master and served with some distinguished brothers like the late Melvin Pinkney (3) and the late Stacy C.B. Taylor (23). One year after serving as Worshipful Master, and two years serving as a member of the Grand Lodge, Grand Master David was appointed to the Grand Lodge moving line by the 78th MWGM Aaron R. Jordan where he has served since December 2002 sitting in every line seat from Worshipful Junior Grand Steward to now Most Worshipful Grand Master.

Grand Master David is a financial member of all houses in the District of Columbia to include Holy Royal Arch, Royal and Select Master, Knights Templar, Ancient Egyptian Arabic Order Nobles of the Mystic Shrine (AEAONMS), and Sovereign Grand Inspector General (SGIG) for the United Supreme Council Southern Jurisdiction.

Grand Master David is a member of Mount Olivet Lutheran Church in Washington, DC and has been married to the former Rosalie Montgomery for the last 18 years. Rosalie and Grand Master David are the proud parents of Amber David – 16 and Ashley David – 12. They reside in Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

Introduction:

Darkness cannot drive out Darkness only Light can do that

Hate cannot drive out Hate, only Love can do that.

To: The Very Effective Master of Ceremonies, Antwane V. Johnson

Right Worshipful Deputy Grand Master Quincy G. Gant

Most Worshipful Grand Masters

Right Worshipful and Worshipful Brethren

Worshipful Masters, Past Masters, and Wardens

Brethren of the Warranted Lodges

Grand Worthy Matron, Patricia L. Young

Grand Worthy Patron, Ricardo A. Montague

Past Grand Worthy Matrons and Patrons

Grand Chapter Officers, Past and Present

Worthy Matron and Patrons

Members of the Subordinate Chapters

Heads of Allied, Appendant, Concordant, and Special Bodies

Morgan State University Alumni, Friends, and Officials

University of the District of Columbia, Friends, and Officials

Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Officials

Brothers and Sisters of the Divine Nine

Visitors, Family, and Friends,

Good Morning.

It is customary in this ancient and honorable institution that we always invoke the aid of Deity before any great or important undertaking, let us pray.

Lord let me first thank you for the many blessings you have bestowed on me over my lifetime. I thank you for watching over me in my time of need, want, and desire. Thank

you for taking care of my family during this long journey to the Grand East and allowing me to reach the mountain top of this jurisdiction. Continue to bless me especially over this next year and grant me the wisdom, insight, foresight, and more importantly, the perseverance to do an outstanding job for this Jurisdiction. When times become hard and decisions will be tough, please direct me in the right way to make the correct decision for the betterment of this Jurisdiction. Continue to bless The Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge and all that meet at 1000 U Street while we take this journey to a place we have never ventured before. All these blessings I ask in your Son's name, Amen.

State of the Nation:

While we all want to believe that all police officers are good and there are no bad officers in the bunch, statistics tend to contradict those claims. Last year alone police officers killed at least 102 unarmed black people, nearly twice as many as white people. Nearly 1 in 3 of those blacks killed were identified as unarmed, although the actual number is likely higher due to underreporting. 37% of unarmed people killed by police were black in 2015 despite blacks consisting of only 13% of the U.S. population. Only 10 of the 102 cases in 2015 where an unarmed black person was killed by police resulted in an officer being charged with a crime, and only 2 of these deaths (Matthew Alidade and Eric Harris) resulted in convictions of officers involved. These numbers are appalling.

In 2016 the numbers are even more alarming. Police officers killed at least 136 black people according to a project by the Guardian Newspaper that tracks police killings in America. If you recall Philando Castile, he was the 123rd black person to be shot by police in 2016, based on a tally from the Washington Post. Castile was shot and killed in the St. Paul Minnesota suburb of Falcon Heights. A graphic video his girlfriend filmed using Facebook live shows Castile bleeding from gunshot wounds. The officer "shot him three times because we had a busted tail light," Castile's girlfriend can be heard saying. A day before Castile was killed, Alton Sterling, a 37-year-old father of five, became another victim killed by police this year. From Keith Scott (Charlotte), Gregory Frazier (Florida), and Devaris Rogers (Atlanta), what does this tell us as a community? We must protect ourselves and follow the command of officers when confronted. In addition to following the direction of the authorities, we must continue to vote nationally but more importantly vote at all levels of Government to elect those that have our best interest at heart. Politicians at the local level have just as much influence over our lives as those at the national level.

