

Embracing Change

2008 ANNUAL REPORT

Philadelphia, PA • Los Angeles, CA • Washington, DC



take control.
Use the system. Don't let the system use you.

Register and Vote!

Courageous Men and Women Paved Our Way With Their Lives, So That Our Voice Can Be Heard Like Never Before.

Our Voice Counts. Now's the Chance.
Register by Oct. 6th and Vote in the Nov. 4th Election

The Blueprint for a Safer Philadelphia
Working Together In Unity, For Our Community



Violence in our city can't be solved by any one person or group. We all can be part of the solution.

To find out how your organization can collaborate,
call 1-888-576-BLUE (2583)
or visit www.PhilllyBlueprint.com

BLUEPRINT
Because organizations that really work... work together.



Taking Action
Against Childhood Obesity in Communities of Color

A Report to The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Childhood Obesity Communications Team

From MEE Productions Inc.
Executive Summary

MEE

411SAFE TEXT

The 411 On Safe Sex

This Week's Topic:
Want to Stay Safe? Talk About It.

So it's the final week of information for me. What last words do you have for me?

One of the best ways to take a positive step towards a healthy sexuality and a successful future is to get support from those around you. However, you have to communicate with them about the changes you want to make first. Are you comfortable asking your family and friends for guidance about important issues in your life, and going alone in return?

Sort of. It's just that my family doesn't always listen and it's not like they're perfect...

Getting them involved in your life can make them think about their own life as well. Plus, they've probably been through many of the same situations you find yourself in—learn from your elders, just as they learned from theirs!

You don't know my family... It's not always easy talking to my parents, siblings, and friends.

Understandable. Well, the experts have something to say about communicating with the people that mean the most to you as well. Focus on three things when you have a

Weekly Quiz

Question:
True or False:
You should get support from others to help you lead a safe, healthy, and successful life.

A: True
B: False

WIN PRIZES!!!
Text the Question number and answer to:
267-499-7166

Text should look like this:
Q1:A, B, C or D

Resource

This week's information was adapted from:
Iowa State University, University Extension (PHE Family Life 7)
www.iastate.edu



STRAIGHT UP
Men's HIV Initiative

**BE ON THE SAFE SIDE.
GET TESTED.**

1-800-985-AIDS
www.circleofcarephilly.org



**SUPPORT
NOT JUDGMENT.**

Domestic Violence happens to people we all know and care about.

LEARN WHAT U CAN DO.

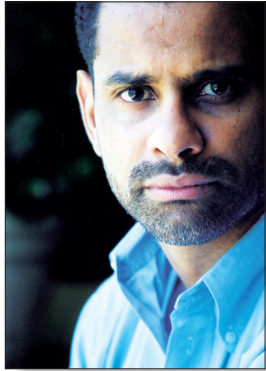
Embracing Change



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From The President – Embracing Change



Change is one of life's constants. And over the past few years, the pace of change seems faster than ever. Some of those changes, like those in the White House, have been uplifting and inspiring. Yet the changes in America's business environment

and economy have made for stressful times, uncertainty, and even failure. This environment is creating significant challenges for everyone—from our nation's largest financial institutions to the Mom-and-pop stores and even small businesses like MEE.

Management teams and boards of directors of small and minority-owned businesses like MEE are struggling to navigate this bumpy road and to stay afloat. Yet, MEE has continued to provide its clients and partners with valuable services during the past fiscal year. I am pleased to present the 2008 Annual Report, which highlights some of our accomplishments.

While we take pride in our achievements, MEE has never had the luxury of being able to rest on its laurels. Since a strong past does not always guarantee future success, we have always strived to position MEE to survive and thrive during good times and bad. We are confident that we will continue to do so in the current environ-

ment, as we have done consistently over the past 19 years. One focus is to aggressively seek health-related opportunities across MEE businesses, with public agencies, foundations and private sector clients.

Successfully running a company in these times is a challenge. Yet, we will not stray from our goals or vision. Social responsibility remains the cultural cornerstone of our company. By combining that vision with the insight gained from many successful projects, our communications expertise and management know-how, we expect to continue "doing well by doing good." That includes projects this year focusing on promoting mental wellness in African American communities and attempting to get more low-income youth and young adults to pursue upwardly mobile careers in the allied health professions.

The challenge now is for us to manage our resources to protect the gains we have made and position ourselves to take advantage of the kinds of opportunities that can be found even in an environment of tremendous change. One focus over the last year has been to invest heavily in capabilities—including e-commerce and new media technologies—that we believe will help us maintain our competitive advantage, create strong operating performance across all of MEE's businesses, and generate revenues in this challenging economic environment. Examples include our new, expanded corporate Website and the development of innovative

text-messaging health intervention tools. We will also aggressively seek out acquisition and strategic partnership opportunities.

