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 A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT ROBERT MICHAEL FRANKLIN '75
 

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APRIL / MAY 2009

When Maynard Jackson '56 died in 2003, the world lost an irreplaceable leader, a one-of-a-kind statesman and a Morehouse legend. As the City of Atlanta's first African American mayor, Maynard impressed both his champions and his detractors with his passion for social justice and his unrivaled ability to organize. Fellow alumnus Richard Grigsby '78, then an associate in the law firm co-founded by Jackson, best captured the genius of Brother Jackson in an article titled "Revolutionary in a Blue Pinstripe Suit." Maynard Jackson loved Morehouse and he wanted each new generation of men of Morehouse to follow his example—an example that President Mays inspired in all of us. Morehouse Men are to be innovators, risk-takers, thought leaders and change agents. This Commencement, as a new class of Morehouse Men venture into a stormy world, the 15,000 living Morehouse College alumni join me in challenging them to follow Maynard Jackson's example of restlessness for intellectual excellence and commitment to the common good. On Friday, May 15<sup>th</sup> at 4 p.m. during the Rites of Passage ceremony (King Chapel), you will witness the "great transition" as alumni add the final touch in preparing the graduates to become Morehouse Men.

### **The Soul of Morehouse and the Future of the Mystique**

In a town hall meeting with students on April 21, I delivered an address titled "The Soul of Morehouse and the Future of the Mystique." I spoke of the need to preserve a culture of excellence on the campus where legendary men have been educated then ascended to positions of leadership. We will not allow a few disoriented among us to derail the vision to produce educated and ethical leaders with a social conscience and global perspective, especially when it is so vital to the progress of our community. I am grateful that the Morehouse community shares my convictions and has been liberal with its positive feedback. The world beyond the gates of Morehouse apparently agrees and has publicly said so. Colbert King's May 2, 2009, *Washington Post* article ("A Message from Morehouse") endorsed our tradition and message. I am told that numerous web sites and blogs have made the article available to others throughout the country. If you have not had the chance to read the remarks, they are available on [TigerNet](#). I look forward to your comments and your partnership as we move forward in the renewal of Morehouse. We need your assistance in making the Renaissance a reality.

### **President Emeritus Gets Nod from Corporate Community**

I ask the Morehouse community to join me in saluting Morehouse College President Emeritus Walter Massey '58 on his recent appointment as chairman of the Bank of

America (BOA) board of directors. Dr. Massey has been a member of the board since 1998, serving on its audit committee. From 1993 to 1998, he served the board of the BankAmerica Corporation, with whom NationsBank merged to form BOA. As he did—and continues to do—for Morehouse, Dr. Massey is expected to promote "constructive partnerships" for BOA. We are exceptionally proud of President Emeritus Massey and offer our support and encouragement as he begins this demanding and much-deserved position.

### **Maroon Tigers Demonstrate Athletic Prowess**

The Maroon Tiger golf, tennis, and track and field teams are to be commended for their tournament victories. Morehouse golfers won the SIAC Championship, defeating the Benedict College, Paine College, Kentucky State University, and LeMoyne-Owen College teams. The College offers special kudos to Olajuwon Ajanaku, Philip Allen, and Bryan McElderry, who were voted to the All-Conference team; Thaddeus Hill for being named to the All-Academic Team; Bryan McElderry, who was also voted Freshman of the Year; Philip Allen, the tournament's most valuable player; and Olajuwon Ajanaku and Philip Allen, who were named to the All-Tournament Team. Also on the athletic front were the track and field and tennis teams, who captured SIAC titles during the competition held at Morehouse April 15 through April 18. The track and field teams are four-time consecutive winners of the conference title and have won 15 of the last 21

tournaments. Congratulations to these exceptional scholar-athletes and their hard working coaches!

