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1990  
Celebrating



2015  
of Social Marketing

2015 Annual Report

Philadelphia, PA

Los Angeles, CA

Atlanta, GA



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## From The President Still Innovating



**M**EE specializes in engaging the hardest-to-reach — those facing the highest social, educational and health disparities. Our work is with the most overlooked and underserved residents in a community. We educate and empower them so that they can be active players in developing solutions to the issues that are negatively impacting their families and futures. Based on more than two decades of grassroots behavior-change work in poverty-impacted communities, we understand the many barriers (including lack of access, super-stressed lives and challenges “navigating the system”) that make it difficult for under-resourced residents to actualize their dreams and visions.

Providing social marketing services for over 25 years in communities with the highest disparities requires dedication, a clear vision, steadiness through volatile economic periods and a willingness to adapt with the times. Yet, even after more than two decades, MEE continues to innovate.

The realities of the business world have changed since MEE was formed in 1990. Public sector funding to fight health disparities has been reduced, slashed, and even eliminated in some communities. Poor and underserved populations are left to flounder and struggle, as they are less of a priority to some government officials. At the same time, gaps in academic achievement, incidence of chronic disease and lack of real employment opportunities in the workplace continue to widen.

In this environment, you must work smarter and leverage the lessons learned. There will always be evolution in the communications environment, whether

it’s the rise of social media or how we access the Internet on mobile devices (vs. computers). How you respond to change is often what determines failure or success.

While the social determinants that leave oppressed people at a disadvantage will not change overnight, we have to be willing to find a way to “stay in the game” for the long haul. MEE brings together all the key players—from the bottom-up and the top-down—with a common focus on success for individuals, families and ultimately, the community. We have earned our expertise in using community- and individual-level strategies that deliver authentic, credible and most importantly, shareable messages that resonate with target audiences.

We appreciate the clients, business partners and others who have continued to believe in and support us in our efforts to positively reach and influence those communities who are most at-risk for being left behind. We will continue to adapt and confront new challenges that arise so that our future of fulfilling our core mission can be just as bright as our past.

Feel free to share our journey by learning more about our vision and how we make it happen every day.

Ivan J. Juzang,  
Founder/President





MEE in Action	2015	2015/2016	2016
Marketing/Social Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>U.S. Department of Education/ASHLIN Management Group</li> <li>Drexel University, Office of University and Community Partnerships</li> <li>GCAPP gPower</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GCAPP Second Chance Homes Network</li> <li>Louisiana Public Health Institute</li> <li>Philadelphia Department of Health: Tobacco</li> <li>Engaging Males of Color in Mental Wellness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>African American Network Against Alzheimer's</li> <li>Louisiana Healthy Homes and Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program</li> </ul>
Media/Materials Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"We Are!" Black History Month Education Campaign</li> <li>National Institutes of Health/Rhode Island Hospital</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Louisiana Healthy Homes and Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program</li> <li>Louisiana Public Health Institute</li> <li>Philadelphia Department of Health: Tobacco</li> <li>Philadelphia Health Management Corporation</li> <li>Project LAUNCH (Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children's Health)</li> </ul>
Audience Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The California Endowment and The Open Society Foundation Groups</li> <li>Louisiana Public Health Institute</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City of Philadelphia, Mayor's Office of Community</li> <li>Project LAUNCH</li> <li>Primary Research on Boys and Men of Color</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City of Philadelphia, Mayor's Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity</li> <li>Community Asthma Prevention Program (CAPP)</li> <li>The Family League of Baltimore</li> <li>New Jersey Family Planning League</li> <li>Ohio MHAS Be Aware</li> <li>Prince George County Homeless Youth</li> <li>Project LAUNCH</li> <li>Primary Research on Boys and Men of Color</li> <li>Thomas Jefferson University</li> <li>Georgia Family Planning System</li> </ul>
Workshops/Technical Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bronx Community Health Network, inc. (BCHN) - "Engaging Communities To Improve Health Outcomes. The Keys to Community Outreach" - All Day Workshop</li> <li>Johns Hopkins University's Urban Health Institute - "Healing Together: Community-Level Trauma - It's Causes, Consequences, and Solutions." - Panelist for Social Determinants of Health Symposium</li> <li>2015 Wisconsin Youth Services Conferences - "Communications and Outreach to a Digitally-Connected Generation: Countering Lack of Trust and Disrespect Using Trauma-Informed Approaches." - Opening Keynote and Workshop</li> <li>PA Nutrition Education Network 2015 Annual Conference - "Promoting Physical Activity &amp; Nutrition to Prevent Obesity in Communities of Color" - Workshop</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CDC's Division of Community Health (DCH) - Engaging Diverse Audiences - FHI360 Panel Discussion on Best Practices on Engaging Diverse and Hard-to-Reach Audiences Around Community Health Efforts.</li> <li>EDC - SAMSHA CAPT Health Disparities Webinar - Strategies for Reaching and Engaging Community Members and Building Capacity to Address Behavioral Health Disparities.</li> <li>National Park Service's (NPS) Annual Little Rock Central High School National Symposium - "Social Conscience Gathering" - MEE Workshop and Panel on Mental Health and Social Justice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>South Carolina Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy - 2016 Annual Summer Institute - MEE's Trauma-Informed Communications Workshop.</li> <li>GCAPP - Annual DHS Foster Care Conference - Keynote on MEE's Foster Care Research.</li> <li>DC Department of Human Services (DHS) - 2016 Capacity Building Symposium - MEE's Trauma-Informed Communications Workshop.</li> <li>The California Endowment (TCE) - "Heard Not Judged" National Webinar - Presentation on MEE's National Boys &amp; Men of Color (BMOC) Research.</li> </ul>
UrbanTrends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Urban Trends Collection: Helping Foster Youth Transition to Independent Adulthood</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Urban Trends Collection: Tackling America's Opioid Epidemic from the Ground Up</li> </ul>



## 2015 Projects

## U.S. Department of Education/ASHLIN Management Group



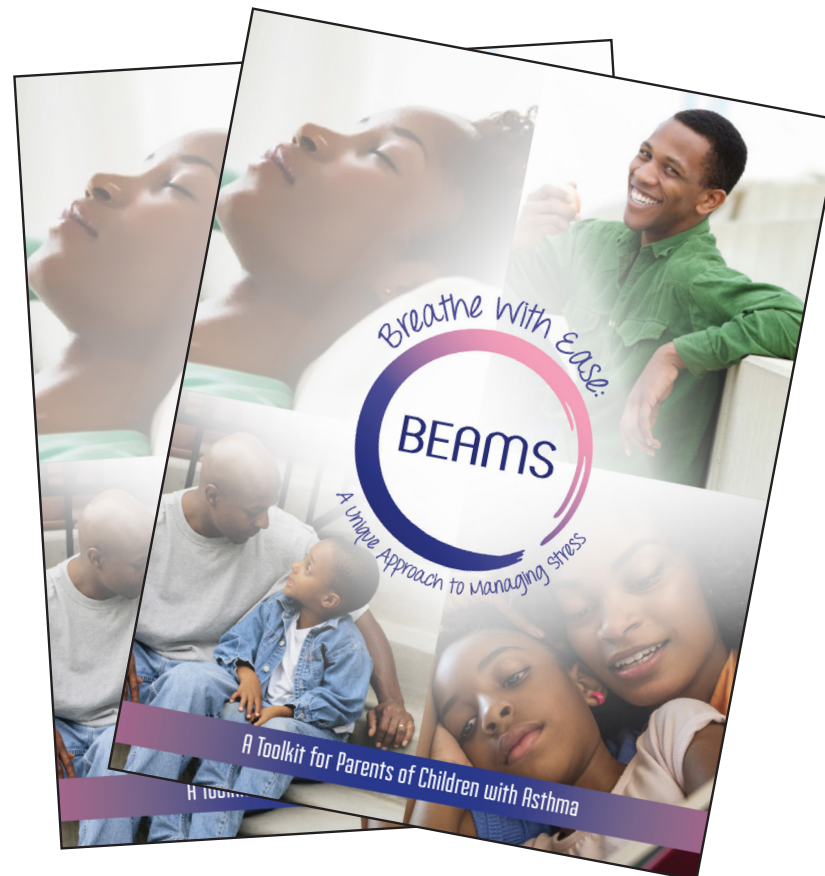
### Addressing Stigma of Career and Technical Education (CTE)

MEE was part of a project team contracted by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE) to perform data collection/formative research, conduct analysis and disseminate the resulting information about Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs to the public. The project was managed by the Ashlin Group.

