

Founder's Day 2009:

142 Years of Weathering Storms

If there was any doubt that the economic climate would affect the celebration of the College's 142nd Founder's Day Observance, it was, well, unfounded. As President Robert M. Franklin Jr. '75 said during the 122nd "A Candle in the Dark" celebration on Feb. 14, Morehouse has long been accustomed to producing "Ivy League results with HBCU resources." The Gala, the College's most anticipated fund-raiser, drew more than 1,400 supporters to witness eight luminaries receive Candle and Bennie awards for their extraordinary achievements.

"Since 1989, this Gala has honored the achievements of 145 outstanding leaders and has raised more than \$7.5 million for the Morehouse College Scholarship Fund," President Franklin said to applause. "Morehouse's commitment to making sure that our young men can – and do—complete their education and become change



The Rev. C.T. Vivian speaks during the Founder's Day convocation.

agents who alter the course of history is critical to sustaining the level of leadership that Morehouse has always provided to the nation and to the world.”

Morehouse pride was on full display at each event during the four-day celebration. The observance kicked off on Feb. 12 with noted civil rights strategist, the Rev. C.T. Vivian, delivering a convocation speech that credited Morehouse and graduates like Martin Luther King Jr. '48 with giving the nation its moral and spiritual base.

The following night, at the Founder's Day concert featuring R&B artist Fantasia and electric violinist Ken Ford, nearly 2,000 people swayed and rocked to old-school and new-school tunes.

On Saturday morning, during one of the many highlights of the weekend, was the Reflections of Excellence forum, which allowed the Bennie and Candle Award recipients an opportunity to talk about their careers and lives.

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Clifton E. Strain '85, F. Euclid Walker '94 and Rod Hardemon '98 with director of Alumni Relations Henry M. Goodgame '84

Below: C.D. Moody '78, Louis W. Sullivan '54, Willie "Flash" Davis '56 and Robert C. Davidson Jr. '67 (far right) join Congresswoman Maxine Waters and her grandson Cameron Titus, a senior, and President Robert M. Franklin Jr. '75.





BENNIE TRAILBLAZER
Richard C. Caesar '40

Richard C. Caesar isn't the kind of man to make a big fuss about his accomplishments—even though they are monumental. He is among the first group of African Americans to fly combat aircrafts in the U.S. Air Force. He saved a fellow pilot from imminent danger.

Caesar is one of the Tuskegee Airmen, the elite group of African American fighter pilots that overcame segregation and prejudice to become one of the most highly respected fighter groups of World War II. Their heroics paved the way for full integration of the U.S. military.

An engineering officer and pilot with the 100th Fighter Squadron, Caesar ascended through the ranks to become lieutenant colonel, serving his country with distinction until retirement in 1978.

In 1943, Caesar helped to rescue Commander Roscoe Brown Jr. from a potentially disastrous plane crash. Caesar modestly says he was just doing his job.

The Tuskegee Airmen's acts of patriotism and valor were finally recognized in March 2007 when George W. Bush awarded them the Congressional Gold Medal of Honor. More recently, at the invitation of the 44th president, surviving airmen attended the inauguration of President Barack Obama.

After graduating from Morehouse, Caesar earned a doctor of dental science from Meharry College in 1951. While practicing dentistry in southern California, he served as president of the San Francisco Dental Society, the Northern California Medical, and Dental and Pharmaceutical Association, and as chairman of the Pacific Area Section of the Academy of Dentistry International.

Caesar was among the first Morehouse alumni to contribute \$100,000 to the College as a class reunion gift.



BENNIE ACHIEVEMENT
Jerome Farris '51

Jerome Farris' passion has always been the courtroom. He earned a bachelor's degree with department honors in mathematics at Morehouse in 1951 and a master's in social work from Atlanta University. He also attended the University of Washington Law School, where he was one of only three black students. Undeterred, Davis made law review and was elected president of the student body, all while working as a juvenile probation officer for the state of Washington.

Graduating in 1958, Farris was hired by the Seattle law firm of Weyer, Roderick, Schroeter and Stern, becoming part of a new generation of black lawyers who integrated white law firms. He became a partner a year later.

In 1969, Washington Gov. Dan Evans appointed him to one of the 12 seats on the newly created Washington State Court of Appeals, where he was unanimously elected as its first presiding chief judge. He made history in 1979 when President Jimmy Carter appointed him to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, making him the first African American judge to hold the position. He credits Carter for "changing the face of the judiciary."

In his 30-year tenure on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, Farris has authored several hundred decisions, covering the gamut of legal issues from bankruptcy law to employment practices, juvenile sentencing to gay marriage.