Even as change is all around us, MEE will be changing internally, too. We are responding proactively to the new business environment, by streamlining operational procedures, reducing costs and increasing marketing and business development efforts, including those in South Africa and the Middle East. The impact of challenging markets can be minimized by disciplined project management, and a clear strategic focus on our core businesses.

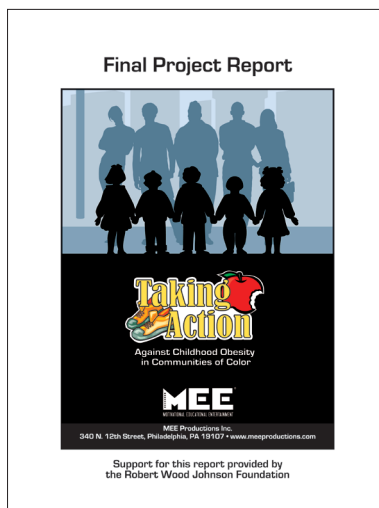
While in this uncertain economic climate we cannot guarantee what the future holds for MEE, we can guarantee that we will continue to do everything in our power to be well-positioned—and well-equipped—to weather the current storm and take advantage of any opportunities it creates. Our entrepreneurial energy and commitment is just as strong as ever. New business arising from the national stimulus package may be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for small and minority businesses, and we intend to take full advantage of it. We have never been more convinced that we are on the right path toward our vision of becoming the best socially-responsible urban and ethnic communications firm in the world.

Peace,
Ivan J. Juzang
Founder/President

MEE in Action	2008	2009
Marketing/Social Marketing	Blueprint for a Safer Philadelphia U.S. Department of Education/Federal Student Aid Pilot Project Community Night at The Franklin Project iMPPACS/National Institutes of Health HIV Outreach to Young Black Men (AACO/Circle of Care) 411 Safe Text Intervention/University of Colorado Project GRAD	HIV Outreach to Young Black Men (AACO/Circle of Care) Community Night at The Franklin Blueprint for a Safer Philadelphia HPV Community Education Campaign Maternal Non-Smoking Campaign
Media/Materials Development	2008 Voter Education and Registration Big Brothers Big Sisters of America Recruitment DVD Parent-Child Communications DVD Prototype (SBIR) DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence www.PhillyBlueprint.com Website American Bar Association Domestic Violence Video Project iMPPACS/National Institutes of Health RWJF Taking Action Against Childhood Obesity Report/Documentary	Children's Futures Electronic Resource Directory (ERD) DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence ERD MEE Corporate Website Parent-Child Communications DVD Prototype (SBIR) Phase II Enhancements
Audience Research	Mental Wellness in the Black Community (DC & Philadelphia) PECO Positive Energy Program Inner City Truth Lifestyles Survey (National) 411 Safe Text Research HPV Awareness Among African American Women	California Endowment Allied Health Initiative Mental Wellness in the Black Community (Oakland & Chicago) Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools Student Interviews Dairy Management Inc. - Nutrient-Rich Foods Research
Workshops/Technical Assistance	Obesity in the Hip-Hop Generation (Plainfield, NJ & Chicago, IL) Blueprint for a Safer Philadelphia (Philadelphia & Harrisburg) After School Institutes (Albany, NY) Planned Parenthood (North Texas) College Access for Underserved Populations	Recruiting African American Male Mentors Achieve Better Health Symposium Guttmacher Exchange 52nd Anniversary Little Rock Central High School Integration APHA Annual Meeting & Exposition

2008 Projects: A Look At Our Accomplishments

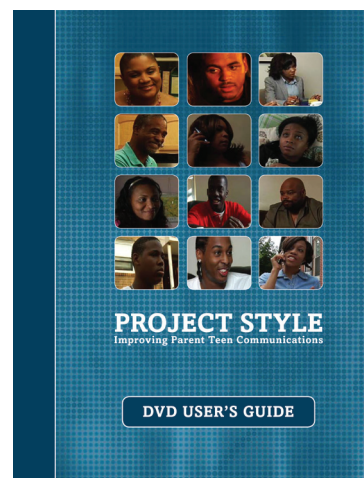
RWJF Childhood Obesity Research Dissemination



MEE conducted follow-up research dissemination activities for our Taking Action Against Childhood Obesity in Communities of Color report for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. This report summarized findings and recommendations of a two-year information-gathering effort centered on environmental and policy approaches to reducing obesity among low-income African American children. MEE developed a toolkit package that contains the full report, an executive summary and a documentary video that provides a first-hand look at some of the barriers to better health out-

comes in underserved communities. Hundreds of report packages were disseminated to key stakeholders in Baltimore and Atlanta, the two cities where MEE conducted the audience research, along with CBO's, agencies and other organizations in other locations that are impacted by or are working to improve the health of children of color. In order to foster continued dialogue and collaboration, MEE created a database list of all report recipients. Taking Action is being made available for download from the RWJF and MEE Websites.