The specific purpose of the project was to collect and analyze information to address the stigma currently associated with CTE and develop materials supporting a dissemination campaign.

MEE's role in the project was to develop a plan for disseminating the information that was collected and analyzed in the research phase of the project. MEE took findings from the two phases of research, and adapted them for the primary target audiences (including CTE teachers and instructors, CTE stakeholders, parents/students and the general public). MEE was commissioned to develop new CTE information using communication strategies and tactics that are specific to and effective with key audiences of CTE stakeholders and advocates. Dissemination activities planned included a print (digital) toolkit for CTE dissemination partners; a series of discussion groups/webinars; social media outreach and collaboration with national groups aimed at disseminating project information. Dissemination content included recommendations (messages) for our dissemination partners to share with their network of education colleagues, employers, parents and student.

## Asthma Intervention Materials for Children's National Health System



### Children's National Health System in Washington, DC

MEE worked with a researcher at Children's National Health System in Washington, DC, one of the nation's leading children's hospitals, to create culturally-specific materials for an intervention study with parents of children with asthma. The BEAMS study (Breathe With Ease: A Unique Approach to Managing Stress) provided parents with information on how to reduce their own stress so they could be more present and supportive in managing their child's asthma. MEE designed the branding and logos for the intervention study, then, using content approved by the Principal Investigator, provided the design and layout for a series of materials used in four intervention sessions with African-American parents recruited for the study.

## PHL Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual Disability Services



### Behavioral Health Screening Campaign

MEE was hired as a consultant to the City of Philadelphia's Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services (DBHIDS) to develop messages and engagement strategies to increase the use and impact of mental health screenings offered through its Healthy Minds Philly ("Check Up From the Neck Up") initiative. DBHIDS launched the public health initiative as a Web-based tool in 2012; it added community-based mental health kiosks to the project in 2014. MEE was hired to improve how African Americans who live in under-resourced areas of Philadelphia perceive psychological health and wellness, in order to reduce stigmas and changing community norms.

MEE provided communications and design support to make promotional materials for the initiative more culturally relevant. Services included designing new iconography and campaign slogans; developing print materials for grassroots community outreach; designing a dedicated landing page (with its own URL) to lead African American visitors to a wellness screening page; creating social media templates and potential hashtags; hosting a "Chat & Chew" small-group information session to introduce the campaign to members of MEE's Community Network and other local opinion leaders; and recommending content that would be useful to those dealing with high levels of stress and trauma, including links to events that promote protective factors and allow residents to connect with positive people in their community.



## Drexel University, Office of University and Community Partnerships



### Promoting Early Childhood Education in Philadelphia's Promise Zone

MEE was hired by Drexel University to develop the branding and community engagement strategies to support an outreach and awareness campaign for the West Philadelphia Early Childhood Education Initiative (WPECE). The WPECE is a Drexel-led collaboration of social service and education agencies and community stakeholders working to create higher quality early childhood education options for students and families in the 19104 zip code of West Philadelphia. The area has been designated as a Promise Zone by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The campaign, called West Philadelphia Action for Early Learning, aims to build awareness around the importance of early childhood education; strengthen the capacity of childcare centers, Head Starts and Pre-Ks; support Pre-K and K-3 instruction with a strong emphasis on literacy; and more effectively link early childhood education centers to local kindergartens to ensure a seamless transition, so that children and parents are better prepared for school.

MEE's primary responsibility was to create a brand that supports the Initiative's goals and objectives based on a strong understanding of the target audience. MEE developed all campaign messaging, branding and materials, including a campaign logo, campaign themes, slogans and outreach materials. MEE also developed a comprehensive communications plan that Drexel and its community partners implemented for the Initiative.



## City of Philadelphia, Mayor's Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity



### Promoting Early Childhood Education in Philadelphia

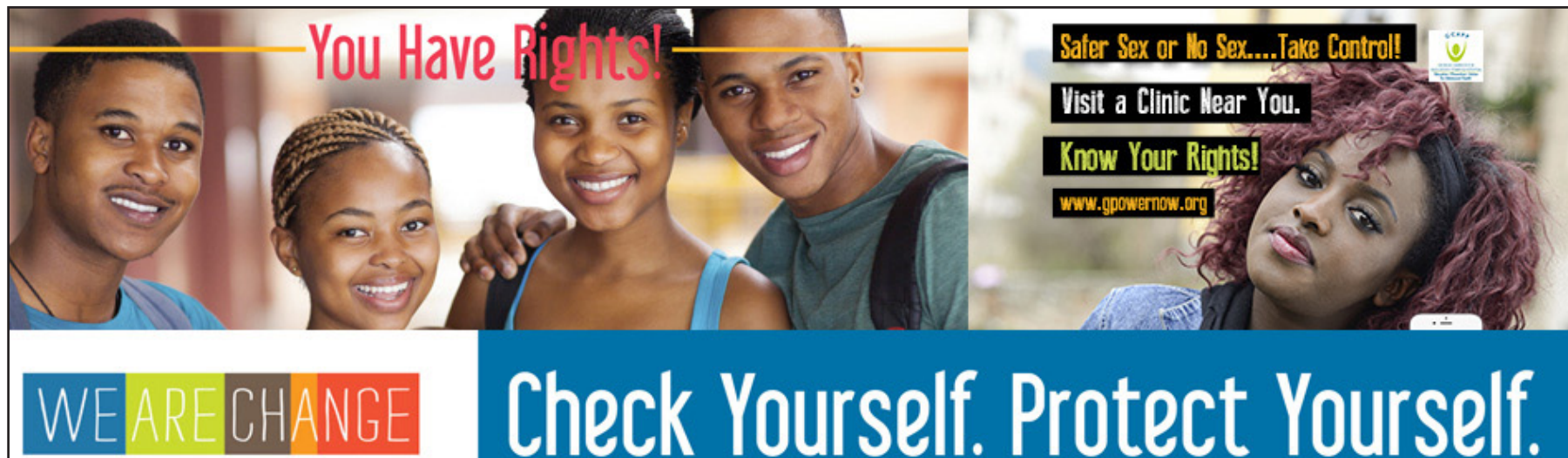
MEE was hired by the City of Philadelphia, Mayor's Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity (CEO) to conduct audience research with parents of children under the age of 5 and develop a Communications Plan that will inform the 2016 implementation of an integrated marketing, education and outreach effort designed to raise awareness of the importance of high-quality early learning for Philadelphia's children. The goal of the campaign is to engage parents, families and key community members in Philadelphia to prioritize the importance of quality early learning experiences and ensure that all Philadelphia's children enter school prepared to learn and succeed.

