



A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT ROBERT MICHAEL FRANKLIN '75

**DECEMBER 2008**

As we approach the Christmas holiday and its many wonderful stories, I reflect on the fact that the gospel writers Matthew and Luke described the first Christmas as one that contained a good deal of fear, misery, suspicion, pain and even violence. But, despite all that, a baby was born, and the world changed.

Our hope, as we pass through these difficult economic times, is that we will not linger in the mood of despair and pessimism. We have seen grim times before, and we have endured only later to thrive once again. That is what will happen this time.

During a time of conflict and fear in Britain, Winston Churchill noted, “This may be our finest hour.” I concur.

**Morehouse Alumni in the Health Professions**

Established in 1974, the Office of Health Professions continues to fulfill its mission of attracting and increasing the numbers of Morehouse undergraduates applying to and entering health professions schools. Morehouse is proud to be the number one producer of African American male medical, dental, and public health professional students in the nation. Our graduates, in fact, have improved the public health of America and the world. In a recent issue, Morehouse Magazine featured two alumni who are serving the health needs of the global community. Dr. Donald Hopkins '62, vice president for health programs at The Carter Center and chair of the International Task Force for Disease Eradication, is blazing the trail toward ridding the world of the painful guinea worm that is still attacking the people of sub-Saharan Africa. Dr. Cory Hebert '92—assistant professor at Tulane University Medical Center and medical director of the State of Louisiana Recovery School District—was for some time after Hurricane Katrina, the only pediatrician in the City of New Orleans. The work of these Morehouse Men exemplifies the per-

vasive need for treatment throughout the world—and the ongoing need for medical professionals in our communities. For this and other reasons, the Office of Health Professions initiative is a priority for me, particularly as we think about the renaissance of the African Diaspora. We need your support for this project.

**Transitions**

For most of us, our friends and family top the list of treasured gifts in our lives. During this season of celebration, we set aside quality time to spend with them and revel in pleasant memories of good times and the hope of shared experiences yet to come. Unfortunately, however, there are loved ones who transitioned from time to eternity since last year. We hold dear the gifts they shared and remember them eternally. This Christmas, we reflect on the memories of Morehouse Men who have made that transition. We mourn their passing, and we thank them for their love, loyalty, and contributions. We also mourn the losses of men of Morehouse who are gone too soon and whose potential had yet to be

fully realized. Thinking of the words of Dr. Benjamin Elijah Mays, I ask that, as a tribute to our brothers, we not consider the losses mere tragedy but that we clarify our own dreams and engage fully in the struggle to achieve them.

### **Recognizing Value During Trying Times**

The short version of a long story is that the Fall 2008 semester proved to be a reasonably good one in terms of enrollment stability. However, like nearly every university and college in the nation, our endowment has declined significantly since July 2008 (approximately 20 percent), and we will probably fall below many of our fundraising targets, especially corporate gifts. The board recognizes the sacrifices we have made in tightening the budget belt and reducing spending. Accordingly, in the November 2008 board meeting, the decision was made to increase the endowment payout by one percent this year. We anticipate that 2009 will be a very tough year for everyone, and we will have to take steps to operate within our available resources. Still, we recognize the importance of doing what we reasonably can to demonstrate that Morehouse employees are a priority. To that end,

the College provided a cost of living salary adjustment of one percent, calculated retroactively to July 2008, which appeared in employees' December 19 paychecks.

### **Tom Joyner Campaign Keeps Its Momentum**

Since the November House Report issued several weeks ago, the Morehouse family has continued to answer the call to dig deep to support the Tom Joyner School of the Month Campaign. Morehouse and the Tom Joyner Foundation have raised more than \$304,000 to be used for scholarships for deserving Morehouse College students who require financial assistance to complete their education. To each member of the community who made a sacrifice for this important cause, I offer the words of Jim Rohn, renowned entrepreneur, speaker and author, "Whoever renders service to many puts himself in line for greatness—great wealth, great return, great satisfaction, great reputation, and great joy." And, for those who still wish to render service, the opportunity remains until December 31. You can make online contributions at <http://www.morehouse.edu/events/2008/tomjoyner/schoolofthemonth.html> or [www.blackamericaweb.com](http://www.blackamericaweb.com) (click "TJ Foundation" then click the "Make a Donation" link).

"Christmas will always be in the hearts of God's children everywhere as they extend a helping hand to a friend in need. ...as they go about reflecting God's goodness in the little quiet and unheralded expressions of a loving heart. ...as they share the light of the world with those who live in darkness."

—Jane Hillsmen