Farris has taken his vast experience as a judge to the classroom, serving as a faculty member for the National College of State Judiciary at the University of Nevada and a lecturer at the Salzburg Seminar in Austria in 1991. Morehouse awarded him an honorary degree in 1978, and he continues to serve the college as a trustee.



BENNIE LEADERSHIP
C. David Moody '78

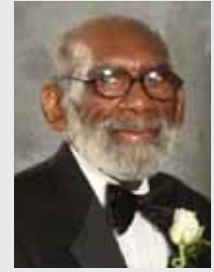
C. David Moody, one of Atlanta's premiere commercial builders for more than 20 years, erects structures that are making an indelible impression on local and national landscapes, from AtlantaHartsfield Jackson International Airport to Disney World.

His commitment to community is not only the foundation of his business, but is what Moody credits for his phenomenal success. He founded the C.D. Moody Construction Company on the principle that construction is more than a brick-and-mortar business—that it is, in fact, a people business.

Moody, a gifted leader who regularly mentors other entrepreneurs, established the C.D. Moody Construction Co., Inc. Foundation in 1989 and has since awarded 80 scholarships to deserving students. The company also has adopted two schools, and the staff mentors local student groups.

A 1978 graduate of Morehouse with a degree in psychology, Moody also earned a bachelor's in architecture from Howard University in 1981. His career began as an architect in the nuclear power department at Bechtel Power Corp., Ann Harbor, Mich., office for two-and-a-half years before returning to Atlanta, where he worked as a project manager for several small companies. He got his footing in construction as a joint venture general contractor working in the City of Atlanta minority business program. Over the years, he has built a construction empire with a consistent 12 percent annual revenue growth rate.

The Morehouse experience, now shared by his son and other family members, came full circle for Moody when his company was hired to construct the Leadership Center facility.



BENNIE SERVICE
Arthur L. Johnson '48

Arthur L. Johnson's fire for action was first sparked as a child growing up in Americus, Ga., by a grandmother whose own activism imbued him with the strength of character to question the validity of segregation. It was further stoked as a student at Morehouse, where he organized alongside classmate Martin Luther King Jr., a 1948 graduate of Morehouse.

Johnson's pursuit of justice led him to take a job as executive secretary of the Detroit branch of the NAACP in 1950. Under his 14-year guidance, the Detroit chapter became one of the most active and vital in the country.

He founded the Shop Detroit campaign to encourage the support of local businesses and was named deputy director of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission. While he dedicated his life to political organizations, education also was a steadfast cause. He served as vice president of university relations and professor of educational sociology at Wayne State University for nearly a quarter of a century before retiring in 1995.

Observers curious about the scars and scrapes of being on the frontlines of social change can walk a mile in Johnson's shoes through his revealing memoir, *Race and Remembrance*.

The impact of Johnson's life as an activist is rivaled only by his role as an arts advocate. Perhaps his second greatest passion, art is a vital force in activism and change and must be given light through recognition, Johnson believes. To that end, he is founder of both the Detroit Festival of the Arts and Arts Achievement Awards at Wayne State University, and serves on the boards of ArtServe Michigan and Arts League of Michigan.

founder's day observance

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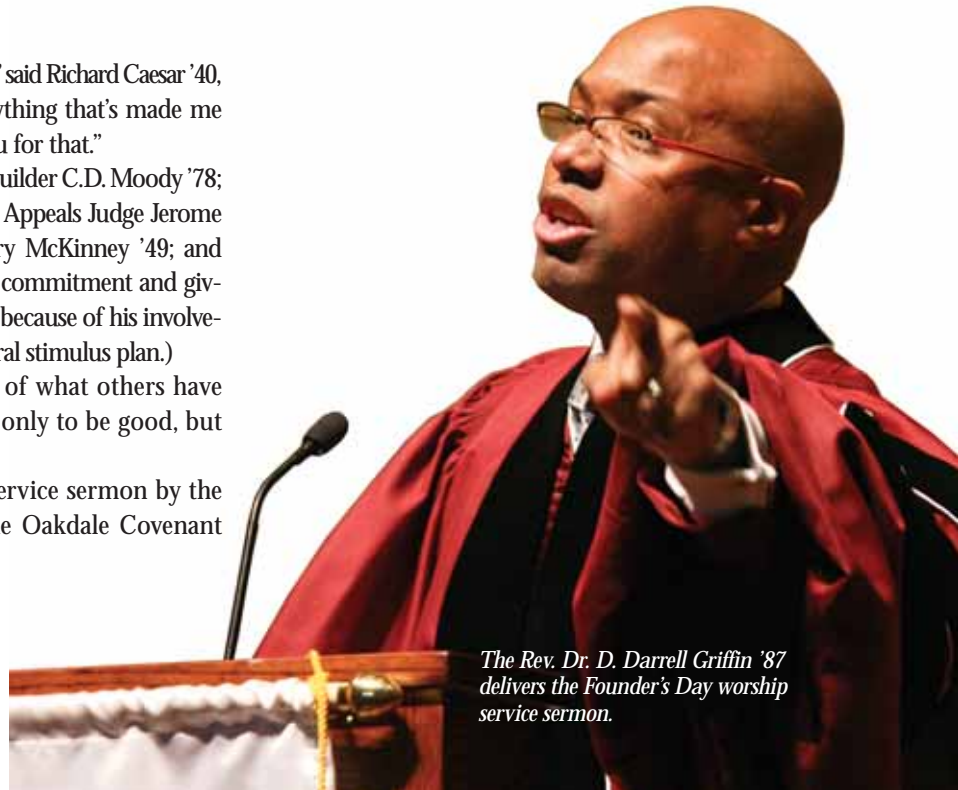
"What kept me going was going to Morehouse College," said Richard Caesar '40, a noted dentist and an Tuskegee Airman. "I got everything that's made me what I am today at Morehouse and I want to thank you for that."

