The Opportunity

The Board of Trustees of Morris College is conducting a national search and invites nominations and applications for the position of President. This position is an opportunity for a transformational leader who is an accomplished, innovative change agent prepared to move the institution to the next level, and who can build and leverage the partnerships and resources available at this critical time in the history of the College.

Morris College is a four-year, coeducational, residential, liberal arts and career-focused institution awarding baccalaureate degrees in the arts and sciences, as well as certificates in career-based professional fields through public service programs and other civic engagement activities. Morris College is located in the city of Sumter which is also the county seat and the eighth largest metropolitan area in the state of South Carolina. In 2022, the city of Sumter, S.C. was recognized as one of the best places to live by Forbes Magazine because of its small-town charm, affordable living, low unemployment rate and great geographical footprint.
The Role of the President

The President is responsible for leadership of all College operations, outreach, and initiatives, including overseeing academic and administrative functions; fundraising; budgeting; developing strategic partnerships; stimulating economic growth; leading student success initiatives; actively engaging with all constituents to include alumni, faculty, staff, and students; and leveraging all resources to maintain an inclusive, collegial environment for all. Building upon the success of current President Leroy Staggers, former long-serving President Luns C. Richardson and their eight predecessor presidents over 115 years, the next President will be an innovative and inspirational leader who will chart an ambitious path for the future of Morris College.

Responsibilities

Reporting to the Board of Trustees, the President will articulate the College’s vision and guide the strategic direction. The development and implementation of a new strategic plan in the coming years will guide and transform the College to fulfill its mission and identified goals; and this effort will need to be inclusive of Morris College stakeholders and a culmination of a comprehensive institutional assessment.

The President will aggressively identify, pursue and secure new sources of revenue from the private and government sectors at the local, state, and federal levels. The President will present a compelling case and effectively tell the Morris College history, vision, and strategic goals to support the College’s fundraising efforts, public and private partnerships and raise the visibility of the College. The ability to thrive in the public sector with well-developed political and diplomatic skills is essential.

The President must develop robust programs and partnerships with the business community across the state and nation to improve statewide internships, meet the community’s employment needs, and strengthen networks within the community. The President will look strategically at enrollment, to include developing new programs, growing existing programs, and improving student success initiatives focused on recruitment, retention, and graduation, with an eye toward encouraging and fostering an environment of innovation in developing programs that will meet the workforce needs of the region.
The President will also be focused on the strategic expansion of Morris College’s areas of distinction and increasing investments in new programs. In addition, the President will be focused on finding ways to improve enrollment outcomes while strengthening relationships with K–12 and higher education partners, including other HBCU’s within the state of South Carolina.

The President provides the critical leadership necessary to achieve educational excellence through innovative academic programs and services, with a keen focus on student achievement by offering diverse programs, quality, targeted student support services (e.g., academic, socio-economic, mental health, community/social, culture) that meet the holistic student life that addresses the unique needs of our community.

The President will be responsible for building an effective, collaborative senior leadership team that sets a shared governance tone and ensures continued cooperation across the campus to pursue a shared goal of supporting and educating students. Morris College has a dedicated staff of administrators, faculty, and staff who go above and beyond the call of duty in putting the students first and working to meet their needs. This value is a vital characteristic of the College that must be honored, recognized, and supported, with the expectations that all senior leaders will exemplify collaboration, innovation, accountability, and shared responsibility to set a tone of collaboration and shared purpose.

Qualifications

The successful candidate will have a demonstrated track record of working in a diverse environment and with underserved populations; long- and short-term strategic planning; involvement with community building through civic and economic engagement; and developing and fostering strategic partnerships. Preference will be given to candidates with an earned doctoral degree, Ph.D. preferred, progressive administrative and fiscal higher education leadership experience, as well as fundraising experience, student success experience, and strategic enrollment experiences.

