Parents’ 411
THE OFFICE OF STUDENT RETENTION
MORGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
TOWARDS OPPORTUNITY, SCALES TO EXCELLENCE

Greetings from the Retention Staff

This academic year we are proud to welcome the twelfth President of Morgan State University, Dr. David Wilson. Dr. Wilson is a transformational leader. He looks forward to the challenge and excitement of leading Morgan to yet a higher level of excellence. Speaking to parents and incoming freshmen attending the 2010 ACCESS Orientation Program, Dr. Wilson said that he wanted to see the Class of 2014 “have the highest graduation rate in Morgan’s history.”

Our new President brings a new vision “Growing the Future, Leading the World,” a vision that will inspire higher expectations to motivate new and current students and their parents. Morgan will produce the next wave of world-class innovators and leaders. In this issue, we will highlight our new President and his new vision for Morgan State University.

Our staff, Dr. Tiffany Beth McMillian, Director, Ms. Sarah D. Adams, Retention Specialist, Dr. Demica Fowler, Retention Specialist, Ms. Diane Wise, Administrative Assistant, and the retention specialists in each of the schools and colleges continue to strive to provide you with the information that you need to support and assist your student from matriculation to graduation. As always, we look forward to receiving your comments and suggestions!

Dr. David Wilson became the 12th President of Morgan State University on July 1, 2010. Before joining us at Morgan, he was Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin Colleges and the University of Wisconsin-Extension. He has a bachelor’s degree (the first in his family to receive one) and a master’s degree from Tuskegee University; he earned a master’s degree and a doctorate from Harvard University.

In an interview before arriving at Morgan, Dr. Wilson said that the student experience is his No. 1 priority and always has been. “I will do a lot of walking around. I might audit a course. I’ve done that before,” he relates. “I want to have a number of chats with the students. An effective president must evaluate the needs of the students. And that can’t happen in a vacuum.” Dr. Wilson also planned to make himself available to students via Twitter and Facebook, to give them as many options as possible for communication.

Since arriving at Morgan, Dr. Wilson has been true to his words. He and his cabinet have been “walking the campus”, greeting students and staff. He has already had a town hall meeting with students where they had the opportunity to voice personally their concerns and hopes to our new President. And, yes, he is on Facebook and Twitter.

Our incoming president says he expects that not everyone will agree with his plans. And, that’s healthy and OK. “I’ve gained a lot of tolerance for pushback. I’ve come to understand that good ideas are not vested in just one, two or three people. It’s OK to disagree, because at the end of the discussion, we want the best ideas.”

Again, Dr. Wilson has already demonstrated his willingness to listen and gather ideas from many stakeholders. One of the first major goals he has articulated is that he wants to see the Class of 2014 “have the highest graduation rate in Morgan’s history.” To that end, he and his cabinet met with Dr. Tiffany McMillian, Director of Student Retention and her staff to be briefed on the history of retention efforts here at Morgan, the results of these efforts, and recommendations to increase our future retention of Morgan State University students to graduation. He has started the discussion which will produce the best ideas.

Continued on page 2
**MIS SION**

Continued from page 1

"Growing the Future, Leading the World" is his vision. We are all looking forward to even greater achievements at Morgan State University under his leadership.

"I’ve always tried to create an atmosphere where I work so people don’t see what they do as a job. It’s a calling." – Dr. David Wilson

Excerpts of the above article taken from Morgan Magazine Volume 1 2010.

**RETENTION: A UNIVERSITY-WIDE MISSION**

The Office of Student Retention (OSR) staff are advisors, teachers, coaches and sometimes “cheerleaders” providing needed words of support and encouragement. As Dr. McMillan says “…we do everything that we can to ensure student success and achievement”. OSR helps to ensure improvement in student retention and increased persistence to graduation by focusing on academic success and achievement through early intervention and systematic tracking of all undergraduate students.

Our staff works with all of the University’s academic and administrative programs to support and increase student success from matriculation to graduation. The OSR sponsors and coordinates various campus-wide programs and collaborates with the eight academic units of the university: the College of Liberal Arts; School of Engineering; School of Computer, Mathematical and Natural Sciences; School of Business and Management; School of Education and Urban Studies; School of Architecture and Planning; School of Community Health and Policy; and, School of Social Work.

The Schools’ retention programs are coordinated centrally to ensure that campus-wide goals are met. But, beyond that, each school develops unique retention strategies. The School of Engineering’s programs and strategies that support our new vision are described in this issue.

**PREPARING THE CLASS OF 2014 FOR ENGINEERING**

Our new President expects the Class of 2014 to have the highest retention rate in the history of our University. Several of the School of Engineering’s retention programs focus on incoming freshmen recognizing that the first year experience is critical to retaining a student until graduation.