MEE conducted five focus groups in order to serve as the foundation of the message development of the campaign. The information gleaned from these groups informed the development of draft print materials that were subsequently tested in four additional focus groups.

MEE's Communication Plan addressed how to: (1) introduce and increase awareness of high-quality early childhood education as a key to a child's development; (2) educate parents about how to assess the quality of child care programs; and (3) encourage them to choose high quality early learning. A particular focus of MEE's plan was to raise city-wide awareness and penetrate individual neighborhoods across the city at the grassroots level in order to engage and persuade parents whose children are not currently enrolled in high-quality child care programs to make better informed choices.



## Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Power and Potential



### Promoting gPower App to Reduce Teen Pregnancies

Over three summer months in 2015 (July-September), MEE used its proven, evidence-based community-engagement models to help the Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Power & Potential (GCAPP) promote gPower, its free mobile phone app, in Augusta, GA. The community-engagement work supported Richmond County's "We Are Change" Initiative. This community has one of the highest teen pregnancy rates in the state. The app is designed to give teens a convenient source of information on sexual health, including locations for free or low-cost clinic services.

MEE's CATs (Community Action Team) Model leveraged a corps of MEE-trained youth to engage their peers and share the word about how the app can be used to explore options for birth control and STD prevention, and to anonymously rate their experiences at local clinics. CATs members also leveraged their social media networks to promote gPower, along with conducting MEE's traditional community outreach in high-traffic areas frequented by youth.

CATs outreach was implemented in two phases. In the first phase, MEE focused on making more young people (and their parents) in Augusta aware of the gPower app and getting them to download it to their smartphones for use as an important resource supporting sexual health. The second phase of outreach focused on driving foot traffic to four (4) selected reproductive and sexual health clinics where Augusta youth can receive services to

meet their needs. Incentives (free movie passes) were used to persuade and reward youth who visited a clinic for a tour or to receive services.

In addition to the on-the-ground, peer-to-peer outreach, MEE leveraged digital and social media platforms to support both phases (content areas) of outreach. Digital ads, targeted by zip code, were produced "by and for" Augusta youth and placed locally on the music-streaming service Pandora (popular with gPower's target audience). In addition, CATs members used their personal social networks to promote the gPower app, using the campaign hashtag #WeAreChange and #gPowerNow.

One of the key lessons learned in this campaign was the need to directly engage parents of teens, in order to help them communicate effectively with their children about values and expectations related to sex and sexuality. In some communities, counter-productive norms about not talking about sex in order to "shield" them from exposure and temptation, must be addressed.



[Click Here for Campaign Radio Ads](#)



## Louisiana Department of Health



### SIDS Risk Reduction & Safe Sleep Social Marketing Campaign

For the fifth consecutive year, MEE has worked with the Louisiana Department of Health (DOH) to implement a state-wide, multimedia and community outreach campaign to promote safe sleeping environments for infants. The goal of the campaign is to lower the risk of SIDS and infant deaths resulting from unsafe sleep practices, with a special emphasis on targeting lower-income African-American women, ages 18-29.

MEE developed an array of campaign materials including postcards, resource flyers, radio ads, billboards and a Website that features an interactive, online tutorial designed to help parents and caregivers understand how to provide a safe sleep space for their infant. In addition to disseminating over 285,000 print materials to campaign partners across the state, MEE conducted a series of community mobilization activities designed to garner campaign support from service providers.

Community canvassing efforts have targeted day care centers, hair salons and other community-based organizations and retailers that cater to African-American women and families in specific zip codes. MEE has also conducted several professional development workshops and webinars on effective communications, audience research and community mobilization for more than 100 service providers from DOH and its partnering organizations.





## New Jersey Family Planning League



### Communications Plan to Engage Parents to Have “The Talk”

The New Jersey Family Planning League (NJFPL) contracted with MEE in September 2015 to develop a Communications Plan for its Community Approaches to Reducing Sexually Transmitted Diseases (CARS) project, being conducted in Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem Counties. The New Jersey Family Planning League manages a network of high-quality family planning and reproductive health services for women, men and adolescents.

MEE’s work in developing a Communications Plan included: holding planning meetings with the NJFPL team to define the primary target audience(s) and desired outcomes; conducting an on-site, in-depth Communications and Planning Workshop with key NJFPL staff; reviewing the findings from six previously-conducted focus groups with local adolescents and young adults; and using the first three steps to develop, recommend and present several “Point B’s” (what NJFPL desired as a “do-able” STD prevention outcome) for a social marketing effort. In December, MEE presented the final Communications Plan, with parents as the primary target audience to NJFPL. The Plan also outlined messaging strategies, potential communication channels, deliverables and outcomes for a campaign urging “active talking” by parents and caregivers of ‘tweens and teens in the three counties. MEE reflected the Community Advisory Board’s preference that attention should be focused on engaging parents to promote more dialogue with their pre-teen/teen children about their values and expectations related to sex/sexuality, with the ultimate goal of reducing STIs among residents in the targeted communities.

## NStar Entertainment



### The “Next Generation” Model for Distributing Theatrical-Quality Urban Films

NStar Entertainment is set to produce, market and distribute its first theatrically-released film in 2017. “Deputy 13” (the working title), an urban horror film, will launch NStar’s innovative production, marketing and distribution models. It is a full-length feature for theatrical distribution on 400-500 screens in the Top 60 urban markets across the country. The target audiences for the movie are primarily older White teens and young urban adults.

An early film treatment/rough script of “Deputy 13” was tested in late 2014/early 2015 with older teens and young adults of color in Philadelphia and Los Angeles who are movie fans and the “sweet spot” among potential audiences. The testing process identified strengths of the concept, potential areas of improvement, and areas needing “clarification or punch;” feedback from those focus groups informed the writer-director’s (Darin Scott) creative process, allowing him to enhance the script for testing in order to determine whether NStar would greenlight the film. The resulting full script was then tested with young people in Atlanta; rating scores averaging 9 out of 10 verified that the changes met audience expectations.



[www.mee productions.com/nstar](http://www.mee productions.com/nstar)

## Opioid Misuse Prevention Program: Behavioral Health System Baltimore



### Preventing Opioid Misuse in Baltimore

Behavioral Health System Baltimore (BHSB) selected MEE to develop a Strategic Communications Plan to support implementation of its Opioid Misuse Prevention Program grant from the state of Maryland. MEE leveraged two decades of audience insights to help identify the most effective concepts, messages and executions for raising awareness among hard-to-reach, targeted audiences and community residents in Baltimore. This was combined with current qualitative research with a subset of the population (young African American males, ages 18-25) to inform the recommendations in the Plan.

Focus group participants bemoaned the lack of resources and things to do in their community; to them, it feels like “everything is gone.” They sorely missed the feeling of a non-judgmental, supporting community that cares about them, indicating that they want to hear affirming messages from adults (including their families) who believe in their ability to achieve their full potential. Young adults also repeatedly said that if we want them to cope differently (than using drugs), they need real alternatives and a way to connect with positive places and people who can help them develop their skills and talents, and exceed expectations.

