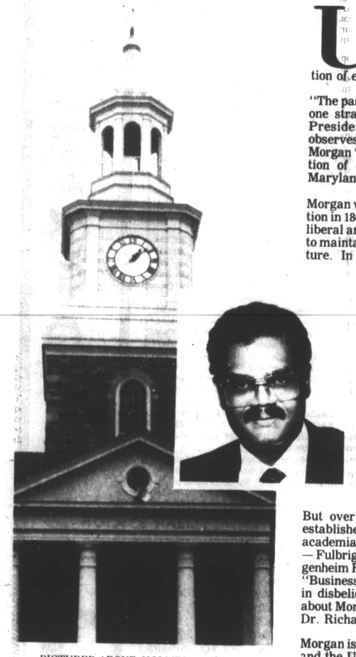
MORGAN

MORGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

NEW STRIDES TOWARD EXCELLENCE BUILD ON TRADITION



PICTURED ABOVE: HOLMES HALL AND DR. EARL S. RICHARDSON, PRESIDENT, MORGAN STATE UNIVERSITY (Interim President, 1984; President, 1985 to the present).

University leaders had something special going in 1984 when they decided Morgan could and should regroup and rebuild. It was a tradition of excellence.

"The past was a star to steer by ..." says one strategist. The point is echoed by President Earl S. Richardson who observes that during its early years, Morgan "...established itself as an institution of quality ... and opportunity in Maryland as well as the nation."

Morgan was founded as a private institution in 1867. It was designated as a public liberal arts college in 1939 with authority to maintain its separate governing structure. In 1968, what officials term "a steady climb toward preeminence," culminated in Morgan being designated "...a model liberal arts college" by the Middle States Association accreditation agency.

A prime measure of the "excellence alluded to it one cited by all institutions — the performance of graduates. "Our product has always been a source of pride," President Richardson says. "The outstanding achievement of graduates is easy to document."

But over the years, Morgan also has established a solid tradition of success in academia's exotic arenas of achievement — Fulbright Awards to students and Guggenheim Fellowships to faculty members. "Business and government leaders blink in disbelief sometimes when they hear about Morgan's standing in these areas," Dr. Richardson says.

Morgan is positioned with Johns Hopkins and the University of Maryland College Park in having members of its faculty designated as Guggenheim Fellows. The most recent fellow is Dr. Thomas Cripps, professor of history.

But, says Dr. Richardson, Morgan is pacesetter in the state and nation in the area of student performance in ways that have passed largely unnoticed. He points specifically to 72 student Fullbright Award winners; graduates earning the doctoral degrees, and Morganites in the ranks of American chemists and physicists.

(Highlights of this tradition of excellence by students and faculty are listed in the accompanying article on this page.)

"Alumni are well represented among Black physicians and health professionals in Baltimore and Maryland and the nation. They are ... U.S. Congressmen .. mayors of large cities, corporate executives, military colonels and generals, and school teachers ... from the East Coast to the West Coast," Dr. Richardson said.

"These ... are but a few measures of the (university's) early pre-eminence..." Dr. Richardson said. "Yet, it is illustrative of the great potential (Morgan holds) for ... Baltimore, the state and the nation."

Serious cracks appeared in Morgan's tradition of excellence in 1964, the beginning of the post-civil rights era. The period saw support for historically Black institutions dry up throughout the nation. The false notion prevailed that integration had erased the need for such institutions.

At Morgan, as with sister institutions caught in similar circumstances, reduced support — especially lowered state funding — set off a pattern of decline that began with physical plant deterioration and ended in an undeserved public image of the institution.

In just four years, Morgan has reversed this troublesome trend. "No institution in the area has overcome difficulties of this enormity in such a short time," Dr. Richardson said. "We are convinced by key indicators that Morgan can and will achieve a level of excellence that will eclipse its own traditional high standards."