Family-Based HIV Prevention: An Interactive DVD



MEE received an SBIR (Small Business Innovation Research) grant from the National Institutes of Health for a project to determine whether a culturally-specific, interactive DVD (and accompanying workbook) could be an effective tool to promote improved parent-adolescent communication within low-income African American families. We sought to leverage the latest media technology to create a family-based intervention to encourage parents and adolescents to talk more effectively about HIV/AIDS, substance use and adolescent development and sexuality, using en-

gaging content and a format that works in a variety of settings. The DVD prototype we developed is based on a face-to-face workshop intervention, Project S.T.Y.L.E., that has been proven to work well with mainstream audiences. Prototype development (including message content and DVD design and packaging) was supported by ten focus groups with potential target audiences for our product—low-income African American adolescents (ages 12-17) and parents of low-income Black youth.

Domestic Violence Projects:

DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence



MEE provided technical assistance to the Washington DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence to develop print materials and radio ads for a multi-faceted, collaborative citywide outreach and education campaign about domestic violence. The campaign was designed to reach out to underrepresented domestic violence victims, including African American women; Latinas; Chinese and Vietnamese women; youth ages 12-18; and male victims. MEE developed culturally-specific flyers, a multi-panel information brochure, a church bulletin, transit and newspaper advertising, and radio scripts for public service announcements. We also conducted focus groups for audience testing of the MEE-developed drafts and then in-

corporated the feedback into print- and production-ready electronic files and final radio scripts. In addition, MEE developed a customized electronic resource directory, starting with Coalition partners as key resources. We expanded the directory by including information about free and low-cost services and programs that can support DC residents at-risk for or involved in domestic violence. In addition to services directly related to domestic violence, the user-friendly tool also includes information about homeless shelters, housing options, employment and training services, health care services, GED and post-secondary education programs and childcare services.

American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division (YLD)



MEE conducted a multi-location video shoot in Washington, DC and then created a DVD product for the YLD's domestic violence prevention and awareness project. The goal of the DVD was to inform young lawyers across the United States about the unique legal barriers and access-to-justice issues that younger

victims of domestic violence (ages 16-24) face. It also sought to motivate young lawyers to get involved in pro-bono work and to make a difference in victims' lives. The 20-minute video serves as a training tool that can open up discussion on this issue and provide a wake-up call to the legal community.



Blueprint for a Safer Philadelphia



MEE continued to effectively implement its social marketing campaign for the Blueprint for a Safer Philadelphia initiative. We continued to deliver positive and engaging messages for both youth and adults in Philadelphia, using a variety of traditional and non-traditional communications channels. These included radio, television and print advertising and promotions; grassroots, peer-to-peer outreach; a customized Website and Electronic Resource Directory; community forums and workshops; and active partnerships with community-based organizations. Over the first three years of the campaign, these efforts have led to increased awareness of the negative impacts of youth violence and a change in attitudes regarding our collective ability and responsibility to do something about it.

2008 activities and accomplishments included: creation and free dissemination of more than 10,000 copies of the Electronic Resource Directory (with up-to-date local resources and opportunities for youth); providing a series of personal enrichment activities for youth members of the Community Action Team (CATs); and enhancing the GreatVine website and motivating more members of the community to acknowledge the positive aspects of Philadelphia youth. MEE was the recipient of a 2008 WorkReady Philadelphia "First Break" Award, presented to local employers that provided at least 25 summer internships. MEE employed more than 85 youth as part of the CATs team.

Project iMPPACS - NIMH



Project iMPPACS is a pilot intervention study funded by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) and executed by a consortium of academic institutions—University of Pennsylvania, University of South Carolina, Syracuse University, Brown University and Emory University. The objective of the study is to measure the efficacy of a safe sex/HIV prevention media campaign targeting African American teenagers. Radio and television ads air in Macon, GA and Syracuse, NY. The control cities are Providence, RI and Columbia, SC. With funding for the project ending in April 2009, the Project Team submitted a new proposal to NIMH because the early results of the study show a strong and measurable change to "safer attitudes and behavior."

