Parents’ 411

Dr. David Wilson became the 12th President of Morgan State University on July 1, 2010. Before joining 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 staff 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.” 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 McMillan, 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!

GROWING THE FUTURE, LEADING THE WORLD

The Office of Student Retention
1700 East Cold Spring Lane
McKeldin Center, suite 318
Baltimore, MD 21251

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Parents’ 411

M O R G A N S T A T E U N I V E R S I T Y
T H E O F F I C E O F S T U D E N T R E T E N T I O N

G R E E T I N G S F R O M T H E R E T E N T I O N S T A F F

VOL. B ISSUE B
Spring 2011

Continued on page 2
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 $855 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.

The new President is a leader who will be moving us into a new era. “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 developing 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, which celebrates 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 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 alumni or alumna who speak to the importance of building a strong foundation in the freshman year and about how Morgan prepared them for their future careers.

Retention Coordinators, School of Business and Management

Stephan Sawyer/ Chelena Anderson-Sorens/ Chinek Lewis 61255/ 612/2610 Fax 61233
stephan.sawyer@morgan.edu technorandertn@gmail.com/22373

Retention Coordinators, School of Engineering

Gina Maldonado/ Andy Garza/ John Wheatland 61923/ 6145 Fax 61216
graci.maldonado@ Morgan.edu/ joh.wheatland@morgan.edu

Retention Coordinator, School of Education and Urban Studies

Melinda Jones 61206 Fax 6129
melinda.jones@morgan.edu

Retention Coordinators, College of Liberal Arts

Samuel Taylor/ Andrea Peterson/ Gary Libby 612751/ 61294 Fax 61277
samuel.taylor@morgan.edu/ andrea.peterson@morgan.edu/ gary.libby@morgan.edu

Retention Coordinator, School of Computer, Mathematical, & Natural Sciences

Gyrfud Stiles/ Garey Hedges 61307 Fax 61305/ 4201
Gyrfud.Stiles@ Morgan.edu/ garry.Hedges@Morgan.edu

Retention Coordinator, School of Architecture and Planning

Joby Lewis 61258 Fax 61203
joby.lewis@morgan.edu

Retention Coordinator, School of Community Health and Policy

Shada Bullock 61208 Fax 61391
shada.bullock@morgan.edu

Retention Coordinator, School of Social Work

Shana Fripp 61202 Fax 61218/ 61391
shana.fripp@morgan.edu

Design & layout courtesy of the Office of Communications & Public Relations

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 freshmen affirmed at the ceremony, the Orientation and his enrollment at Morgan had given him “hope” (for his future).

Did you know? According to the findings of the College Board’s 2010 report (referred to in FINANCIAL AID IS THE KEY!):

• 4% 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%.
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) EARLY REGISTRATION FOR FALL 2011 SEMESTER
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

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.

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

SPRING 2011 SEMESTER DATES!!!

Classes Begin
Mid-Semester Exams
Parents Mark Your Calendars!!

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Mr. Michael James and Mr. Ke Shawn Forbes

My freshman year I met a man named Mr. Michael C. James, and he would change my Morgan experience forever. It was in my freshman orien-
tation class when I met this highly respected gentleman. He was the guest speaker whom I was able to relate to on so many different levels. After the class, I just had to meet him one-on-one. I told him my situation, and I remember him saying, “If you listen and do your part, then you will succeed; but just don’t give me the bull-crap.” Through him, I ended up meet-
ing the Director of the Honors Program and received grants and scholarships to pay for tuition and fees. This was not just given to me; I had earned it by earning and maintain-
ing a good GPA. This was awesome because I was already a Resident Assistant for the Office of Residence Life which covered my room & board fees. By my sophomore year, I had already accomplished what I prom-
ised my mother that day in the Harper-Tubman House. Later I learned that Mr. James was part of the Retention team. I observed how he functioned with stu-
dents and I knew that I wanted that opportunity to be a part of the Retention family. I have always possessed a passion for empower-
ing my peers so that they can suc-
cede in college. Retention was already what I practiced without the title and salary, so I knew this is what I wanted to pursue in the near future. Through Mr. James, I was heavily influenced by what the Office of Student Retention (OST) team does. I make sure I assisted my peers in any way possible to help ensure that they did not become a retention sta-
tistic. I remember when I was elected Mr. Morgan State University for the 2008-2009 academic school year, stu-
dents informed me that it inspired them to do great things at Morgan. This was a form of retention that was
disguised as an accomplishment. This made me feel great to know that my achievement inspired someone to work harder at bringing out his/her full potential. After graduating in 2010, I worked as a Peer Mentor for the ACCESS Orientation Program by Ms. Sarah Adams, the Program Coordinator. During this time, I was observed by Dr. Tiffany McMillan, Director of Student Retention. She noticed my behavior, professional-
ism, and potential to one day be a part of her team.

Working with the ACCESS Orientation Program was overall a huge success. Warting and assisting incoming freshman get acclimated to a new environment and system was rewarding beyond measure. Furthermore, it hit home for me because I did not have this opportuni-
ty when I entered Morgan. I was glad to be a part of the reason why incoming students’ early experience was a positive one which would help greatly in how they matriculate through their collegiate career.