Based on these and other findings, MEE presented a menu of options for a six-month, culturally relevant public health intervention (based on SAMSHA's strategic prevention framework). Recommended strategies focused on identifying and promoting positive, alternative activities to which young people could be connected. MEE also recommended as target audiences for the campaign, the grassroots community-based organizations, trusted agencies and programs and faith-based institutions where Baltimore families already go for services. MEE also suggested targeting individual community adults (“old heads”) who can be a non-judgmental and supportive presence for Baltimore's youth. The Creative Team developed iconography, print materials and transit/outdoor ads for the campaign.

## Primary Research on Boys and Men of Color (BMOC) for The California Endowment and The Open Society Foundations



### Helping BMOC Go From Surviving to Thriving

In 2015, MEE completed its national, community-based participatory audience research with young males of color in nine U.S. cities, “Heard, Not Judged – Insights into the Talents, Realities and Needs of Young Men of Color.” We got 18 to 24 year-old males of African and Hispanic descent to open up about their lives — the everyday challenges they face, their use of technology, who matters to them (and who doesn't) and the need for access to jobs, education, mentoring and health care. The research was co-funded by The California Endowment and The Open Society Foundations.

Focus groups were held in Philadelphia, Oakland, Los Angeles, Long Beach, New York City (Bronx), Baltimore, Atlanta, New Orleans and Detroit. All participants were in the lowest 20% in income of the U.S. population, with average annual household incomes of less than \$40,000.

MEE's audience research validated that a brand-driven, private-sector approach could help BMOC succeed by developing their “opportunity-finding” skills and giving them ongoing, daily access to a digital platform and associated offline resources will connect BMOC to a diverse range of community touch-points and services mobilized to challenge their minds and support them in evolving from surviving to thriving.

The research process allowed MEE to test the brand architecture (i.e., key features, functional and emotional benefits) of a branded, digital platform and to determine if and how it resonates with BMOC. It also enabled MEE to determine the platform's “meaningful difference” and support the development of a marketing plan designed to attract and retain African American and Latino BMOC subscribers.



[www.HeardNotJudged.com](http://www.HeardNotJudged.com)



## UrbanTrends Newsletter Vol. 24

### Helping Foster Youth Transition to Independent Adulthood



MEE has conducted focus groups directly with transitioning foster youth ages 18-22, along with one-on-one interviews with subject-matter experts in the field. This has allowed MEE to gain a comprehensive understanding of where young people are now (Point A) when it comes to making choices for their future after foster care. That knowledge can be used to inform the development of persuasive appeals that will help all of us move youth to the desired "Point B" (more youth making informed choices, including choosing transitioning programs and services as they turn 18).

### Helping Foster Youth Transition to Independent Adulthood

MEE has conducted a substantial amount of focus group research with youth of color. We have also developed and implemented education, awareness and mobilization campaigns for thousands of urban youth and low-income young adults who have experienced sustained trauma, both inside and outside of the child welfare systems designed to protect them. In this issue of UrbanTrends, we share some lessons learned and some possible ways forward in changing the life outcomes for young men and women exiting our nation's foster care system.

Young adults from foster care backgrounds have told MEE about the institutional trauma they experience – multiple placements, lack of stability in schools and living arrangements and high turnover in their assigned social workers. Yet, every year, hundreds of thousands of foster youth of color in America turn 18 and may "age out" or must make a decision about their next steps in the foster care system.

Transitioning foster youth need information and guidance in order to make smart choices about what programs and services can make their transition into independent adulthood as smooth as possible. Without intervention and support services, along with ongoing adult involvement and guidance, children who age out of this system face uncertain futures.

# UrbanTrends

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**MEE**  
Mental Health Education & Empowerment

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## Virginia Foundation For Healthy Youth



### Increasing Access to Grants for Small Non-Profits in Virginia

MEE was hired by the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth (VFHY) for a second time to conduct a series of community-mobilization and promotional activities to promote its Y Street Grants Program to non-profit organizations in Northern Virginia. Grantees receive funding to implement the Y Street Youth Initiative through their organizations and tackle the issues of tobacco and obesity prevention, while also helping to create youth advocates.

MEE's efforts targeted institutions and organizations in and around Suffolk, Chesapeake, Chesterfield, Colonial Heights, Harrisonburg, Charlottesville, Fairfax and Alexandria. The goal was to encourage and motivate local organizations to submit Y Street grant applications. MEE also leveraged its relationships with members of its Community Network (CN) statewide to promote availability of the grants.

MEE invited eligible organizations to attend a webinar where they were introduced to VFHY and the funding opportunity, as well as request individual phone support so they could be taken step-by-step through the application process. MEE identified and engaged 77 organizations that were both qualified and expressed interest in applying for the Y Street Grant.



## Philadelphia Department of Public Health



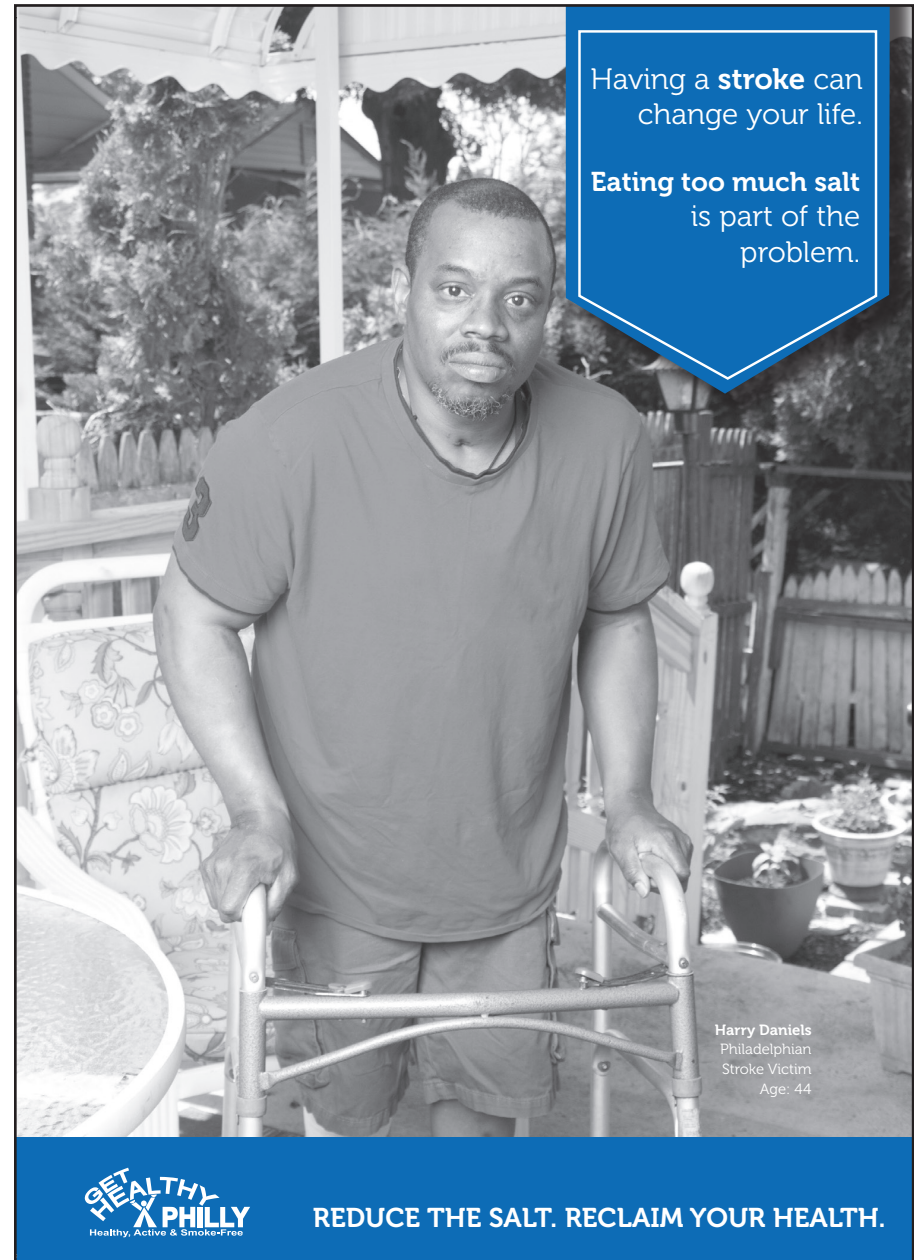
### "Get Healthy Philly" by Reducing Salt Consumption