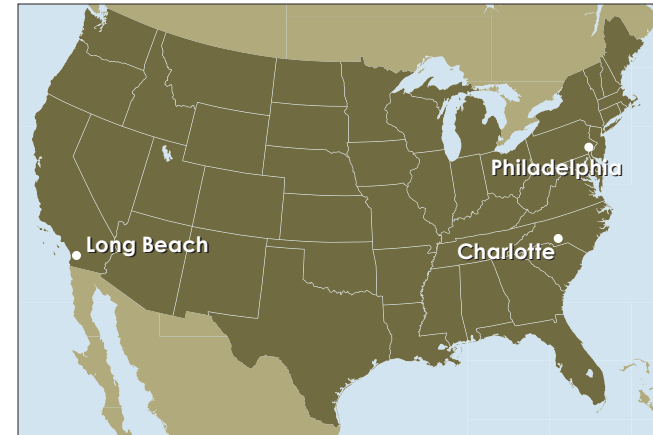
MEE was responsible for all campaign media production and me-

dia placement. MEE developed a series of culturally-sensitive and age-appropriate messages (for African American 14-19 year olds) that promote attitudes that will lead to safer sex behaviors and risk reduction for sexually-transmitted infections.

The ads for this project have received several national Telly Awards that recognize excellence in video and film production. "Check Yourself," "That was Great," "Class of 2008" and "Relationships" all won awards in 2007 and 2008.

As an example of the types of media produced for this campaign, "Check Yourself," a TV spot promoting HIV awareness and prevention to African American adolescents, won in the Telly not-for-profit category. It addresses assumptions about who's "safe" and who isn't.

U.S. Department of Education/FAFSA



MEE continued its second year of work with the U.S. Department of Education on a pilot social marketing campaign to let low-income, minority and first-generation high school seniors know about the variety of student aid available to them for education and training beyond high school. The primary goal was to raise awareness about federal student aid (grants, work-study and low-interest loans) among underserved students and families, by providing a culturally-specific sub-campaign as part of a larger, mainstream marketing strategy. Implementation continued in Philadelphia and Charlotte, targeting African American high school seniors; their parents/caregivers and other influencers (family members, older peers and advisors);

college access programs; counselors and other school personnel at schools, after-school and career development programs; and the community-at-large. Over the two years, positive feedback for MEE's efforts came not only from seasoned college access professionals (including key members of the Federal Student Aid Team) who had seen the need for more culturally-specific materials, but also from grassroots community-based activists and organizations who were encouraged by our emphasis on children from *all* backgrounds having equal access to a college education.

This unique social marketing campaign built bridges to individuals and organizations that had not

been engaged fully by previous college access outreach efforts. MEE also generated significant added value for our clients during the pilot campaign, garnering numerous free ads across North Carolina (in conjunction with the College Foundation of North Carolina) and free public affairs programming in Philadelphia (leveraging our strong radio relationships). In 2008, we laid the foundation for a grassroots effort in Long Beach, California, focused on Hispanic students and families. Though MEE's involvement with the government campaign has ended, we are committed to the ultimate goal of motivating even more communities to take on ownership of increased college access for their students. We will continue to seek out

ways, even using our own resources, to continue to make our communities aware of the various options for post-secondary education. Inspiring communities to develop their own community-based programs for college access will be a true measure of success.

HIV Prevention/Testing Projects:

Straight Up! HIV Teen Outreach Campaign



MEE worked with Circle of Care to promote HIV testing to African American teenagers in Philadelphia. According to CDC data, African Americans are the largest group of people affected by HIV. They account for 56% of all HIV infections reported among those ages 13–24. Sadly, one in four youth who are HIV positive do not know that they are infected. The core feature of this campaign was promoting Circle of Care's men's HIV initiative called "Straight Up!" It provides educational sessions, pairs mentors with young men and conducts mobile testing and counseling.

The objective of the information and outreach campaign was to let youth and young adults know about

local (free & confidential) HIV testing and counseling services. The campaign had the following components:

Print Media Development. The MEE Creative Team updated previous print materials used in a HIV testing initiative targeting teens in Philadelphia. These materials were developed based on a series of audience focus groups. We also developed event-specific materials.

CATs (Peer Group) Outreach—MEE trained teenage males and adult advocates (as coordinators) to give out promotional materials and engage Philadelphia young people about free, youth-friendly HIV testing and counseling services.

Partnerships with Philadelphia Organizations—MEE shared the Straight Up! campaign information with agencies, businesses and organizations that serve Philadelphia residents and youth.

Community Events—In addition to community sweeps, outreach was conducted at community events, health fairs and festivals throughout the highest-risk Philadelphia neighborhoods.

Tennessee Department of Health



MEE was selected by the Division of Minority Health and Health Disparities Elimination (DMHHDE) of the Tennessee Department of Health to collect information to inform development of the Department's social marketing efforts promoting HIV testing to high-risk populations. MEE conducted four focus groups with low-income African American men and women in Nashville and Memphis, with residents, community activists, and staff at community-based organizations (CBOs). This audience research provided a comprehensive understanding of local perspectives on HIV/AIDS, as a first step in designing authentic messages that are relevant to the daily lives of these communities at risk. The research also will provide critically-needed qualitative information for Tennessee public health institutions and agencies, community-based program directors, HIV/AIDS educators and other researchers.