The ability and enthusiasm to connect with business, government and community leaders and a willingness to spend a considerable percentage of time and energy on external relations is critical. Demonstrated skill as a successful fundraiser will be a distinct advantage, and the personal qualities of the successful relationship builder – including exceptional communication skills – are absolutely required. Additional skills and experience that are highly preferred are: dealing with accreditation agencies, soliciting grants, creating new programs and direct experience dealing with advisory or governing boards. In addition to the above, strong preference will be given to candidates with the following qualifications and demonstrated capabilities:

- Experience shaping short- and long-term strategies to guarantee that the College not only embraces the challenges of this century, but defines the role of public higher education in addressing them;
➢ Ability to think creatively and strategically with an enterprising spirit and a willingness to take risks;
➢ An appreciation for the financial and enrollment challenges facing HBCUs;
➢ An appreciation for the College’s historic ties to the Baptist Educational and Missionary Convention of South Carolina and related entities;
➢ Ability to attract, retain, and engage with a superb diverse and inclusive faculty, student body, and staff;
➢ A highly communicative and transparent leadership style that fosters an environment of trust, excitement, and high morale among faculty, students, staff, and the College community;
➢ Ability and enthusiasm to connect with business, government, and community leaders and an understanding of the importance of devoting a considerable percentage of time and energy on external relations;
  ➢ Ability to build institutional excellence, especially in support of the College’s strategic goals;
  ➢ A commitment to nurturing within students the best critical- and creative-thinking skills and equipping them with the expertise they need to succeed in the changing landscapes of work and civic life;
  ➢ The ability to effectively navigate politically sensitive matters and experience working with local, state and national governments
  ➢ Experience overseeing curricula changes and best practices in higher education;
➢ Experience with and knowledge of change management principles, methodologies and tools;
➢ A commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion that results in strong and positive relationships with individuals from a wide variety of backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences and the recognition of the unique contributions that each bring;
➢ A proven record in fundraising, advancement activities, and alumni relations and a capacity for cultivating a broad range of stakeholders;
➢ A commitment to scholarly and creative excellence, including an appreciation for the distinctive contributions of all the academic divisions comprising this diverse, liberal arts institution;
➢ Experience in increasing student enrollment, recruitment, and retention of students, nationally and internationally;
➢ An understanding and appreciation of the evolution of higher education locally and nationally, and the ability to operate nimbly in this dynamic environment, including collaborations with other HBCUs and higher education institutions within the state of South Carolina;
➢ Successful experience in developing and executing strategies in a complex institution, including the fiscal skills and acumen necessary to prioritize and facilitate the allocation of resources effectively and efficiently;
➢ An understanding of and demonstrated support for the unique experience of student-athletes and for the positive impact of a nationally competitive athletics program on the broader mission of the College;

The successful candidate will also be someone who can develop new initiatives to enhance Morris College’s visibility and national stature.

**Personal Characteristics**

➢ Decisive management skills exemplified by a record of courage in making difficult decisions in an environment with competing demands and limited resources;
➢ A work ethic that prioritizes shared governance, integrity and transparency as core values that shape all campus processes and decision-making;
➢ A forward-thinking leader who will explore and embrace new technologies and innovative teaching and business models that will enhance and expand academic programs, improve the student experience, and strengthen enrollment and institutional advancement results;
➢ A role model with superior integrity, honesty, resilience and work ethic and a record of values-based decision-making;
➢ A gifted leader with excellent interpersonal skills, high emotional intelligence, excellent communication and storytelling abilities, and a transparent leadership style;
➢ A person of faith with a deep respect and enthusiasm for the Baptist faith and intellectual traditions and for stewarding these fundamental elements of the College’s identity;
➢ A bold leader with personal humility who is both visible and approachable;
➢ A desire to live in and engage with the close-knit community of Sumter, South Carolina.

