

**A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT ROBERT MICHAEL FRANKLIN '75****AUGUST 2009**

As the dust settles on summer and an exciting New Student Orientation week, I pause to reflect on some of the last-  
ing images. We welcomed 800 new students to campus at the end of August. Walking across campus on the first day  
of New Student Orientation, a parent stopped me to introduce her son, who has transferred from Stanford University.  
She indicated that Stanford was a great environment providing an excellent education, but she felt that he was not  
being nurtured as she had expected. They both agreed that Morehouse was the better environment to cultivate aca-  
ademic excellence, ethical character, social commitment, leadership, and a willingness to serve the least advantaged  
members of our communities. After greeting them, I walked into the cafeteria where I met two students from Chi-  
cago. Both of them arrived as celebrities of a sort. One had been featured on television as the recipient of more than  
\$1 million in scholarships and grants from more than ten universities. His choice was Morehouse. And the other stu-  
dent had been featured by the *Chicago Tribune* for his leadership in the anti-violence movement on Chicago's south  
side. Later, I met a young man who would no longer call himself young. He introduced himself as a 45-year-old re-  
turning student who has learned many tough lessons from being in the workforce without a college degree. He told  
me that he intends to be one of our top students—valedictorian, in fact. Even more compelling was his offer to speak  
to some of the younger men he has observed on our campus who appear to take their college education for granted.  
He believes that many would benefit from a sober, firsthand message about how difficult it is to move ahead in this  
economy without the right credentials. That is why he has returned to Morehouse.

Think about this: These are just four students in our incoming class—men who have achieved a measure of visibility  
and life experience and had many options about where to pursue their educations. All have come to Morehouse. As I  
get to know the other hundreds of new students, I am exceedingly grateful for those who share our values and con-  
viction that Morehouse is the best school in the world for cultivating African American men of distinction. That  
said, as we begin the month of September, we have many students who are struggling to fulfill their financial obliga-  
tions to remain at Morehouse. Last year, Morehouse alumni and friends stepped up and helped us to keep most of our  
scholars in school. My hope is that you will again consider a sacrificial gift to enable them to persist to graduation.  
Keeping these young men in school is critical to elevating our graduation rate and moving higher in the national  
rankings.

Also this summer, I had the pleasure to attend the NAACP 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary dinner where alumnus Julian Bond '71  
was honored with the Spingarn medal. Representing Morehouse, I delivered remarks that underscored the fact that  
Mr. Bond is the product of a strong college culture that expected him, along with every Morehouse Man, to excel, to  
serve, and to lead. As I write, I have just returned from the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges  
and Universities. This was the first meeting organized by alumnus John S. Wilson '79. Alumnus Wilson did an ex-  
ceptional job of challenging and inspiring the 105 black college presidents to *recover* our heritage of audacious  
thinking, *uncover* institutional shortcomings with a commitment to improve and *discover* the hidden assets and  
promising students who do not receive the attention they deserve. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan delivered a  
speech in which he outlined several proposals for increasing the level of financial aid for HBCU students. Although  
half of African Americans in college attend a community college and large investments are being made there, we  
heard that the Obama administration is committed to black colleges and will stand with us as we continue to serve  
the nation. During my remarks at the closing plenary, I pledged that we would stand with Dr. Wilson as he educates  
those who do not know the story of HBCUs. Together, we will call for a new narrative of our achievement, promise  
and desert of greater public investment. I also noted that we must remind the world that our schools produced Dr.  
Martin Luther King Jr., Thurgood Marshall, Marian Wright Edelman, and Oprah Winfrey, people who have enriched  
American life and culture.

## 'HOUSE HIGHLIGHTS

### Homecoming on the Horizon

With Homecoming less than two months away, alumni and friends are beginning to make plans to return to Atlanta to be a part of the reunion celebration that evokes powerful memories and fans the flame of pride that we feel in this institution. Last year, in celebration of Homecoming, I asked you—especially alumni—to share your bounty with the College that inspires us to be wiser, stronger, and better. I am pleased—in fact, humbled—by the response to the call. Last year's donation to the Homecoming Tent project totaled \$26,417.16, bringing the lifetime contribution to \$416,395.00. My appreciation for your ongoing generosity is abundant.

A couple of weeks ago, Alumnus Ben Logan, who graciously gives leadership to this activity, issued the 2009 invitation for participation. It is my sincere hope that you will once again respond, that the Tent will be at maximum capacity again this year, and that each of you will enjoy the fullness of the Homecoming experience. I look forward to seeing each of you and thanking you for all you do to keep our College and our brotherhood thriving.

### Stimulus Funds Spur Community Development at Morehouse

During the month of August, Morehouse was awarded more than \$222,000 in funding to assist in its efforts to provide greater service to the surrounding community. Specifically, the Economic Development Administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce and the Atlanta Renewal Community Coordinating Responsible Authority (ACoRA) both granted funds that will be used to develop a business incubator feasibility study for Neighborhood Planning Unit T (NPU-T). NPUs—initiated to give residents a voice in the City's development planning—are citizens advisory councils that make recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on zoning, land use, and other planning issues.

### A Tradition of Morehouse Health Professionals

The College is rightfully recognized for being a feeder school to some of the most well respected medical and health care professional schools in the country. And it is our desire to continue in that tradition. We must, then, ensure that students have the funds needed to complete their undergraduate studies.

As I travel the country on behalf of the College, one of the most gratifying experiences I have is meeting alumni who express a genuine interest in helping students. Recently, I have met an abundance of health care professionals who want to support current scholars seek careers in health-related fields. I am inspired by that sentiment, and I am appreciative of the gifts that have come from alumni health professionals. I seek your continued benevolence. Further, I ask each alumnus who has made a gift toward the future of health care to encourage a colleague to do the same. Your generosity will make a difference in the Morehouse community and make strides toward making quality health care a right—not a privilege—for all Americans.

### Well Done, Mighty Maroon Tigers!

Kudos belong to the players and coaches who produced a big win (34 -13) over the Benedict College Tigers in the first game of the season. First and foremost, the team was impressive. But add to that an enthusiastic crowd, a precise and well-tuned marching band, and the best cheerleader and dance teams in the southeast, then you have the stuff that HBCU football games are made of.

As the season moves forward, I look forward to seeing all the members of the Morehouse family in the bleachers, supporting our scholar-athletes and cheering them on to victory.

“Service is the rent we pay to be living. It is the very purpose of life and not something you do in your spare time.”

—Marian Wright Edelman



**MOREHOUSE**  
COLLEGE