#### **Morehouse Community Observes Earth Day**

When Gaylord Nelson, then a U.S. senator from Wisconsin, organized the first Earth Day in 1970, it was a protest he hoped would force the environmental movement onto the country's political agenda. The protest worked and, 39 years later, I am proud that the Morehouse College community is actively participating in efforts to counteract the deterioration of the planet. On April 22, Earth Day 2009, HighGrove Partners, our landscaping vendor—along with Morehouse faculty, staff, students, and other volunteers from local Atlanta corporations—participated in a project that included planting and irrigation improvements. I am grateful to HighGrove and to the committed community of activists who devoted a portion of their day to making Morehouse a greener campus. I am equally grateful to the Morehouse family around the globe who continue to champion the cause of a cleaner environment.

#### **Leadership Studies Professor and Morehouse Alumnus Pen Books**

Dr. Melvinia Turner King, professor of leadership studies and coordinator of the leadership studies minor, recently published **The African American Moral Tradition as a Resource for Leadership Education: Developing Ethical Leaders for America**. The book, Dr. King's first, addresses the learning outcomes of an ethical leadership model that is based on the examples of African Americans coming from a moral tradition, especially the black church. Esteemed alumnus Dr. Samuel Dubois Cook '48 is the editor of **Benjamin E. Mays: His Life, Contributions, and Legacy**. Dr. Cook's work is a tribute to Dr. Mays, highlighting previously unpublished essays by luminaries, including John Hope Franklin, Howard Thurman '23, and Lerone Bennett Jr. '49, among others. On behalf of the College, I applaud Dr. King and Dr. Cook for their contributions. If possible, I urge you to attend Dr. Cook's book signing at 10 a.m. on May 15 at the campus bookstore. Dr. King's work will be available in the bookstore the week of May 11. Please be sure to add it to your bookshelf.

#### **Hopps Scholars Pursuing Excellence**

The Dr. John H. Hopps Jr. Research Scholars Program, under the direction of Dr. Rahmelle C. Thompson and Mrs. Ellen Ponder, continues to pursue excellence at Morehouse College. Several students were acknowledged

at this year's Scholars Day Program as the top-ranking scholars in the sophomore and senior classes, as well as for their Dean's List, Phi Beta Kappa, ARC Scholars, and Honor Roll honors. The Hopps Scholars Program also recently concluded its annual spring break trip to the University of Chicago, Northwestern University, and Washington University in St. Louis, during which they secured numerous summer research opportunities in these top-tier research institutions. Scholars will perform research in Brazil, Budapest, Scotland, South Africa, Tanzania and France. Additionally, the International Society of Computational Biology has invited sophomore Luke Yancy to present his research in Stockholm, Sweden, this summer. I commend these scholars and the program directors for their ongoing success and thank them for representing the College well.

#### **Pandemic Influenza Emergency Preparedness Project Takes Precautions**

More than \$16,000 were awarded to student interns trained in preparing Morehouse College and the Atlanta University Center on pandemic influenza emergency preparedness. The project was funded by a \$50,000 grant from The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to develop ethical leaders during pandemic outbreaks. This timely project was coordinated by Dr. Melvinia Turner King of the Leadership Center in partnership with Omicron Delta Kappa student members, Hopps Scholars, and Public Health Sciences Institute, headed by Dr. Cynthia Trawick, the primary investigator for the project. All parties involved to be thanked for their efforts to protect the Morehouse and AUC community.

#### **Morehouse Alumnus Promoted in U.S. Department of Commerce**

Daraka Satcher '96 was recently appointed deputy assistant secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs at the United States Department of Commerce. Alumnus Satcher's management skills and his relationships with members of Congress and their staffs will be critical assets for the Commerce Department. He most recently served as chief of staff to U.S. Congressman Hank Johnson of Georgia. Previously, he worked as legislative director to Congressman Harold Ford and legislative assistant to Senator Debbie Stabenow and Congressman John Spratt. Congratulations to Brother Satcher for his most recent accomplishment. We know that he will represent the Obama administration—and Morehouse—with excellence.

“Every man and woman is born into the world to do something unique and something distinctive, and if he or she does not do it, it will never be done.”

--Dr. Benjamin E. Mays