**About Sumter**

*Sumter, South Carolina*, the county seat of Sumter County, is a growing, diverse community centrally located between the beaches of the Atlantic Ocean and the Blue Ridge Mountains. It is 100 miles west of Myrtle Beach’s Grand Strand and 175 miles east of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Columbia, the state capital, is about 45 miles to the west, Hilton Head is 140 miles to the South, and Charleston is around 100 miles to the south. Shaw Air Force Base, located within the Sumter City limits, is home to the Air Force’s largest combat F-16 wing -- the 20th
Fighter Wing -- whose mission is to provide, project and sustain combat-ready air forces. Shaw also serves as home to Headquarters Ninth Air Force/U.S. Air Forces Central (AFCENT), Fifteenth Air Force, and U.S. Army Central Command (ARCENT). The Santee-Waterer Regional Transit Authority (SWRTA), in connection with Shaw Air Force Base, is responsible for operating mass transit in greater Sumter area. Its proximity and moderate climate make activities like golf, tennis, hiking, biking and fishing accessible year-round. Sumter is proud of its dozens of local parks & playgrounds, two state parks and the world-renowned Swan Lake Iris Gardens, which is home to all eight species of swans — all providing miles of trails for an afternoon stroll or a rigorous hike. The historic Sumter Opera House, built in 1894, still hosts an array of live performances for all ages.

Since 1984 the City of Sumter has been undergoing renovation when the City purchased the then-closed Sumter Opera House for additional office space and completed its restoration in 1987. Over the last 20 years, the City of Sumter has put in more efforts to revitalize Downtown. Recently, Downtown Sumter has seen the opening of a hotel, transportation improvements on Main Street and Liberty Street, building renovations, and an events series. The Downtown Sumter Master Plan created in 2019 was established to create a consensus-driven vision and “road map” to continue strengthening Downtown Sumter’s role in the community. The Master Plan study area is focused on the Central Business District of Downtown Sumter, comprising 182 acres. The primary land use of the study area is commercial. Although not located within the study area, Morris College is currently working with the City of Sumter on revitalization of the entrance to the College as well as the streets in front of the College.
About
MORRIS COLLEGE
Mission

Morris College was founded in 1908 by the Baptist Educational and Missionary Convention of South Carolina to provide educational opportunities for Negro students in response to the historical denial of access to the existing educational system. Today, under the continued oversight of its founding body, the College opens its doors to a culturally and geographically diverse student body, typically from the Southeast and Northeast regions. Morris College is an accredited, four-year, coeducational, residential, liberal arts and career-focused institution awarding baccalaureate degrees in the arts and sciences, as well as certificates and associate degrees in career-based professional fields through public service programs and other civic engagement activities.

The College serves the needs of its students, alumni, and community. It serves its students by:

- Providing sound liberal arts and career-based programs with a particular emphasis on teacher education.
- Providing an intensive program for mastering basic social, thinking, listening, speaking, reading, writing, mathematical, technological, and leadership skills.
- Providing services and programs to enhance their academic, social, professional, and personal development.
- Promoting an ethical and religious environment which complements the student’s total development.

It serves its alumni by:

- Promoting a relationship that is mutually beneficial to the alumni and the institution.

It serves its community by:

- Providing continuing education and services to clergy and laity.

Morris College
Quick Facts

- **Academics:** 10:1 Student to Faculty ratio; Division of General Studies; Division of Business Administration; Division of Education; Division of Religion, Humanities, and Social Sciences; Division of Natural Sciences; 27 major programs of study taught by 22 full-time faculty and 16 part-time faculty

- **Athletics:** Home of the Morris College Hornets, intercollegiate sports programs include: Men’s baseball, basketball, and track & field; Women’s basketball, softball, and volleyball. Member of the NAIA and competing as an independent within the Continental Athletic Conference.

- **Student Life:** 410 students; 8 Greek letter organizations; Extra-curricular activities as well as leadership organizations

- **Accolades:** Ranked by USNWR #Tier 2 Regional Colleges in the South; #59–77 Historically Black Colleges and Universities; #81 Top Performers on Social Mobility

- **Location:** Morris College is located in Sumter, SC, 1 hour from Columbia, SC; 2 hours from Myrtle Beach, SC; 2 hours from Charleston, SC; 2 hours from Hilton Head, SC; 2.5 hours from Charlotte, NC; 4 hours from Atlanta, GA
• Promoting the growth and development of the larger community through public service programs.
• Providing research services and facilities in the solution of academic and community problems.

