Thompson Calls Image 'Myth'

BY DEBBY ROMOTSKY

Howard Thompson rejected the myth of the "Rice image" in a speech last Wednesday, October 31, as part of the Autry House series on "The University and Its Work."

The director of the Rice Development Office indicated that such a concept as the "image" of the University simply does not exist. He explained that the purpose of his office was that of a service organization, working to bring the best professors to Rice and to create student harmony.

MR. THOMPSON'S office also carries out the public relations functions of the University. Its director underscored the fact that his staff for this purpose is many times smaller than that of any other similar institution.

It was this office, too, which was the liaison in completing arrangements for President Kennedy's visit, Walter Schirra's press conference, and the Rice Semicentennial events.

ONE OF THE major duties of the Development Office is as a fund-raising agency which, the speaker indicated, they carry out in "a very quiet, meek sort of way," through such organizations as the Rice University Associates, the Society of Families, and the Research Sponsors.

When questioned about the possibility of instituting tuition, he pointed out that this suggestion had been under discussion since Rice opened its doors in 1912 and had, in fact, been a topic of President Lovett's inaugural address.

MUCH OF MR. Thompson's response to questions from the floor involved the divulging of some unofficial information in regard to such topics as Forum speakers, publicity, and academic freedom.

On the subject of national magazine coverage, however, the speaker indicated that Rice has never attempted to hide anything from reporters since "the more you try to hide something, the worse it is." Unfortunately, the article about Rice which was to appear in Life Magazine was pre-empted by the death of Marilyn Monroe, but Mr. Thompson anticipates coverage by Look