Tradition Of Excellence

Student, Faculty Highlights

- Designated a model liberal arts college in 1968 by the Middle States Association accreditation agency.
- Morgan ranks among some of the most prestigious institutions in the number of Fulbright Scholarships awards to students since 1952.
- Among all educational institutions Morgan ranks second in the number of its Black graduates receiving doctoral degrees.
- The university graduated approximately 10 percent of all the Black American undergraduates in physics nationally between 1976 and 1986, according to data based on the annual survey of The American Institute of Physics.
- The university has graduated by far more Black chemistry undergraduates than other institutions in the state (570).
- It is positioned with Johns Hopkins and the University of Maryland College Park in having members of its faculty designated as Guggenheim Fellows.
- Graduates are academicians at some of the most respected colleges and universities in the country including Yale University, the University of California, Howard University, Morgan State University, Princeton University, Tuskegee University and the University of Maryland.

Institutional Changes Since 1984

- Board of Regents revised By-Laws to provide for restructuring of the Board and clarification of role of Board versus the President and redefinition of the President's relationship with constitutent groups.
- Revision of policies on the appointment, promotion and tenure of faculty with increased emphasis given to the doctoral degree, and excellence in teaching: scholarly output, student advising and service. Less weight is given to time in service.
- Implemented major activities for enhancement of programs in business, telecommunications, mathematics and computer science, the natural and physical sciences, and foreign languages.
- Restructured administrative functions and academic programs through realignment of administrative offices and merging of academic departments.
- Revised grading policy and standards for satisfactory progress.
- Instituted pilot program of increased admissions standards with a 20 percent limitation on provisional students.
- Revised Honors Program to reflect increased admission standards and specialized curriculum.
- Implemented pre-college program and Freshman Studies Curriculum for students admitted with provisional status.
- Approved plan for restructuring of teacher education program to reflect an integrated bachelors/masters degree program.
- Launched undergraduate programs in electrical, civil and industrial engineering with current enrollment of approximately 450 students.
- Undertook review of general education as well as individual academic programs.
- Increased spending on the physical plant by 500 percent.
- Established University-wide Council as the primary advisory body of the campus.
- Established Summer Enrichment Program in Engineering for selected students.
- Received funds to launch in 1988-89 a Science Academy Program for high school students interested in hi-tech programs.
- Developed partnership with Lake Clifton/Eastern High School and the business sector to provide a program of curriculum assistance, summer enrichment and student tutoring for a group of 50 high school students.

Progress Keeps Urban Mission in Focus

Enrollment figures at Morgan State University sparked broad smiles in several quarters this fall.

Overall enrollment is up six percent for 1988. But, for freshmen, the fall hike is 14.5 percent. This follows a 25 percent rise in freshmen enrollment in the fall of 1987.

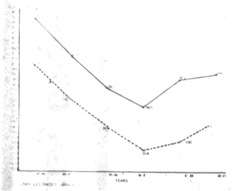
Most pleased, probably, is a cadre of planners that has spent the last four and a half years mapping what they describe as the "return of Morgan to its glory days of academic excellence."

This excitement is due to more than the latest upswing in enrollment figures, however.

First, the figures cap what has been a steady and accelerating pattern. And second, rising enrollment is just one of several dramatic indications that the school has achieved a hard-sought turnabout in its academic fortunes.

There are these encouraging indices as well:

- The percentage of faculty holding the Ph.D. has increased from 56 percent in the academic year 1983-1984 to 67 percent in 1988-89. The rate of tenure has declined from 76 percent to 65 percent during the same period, thus providing the University more flexibility in meeting the demands of the changing marketplace.
- The average SAT Scores as a measure of the entering class of freshmen is up 130 points over the last four years.
- Student retention rates for the entering classes of 1985 and 1986 were up 10 points with the potential for greater increases for the entering classes of 1988 and 1989.
- Fiscally, the university has gone from a negative fund balance of $4.7 million in 1985 to a fund balance of minus $500,000 in 1988 and a projected positive fund balance in 1989.
- Private fundraising, which netted $65,000 in 1984, has increased to more than $1,000,000 in the first ten months of 1988.