A common thread among the honorees – Caesar; builder C.D. Moody '78; retired educator Arthur Lee Johnson '48; U.S. Court of Appeals Judge Jerome Farris '51; Dr. Ernie Bates; retired pastor Samuel Berry McKinney '49; and Olympic hero Tommie Smith – was the importance of commitment and giving. (Congressman Charlie Rangel was unable to attend because of his involvement in negotiations on President Barack Obama's federal stimulus plan.)

"What I've been able to do is possible because of what others have given to me," Johnson said. "I am determined not only to be good, but to do good..."

The celebration concluded with the Worship Service sermon by the Rev. Dr. D. Darrell Griffin '87, senior pastor of the Oakdale Covenant Church in Chicago. ■

President Franklin (fourth from left) and actress Lorraine Toussaint, mistress of ceremony for the "A Candle in the Dark" Gala, with the 2009 Bennie and Candle award recipients.



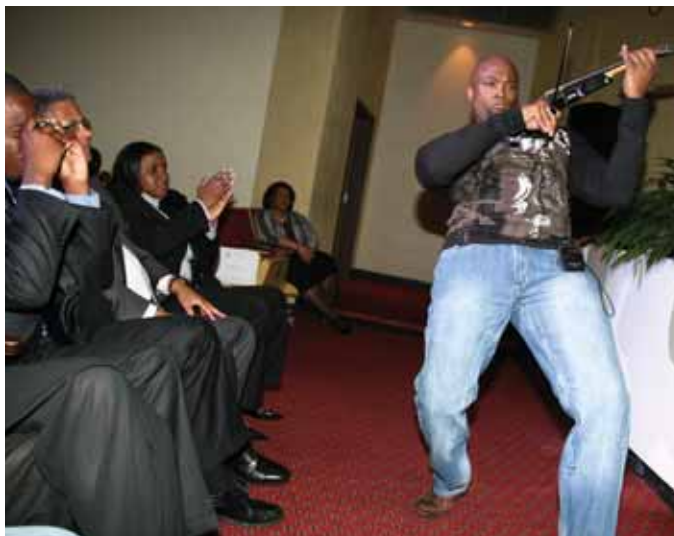
The Rev. Dr. D. Darrell Griffin '87 delivers the Founder's Day worship service sermon.



founder's day observance

Electric violinist Ken Ford and Grammy-nominated singer Fantasia perform during the Founder's Day Concert.

Below: The "A Candle in the Dark" Gala, the College's most anticipated Fund-raising event, has raised more than \$7.5 million for the Morehouse College





CANDLE IN MEDICINE
Ernest Bates

Ernest Bates likes to tell the story of being pulled over by a California Highway Patrol officer while barreling down the highway at 100 mph. It was 1972 and Bates, then sporting a big Afro, was putting his new Rolls Royce to the test.

"The officer's first words were, 'Is this your car?' and I responded 'Yes,'" Bates recalls. "The officer rolled his eyes and said, 'I suppose the next thing you're going to tell me is that you're a brain surgeon, too.' Lucky for me," says Bates, "I could answer, 'Yes officer, I am.'"

The cool brain surgeon in the Rolls dodged a traffic ticket that day. The story illustrates both the lucky breaks Bates has enjoyed, as well as the barriers he's faced to become one of the first African American neurosurgeons in the country.

Although Bates attended Johns Hopkins University as an undergraduate, in 1958, the medical school was still segregated so he instead attended the University of Rochester Medical School on scholarship.

