

Dr. John Silvanus Wilson Jr.

As an advocate for the intrinsic value of education for all, Dr. John Silvanus Wilson Jr. has dedicated more than 25 years to the advancement of socially conscious and purposeful education; student success; and the good that comes from a college education. As a scholar, an educator, a consultant, a strategist and a fundraiser, he has moved universities and organizations forward with his efforts and vision. In January 2013, Dr. Wilson took office as the 11th president of Morehouse College, the nations' only private, liberal arts institution dedicated to the education of African American males.

Prior to that position, Dr. Wilson was appointed by President Barack Obama to serve as the executive director of the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), a position he held since 2009.

Born in Philadelphia to parents who attended HBCUs (his mother at Morgan State University and his father at Virginia Union University), Dr. Wilson understood at an early age the critical role HBCUs have played in the lives of their students and in United States history. He attended Morehouse College, the alma mater of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., where he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1979. Dr. Wilson continued his education at Harvard University, where he earned two master's degrees in theological studies and education, as well as a doctorate in education, with a focus on administration, planning and social policy.

Dr. Wilson's career in education began in 1985 at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), where he served for 16 years in various roles and ultimately as the director of Foundation Relations. In this role, he helped to manage two record-breaking capital campaigns, with combined results approaching \$3 billion.

While at MIT, he served for more than a decade as the president of the Greater Boston Morehouse College Alumni Association (GBMCAA). Under Dr. Wilson's leadership, the alumni chapter raised more than \$1 million in support of scholarships and community outreach, and he was consequently awarded Morehouse College's Benjamin Elijah Mays Leadership Award in 1998. In honor of the impact he has had on both Morehouse College and the community, the GBMCAA established the John Wilson Leadership Award to recognize current Morehouse students who exhibit similar transformative leadership qualities.

In 2001, Dr. Wilson's career led him to the George Washington University (GWU), where he served for eight years filling such critical leadership roles as executive dean of the university's Virginia campus and associate professor of higher education in the Graduate School of Education. His research focused on best practices for the sustainability and stability of colleges and universities, as well as transformative

advancement and finance in higher education. Dr. Wilson also assisted GWU in creating a university-wide strategic plan that addressed opportunities for advancement and success.

In his role as the nation's executive director of the White House Initiative on HBCUs — which serves as liaison between HBCUs, the White House, 32 federal agencies, and the private corporate and philanthropic sectors—Dr. Wilson promoted HBCU excellence, innovation and sustainability. He was charged with strengthening the capacity of HBCUs to participate in federal programs; fostering private-sector initiatives and public-private partnerships; improving the availability and dissemination of information on HBCUs to inform public policy; sharing best practices within the HBCU community; and exploring ways to improve the relationship between HBCUs and the federal government.

Prior to his presidential appointment, Dr. Wilson served in numerous capacities throughout the nonprofit sector, including as a consultant for the United Negro College Fund's Institute for Capacity Building and on the Kresge Foundation's Black College Advisory Board. Additionally, he served on the trustee boards of the Samaritans, the Andover Newton Theological School and Spelman College.

Dr. Wilson is married to Dr. Carol Espy-Wilson, an electrical and computer engineering professor at the University of Maryland, College Park. She is also founder and CEO of OmniSpeech, a speech technology company. They have twin daughters and a son.