ENROLLMENT TURNS UPWARD: After a 10 year period of decline, overall enrollment stabilized during the 1986-87 school year; it also increased approximately 6% in the fall of 1987 and another 6% in the fall of 1988. The size of the entering freshmen class increased 14.6 percent. The fall enrollment of 4,112 marks the second consecutive year of increase and comes as the university is also increasing the quality of students dramatically.

Much of the success can be attributed to the efforts of the administration, faculty, students, alumni and community in strengthening an institution that has served Maryland and the nation for more than a century.

Once the recovery began, progress has been phenomenal compared to the time normally associated with turning around institutions with similar problems," according to Morgan's President, Earl S. Richardson.

The last four years are without a doubt illustrative of the potential of the institution to excel given additional support from the state," Richardson said. "It speaks to the university's ability to fulfill the urban mission in its fulness."

Vision Of The Future Brightest In Decades

Morgan's urban mission is a prime focus as Richardson's administration explores the decade ahead and the coming of the 21st Century.

As an urban university with responsibility for instruction, research and public service, Morgan's mission focuses on:

- Undergraduate programs in the liberal arts and in professional specialty areas, as well as providing graduate opportunities in areas of particularly important unaddressed urban needs and issues.
- Service to a heterogenous and diverse student population while maintaining as a primary goal the education of the disadvantaged, the poor, and the under-represented in the city and the state.
- Service through its research, faculty, and students as a resource base for planners, developers, and promoters for the city and state government, the business sector, and community leaders.
- Educating students to understand and appreciate the human condition in Baltimore and urban America and to create within them a sense of social responsibility and commitment to improving the urban setting.

In specific terms, President Richardson views Morgan as playing a key role in assisting the state achieve its goals of promoting increased student access, particularly minorities; providing quality and diversity of programs; enhancing the delivery of academic programs within the higher education matrix; and promoting economic development.

He also urges the state to invest in Morgan because of the dividends that will accrue through "billions in federal funds for minority set-asides."

"These special set-asides represent dollars which are not otherwise available to the state, unless they come through ... historically Black institutions or minority businesses," Richardson said.

Dr. Richardson said his aides admit they have been emboldened by the dramatic upswing at Morgan "Our vision of the future is optimistic."

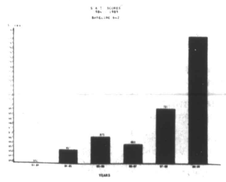
He said the university has moved on these fronts:

- Reviewed the entire curriculum and restructured some courses through program integration and departmental mergers.
- Launched new programs in electrical, civil and industrial engineering, accounting for new enrollments of more than 450 students.
- Begun construction of a new science building as Phase One of a larger science facilities improvement project and new engineering building Renovation of the health and physical education complex is set to begin soon.

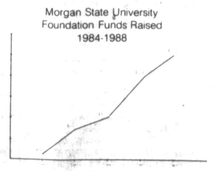
"As the university sustains its current momentum, it is critical that funding is provided in the FY 1990 Budget for program development, scholarship assistant, deferred maintainance, and facilities renovations," he said.

In a move to maintain gains in enrollment and retention, special programs have been instituted for high ability students. The university has set as a goal the enrollment of a minimum of 15 percent high ability students in each entering freshman class.

Also, eight-week pre-college summer sessions and a freshmen studies program have been implemented for students admitted on a provisional basis. In defense to its mission, 20 percent of each entering freshman class is admitted provisionally.



SAT SCORES UP SHARPLY: The average combined SAT score for entering freshmen has increased more than 130 points over the last four years. For fall 1988, the combined average score for regularly admitted freshmen is 824. Adjusted for the 624 average of the class' 20 percent provisionally enrolled students, the combined average for all students is 772. (National combined average for Black students is 748.) Admission of provisionals is consistent with the university's commitment to its mission of broadening the pool of minorities in higher education.



FUNDRAISING SETTING RECORDS: Annual income from fundraising efforts has increased from $65,000 in 1984 to more than $1,000,000 in 1988. Increased contributions reflect changes in public perception and increased confidence among alumni and friends as well as special activities at the institution. Future efforts will look increasingly to private foundations, business and industry.

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