For the Get Healthy Philly Initiative, MEE continued work (Year 3) to produce and place elements of a media campaign for the Philadelphia Department of Public Health to reduce salt consumption primarily among low-income African American adult residents — especially salt that comes from restaurant and packaged foods — as part of an effort to lower the risk of high blood pressure and stroke.

MEE developed the media campaign strategy with the Health Department, produced and implemented the campaign —including media placement and social media/digital advertising and posts. The campaign included MEE-developed messages for radio, public transit, and print publications. Other activities included edited short testimonial videos aired on the campaign website; developed small print materials and social media; and mail outreach/fulfillment to Philadelphia physicians from a list acquired from the Philadelphia County Medical Society.

The media campaign began June 2014 and ended June 2015. It focused on African Americans, 35 to 55 years of age, and the slogan was: "Reduce the Salt. Reclaim Your Health." Research showed that Philadelphia residents underestimated the link between excess salt and stroke and that many people had family members or friends whose lives were adversely changed by a stroke. High blood pressure affects nearly 40 percent of adults in Philadelphia and almost half of African Americans. Stroke affects nearly 16,000 Philadelphians annually and is the third leading cause of death.

Campaign media strongly connected high salt consumption to high blood pressure and stroke. MEE recruited Philadelphia stroke victims via the MEE Community Network, who shared the story that connected their stroke, in part, to their poor eating habits. This campaign alerted Philly residents to the risks of eating too much salt and provide them with practical tips on how to maintain healthy lifestyles. The campaign highlighted simple changes that can make a big difference, such as eating more fresh fruits and vegetables or asking for low salt options when you eat out.



[Click Here for the Campaign Radio Ads](#)



## 2015/2016 Projects



## African American Network Against Alzheimer's



### Raising Awareness of Alzheimer's in the African American Community

For a second consecutive year, MEE was hired by the African American Network Against Alzheimer's (AANAA) to help raise community awareness and promote the award-winning play *Forget Me Not*. This year AANAA took the play to Atlanta, Chicago, Houston, Indianapolis and Tampa. Written by Garrett Davis, the goal of the play is to raise awareness of Alzheimer's disease, especially in the Black community. The play shows just how far-reaching a disease like Alzheimer's can be, affecting not just the immediate family, but also friends and those in the community.

MEE utilized its Community Network (CN) partnerships to conduct a series of community mobilization and outreach activities, along with e-mail blasts to CN members to drive attendance to the play and increase awareness of AANAA. MEE's promotional activities resulted in 1,088 ticket requests in Atlanta, 590 requests in Tampa, 1,005 requests for two shows in Chicago, 397 requests in Indianapolis and 615 requests in Houston. In 2016, MEE will continue to work with AANAA on a national tour for *Forget Me Not* in the following cities:

- Miami
- Daytona Beach
- Milwaukee
- Los Angeles
- Charlotte
- Cincinnati

## Engaging Males of Color (EMOC) in Mental Wellness for DBHIDS



### Engaging a Diverse Cross-Section of Males of Color

MEE supported Philadelphia's Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual Disability Services (DBHIDS) in its efforts to promote its EMOC (Engaging Men of Color) Initiative. MEE created messages and materials to reach and engage a diverse cross-section of males of color, as the city seeks to reduce stigmas and misinformation and to improve mental health services and delivery for this sub-population of local residents.

The target audience includes those who are homeless, disconnected from family and social supports and formerly incarcerated. In addition to customizing previous MEE materials for use in this new campaign, MEE created an iconic logo for the initiative and promotional radio spots (including placement and tracking on selected stations), along with culturally relevant print materials (postcards, display poster) to support community outreach and event promotion. The materials development process was supported by informal qualitative research with local African American men.



## The Family League of Baltimore



### Promoting Family Literacy in Baltimore

Early childhood development continued to be an on going area of focus for MEE as we were hired by The Family League of Baltimore and The Family Literacy Coalition to conduct audience research with parents and caregivers of children ages 4 and under to better understand what parents and caregivers are doing in the home to help kindergarten age children in Baltimore get ready for school.

MEE also conducted in-depth interviews with service providers who work closely with families in Baltimore. The goal of the interviews was to gain their insight on the attitudes and beliefs towards quality parent/child interactions and when a child is ready to learn.

The findings from both the audience research and in-depth interviews will be used to inform The Family League's 2016 citywide communications campaign designed to promote: 1) quality interactions (talk, sing, read, play and draw) between parents/caregivers and their children under 4 years old; and 2) the importance of enrolling children in pre-K or early childhood programs and attending those programs regularly.



## Louisiana Healthy Homes and Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program



### Raising Awareness of Lead Poisoning Prevention Across Louisiana

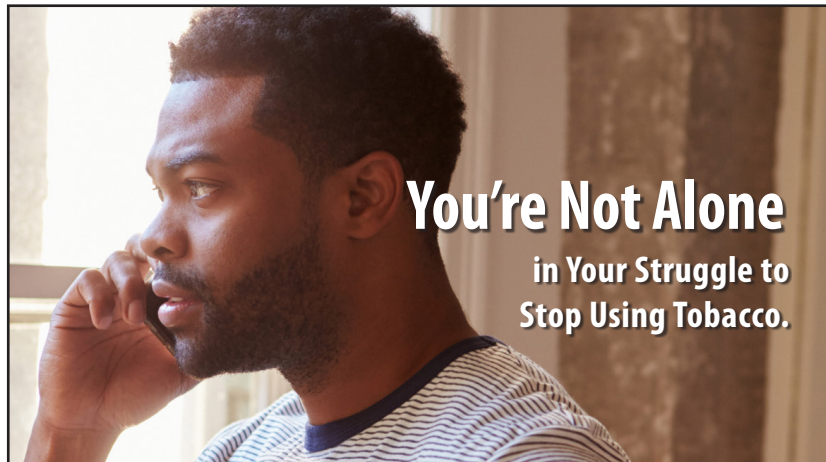
Lead poisoning is one of the top childhood environmental health problems facing children in Louisiana and there is a lack of lead screening being performed by medical providers in many parishes across the state. To address these issues, MEE is working with LHHCLPPP to design and implement a Lead Prevention Campaign that provides parents and caregivers with information and resources to create lead free zones in their homes and ensure that their children are not at risk for lead poisoning. The campaign, which will target the parishes around New Orleans and Monroe, also focuses on encouraging medical providers to screen every child for lead exposure at least once by age one.