The School of Engineering first welcomes the Class of 2014 during Fast Track to Achievement, celebrating its 13th anniversary this year. This program, facilitated by a minimum of 24 trained student leaders, is part of the Introduction to Engineering course (ORIE 104). Freshmen rotate through the three workshops: Mastering Mathematics; Planning to Graduate; and, Making it in Engineering and learn about the first-year experiences from successful, still matriculating, upperclassmen. Freshmen also hear from a Morgan engineering alumnus or alumna who speak to the importance of building a strong foundation in the freshman year and about how Morgan prepared them for student, orientation, advising, and registration (SOAR).

Later, freshmen are involved in a series of programs to help them transition to college and to engineering. Freshman Weekend, Engineering Assembly, and Fast Track to Achievement engage students with the Dean, faculty, and upperclassmen and introduce them to the student support team in the School of Engineering. These programs occur during the first month of the semester to be maximally effective in reaching out to freshmen and giving them information that will help them establish a good academic foundation and connectivity to the engineering community.

At the Engineering Assembly, freshmen meet the Dean, Associate Dean, faculty, and support staff. The Dean of Engineering administers the freshman oath and the students receive their School of Engineering freshman lapel pin. They witness the awarding of certificates for high academic achievement and are addressed by the engineering student organization presidents who stress the importance of involvement and development of leadership skills.

Fast Track to Achievement celebrated its 13th anniversary this year. This program, facilitated by a minimum of 24 trained student leaders, is part of the Introduction to Engineering course (ORIE 104). Freshmen rotate through the three workshops: Mastering Mathematics; Planning to Graduate; and, Making it in Engineering and learn about the first-year experiences from successful, still matriculating, upperclassmen. Freshmen also hear from a Morgan engineering alumnus or alumna who speak to the importance of building a strong foundation in the freshman year and about how Morgan prepared them for student, orientation, advising, and registration (SOAR).

Later, freshmen are involved in a series of programs to help them transition to college and to engineering. Freshman Weekend, Engineering Assembly, and Fast Track to Achievement engage students with the Dean, faculty, and upperclassmen and introduce them to the student support team in the School of Engineering. These programs occur during the first month of the semester to be maximally effective in reaching out to freshmen and giving them information that will help them establish a good academic foundation and connectivity to the engineering community.

At the Engineering Assembly, freshmen meet the Dean, Associate

**THE MORGAN LEGACY**

The closing ceremony of the ACCESS Orientation Program for first-time freshmen is special and unique. The ceremony is derived from an African rite of passage. At the end of the ceremony, students affirm that “they are now a Morgan State University Man; they are now a Morgan State University Woman.” They have learned what is expected of them as a Morgan State University student. They have learned that they have a legacy, a tradition of excellence to uphold. Attending a HBCU (Historically Black College/University) is an experience that can change a student’s life. As one freshman affirmed at the ceremony, the Orientation and his enrollment at Morgan had given him “hope” (for his future.)

**Morgan State University**

**Retention Staff – Spring, 2011**

**Parents’ 411 Editor in Chief**

Dr. Wilson is one of 11 persons appointed to President Barack Obama’s Board of Advisors on Historically Black Colleges and Universities on Feb. 26, 2010. It’s a prestigious and important position, not only because the 2011 presidential budget calls for $98 million in new money for HBCUs and some $850 million more over the next 10 years. As a member of this board, Dr. Wilson will have input into the allocation of these funds, as well as input into the ongoing conversation over whether HBCUs are still necessary. Dr. Wilson feels that serving the HBCU community is his true destiny.

**PA RENTS’ 411 EDITOR IN CHIEF**

Dr. Wilson will have input into the allocation of these funds, as well as input into the ongoing conversation over whether HBCUs are still necessary. Dr. Wilson feels that serving the HBCU community is his true destiny.

**Did You Know?**

According to the findings of the College Board’s 2010 report (referred to in FINANCIAL AID is the KEY):

- The median college graduates’ full-time salary is $55,700, compared to $33,800 for high school graduates.
- 8% of high school graduates, 25 and older, rely on food stamps, compared to slightly more than 1% of people with a college degree.
- Also, very interesting: Between 1998 and 2008, the smoking rate dropped among adults with college degrees from 14% to 9%. For high school graduates, the decrease was from 29% to 27%.
ATTENTION!!
PARENTS MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!
The 2011 ACCESS Orientation Program for first-time freshmen enrolling for the Fall 2011 semester will be held in July and August 2011. All first-time freshmen are required to attend the 4-day ACCESS Orientation Program. Look for Program dates and other specific information about the Orientation to be sent to freshmen admitted for Fall 2011 beginning in May.

IMPORTANT 2011 SPRING SEMESTER DATES!!!