In approximately 13 days we will inaugurate the next President of the United States, Donald J. Trump leaving behind the legacy of the 44th President of the United States Barack Husain Obama. President Elect Trump constantly alienated many ethnic groups and women while on the campaign trail but still won the election. I'm not sure what that says about America, but if we as a nation do not come together as one, we will be doomed and regarded in history as the generation that just could not get it right. With what appears to be the apparent disregard for many in the minority community, we must continue to fight bigotry and hatred when confronted and not let a handful of individuals divide us. I will continue to pray for our nation and hope everyone under the sound of my voice will do the same.

Ritualistic Transformation:

The Jurisdiction of the District of Columbia is widely looked upon as the leader in the Prince Hall Sodality. With that honor comes much responsibility in ritualistic work and community outreach. For many years I have seen some decline in the ritualistic excellence of the male York Rite body, but now the time has come to change. To move in a different direction, I have established a **ritualistic representative** for each male York Rite body. It will be that Brother's responsibility to monitor their assigned York Rite body and personally report back to the Grand Lecturer on their progress. They will monitor degree work, finances, and prepare them for public church services, such as Divine Services. We must ensure that their work is proficient and their leaders run their organization proficiently. I have selected Frederick Joyner (Royal Arch Mason), Carlton Richmond (Knights Templar), and Calvin Holloway (Royal and Select Master) to serve in these roles.

At the Lodge level, the Grand Lecturer Steven McKenzie will train, monitor, and test all lecturers before assigning them to a Lodge. Before taking office, all Worshipful Masters (WM), Senior Warden (SW), and Junior Wardens (JW) must prove proficiency in the opening, closing, degrees, balloting, and most importantly their funeral work because the last sad rites are sacred and honorable and must be done in impeccable manner with no exceptions. If Lodges are unable to show proficiency in all their work, they will sit another year until they get it right. In addition, the Grand Lecturer has created a **certificate program** for those Worshipful Masters who show proficiency in the Opening, Closing, funeral, balloting, and lowering. Grand Lecturer McKenzie will also work on a **training manual**, with the help of the Leadership Academy, which will assist the SW, JW, Senior Deacon (SD), and Junior Deacon (JD) with their duties. The Grand Lodge School of Instruction (GLSOI) will reinforce those lessons taught in the Leadership Academy to include Protocol, Investigations, and other important topics. Unfortunately, there are many that will not attend the Leadership Academy but must be trained in order to be a future leader in this illustrious Jurisdiction.

Inspection Redirection:

As a follow-up to the Grand Lecturers, the Grand Inspectors, led by Grand Inspector Larry Hughes, will redirect their resources to work as a more cohesive unit in the Grand Lodge. To that end, the Inspectors will **develop a handbook** which will include updated guidelines and procedures and ensure they are proficient in the discharge of their duties. They will **develop a hands-on seminar** and simulation of Lodge opening, closing, balloting, and other degree work which will afford the inspectors the opportunity to observe and then the correct the way that task will and must be executed. Lastly, the Inspectors will develop an **Inspector's workshop**. This workshop will include inside and outside speakers with advanced knowledge in the roles and responsibilities of inspection and to discuss Masonic education topics, policies, and procedures.

Community Affirmation:

Working for Progress. Working in the Community is my slogan. Community Service is the cornerstone of what we as Masons do in and for the community. In 2017, the Grand lodge will expand the current programs like the Masonic Classic and Senior Luncheon and develop

new and innovative programs that can and will sustain us in the future. We will start with the Masonic Classic led by Thomas Coleman. The team will increase **scholarship donations to 15K**, create an **endowment** to be used for future scholarship recipients, and become more visible to the Howard University community. The team will work to get more faculty, students, and the community involved in attending the Masonic Classic and bring more awareness to what the Jurisdiction has done over the last five years of hosting the Masonic Classic at Howard University.