Big Brothers Big Sisters DVD



As a follow-up to its 2007 research project for Big Brothers Big Sisters, Inc. (BBBS), one of the nation's oldest and largest youth mentoring organizations, MEE developed, *Brothers: We Are The Village*, a six-minute DVD that promotes mentoring to African American males and encourages them to become a Big Brother. It also educates African American male mentoring candidates about the benefits of formal mentoring and the positive impact it can have on both their lives and the life of a young person. The DVD can be used either as a stand-alone

promotional tool in its entirety or as part of a broader BBBS presentation to community groups, churches, fraternal organizations, etc. In the original research project, MEE gathered in-depth information as the foundation for an enhanced BBBS marketing campaign to increase the participation of African American men as mentors. This included focus group research with "Non-Bigs," "Contemplatives" and existing Big Brothers in St. Louis, Baltimore and Philadelphia. The information gained was leveraged in the development of the DVD.

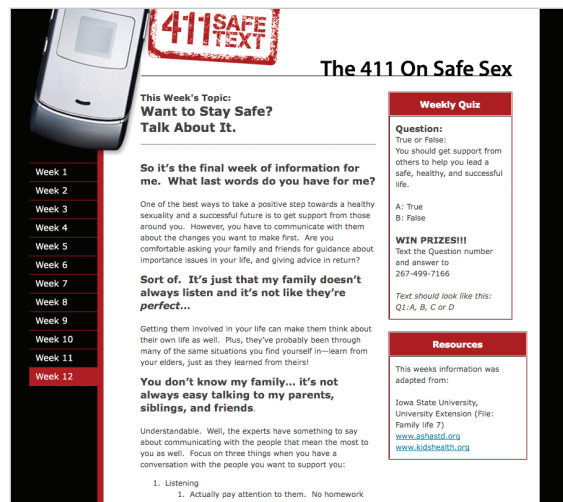
2008 Voting Promotion



As an organization that cares about the future of our community, MEE decided before the 2008 primary elections that we could use our expertise and experience in developing voter education and registration campaigns around the country to enfranchise underserved citizens in Philadelphia and across Pennsylvania. We sought out like-minded corporate, media and community citizens to support a grassroots effort to increase voter participation in what turned out to be a historic election. This effort allowed us to use what we learned in a ten-city grassroots voter registration effort we did with the NAACP's National Voter Fund in 2000 and a 2004 voter education and registration campaign for ex-offenders, created for the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under the Law. Many MEE Com-

munity Network members joined our efforts and we received positive feedback on the posters and flyers we created to inform young people of color, African American males of all ages and other often-marginalized citizens, including ex-offenders, about how to register and vote. We urged them all to make their voices heard. MEE made the electronic files of these materials available to Network members who wanted to customize them for use in outreach and advocacy in their own communities and states. While the election of President Barack Obama has brought hope to many corners of our nation, MEE remains committed to seeing that underserved communities participate fully in this new and important chapter in our American legacy.

411 Safe Text



There are many challenges in reaching adolescents with healthy lifestyle information. While many youth are "spreading their wings" toward independence from parental control, striving to make their own choices, we also know that adolescence is also a time of life when many of the health-risk behaviors (i.e., smoking, drug use, physical inactivity, poor nutrition or high-risk sexual behavior) begin that may have negative effects later in life. At the same time, teens and youth have proven to be the early adopters for the most cutting-edge technology. This combination of realities led MEE to explore using e-health applications to tackle HIV prevention among low-income youth and adults.

MEE partnered with the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center to develop and audience-test the "411 on HIV Prevention" concept, a new e-health technology application, to respond to this urgent need. In this Internet and cell phone-driven application, youth and young adults signed up to receive and respond to text messages promoting safe sexual behavior and healthy nutrition habits on their mobile phones. Since the younger generation historically pushes technology and is almost always "connected," the concept uses the medium and devices that are an intrinsic part of today's youth culture as intervention points for culturally-relevant, healthy messages.

