



OPENING CONVOCATION

CELEBRATING THE START OF THE 153RD ACADEMIC YEAR

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2019 | 10:45 A.M.

Martin Luther King Jr. International Chapel
Gateway to the Global Village



SPEAKER

PRESIDENT DAVID ANTHONY THOMAS

12th President, Morehouse College

Dr. David A. Thomas took office as the 12th president of Morehouse College on Jan. 1, 2018, ushering in a new era of progressive leadership for Morehouse, the nation's largest and most prestigious liberal arts college for men.

Thomas is the first Morehouse president in 50 years who did not graduate from the College. The Morehouse Board of Trustees selected Thomas to lead Morehouse for many reasons, including his visionary leadership as an Ivy League business school administrator and his proven track record as a fundraiser. Thomas led a capital campaign that raised more than \$130 million in five years for Georgetown University's McDonough School of Business. The president is planning a similar capital campaign for Morehouse.

With more than 30 years of experience in the business of higher education, Thomas is nationally respected as an expert in organizational change and workplace diversity issues. He holds a doctorate in Organizational Behavior Studies and a Master of Philosophy degree in Organizational Behavior, both from Yale University. He also has a master's degree in Organizational Psychology from Columbia University, and a Bachelor of Administrative Sciences degree from Yale College.

Thomas is the former H. Naylor Fitzhugh Professor of Business Administration at Harvard Business School, and the former Dean of Georgetown University's McDonough School of Business.

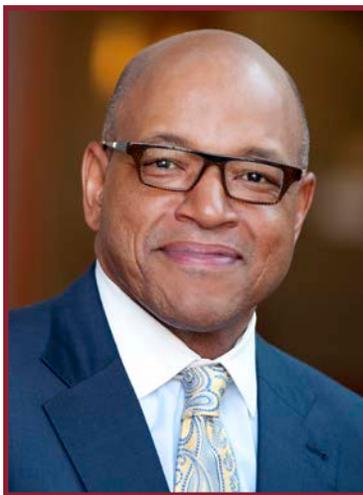
In less than two years at Morehouse College, Thomas has already begun to build a legacy of historic proportions. In an effort to affirm Morehouse's commitment to educating and developing men, Thomas proposed a new policy that would allow applicants who live and identify as men regardless of the sex assigned to them at birth to be considered for enrollment and matriculation at Morehouse. The Gender Identity Admissions and Matriculation Policy was approved by the Board of Trustees in April 2019 and was widely praised for its efforts to engage Morehouse as a leader in one of the new frontiers of social justice—gender identity.

A month later under Thomas' watch, history was made at Morehouse's 135th commencement ceremony when honorary degree recipient and CEO of Vista Equity Partners Robert F. Smith generously offered to pay off the student loans of the Class of 2019. The surprise donation was announced during Smith's commencement speech less than 24 hours after the President shared his concerns about student debt during a dinner with the philanthropist. It was the first gift of its kind in higher education.

Thomas is continuing his efforts to raise funds to support student scholarships, campus renovations, faculty research, infrastructure improvements, and other needs. His priorities also include expanding academic and leadership opportunities for students, increasing the graduation rate, and growing the enrollment to 2,500 scholars. His success as a leader is bolstering enrollment and donations to the college. During the President's first year in office, enrollment applications increased by more than 40 percent. Philanthropic donations exceeded previous year's results in fiscal year 2019. Some of those gifts included more than \$7 million raised by the Office of Institutional Advancement to establish new endowed scholarships, build an outdoor study area and park for students, and support programming at Martin Luther King Jr. International Chapel.

Thomas experienced similar success as a leader at Georgetown. As Dean of Georgetown McDonough, Thomas led 250 employees and more than 2,000 students through a period of growth, which included a redesign of the MBA curriculum, the launch of the school's first online degree program, and a \$130-million capital campaign. He also increased the diversity of faculty and staff, launched new research initiatives, and boosted the school's research funding.

Prior to Georgetown, Thomas served for two decades as a professor and administrator at Harvard University. He returned in 2017 as the H. Naylor Fitzhugh Professor of Business Administration at Harvard Business School. He is also a former assistant professor of management at The Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.



In addition to his work as an educator and administrator, Thomas has served as a consultant on issues relating to organizational change, diversity, and inclusion for 100 of the Fortune 500 companies, as well as major governmental and nonprofit organizations. He has written numerous case studies and academic articles on the subjects, and is the co-author of two related books, "Breaking Through: The Making of Minority Executives in Corporate America," and "Leading for Equity: The Pursuit of Excellence in Montgomery County Public Schools." His third book will soon be released.

Thomas is an active member of several boards, including the Board of Directors of DTE Energy, the American Red Cross, and The Posse Foundation. He has received a number of accolades and is the recipient of the Washington Business Journal's 2014 "Minority Business Leader of the Year" award and the National Executive Forum's "Breaking Through: 2020, Beacon Award," among other honors.

PROGRAM

PRESIDING

DR. MICHAEL L. HODGE

Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

PRELUDE	“Improvisation on Dear Old Morehouse”	arr. David Oliver
PROCESSIONAL**	“War March of Priests”	Felix Mendelssohn
OPENING PRAYER*		
PRESENTATION OF COLORS*	“The Star-Spangled Banner”	Naval Reserve Officers’ Training Corps
HYMN*		
THE OCCASION AND INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKER		Provost Hodge
MUSICAL SELECTION	“Ascribe To the Lord”	Rosephayne Powell arr. William Powell
	MESSAGE “ <i>Insert Message Title</i> ” PRESIDENT DAVID ANTHONY THOMAS 12 th President, Morehouse College	
MUSICAL SELECTION		
COLLEGE HYMN*	“Dear Old Morehouse”	J.O.B. Moseley ’29
RECESSIONAL**	“Trumpet Voluntary”	Henry Purcell

CEREMONIAL MARSHALS

LIFT EV'RY VOICE AND SING

Lift every voice and sing, till earth and Heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise, high as the listening skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod, bitter the chastening rod,
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
Yet with a steady beat, have not our weary feet,
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered,
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered;
Out from the gloomy past, till now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,
Thou Who hast brought us thus far on the way;
Thou Who hast by Thy might, led us into the light,
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee.
Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee.
Shadowed beneath Thy hand, may we forever stand,
True to our God, true to our native land.



DEAR OLD MOREHOUSE

Dear old Morehouse, dear old Morehouse
We have pledged our lives to thee;
And we'll ever, yea forever,
Give ourselves in loyalty.

True forever, true forever
To old Morehouse may we be;
So to bind each son the other
Into ties more brotherly.

Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit
Make us steadfast, honest, true
To old Morehouse and her ideals
And in all things that we do.