Under the direction of Willie Bennett, the Community Service team will enhance our involvement and presence in the public. The team will establish some clear guidelines for the entire Jurisdiction to follow and enhance the ability for local organizations to work better together to serve the community. One of the major projects the unit will support is the District of Columbia's **Emancipation Proclamation Day Parade**. This parade will enhance our visibility in the city and community and better identify the Jurisdiction now and for future endeavors. We will lend support to the **Central Union Mission Men's Shelter**. We will participate in the daily operations of the facility and look at ways to expand our support to this worthwhile operation. We will also continue to help restore the **Woodlawn Cemetery**. This cemetery, which sits on 22.5 acres, contains the graves of more than 36,000 African Americans and sits off Benning Road & C. Street, S.E. Because the cemetery is not Government owned, the city has not maintained the location like other cemeteries. This National landmark which is the final resting place for many of our ancestors must be restored before it is too late. We will work with the authorities to restore this national landmark and bring pride back to those families that drive past the cemetery each day. Some notables that are buried there include:

- ❑ John Mercer Langston – first black lawyer in Ohio who organized the law department at Howard University and first black to represent VA in the US House of Representatives
- ❑ John Willis Menard - first black to serve in the US Congress in 1868
- ❑ Blanche K. Bruce – born a slave and became the second black man elected to the US Senate and first to serve a full term

Other community service projects we will continue in 2017 include the **Seniors Luncheon** led by RWJGW Glenn N. Ruffin. We will expand this program to include **Ward 8**. We will continue the **Prostate Cancer** walk led by Brother Stephen Jefferson, **blood drive** also led by Stephen Jefferson with assistance from the 83rd Most Worshipful Past Grand Master John T. Doles, Sr, We will continue the Jurisdictional **Scholarship program**, led by Worshipful Junior Grand Deacon Marshall Cupe, with the goal is to contribute in excess of 100K.

Healthy Living:

The African American community has been under attack and underserved health-wise. Heart disease is the leading cause of death for African Americans. Among non-Hispanic blacks age 20 and older, 46% suffer from cardiovascular disease. African American men are 30% more likely to die from heart disease than non-Hispanic white males, with diabetes and hypertension being major contributors. 3.7 million (14.7%) of all African Americans, aged 20 years or older, have diabetes and Blacks are 1.5 times more likely to contract diabetes than Whites and 43% of African American women, 39% of African American men, suffer from hypertension according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). African Americans have the highest rate of obesity, 51% higher as compared to whites. When we speak of alcoholism, a disease that impacted my household when growing to adulthood, the statistics are even more alarming. Of the 3.9 million Americans who received treatment for a substance abuse problem in 2005, 2.5 million of them were treated for **alcohol** use. (Drug Free World) In 2013, 24.6 percent of people aged 18 or older reported that they engaged in binge drinking in the past month. Below are a few disturbing statistics on drinking alcohol:

- 88,000 deaths are annually attributed to excessive alcohol use. (CDC)
- Every day, almost 30 people in the United States die in motor vehicle crashes that involve an alcohol-impaired driver. This amounts to one death every 51 minutes. (CDC)
- Long-term alcohol use can cause serious health complications affecting every organ in your body, including your brain. Additionally, it can damage your emotional stability, finances, and career; impact your family, friends and the people you work with. (NCAAD) National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence.
- 100,000 persons die each year from alcohol-related causes: drinking and driving crashes, other accidents, falls, fires, alcohol-related homicides and suicides. (NCAAD)
- Excessive alcohol consumption increases aggression and, as a result, can increase the risk of physically assaulting another person. (CDC)
- Approximately 17 percent of men and 8 percent of women will be dependent on alcohol in their lifetimes. (NIAAA)
- Because of the astounding 80,000 deaths that are related to alcohol abuse every year, alcohol abuse is the third highest cause of death in the U.S. (CDC)
- 696,000 students between the ages of 18 and 24 are assaulted by another student who has been drinking. (NIAAA)

- Approximately 7,000 children in the U.S. under the age of 16 take their first drink every day, which is a major problem because those who begin drinking before age 15 are four times more likely to develop alcoholism than those who begin at age 21. ([Rehabs.com](#))
- Excessive alcohol consumption cost the United States \$223.5 billion in 2006. This amounts to about \$1.90 per drink, or about \$746 per person. ([CDC](#))
- Alcoholism includes the following four symptoms: craving, loss of control, physical dependence, and tolerance. ([NCADD](#))
- Teen alcohol use kills 4,700 people each year — that's more than all illegal drugs combined. ([MADD](#))
- 5.3 million Adults -- 36 percent of those under correctional supervision at the time -- were drinking at the time of their conviction offense. ([NCADD](#))

After looking at the above statistics, these are all *Barriers to a Healthy Lifestyle*.

