

MDC

ANNUAL REPORT
2008



ABOUT MDC

MDC's mission is to help organizations and communities close the gaps that separate people from opportunity. We have been working to create positive change in disadvantaged communities for 40 years—by conducting research and demonstrating effective programs at the community level. We focus on three areas: education, economic and workforce development, and asset building and strategic philanthropy.

MDC's organizing principle is:

Education + Work + Assets = the Pathway to Opportunity

We are a private, nonprofit organization located in Chapel Hill, NC, and are supported by grants and contracts from foundations; federal, state, and local governments; and the private sector.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MARK V. BENSEN

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, MDC

RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA

JANET H. BROWN,

WASHINGTON, DC

ANITA BROWN-GRAHAM

DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

JOHN F. BURNES

DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

J. HAYWOOD DAVIS

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

DAVID L. DODSON

PRESIDENT, MDC

DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

THE HONORABLE OTIS JOHNSON, PHD

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

AMBASSADOR JAMES A. JOSEPH

CHAIR

CHAPEL HILL, NORTH CAROLINA

DON MUNRO

HOT SPRINGS, ARKANSAS

SALLY D. ROBINSON

VICE CHAIR

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

JUAN SEPÚLVEDA

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

MINOR M. SHAW

GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA

DAVID WILSON, PHD

MADISON, WISCONSIN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN.....	<i>vii</i>
---------------------------------	------------

EDUCATION

Achieving the Dream.....	1
Disconnected Youth.....	5

WORK

Latino Pathways.....	7
Connecting People to Jobs.....	9
Learning from Constructive Failures.....	9
Rural People, Rural Policy.....	9
Program for the Rural Carolinas.....	10

ASSETS

EITC Carolinas.....	11
Emergency Preparedness Demonstration Project.....	15

PHILANTHROPY

Community Philanthropy, Race, and Equity in the American South.....	17
Passing Gear Philanthropy in Rural Virginia.....	19
State of the South 2007.....	20



LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

R.C. Smith was one of MDC's founding voices, a man who helped set us on a path of understanding the issues facing the South not only in numbers and nomenclature, but through clear language and evocative imagery. So it's appropriate now, as we mark MDC's 40th anniversary, to remember how he described our founding mission when he wrote about it for the annual report marking our 30th birthday. "MDC's mission," he wrote, "added up to several things: to stick with what's practical, to develop pilot projects capable of being applied elsewhere,... to try to communicate with both precision and eloquence, and, above all, to stay flexible."

MDC remains true to that mission. In its first 30 years, as former board chair and Mississippi Governor William F. Winter has noted, MDC evolved from an organization focused on job training to one covering economic development, policy research, trend analysis, education and institutional capacity building. Since then, we have expanded our penchant for good writing into a seminal (and readable) resource document for the region, *The State of the South*; widened our education work with rural community colleges into the potentially world-changing national work of Achieving the Dream; broadened our anti-poverty portfolio to include helping people hold onto their gains through asset building; focused on breaking down the barriers facing Latinos, our newest population; shined a light on disconnected youth, which we called "an ominous problem hidden in plain sight;" and expanded our community building to cover the world of philanthropy and nonprofits, helping them focus on the kinds of change that will have long-lasting effects in their communities. Woven deeply into all of that work is equity and the job of breaking down structural inequities. Those are surely the most pernicious impediments to closing "the gaps that separate people from opportunity," as our mission statement demands.

Much has improved, but many of the South's problems of 40 years ago remain. As the economies of the South, the nation, the world and the nonprofit universe have changed, we are growing into a larger and deeper organization to keep pace. But the changes at MDC show that we have never lost the ingredient that R.C. Smith reminded us is so essential: staying flexible. That is what makes us unique.

James Joseph
Chairman, Board of Directors

