



A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT ROBERT MICHAEL FRANKLIN '75

JANUARY 2008

A hearty new year's welcome to our returning students and to those who are joining us for the first time. We have posted a stunning banner at the entrance that reads, "Welcome Back Men of Morehouse: The Renaissance Begins with You!" I call upon each student to enter this semester with renewed dedication to achieving a higher level of academic accomplishment. Higher grades and academic distinction are within the grasp of every man of Morehouse. And as you study, strive to balance this with your co-curricular and public service commitments. We urge all students to challenge your brothers to use their abundant gifts to transform our local and global communities. Never allow yourselves or them to settle for being less than who you are—Morehouse men: Renaissance men with a social conscience.

Remembering the Dreamer

As we celebrate the Martin Luther King Jr. national holiday, we pay homage to Dr. King for his contributions to the civil and human rights movements and for his personal ideals of non-violence and civil disobedience. The fact that Dr. King willingly paid a hefty cost for those ideals is irrefutable proof that his character should be a yardstick by which all Morehouse men measure their own characters.

I encourage the entire Morehouse community to participate in the remaining campus activities organized to celebrate the life and work of Dr. King. Others may be found on our website.

- Tuesday, January 22, 6 p.m. – Conversations on Leadership
- Thursday, January 24, 11 a.m. – MLK, Jr. Crown Forum
- Tuesday, January 29, 6:45 p.m. – African American Lives 2
- Wednesday, January 30, 6:30 p.m. – An Evening with Dr. William "Bill" Cosby

New Leadership for the Morehouse King Collection

Most of you know that last year, the College became owner of the Morehouse College Martin Luther King Jr. Collection, a vast treasury of Dr. King's personal papers, books and memorabilia. Along with the Woodruff Library staff, we are now archiving and digitizing these materials and will have them ready for your review this fall. Exciting and important programs and training will be developed from these materials. I am pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Walter Earl Fluker as the interim director of the Morehouse College Martin Luther King Jr. Collection. Dr. Fluker, who also serves as the executive director of the Leadership Center, is a King and Thurman scholar, dynamic theologian and author who will steward the Collection until permanent leadership can be named this summer.

Public and Private Fundraising Gains

I'd like to thank all alumni and Morehouse stakeholders for your generous end-of-year gifts. You opened your wallets, you responded to the AT&T challenge, and you used our website as never before to contribute to a great cause. I am also

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pleased to report that Morehouse received significant federal support for the John H. Hopps Defense Scholars Program; the Morehouse Energy Science Research & Education Initiative; Project MARS; the Success of the African American Male Project; and Building Bridges Between South African/American Leaders. The funding will make a great impact on the work that can be done through these worthwhile academic and outreach initiatives.

In addition to our fundraising gains, the Morehouse community was generous to families and individuals in need throughout metro-Atlanta. Morehouse faculty and staff donated a total of \$26,794.72 to the United Way Campaign by way of payroll deductions and cash contributions. This was a fine tribute to the leadership of the United Way's new president and Morehouse alumnus, Milton Little '76, and to United Way Campaign chair and Morehouse trustee Michael Garrett, president of Georgia Power.

Morehouse Faculty Impress in Austria

We were ably represented at the first of two Salzburg Global Seminars this month by Walter Fluker, executive director of the Leadership Center, Terry Mills, dean of Humanities, and Ceci Haydel, instructor in the Modern Foreign Languages department. President emeritus Walter E. Massey '58 serves as board chair of this internationally acclaimed seminar. As part of the International Study Program funded by the Mellon Fellow Community Initiative, the Morehouse team spent January 6-13 in Salzburg developing projects aimed at "internationalizing Morehouse," with specific emphasis on institutional policies, curriculum enhancement and faculty development. The project supports the College's Quality Enhancement Project goals and re-accreditation efforts and entitles Morehouse to a \$5,000-grant to execute their design. I am excited about this project and look forward to their sharing more details as they unfold.

The House and "The Great Debaters"

Kudos to Morehouse alumni Voltaire Sterling '02, Steven Rider '01 and Rick Weaver, a former student, all of whom have roles in the Harpo Productions film, "The Great Debaters." The film tells the story of Professor Melvin Tolson (played by Morehouse parent Denzel Washington), who led the Wiley College debate team to unprecedented success in the midst of racial tension. Sterling and Rider played the roles of debaters from the Paul Quinn College team that rivaled the Wiley team. Weaver was one of the film's production assistants.

Please be sure to see the trophy case in Brawley Hall highlighting Morehouse's own tradition of great debating.

Pride on the Hardwoods

With a 7-4 record (4-3 SIAC), the Maroon Tigers basketball squad remains unbeaten at home and is continuing the winning momentum set by the Fighting Maroon Tigers. There are eight opportunities remaining to see the team in action at home before the SIAC tournament. I plan to attend as many games as possible and hope to see many of you there, cheering them on to victory. Let's support all of our athletic teams and the coaches who work hard to develop great scholar-athletes. Go Tigers!

Concern for Former SNCC Activist, Truth and Justice

I have received numerous inquiries about an unfortunate 2005 incident involving activist Willie Ricks (aka Mukasa Dada), a Student Non-Violence Coordinating Committee member and Morehouse Campus Police. I regret that an earlier communication on this topic may not have provided adequate clarity and understanding. Since legal and other avenues for resolution are underway, it is not appropriate to say much more than the following: The College denies

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charges of alleged brutality; we are concerned about our brother's well-being; and, will strive to resolve the matter in a manner appropriate to the Morehouse tradition.

Forward and Final Thoughts...

Founder's Weekend and Presidential Inauguration activities are less than a month away. I hope all alumni will join us for the festivities.

This is a national election year. Accordingly, I ask all campus political organizations to be visible, whatever their leanings, in providing information that is vital to our community's decision-making process. We want Morehouse men to be informed and deliberate about their decisions, and to participate in this sacred tradition and civic practice.

Our students returned to a more attractive Wheeler Hall than they left because Campus Operations worked diligently during the break to improve its cosmetics. Gratitude to Vice President Andre Bertand and the Campus Operations team for a job well done. The second and third floor hallways and classrooms and all of the stairwells were painted.

As you join us on campus for the Inaugural and Founder's Day activities, I hope you will visit and invite others to support our new and improved campus bookstore and to grab a bite next door at Jazzman's coffee shop. Also, we urge you to support African American entrepreneurs by patronizing three of my favorite local restaurants: The Pecan on Main Street, College Park, Landon's on Cascade Road and the new Paschal's on Northside Drive.

"This hour in history needs a dedicated circle of transformed nonconformists. The saving of our world from pending doom will come not from a conforming majority, but from the creative maladjustment of a transformed minority."

—Martin Luther King Jr. '48
in "Transformed Nonconformists"
from the collection of King sermons
titled Strength to Love