In 45 states across the country, insurance companies continue to discriminate against people based on their pre-existing conditions when they try to purchase health insurance directly from insurance companies. A recent national survey estimated that 12.6 million non-elderly adults, 36% of those who tried to purchase health insurance directly from an insurance company in the individual insurance market - were discriminated against because of a pre-existing condition in the previous three years. One in 10 people with cancer said they could not obtain health coverage, and six percent said they lost their coverage because of being diagnosed with the disease. Armed with these statistics, the Grand Lodge team will develop a symposium titled **Healthy Living**. The symposium, developed by the Health and Wellness team led by Stephen Jefferson, will not only focus on alcoholism and drug abuse, my initial plan; but more importantly how we as African Americans live and how we must change our eating habits; otherwise, we will not be around to see our children and grandchildren grow to adulthood. Thank God for the Affordable Care Act aka, Obama Care, that has helped so many people become insured. The symposium is scheduled for the Center of Performing Arts later in the year.

Temple Basement / Business Group:

The **Temple Basement** and **Business Group** committees were started under 84th Most Worshipful Grand Master, Norman L. Campbell. I will continue to work with the Basement committee and commercial realtor to ensure a tenant is secured for the basement. To date the team has vetted and recommended Cher L. Castillo Freeman, Principal Broker for Remax Sky to handle the leasing of the basement space. I personally will work with the Prince Hall Eastern

Star Charitable Foundation to oversee this project to ensure that by the completion of my Administration the basement is rented, generating necessary income for this Jurisdiction.

The business group, led by Olandan Davenport, will also work in this administration. The goal of the group is to identify, select, and work with business owners within the Jurisdiction to help generate additional income for each business. The plan is to increase membership to at least 25 businesses, complete 75 transactions by the end of 2018, and contribute at least 30K to the MWPHGL and this Jurisdiction.

Youth Empowerment:

The Order of the Knights of Pythagoras and the Phyllis S. Byrd Youth Fraternity are our future, so we must treat our youth as such. We will continue to support our youth and identify areas where they can become more involved in the community. The team will continue to refine their goals and promote their mission, while identifying what our youth should be involved in. More importantly, I will re-establish the **State Board of Regents** under the direction of Junior Grand Deacon Marshall Cupe. As previous Chairman of the board, I will work with the new chairman and director Arnold Hudson to better direct our youth and provide them with the tools they need to become better men, productive citizens, responsible, respectful, and one day Master Masons. Some activities they will participate in include:

- All Day School of instruction to focus on academics, communications skills, community service, and spiritual excellence;
- Parent Appreciation Reception;
- Gravesite visit of our Founding Fathers;
- Visit other Jurisdictions;

In addition to the above activities, the Master Mason (Sir Knights) will also hold **workshops** that will focus on activities like conflict resolution, anti-bullying, mentoring, and other life-long topics.

Orator Speaks:

The Grand Orator team has been an integral part of this Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge. To that end, led by James Bridges, the team will work to increase their presence in the Jurisdiction and return to the team of the past. The team will hold **quarterly public speaking symposiums**. The symposiums will educate members of the Craft and objectively increase the brother's ability to express his thoughts and ideas through multiple speaking opportunities. They will all serve as a means to allow brothers, and eventually sisters, to practice speaking in front of a diverse audience. The hope is the symposiums will run as a **series of lecturers or presentations** and eventually fall under the Leadership Academy.

Auditor Excellence:

The Grand Auditor's team will work to increase their involvement with Lodge Secretaries and Treasurers. They will develop a business automation initiative in the form of a **workshop** which will provide and define **standard operating procedures** for those Secretaries and Treasurers of the Warranted Lodges. The standard operating procedure will enhance Lodge business functionality and performance by establishing a set of standard repeatable processes that all Lodge fiscal officers can perform and operate by.