January 24 - Classes Begin
March 1 - DEADLINE FOR FINANCIAL AID FOR FALL 2011 (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). FAFSA forms may be filed on-line at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Students who file FAFSA forms after March 1st may not be eligible to receive all types of financial aid.
March 14-19 - Mid-Semester Exams
March 21-26 - Spring Break
March 28-April 15 - ADVISEMENT DAYS (Students must meet with academic advisors to review progress and prepare FALL 2011 course schedule)
April 7 - Honors Convocation (Recognizes student outstanding academic achievement)
April 8 - Last Day to Drop Undergraduate Classes
April 25 - 30 - Final Exams for Prospective May 2011 Graduates
May 1 - Application Deadline for Fall 2011 Admission

May 9-June 28 - Registration for FALL 2011 Semester Resumes
May 12-20 - Final Exams for Non-graduates
May 21 - COMMENCEMENT
MAY 24 - SPRING 2011 SEMESTER ENDS

SUMMER 2011 SESSION DATES

SUMMER SESSION I
April 21-May 4 - Early Registration for Continuing Students (Sessions I and II)
May 2-4 - Registration for Summer 2011 Sessions I and II
May 24 - CLASSES BEGIN FOR SUMMER SESSION I
June 29 - SUMMER SESSION I ENDS

SUMMER SESSION II
June 16-17 - Registration for Summer Session II
June 30 - Classes Begin for Summer Session II
August 8 - SUMMER SESSION II ENDS

for his or her career. This is helpful in assuring freshmen that they made the right choice in enrolling in Morgan’s School of Engineering.

Our newest program is Freshman Weekend. Established in 2005, Freshman Weekend (officially known as the Student Engagement, Empowerment, and Leadership Retreat) engages the Dean, faculty, alumni and nearly 50 upperclassmen with new first-time freshmen over two days. The overall goal of Freshman Weekend is to introduce freshmen to the School of Engineering faculty, support staff, alumni, student leaders, and each other to promote connection to and involvement in the engineering community; introduce them to support services; and identify non-academic challenges that ultimately may affect their performance. It is desired that this introductory weekend of experiences make freshmen aware of resources available that, if utilized, will retain them in the School of Engineering. Freshman Weekend is facilitated for two days.

On the first day, activities include a welcome and reception with department faculty, alumni and students; an alumni workshop to warn students that there are non-academic stressors that affect performance; a colorful student leader skit on the Morgan freshman experience; and the #1 ranked “DeLoatch Motivator,” where the Dean of Engineering gets freshmen excited about the opportunities in engineering and helps them understand how valuable their contribution will be to society if they work hard and earn their engineering degree.

On the second day, experiences at the Genese Valley Outdoor Learning Center focus on teamwork through a variety of challenging outdoor activities. The day ends with an engineering competition where teams of students com-
Since financial aid is critical to the retention of approximately 95% of students enrolled at Morgan State University, understanding the financial aid process is crucial. Students will have to understand how to obtain and maintain their financial resources. It is recommended to graduate. Failure to follow directions and meet deadlines can result in students being denied funding for a semester or more. Consequently, we include up-to-date information about the process in each issue of the Parents’ newsletter. In the current economic downturn, it is especially critical that parents, as well as students, are aware of financial aid possibilities and how to apply for them.

The keys to success can be summed up in three words, “EARLY! EARLY! EARLY!” Students submitting their applications at the latest possible date for award, submitting incomplete information, or even submitting their applications after the deadline period will not benefit greatly in how they matriculate at the University and eventually the world. To repeat Dr. Wilson’s coined phrase “Growing, the Future, Leading the World!” a phrase I use to fertilize student minds.

FINANCIAL AID IS THE KEY!

Students applying for financial aid must be registered for courses. It is extremely important that students understand how to continue receiving financial aid. Students are required to pay tuition and fees on time. It would be impossible to tell you everything you need to know about financing your college education in this newsletter. In this electronic age, however, all you would possibly want to know about the availability of financial aid at Morgan, scholarships, and financial aid from other sources is accessible on the Internet. Listed below are a few sites that will provide you with useful information.

www.morgan.edu

Our site provides detailed information about the financial aid process. Click on Financial Aid on Morgan’s home page.

www.fafsa.gov

This site provides complete, detailed information about FAFSA. Students can also complete the application on this site. It is preferred for students to complete the FAFSA on-line since it only takes about 3-5 days to get to MSU. Hard copies of the FAFSA take 6 weeks to be processed and sent to MSU. Please be sure that Morgan’s school code (002083) is included on the form.

This site provides information about financial aid from the State of Maryland.

MSU WebSIS

This site provides students access to their financial aid award status and to register for courses. Of course, you can always call the Financial Aid Office on (443) 885-3170.