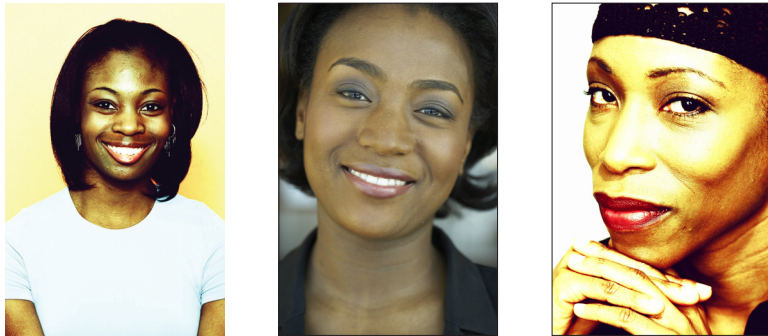
Workshops and Conference Presentations

MEE workshops and public speaking opportunities (conference presentations, keynote addresses and participation on key panels) provided new avenues to share what we've learned and to generate future business opportunities.

Feb. 08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harrisburg State Agency Procurement Officers Cayman Islands Youth Communications Presentations
Mar. 08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators - College Access Blueprint for Safer Philadelphia Provider Workshop
Apr. 08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training Institute for Improved Health/Planned Parenthood of Northern Texas Action for Healthy Kids - Parent Advocacy Tools Blueprint/GPUAC Communications Workshop
May 08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe Schools Conference: Keeping Our Children Safe Office of Women's Health/CANFit Obesity Workshop The After School Experience Conference Office of Women's Health/CANFit, Preventing Obesity in Today's Hip-Hop Women Workshop
June 08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summit on School Safety Solutions African American Healthy Marriage Initiative Conference Taking Action Against Health Inequities (NASBHC Exhibit)
July 08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators - College Access 2008 Champions for Healthy Kids Grantee Workshop US Dept. of Education/21st Century After School Summit
Aug. 08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting Responsible Fatherhood Initiative (U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services) 3rd Annual Forum: Changes, Choices, and Challenges - Advocating for Higher Education in a New Landscape - College Access Children Youth and Family Collaborative - After School Success
Sep. 08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eastern University Presents Church and Community Conversations - "The Criminalization of Urban Youth: A Juvenile Justice Issue" Congressional Black Caucus Foundation's Annual Legislative Conference
Oct. 08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student National Medical Association Region VIII Conference National Institutes of Mental Health Annual International Research Conference: The Role of Families in Preventing and Adapting to HIV/AIDS Carnegie Mellon University - Tepper School of Business
Nov. 08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mid-Atlantic Network of Youth and Family Services 2008 MCP Conference Pennsylvania Public Health Association Annual Conference (Exhibit) Academic UpRise Conference - College Access
Dec. 08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancies

What's Planned for 2009

HPV Community Education Campaign



Working with a locally based pharmaceutical company, MEE is developing an unbranded HPV education and awareness campaign focused on beauty salons serving African American women in Philadelphia. The primary goal for the Beauty Salon Initiative is to increase awareness of HPV, cervical cancer (and the link between the two) and their impact on African American women. We will use credible, community-based message senders—hair and beauty salon stylists—to influence community norms and raise awareness among Black women (particularly mothers of adolescent daughters) about HPV and cervical

cancer. Providing basic information and addressing myths and misconceptions will allow salon clients to make informed decisions, for both themselves and their daughters, related to their sexual and reproductive health. Through educating stylists and operators with basic HPV facts in half-day training sessions, MEE gains an additional, trusted access point for increasing awareness about cervical cancer. The project includes audience research; peer-to-peer education; grassroots communication and outreach; radio promotions; community partnerships; and dissemination of media materials and other collaterals.

The California Endowment Allied Health Professions Initiative

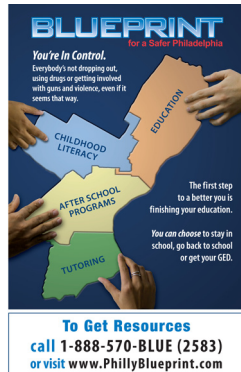


MEE will be conducting a nearly two-year planning, research and analysis process for The California Endowment (TCE) that will result in a comprehensive research report and action plan to inform the Endowment's strategic planning and initiatives to support increased diversity in the allied health workforce in California. The recommendations would be considered for funding by The Endowment, in alignment with its program objectives, grant-making and advocacy work. The project allows TCE to be a leader in cre-

atively addressing health disparities and in meeting the long-standing challenge of increasing the number of underrepresented and minority Californians who pursue careers in the allied health field. The project includes audience research, an environmental scan of related programs and services, interviews with experts in the field, and information-gathering and solution-sharing sessions with stakeholders from African American and Latino organizations and communities in the Los Angeles area.