Veteran Affairs:

We will continue to acknowledge, pray for, and support our troops here and abroad. It is now time to stop talking and doing more to support our troops. The **Veteran Affairs** team will be under the leadership of Richard Chandler, who will design a veterans program. They will Focus Activities & Collaborate (**FAC**). They will focus their attention on the needs of veterans, increase their **Activities** across the Jurisdiction, and **Collaborate** with internal and external veteran's organizations that will benefit veterans. They will start by:

- Identifying each veteran that is a member of the Jurisdiction starting with the MWPHGL;
- Implementing a database that will track each veteran by military service, military campaign supported and years of service

The team will develop long and short term goals and provide status reports to the Most Worshipful Grand Master on veteran status. They will execute around Veteran Day by

establishing the **Veteran's Day symposium** event which will assist veterans with filing out any paperwork pertaining to benefits. They will work closely with the District of Columbia Veteran Affairs Office and work with other groups that assist veterans.

Governmental Affairs:

The newly created Government Affairs team's primary focus will be to establish a strong working relationship with the district Government. This starts with sending Mayor Muriel Bowser and Council members a letter officially inviting them to many of our community activities. The plan is to reestablish our status in this city so that when events take place, this Jurisdiction is not only invited but have a seat at the table when decisions and plans are made.

This MWPHGL will become more involved with the Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC). The team will:

Reestablish our relationship with the community by attending ANC meetings, and assisting the neighborhood surrounding the Temple;

Work with Government Relations to advise the Most Worshipful Grand Master on various partnerships which will assist in improving the jurisdiction's presence in the community;

Establish mutually beneficial relationships with high profile individuals in The District of Columbia;

Identify at least two annual District Government events or high profile events to attend;

Fraternal Relations:

In an effort to continue good fraternal relations, the Jurisdiction of the District of Columbia will work with all National Prince Hall organizations to re-establish that commitment to brotherly and sisterly love. We will strengthen our relationship with the United Supreme Council of the District of Columbia and Tennessee and work with the Ancient Egyptian Arabic Noble of the Mystic Shrine to do our part to bring the family together. With the appointment of the new Deputy of the Dessert Daryl S. Dowleyne, that relationship is certainly looking up.

Retention and Attraction:

Lastly, over the years this Jurisdiction has suffered with declining membership due to demits, lack of participation, and overall jurisdictional issues. To tackle this on-going challenge, I have created a new team titled Retention and Attraction. Although we as Masons do not recruit, the team has been given clear direction to identify ways to retain brothers and develop innovative initiatives to bring in new members. This new committee will be led by newly appointed director of retention and attraction, Jeffrey Johnson.

Many thanks to those that made this day possible. They include all Most Worshipful Grand Masters who appointed me to the moving line; committee members that worked diligently over the last few months, ushers, and program participants. A special thank you to my in-laws who supported me immensely over the years when taking care of the girls, extended family, my mother Florence Richards David, and my wife Rosalie and children Amber and Ashley who supported me from day one.

In closing I would like to read a poem that I learned many years ago while pledging my fraternity that sustained me when time were good and when times were not as good:

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever Gods may be,
For my unconquerable soul.
In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.
Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.
It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.

After building the team and establishing clear goals for retention and attraction, the team will develop a strategy to collect information from the Craft to assist them in reaching their goals.

Major Goals:

- Retaining members and identify recruitment opportunities for the Jurisdiction.
- Working for Progress -- Working in the Community by reestablishing ourselves through the Healthy Living symposium, Woodlawn Cemetery, and Central Union Men's Shelter.
- Strengthening the York Rite bodies by establishing ritualistic representatives, developing training manuals, certificate programs, and seminars for the Inspector and Lecturers teams.
- Identifying and securing a tenant for the basement and fully establishing the Business Group.
- Working with the Charitable Foundation on the infrastructure of the building to include the roof replacement, cosmetic improvements, and other major systems.
- Helping our Veterans, strengthening our relationship with DC Government, working more with our youth to prepare them for adulthood, and
- Controlling finances within the Grand Lodge.

Many thanks to those that made this day possible. They include all Most Worshipful Grand Masters who appointed me to the moving line; Prudence Lodge #27 for Raising me from a dead level to a living Perpendicular; committee members that worked for the last few months, the ushers, program participants, and my wife Rosalie and kids Amber and Ashley who supported me from day one.

Lord as I stated earlier, please continue to bless The Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge and all that meet at 1000 U. Street while we take this journey to a place we have never ventured before.

Fraternally Submitted,

Honorable Phillip David

85th Most Worshipful Grand Master

Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge

District of Columbia