Now that I am the Retention Coordinator for the School of Social Work, I have the opportunity to function in a capacity I’ve observed for years. It is truly like a dream come true. My experiences as a former Peer Mentor and now as a Retention Coordinator working for the Office of Student Retention, serve as symbols for the students who are being groomed to become leaders from this distinguished University and eventually the world.

To repeat Dr. Wilson’s coined phrase “Leading the Future, Leading the World!” a phrase I use to fertilize student minds.

Ke Shawn Forbes
Retention Specialist
Bachelor of Social Work Degree 2009
Master of Social Work Degree 2010
Morgan State University

A TRUE MAN SPEAKS

“Growing the Future, Leading the World!” President Wilson says it best. My name is Ke’Shawn Forbes, a recent graduate from the School of Social Work’s Masters degree pro-
gram. I would like to travel with me as I take you on a Morgan State University journey like none other. Upon entering this University, I was unaware what to expect especially for a city that was foreign to me.

A strong foundation and an adaptive spirit was embedded in me. I can still remember using the Office of Student Retention family so that they can suc-
cede in college. Retention was already what I practiced without the title and salary, so I knew this is what I wanted to pursue in the near future. Through Mr. James, I was heavily influenced by what the Office of Student Retention (OST) team does. I make sure I assisted my peers in any way possible to help ensure that they did not become a retention sta-
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Ke Shawn Forbes
Retention Specialist
Bachelor of Social Work Degree 2009
Master of Social Work Degree 2010
Morgan State University

FINANCIAL AID IS THE KEY!

Since financial aid is critical to the retention of approximately 95% of stu-
dents enrolled at Morgan State University, understanding the financial aid process and opportunities is important. Morgan students will have to understand how to obtain and maintain their financial ac-
cess. 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.

The keys to success can be summed up in three words, “E ARLY! E ARLY! E ARLY!”

Students submitting their applica-
tions at the latest possible date for award, submitting incomplete informa-
tion, or even submitting their applica-
tion too early, it will be processed and either cause the seemingly overwhelming problems and long lines at the Financial Aid Office.

What can you do? First, parents should be aware of the deadlines for submitting the “Free Application for Federal Student Aid” (FAFSA) and work with the student to ensure that the application and required documentation are submitted as early as possible. Most student financial aid is determined from FAFSA. Applying is a rather simple process that can be done online. Second, provide documentation needed from you, such as copies of income tax returns, as quickly as possi-
ble. File your income taxes early. (Many states’ applications are not processed in a timely manner, even though they were submitted early, because required documents are miss-
ing) And, if possible, follow up with your student! Better yet, complete the FAFSA together. Much of the informa-
tion students provide on the FAFSA must be provided by you. Beginning January 30, 2011, par-
ents/students can click a box in the on-line FAFSA form to have their financial information imported directly from the IRS to the FAFSA, eliminating the need for verification of financial information.

Your daughter or son bears the responsibility for keeping the aid once it is received. Regardless of filing deadlines and documentation, students must maintain satisfactory academic progress (SAP) to continue receiving aid and to persist in graduation. This means they are required to maintain a minimum 2.0 cumulative grade point average (GPA) and minimum number of earned credits.

They must pay attention to meeting financial aid deadlines and providing accurate documentation every year, not just the first year.

You can file FAFSA as early as January 1, 2011. The FAFSA can be completed and submitted on-line by going to www.fafsa.ed.gov. Again, remember, if your child’s application is filed early with the required, accurate documentation, it will be processed and either cause the seemingly overwhelming problems and long lines at the Financial Aid Office.

This affords time for the family to make arrangements to tap other resources because the aid awarded usually does not meet 100% of the student’s need.

FAFSA should be filed by March 1 of each year, especially for Maryland students. Filing by that date enables Maryland residents to receive Educational Assistance Grants from the Maryland Higher Education Commission for up to $3000. Applicants filing after that date are not eligible to receive this award. So, for Maryland residents, your child’s financial aid may be $300 less than it could have been if it had been filed between January 1 and March 1. We recommend that students file their FAFSA no later than mid-
February.

According to a College Board report, “Educational Benefits of Higher Education for Individuals and Society” (based on 2008 data) issued September 2010, the value of a college degree is growing.

The report indicated that workers with a college degree earn more and are less likely to be unemployed. Financing a college degree is an invest-
ment with a significant pay-off. It is important for students and parents understand how to finance college so they can reap the future benefits.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to tell us how to contact you.

HELP IS JUST A CLICK AWAY

It would be impossible to tell you everything you need to know about financing your child’s 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 fund-
ing 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 informa-
tion about the financial aid process.

Click on Financial Aid on Morgan’s home page.

www.fafsa.ed.gov

This site provides complete, detailed information about FAFSA. Students can also complete the application on this site. It is pre-
ferred 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 6-8 weeks to be processed and sent to MSU. Please be sure that Morgan’s school code (002083) is included on the form.

www.mhiec.state.md.us/financi-
AlAidIndex.aspx

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

MSU WebSIS

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

Mr. Michael James and Mr. Ke Shawn Forbes