In 2015, MEE developed print materials targeting both parents and medical providers and conducted a series of Chat & Chew information sessions and webinars with service providers in New Orleans and Monroe in order to create a community-based network of providers that will support the campaign and motivate the community members they service to get more information about lead prevention and maintaining a healthy home.

In 2016, MEE will develop additional print materials as well as a 30-second radio ad that will be placed on both traditional radio stations and Pandora. MEE will continue building community-level support for the campaign and will disseminate campaign materials to campaign partners in the targeted areas.



## Louisiana Public Health Institute



### Promoting the Louisiana Tobacco Quitline in Shreveport

MEE was hired by the Louisiana Public Health Institute to serve as the primary creative developer and media strategy planning and buying resource for their African American Male Cessation pilot campaign in Shreveport. The campaign will primarily target African American males, ages 35 – 59, who know why they shouldn't smoke or who want to quit. The campaign will let them know that they have support available to them by highlighting the state's resources that can help them be successful.

MEE's campaign will promote and raise awareness of the Louisiana Tobacco Quitline (1-800-QUIT-NOW) and the QuitWithUsLa.org website where users can receive Tobacco Cessation Trust services, such as: consultation with a tobacco cessation specialist; free self-help guides, tools and support materials; referrals to face-to-face programs in their areas; and materials for smokeless tobacco users. The campaign will also deliver the message that these and other resources are user-friendly, culturally specific and can be trusted.

MEE's campaign will be delivered through print, transit, radio, digital and social media platforms, such as Facebook, YouTube, Pandora and Instagram.



[Click Here for the Campaign Radio Ads](#)

## Philadelphia Health Management Corporation



### Youth Activists Promoting Teen Pregnancy and STD Prevention

MEE was hired by the Philadelphia Health Management Corporation (PHMC) to utilize its peer-to-peer communication expertise to manage the Youth Activist Network (YAN) component of PHMC's Plain Talk Philadelphia, a community-level, multi-component teen pregnancy prevention and sexually-transmitted disease prevention initiative.

MEE will work with youth from targeted zip codes in North Philadelphia to develop and implement interactive peer-led workshops and produce social media content focused on reducing teen's sexual risks. In addition to training the YAN peer-to-peer outreach, MEE will also work with PHMC to create a year-long youth development curriculum that the YAN will complete over the duration of the project. The curriculum will focus on three primary areas: Personal Health; Personal Development; and Community Involvement. The goal is to develop a curriculum that can be packaged and shared with organizations across the country interested in implementing a comprehensive youth development and education program.



## Project LAUNCH (Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children's Health)



### Raising Awareness of the Emotional Well-Being of Louisiana's Children

MEE continued its work in Louisiana as we were hired by Project LAUNCH to design and implement a communications campaign in Lafayette, Vermillion and Acadia parishes that encourages parents to be more aware of their children's emotional and mental health and provides resources to help empower them to improve their children's overall well-being.

In 2015, MEE focused on working with Project LAUNCH to define the target audiences and begin the message development process. In 2016, MEE will develop and produce the campaign print materials and radio ad. MEE will also conduct a series of Chat & Chew information sessions with service providers in order to garner their support for and participation in the campaign. MEE will also utilize its Community Network partnerships to conduct a series of community mobilization and outreach activities designed to expose both the campaign messaging and materials to parents and caregivers on a grassroots level.



**PROJECT  
LAUNCH**  
LOUISIANA

[Click Here for Campaign Radio Ads](#)

## GCAPP Second Chance Homes Network



### Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Power and Potential

In a second major project with the Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Power and Potential (GCAPP), MEE was hired to help the organization promote its Second Chance Homes Network. These communal-living sites provide housing and a wide range of supports to pregnant and parenting young mothers (ages 14-20) who need a safe place to stay. MEE is developing and implementing a digital-driven campaign targeting Georgia social services professionals who make placements of former foster youth and others living in at-risk environments. As a foundation, MEE made site visits to several of the homes, interviewed staff, conducted focus groups with social workers and talked to young women who had benefited from the GCAPP Second Chance Homes experience.

For the campaign, MEE has created campaign iconography (including a logo and slogan) and call-to-action; several print materials, custom Web landing pages, a series of virtual tour and interview videos; social media content and advertising; along with a series of html e-mails that social workers can share within their peer network. The campaign goal is to build and expand a database of contacts within the social services community in Georgia, by collecting relevant e-mail addresses and "likes" to the campaign Facebook page.



[www.gcapp.org/secondchance](http://www.gcapp.org/secondchance)

## Philadelphia Department of Public Health



### TIPS Tobacco Prevention Campaign (using CDC's Tips from Former Smokers Ads)

During the winter and spring of 2015, MEE continued the third year of Tobacco Prevention efforts with the Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH). MEE developed and implemented a media plan to reach low-income Philadelphian adult smokers effectively and efficiently through placement of final ads/messages in appropriate mediums. The objective of the 2015 media campaign was to promote quitting among Philadelphian adult smokers through a mass media campaign targeting low-income adults (ages 30-50).

MEE provided planning, ad modification, media buying (print, transit and Cable TV) and account management services. These ads ran on XFINITY/Comcast over 12 cable stations: VH1, BET, Comcast Sports, FX, True TV, Cartoon, Discovery, History, TV Land (TVL), SyFy, Entertainment and Lifetime. Final television ads were adapted from CDC's "Tips from Former Smokers" campaign ads that were rotated on Cable TV. The campaign primarily used the ads called "Cessation Tips," "Roosevelt" and edited a short video based on a former city employee called "Susan McTamney." Transit ads were also developed based on the Tips theme.

MEE also complete any other activities required by PDPH to ensure effective and appropriate communications campaigns including editing short videos of retailers and ex-smokers. MEE also developed a series of small print to support campaign activities such as brochures, table tents and posters.



### Break The Cycle Campaign using Tobacco Industry Denormalization (TID) Messages

MEE is pleased to be continuing our relationship with the PDPH in the fourth year of the Tobacco Campaign. In the first phase of FY16, we will continue the TIPS campaign for several months on encouraging smokers to quit and make free help available.

As we do so, MEE will develop a new campaign effort focusing on tobacco industry (Big Tobacco) marketing and past practices. We will highlight that youth, racial and ethnic minorities, and low-income communities are particularly vulnerable due to targeted Big Tobacco marketing and advertising practices while historically denying the addictive nature of their products.

The "Big Tobacco" campaign will be implemented in 4Q 2016. Our objective is to educate the public—particularly young adults and parents—about the tobacco industry practices that promote tobacco use and tobacco use disorders, and promote tobacco-free norms and lifestyles, including smoking cessation, smoke-free homes and cars, and prevention of initiation among youth and young adults.

An anti-tobacco focus is an effective strategy for reducing prevalence among youth and young adults and smoking initiation among youth; increasing intention to quit among youth; and increasing anti-industry norms.

Break the Cycle News Article





## "WE ARE!" BLACK HISTORY MONTH EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

### Black History Month Celebration on Social Media

MEE celebrated Black History Month with its "We Are!" educational series. MEE's Facebook and Twitter followers were engaged throughout the month through interesting videos highlighting the accomplishments of great Black inventors. MEE's video feature on great Black inventors was inspired by t-shirts originally designed by the late Mary Juzang, mother of MEE's president Ivan Juzang.