Blueprint for a Safer Philadelphia

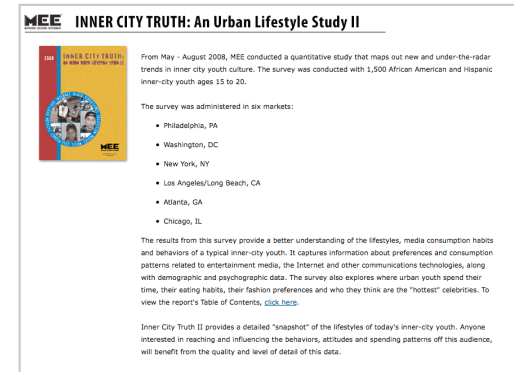
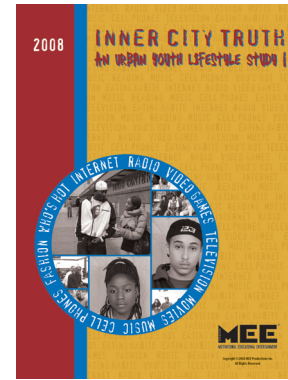


For the fourth year of the Blueprint campaign, MEE messages, activities and programs will emphasize the concept of education as a violence prevention strategy. We will promote staying in school, increasing the graduation rate and improving literacy in the City of Philadelphia. Tutoring and after-school programs, along with other grantees that support improved education, will be aggressively and actively promoted by MEE. We will continue to increase the understanding of the conse-

quences of youth violence and provide an expanded call-to-action to change community norms and individual behaviors. We will also continue to “brand” the Blueprint campaign, and to promote and publicize its grantees, through radio commercials, the Blueprint Website (including the GreatVine), transit advertising, bimonthly newsletter, customized print materials and other collaterals and outreach by the Community Action Team.



Inner City Truth Survey II



MEE is releasing *Inner City Truth: An Urban Youth Lifestyle Study II*, our latest in a series of national surveys focused on the lifestyle trends, behaviors and attitudes of urban youth. The report, like the original (2002), is based on a survey of Black and Hispanic youth and young adults in six key urban markets. We captured youth preferences and consumption patterns in New York City; Los Angeles/Long Beach; Chicago; Philadelphia; Atlanta; and Washington, DC. The survey provides an

understanding of the lifestyles, media habits and behaviors of urban youth, so that we can continue to reach and influence them with culturally relevant, pro-social messages. Information about the use of entertainment media, the Internet and other communication technologies, will inform “how to say it” for various MEE messages. The 2008 study was co-sponsored by Black Entertainment Television (BET) and the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy.

Internet • Radio • Video Games
Television • Movies • Music • Cell Phones
Fashion • Who's Hot

Mental Wellness Promotion Audience Research



MEE will be executing an exciting community-based participatory research project in 2009 that reflects how we have continually been struck by the impact of ongoing stress, anxiety and trauma, particularly related to violence, impacts low-income African Americans and other people of color. Qualitative, focus group research will be conducted in Chicago, Oakland, Philadelphia and Washington DC. Because of MEE's proprietary data collection and technology-driven coding and analysis methodology, we will be able to uncover what low-income African Americans and other underserved populations feel about mental illness and mental health. MEE will "get under the surface" of any negative myths or misconceptions about mental illness, uncover the protective fac-

tors that could strengthen coping and survival strategies, and explore the social and environmental realities that impact how people in low-income communities make decisions about seeking mental health services.

To start the project, MEE explored several issues with an expert panel of some of the most respected names in public and mental health. These three men reflect a breadth of experiences and backgrounds. The insightful feedback from Carl Bell, M.D., Joseph White, Ph.D. and Dr. Howard Mabry was incorporated into the research design, which includes a comprehensive, IRB-approved protocol. Data from focus groups in the four cities will be analyzed and published later this year, in a report and documentary providing a stark picture of those "living in survival mode," along with strategies about how to promote mental health services that support and empower them. Deliverables include a training toolkit to prepare service providers and CBOs to effectively promote mental wellness in the hardest-hit communities.

Project Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An IRB-approved focus group protocol and research instruments • Three expert interviews • Collection of more than 30 hours of primary data from focus groups • Three levels of extensive data coding by social scientists and trained peer coders • Comprehensive research report (and online executive summary) • Video documentary (DVD) summarizing the audience research findings • A toolkit to help mental health agencies, service providers and CBOs promote mental wellness to low-income African Americans • Community dissemination of findings and recommendations
Potential End Users of Findings	<p>Community-based organizations serving those who are living in survival mode; hospital emergency room personnel, teachers and other educators; public health agencies and institutions; program directors; public health researchers; parents and caregivers; criminal justice/law enforcement personnel</p>
Applications for Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kick-start a community dialogue about mental wellness • Help mental health organizations develop effective, culturally relevant and user-friendly programs and outreach • Development of "authentic" crisis support messages and interventions • Give parents information about protective factors that will support young people in dealing with trauma, depression, stress, etc. • Educate school-based staff and emergency room personnel about how to support people who have been victims of or witnesses to serious violence • Foundation for a social marketing campaign to promote mental wellness in the African American community



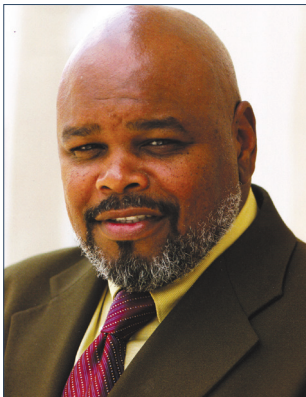
In Memoriam: Troy Curvey, Jr.