Morris College is primarily a student-centered institution which seeks to fulfill its mission by:
• Evaluating and supporting the academic performance of students to ensure competitive competence in the global workplace.
• Emphasizing a broad understanding of the liberal arts and sciences.
• Emphasizing specific professional and technical skills necessary to meet societal demands.
• Emphasizing total development of the student for responsible citizenship in a global society.

This student-centered commitment embraces the College’s motto, "Enter to Learn; Depart to Serve."

Vision

Morris College will be a premier liberal arts and career-focused institution in Sumter, the state of South Carolina and the southern region; as well as carry out its stated mission as an institution that is totally committed to excellence in all areas of operation and is driven toward continuous improvement.

In the attainment of this vision, Morris College will:

1. Provide a high-quality education for students which results in employment and achievement of their educational and career goals.
2. Provide an exceptional faculty and staff who are committed to the mission, vision, excellence in all areas of operations, and teamwork.
3. Provide relevant quality academic programs and resources in order for students to perform at their best and find gainful employment.
4. Fully utilize the Morris College Bertie B. White Teaching and Learning Center to achieve excellence in teaching and maximize learning.
5. Provide a student-centered, caring, supportive and nurturing a learning environment that will engender life-long learning.
6. Produce graduates that achieve and lead in their respective communities, states, and country.
7. Continue to develop into an institution that is significantly more impactful on the intellectual, cultural, and economic development of Sumter, the state of South Carolina and the Southern region.
8. Instill pride and strive to improve the quality of life for all stakeholders.
9. Provide necessary financial resources to achieve excellence in all areas of operations and development.
Strategic Goals

Goal 1: Strengthen the quality of the academic program and related academic support resources to provide a high-quality education for students.

Goal 2: Promote a student-centered, caring, supportive and nurturing learning environment that will enhance student learning and success.

Goal 3: Maintain the fiscal stability of the institution and enhance its financial position to achieve excellence in all areas of operation and development.

Goal 4: Strengthen institutional effectiveness and management through a commitment to excellence in all areas of operation.

Goal 5: Provide physical resources to support and promote a quality academic program, student learning and development, and the administrative operations of the College.

Goal 6: Establish a comprehensive human resources program that supports all divisions and units of the institution and complies with all local ordinances and state and federal laws.

Goal 7: Acquire additional financial resources to enhance the educational programs and operations of the College as well as support a positive public image of the College.

Goal 8: Continue to maintain and expand technology resources to achieve excellence in administrative operations and quality academic programs.

Accreditation

Morris College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award baccalaureate degrees. Morris has been accredited since 1978 and its most recent reaffirmation was in 2022.

Discipline accreditations include the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education.
Academics


Division accreditations include the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education.

Student Life

Outside of the classroom, a variety of services and programs are offered. The College has seven fully furnished residential living facilities where students can thrive and develop in a living-learning community with other students who share the common goals of educational success and personal development. The Student Health and Wellness Center is equipped with state-of-the-art exercise equipment and a fitness trainer to help students meet their individual physical and wellness goals. Counseling services are available to assist with academics and personal issues, and all interactions with the counseling staff are handled in a caring, sensitive, and confidential manner. Student activities at Morris College are designed to provide opportunities for students to enhance their academic development as they strengthen their leadership skills. Each student is encouraged to join some of the more than fifty (50) clubs and organizations that provide an avenue for personal fulfillment and skills development.
Athletics

Morris College is a member of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), competing as an independent within the Continental Athletic Conference. Morris College competes in six intercollegiate varsity sports including: Men’s baseball, basketball, and track & field; Women’s basketball, softball, and volleyball. Their mascot is the Hornets.

Administrative Organization

The governance of Morris College is vested in a Board of Trustees whose responsibilities include establishing broad institutional policies, securing financial resources to support adequately the program of the College, selecting the President of the College, and selecting, upon recommendation of the President, the other administrative officers, teachers, and staff of the College. Once the Board of Trustees has established broad policies, it leaves to the President of the College the responsibility for implementing these policies and for administering the affairs of the College. The Board of Trustees is composed of thirty-six members who are elected by the Baptist Educational and Missionary Convention of South Carolina. Persons who automatically serve on the Board of Trustees by virtue of the offices that they hold include the President, the Treasurer, and the Secretary of the Baptist Educational and Missionary Convention of South Carolina, the President of the South Carolina Baptist Congress of Christian Education, the President of the Woman’s Baptist Educational and Missionary Convention of South Carolina, the President of the South Carolina Baptist Brotherhood, the President of the South Carolina State Ushers Convention, the President of the Young Woman’s Auxiliary, and the President of the College. The remaining twenty-six members are elected by the Baptist State Educational and Missionary Convention in regular session and automatically include one member from the faculty of the College, the student body of the College, and the Morris College National Alumni Association.