MEE's "We Are!" series also featured clips from our documentary, "First People, Our People: Ancient Egypt Revealed," a collaboration with the late Dr. Asa G. Hilliard, III. The film featured excerpts of illuminating lectures by the late Dr. Hilliard, who separates historical fact from fiction about Ancient Kemet and ancient African civilizations. Dr. Hilliard felt that the passing down of African descended values and culture from generation to generation was critically important. The "We Are!" series is MEE's way of contributing to that dialogue.





## 2016 Projects



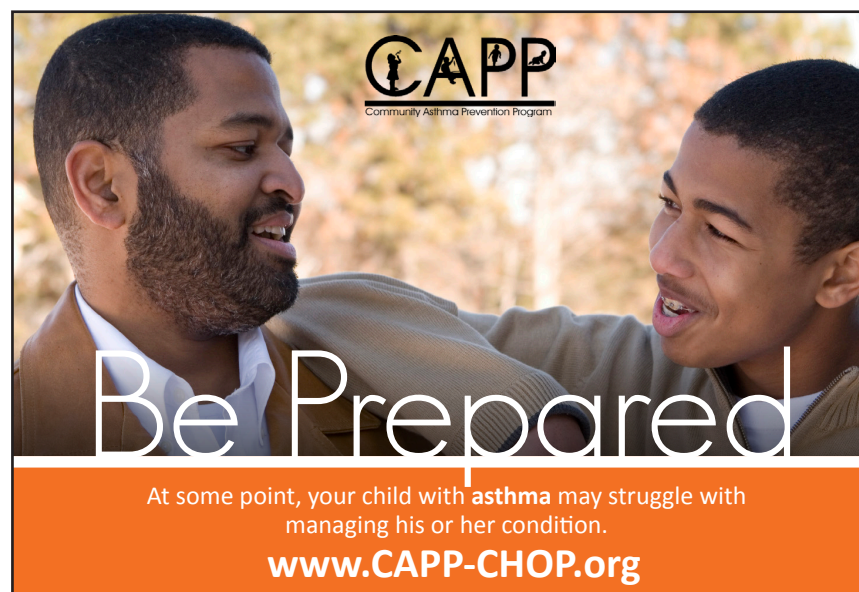
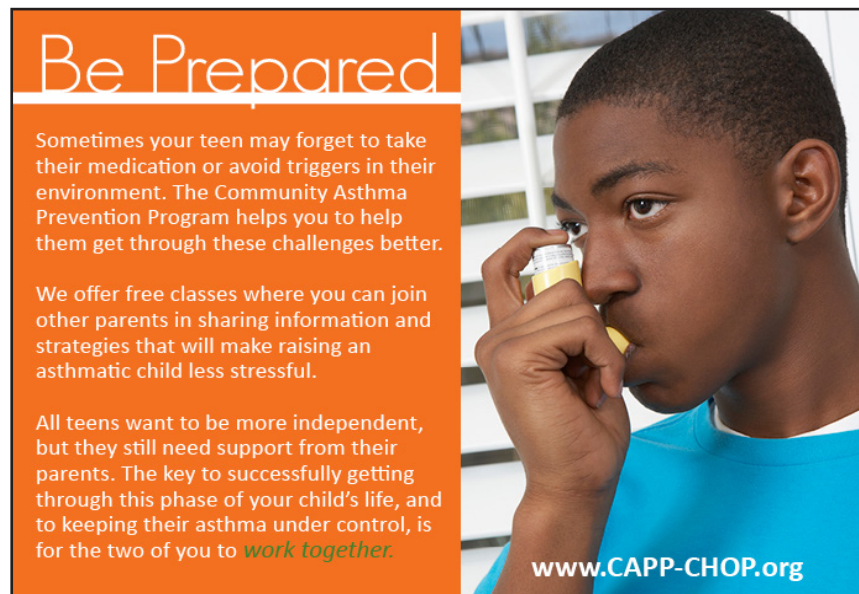
## Community Asthma Prevention Program for Children's Hospital of Philadelphia



### Audience Research for an Asthma Community-Education Program

MEE is conducting audience research to test, brand and develop community-engagement materials to support the Community Asthma Prevention Program (CAPP) at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. Persuasive content will be drafted for outreach and education materials (including potential social-media messages) targeting Philadelphia-area teens with asthma, along with parents/caregivers of these teens.

A selection of the message concepts will be further developed into draft print and social media layouts that MEE will prepare as mock-ups for testing in separate focus groups with parents and teens. The goal of these focus groups will be to gather current data, knowledge, behavior and attitudes about asthma; social, health and environmental challenges facing the project's target population; along with determining the effectiveness of the MEE-drafted asthma education materials. We will also attempt to identify the best outlets for disseminating education materials. Information and feedback gathered in the groups will inform future CAPP activities and outreach.



## New Jersey Family Planning League



### Developing a Parent-Teen Engagement Campaign

In the second phase of work with the New Jersey Family Planning League (NJFPL), MEE will develop and produce a culturally-relevant outreach and education campaign targeting parents/caregivers of 'tweens and teens in Cumberland, Salem and Gloucester Counties. Using a multi-phased, "by and for" the audience approach, MEE will: plan and work with members of the NJFPL project team and Community Advisory Board; develop draft branding, messages and materials for audience testing; conduct focus groups with African-American and Latino parents to test potential messages and materials; update/revise the campaign plan, based on the audience research; refine and execute the final production of campaign branding, messages, digital/social media, outreach materials and a campaign website; and conduct final, pre-launch community engagement and mobilization activities to prepare the community for the launch of the campaign in early 2017.

The MEE Creative Team will leverage its content expertise to create specific messages/slogans and content for community and parent outreach. The focus groups, along with input from a Parent Council will help confirm "Point A"—where the target audience is now—related to their level of awareness, attitudes, perceptions and needs related to engaging their children in productive dialogue about sex and making decisions related to sexual and reproductive health. Community outreach activities will address key needs identified in the community and will be supported by media placement in 2017 on a predetermined schedule.

## Thomas Jefferson University



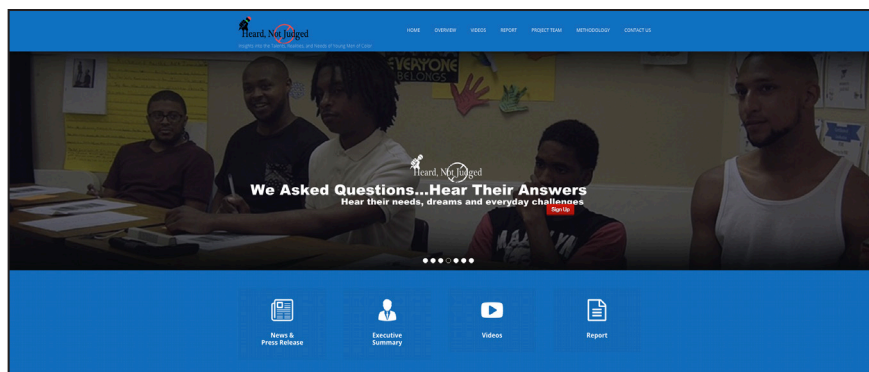
### Supporting a Research Study on Prostate Cancer & Intervention

MEE is working as a subcontractor with a research team based at Thomas Jefferson University on a three-year project, "A Neighborhood-Based Intervention to Reduce Prostate Cancer Disparities." MEE will be providing the team with additional capacity in qualitative audience research; development of branding components, culturally specific participant recruitment and prostate health education materials; grassroots community outreach and mobilization; and audiovisual/social media production. The project is funded by the U.S. Department of Defense through its Prostate Cancer Research Program. MEE will leverage its two decades of health communications research and expertise in low-income and underserved communities, relying on the medical experts to ensure accuracy and consistency of the educational information

The study will focus on Philadelphia neighborhoods with high incidences of prostate cancer among African-American men. One of MEE's major roles is to create culturally relevant study recruiting materials and to develop and adapt the various health message concepts and educational content (including videos) for the study's control and treatment groups. As a foundation for message development, MEE will conduct focus groups with African-American men in the targeted age range and demographic profile. Once the materials are completed, MEE will support the project with community-engagement tasks. MEE will also identify and engage community-based organizations, faith-based institutions and local small businesses in each target community in Philadelphia. We will introduce the upcoming study to key stakeholders in each community, via MEE's Chat & Chew small-group information sessions, to get their buy-in, along with referrals of good sources to recruit study participants. Work will begin in mid 2016 and continue through September 2018.