Bates went on to become a highly successful board certified neurosurgeon. He wrote chapters in the *Textbook on Brain Tumors and Black-Related Diseases* and is currently working on developing the operating room for the 21st century in collaboration with Johns Hopkins University and the University of California, San Francisco.

Although no longer a neurosurgeon, he is far from retired. He is founder and CEO of American Shared Hospital Services, a publicly traded medical imaging company based in San Francisco.

His latest avocation, proprietor of Black Coyote wines in the Napa Valley, places Bates among another elite and exclusive club: he is one of only a handful of African American vintners.



CANDLE IN RELIGION
The Rev. Samuel Berry McKinney '49

The Rev. Dr. Samuel Berry McKinney preached his first sermon at the historic Mount Zion Baptist Church in Seattle, Wash., in February 1958 and his last one exactly 40 years later in February 1998 when he retired—the dates bookending an extraordinary legacy of service, leadership and ministry.

During his leadership at Mount Zion, the church membership grew exponentially, from 800 to approximately 2,800. Among its many expansions, Mt. Zion constructed a 64-unit retirement home, an additional educational unit, and established the Mt. Zion Pre-School and Kindergarten, which has been accredited for 25 years. The Mt. Zion Federal Credit Union, established in McKinney's inaugural year as pastor, has since been expanded and renamed The Northwest Baptist Federal Credit Union and has assets in excess of \$5 million.

The church sponsored a Cocaine Outreach and Recovery Program, created the Mt. Zion Mental Health Task Force, and sponsored a weekly meal ministry for the homeless, sick and shut-in. Members also sponsored donations of more than \$20,000 per year in academic scholarships and grants to college and graduate students.

The *Seattle Times* listed McKinney among its Metro List of 150 Most Outstanding Citizens. The top floor of a new 13-story Martin Luther King, Jr. County office building has been named in his honor. He earned the Spiritual Enlightenment Award at the 14th Annual Trumpet Awards in 2006 and the 2008 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Washington NAACP.



CANDLE IN GOVERNMENT AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
Charles Bernard "Charlie" Rangel

Congressman Charles B. Rangel, known as the "dean" of the New York congressional delegation, is serving his 19th term as the representative of the Upper Manhattan area of New York City (15th Congressional District) in the U.S. House of Representatives. He has devoted his entire career to public service.

In 2007, he made history when he became chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, becoming the first African American to lead this powerful committee of Congress.

Rangel earned degrees from New York University and St. John's University School of Law. From the beginning of his career, he quickly gained a reputation for defending black civil rights activists. He served on the New York State Assembly and quickly emerged as one of the leading black legislators in the state. In 1970, he made headlines by defeating Adam Clayton Powell Jr., the legendary preacher at Abyssinian Baptist Church and long-serving congressman, to become representative of the 15th congressional district. He has been re-elected to each succeeding Congress.

Rangel has authored legislation to revitalize urban neighborhoods, such as the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit.

He also serves as chairman of the Congressional Narcotics Abuse and Control Caucus, working to solve the nation's continuing drug abuse crisis.

Rangel is a founding member and former chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus and also was chairman of the New York State Council of Black Elected Democrats.

In 2008, Morehouse inducted him into the Board of Renaissance Leaders. His portrait hangs in the Hall of Fame in King Chapel.



CANDLE FOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT IN SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT
Tommie Smith

In 1968, when it came time for Tommie Smith, along with fellow U.S. Olympic Track team member John Carlos, to stand in front of the world to accept a gold medal for a world-record win in the 200-meters (Carlos won the bronze), the two didn't let Olympic protocol stop them from standing up against racial and human oppression.

Smith raised his black-gloved right fist to represent black power in America. Carlos did the same with his left fist, representing unity in black America. Smith also wore a black scarf for black pride and black socks without shoes to represent black poverty in America.

During that historic 19th Olympiad held in Mexico City, Smith broke the world and Olympic records with a time of 19.83 seconds to become the 200-meter Olympic champion. However, the silent gesture got them kicked out of the games. Their story is captured in the 1999 HBO documentary, "Fists of Freedom."

Smith also won recognition for his extraordinary athletic ability. He has been featured in periodicals such as *Sports Illustrated*, *Time*, *Newsweek* and *Ebony*. He is a 1978 inductee into the National Track & Field Hall of Fame; a 1996 inductee into the California Black Sports Hall of Fame, the 1999 Bay Area Hall of Fame and the 1999 San Jose State University Hall of Fame. Among his other honors are the 1999 Sportsman of the Millennium Award; the 2000-01 Commendation, Recognition and Proclamation Awards from the County of Los Angeles and the State of Texas; and the 2004 dedication of the Tommie Smith Gymnasium in Saint-Ouen, France.