Church Relations

The Office of Church Relations assists in communicating and coordinating all relations of the College with supporting churches, associations, and church organizations to foster a climate that seeks to stimulate interest among constituents to ensure ongoing support of the College.

History

Under authorization granted by the Baptist Educational and Missionary Convention of
South Carolina in 1906, Morris College was established in 1908 "for the Christian and Intellectual Training of Negro youth." This action signaled the beginning of a heroic venture in higher education by a group of men and women less than a half century removed from the blight of American slavery. The majority of these "founding fathers" were poor and without any formal learning, but they possessed an "unfaltering faith in God and a zeal to provide for others the educational opportunities they themselves were denied."

On April 12, 1911, the College received a certificate of incorporation from the state of South Carolina. Initially, Morris College provided schooling on the elementary, high school, and College levels. The College curriculum included programs in liberal arts, in "normal" education for the certification of teachers, and a theological program. In 1915, the Bachelor of Arts degree was conferred on the first two graduates. The institution discontinued its "normal" program in 1929, its elementary school in 1930, and its high school in 1946.

During 1930–32, the school operated only as a junior college, but it resumed its full four-year program in 1933. The word "Negro" appearing in the original certificate of incorporation was eliminated on August 14, 1961, thereby opening the doors at Morris to students of all ethnic groups.

Morris College has more than justified the faith, the labors, and the sacrifices of the founding fathers. The services it has rendered have been extensive and beyond value. In the early decades of its history, Morris College provided elementary and high school training for Negro youth at a time when such opportunities were meager or nonexistent in many communities. From its beginning, Morris College has been a center for training ministers and teachers for the pulpits and schools of the State and of the Nation. Its graduates have added to the ranks of professionals and businessmen. Hundreds of Negro youth who otherwise never would have attended college have received at Morris College the benefits of higher education. Many communities and state agencies have used the facilities of the College to carry out programs of general welfare and social uplift. The College thus occupies a unique and significant position in the American social order. It is one of the few senior colleges built and operated solely under Negro auspices. As such, it represents a distinct contribution of the Negro to American society.

In the seventieth year of its history, on December 13, 1978, Morris College achieved the goal of full accreditation by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. On January 1, 1982, Morris College became the 42nd member of the United Negro College Fund, the nation's largest and most successful black fund-raising organization. Morris is also a member of South Carolina Independent College and Universities, Inc. (SCICU). The College has embarked upon a new era of institutional improvements that has moved it further into the mainstream of American higher education and that has enabled it to render even better service to its students and to the community.
Nomination & Application Process
Compensation

Salary will be competitive and commensurate with qualifications and experience.

How to Apply

Marion Frenche & Julie Holley with Greenwood Asher & Associates® are assisting Morris College with the Presidential Search. Applications and nominations are now being accepted. Inquiries, nominations, and application materials should be directed to Greenwood Asher & Associates. Application materials should include:

› A letter of interest that clearly states the applicant’s qualifications for the position
› A current résumé/curriculum vitae
› The name, relationship, and email address of five professional references

We strongly encourage submitting application materials as PDF attachments. The search will be conducted with a commitment of confidentiality for candidates until finalists are selected. Initial screening of applications will begin immediately and will continue until an appointment is made.

Please direct inquiries, nominations, and application materials to:

Marion Frenche
Search Manager
marionfrenche@greenwoodsearch.com

Julie Holley
Search Consultant
julieholley@greenwoodsearch.com
Greenwood Asher & Associates
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Equal Opportunity Employer
Morris College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, or physical handicap in its educational programs or activities, including admission and employment