## BMOC Research Dissemination – The California Endowment and The Open Society Foundations



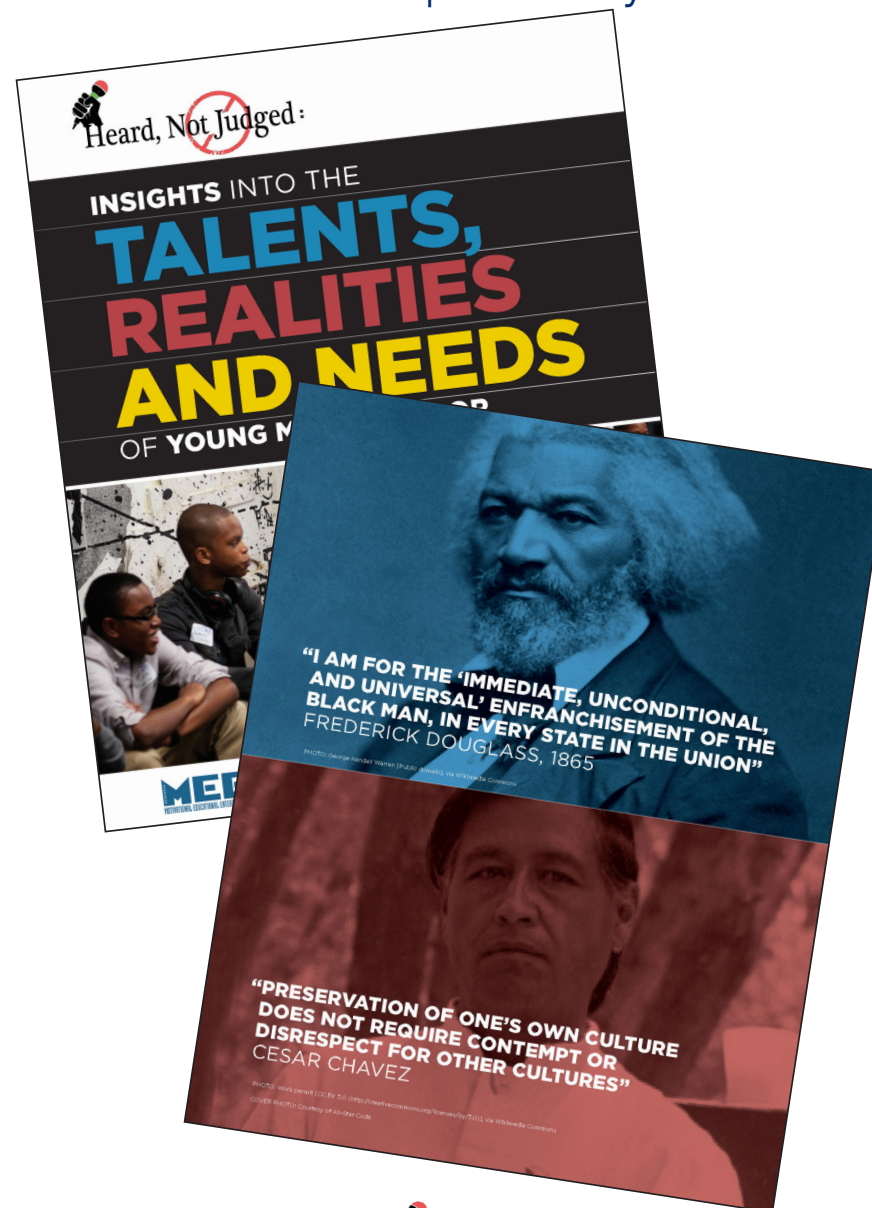
### Helping BMOC Go From Surviving to Thriving

In 2016, MEE received a small dissemination grant from the The California Endowment to create digital tools in order to share MEE's latest national, community-based participatory research with young adult males of color in nine U.S. cities. The "Heard, Not Judged – Insights into the Talents, Realities and Needs of Young Men of Color" report and video series show that the creative use of mobile digital technology could be an effective tool to help boys and young men of color (BMOC) overcome adversity and achieve their goals.

The grant will allow MEE to create and manage a custom Website ([www.HeardNotJudged.com](http://www.HeardNotJudged.com)) and Facebook page as repositories for this groundbreaking national research, its findings and recommendations. They vividly bring the voices of 18-24 year-old men of African and Hispanic descent to a national dialogue about their place in the "American Dream."

The public will be able to access details of the primary research on the daily challenges, dreams and paths to success for young boys and men of color via either digital portal. The website, social media, a press release and outreach to national organizations and leaders of the My Brothers' Keeper Alliance will continue to move the conversation forward at a national level about how to improve the life, social and health outcomes for boys and men of color. The online video series augments the written research findings and recommendations with the participants' own images and voices, bringing the research to life. The website and Facebook allow visitors a textured and nuanced look inside the worldview of young Black males, particularly at how to engage them as empowered drivers of their own success.

The research dissemination effort is aimed at reaching and engaging at least 5,000 unique visitors across the country. MEE will create a database of the collected e-mail addresses of individuals interested in receiving html e-mails or e-newsletters about the research, along with those who have "liked" MEE's Facebook page for the BMOC Research. At the end of this dissemination phase, the MEE team has projected a Phase 4 of the project, which will consist of developing of a full-blown prototype of a branded BMOC online/offline platform, based on information gathered in previous phases.



[www.HeardNotJudged.com](http://www.HeardNotJudged.com)

## UrbanTrends Newsletter Vol. 25



## Tackling America's Opioid Epidemic from the Ground Up

MEE's latest *UrbanTrends* issue explores public health issues that are impacting communities across the country. For example, CDC data shows that the opioid epidemic is getting worse. And since CDC's headway in reducing the supply side of this problem is meeting resistance, it makes sense to look at ways to reduce demand, through "upstream" prevention efforts. With dwindling public funding available, MEE believes that institutions have to be smart about how they spend their dollars. One article describes how community mobilizing is cost effective in penetrating hard-hit communities, along with being a culturally relevant approach to changing norms.

It's A Different World...Do It Early and Often...  
The Talking (Not the Sex)

The other main article in this issue focuses on the fact that many parents are not having those first, important conversations about sex with their teens — "The Talk" — at home. In this day and age, that's a dangerous proposition — and a missed opportunity. The article outlines the importance of parental input at the pre-teen juncture, when young people are starting to make choices and decisions that could have dire health and emotional consequences. Macro benefits of parental participation include creating a corps of potential advocates for sustained or increased funding for school- and community-based health clinics — and for making sure those clinics are held accountable for treating low-income patients with dignity and respect.

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