The MEE family suffered the untimely loss of one of our own, Troy Curvey, Jr., earlier this year. Troy, who worked as a consultant from MEE's Los Angeles office, was a part of MEE's vision even before the company was formally created. He was a compassionate friend and trusted colleague to dozens of employees and managers, and a valuable resource to our clients.

Troy was only 51 years old when he passed away peacefully from a fatal heart attack on January 29, 2009. His charm, love for life and sense of humor endeared him to all who knew him and his enthusiasm inspired everyone who met him. Troy was genuinely admired, especially by those of us at MEE who worked closely with him over the years.



In addition to his work for MEE, Troy continued to pursue and nurture his first love, acting. A man dedicated to his craft, he appeared in more than 75 films, theater productions and television shows during his nearly three-decade career. He acted in scenes with many of the greats in the industry, including Angela Bassett, Eddie Murphy, Sylvester Stallone, Sean Penn, Don Cheadle and the late Bernie Mac. He also taught acting classes to and mentored many people in Los Angeles who sought to break into film or television work. For five years, he was the drama teacher at Worthington High School in his home town of Houston, TX. His students became consistent winners at drama competitions and were hired to appear in award-winning MEE videos. A versatile and talented actor, Troy was a great role model for how to put practice into action. For more than a decade Troy was "the voice of MEE." You will see Troy's image and hear his voice in many of MEE's videos, radio ads and other media products. Taking his skills and talents to a new level, Troy also served as director of MEE's independent feature film, *Up Against the 8-Ball*, in 2004.



He was a 1979 graduate of the College of Fine Arts at Carnegie Mellon University (CMU), and was actively involved in many of its alumni activities. It was at CMU that Troy and Ivan met as students and formed their long-standing friendship, and where Troy became a mentor, confidante and "unofficial MEE founder." Troy left behind a wife, Gloria, and five children, ranging in age from 7 to 27.

The passing of Troy Curvey, Jr. leaves an irreplaceable space in the hearts and lives of those who knew, worked with and loved him. He will forever be missed.

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The GreatVine Youth Submissions The Gallery Message Board

GreatVine
Tell Your Side Of The Story.
If You Don't Tell Your Story, Who Will?

BLUEPRINT
by MEE Productions

GreatVine Winner
Sheylene Jones
April 2007

You could be a GreatVine Winner!

There is one winner selected each month from the submissions received. You could win a \$250 prize. Have your one-on-one interview and submission featured on this website, and a article published in the Blueprint Newsletter!

What is The GreatVine?

It's a site created for the sole purpose of honoring Philadelphia youth. We hear too much about what our young people are doing wrong and not nearly enough about what they are doing right.

The GreatVine is a way to flip the script. It's a place to spread a positive vibe, to talk about youth who are doing great things in their community, particularly about making our city better and safer.

Who are the Philly people who are holding it down and making a difference? Is it you, a classmate, a neighbor, or a friend? Let him or her be known...post it up!

Remember, anyone can nominate you...even yourself.

©2008 Blueprint for a Safer Philadelphia



You have the power to make a difference.

I TOLD HIS STORY.

Now, it's your turn.

Tell the story of positive youth you know.

If you don't tell their story, who will?

BLUEPRINT
Recognizing Philly's Youth

GreatVine

Audience Research to Support a Social Marketing Campaign

STOP Domestic Violence in the District

Roan Fleming II, Program Director, MVE/MSD Initiative
Division of Minority Health and Health Disparities Elimination
Tennessee Department of Health, Connetquot Building
Nashville, Tennessee 37243

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I tripped on one of the kids' toys.
I can't take this abuse much longer.
It was only one time.
I'm afraid it will happen again.
I have everything covered.
I have nowhere to go.
There's nothing wrong.
I have no one to talk to. I need help.

Are You Listening?

Domestic abuse happens hundreds of times every day in the District of Columbia. Most of the time people suffer in silence.

People who experience domestic abuse are NOT strangers. They are your family, your friends, your coworkers and your neighbors. They may want your help, but they aren't sure how to ask. You can help by being there when they need you.

Help STOP Domestic Violence in the District

Learn what you can do at www.StopDVinDC.org

A message from the members of the DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CADV)