



A light of hope serving for 50 years - 1957- 2007

# Mother Dear's Community Center

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## **Organization Background and History**

Mother Dear's Community Center, (MDCC) was founded by the late Rev. Annie M. Woodridge, (Mother Dear) in 1957. It is a faith based 501 (c) (3) non-profit organizations that serves the entire Washington Metropolitan area and has provided emergency assistance to out-of-state flood victims and clothing to refugee children in Africa. It was the God inspired vision of Mother Dear as an outgrowth of her many years of dedicated community work and her passion for helping under privilege families, seniors and children. Mother Dear was the mother of eleven biological children and three adopted children from Trinidad. Her immense love for children prompted her to actively get involved in helping to get a playground built in her neighborhood in the early 1950's. Mother Dear's Community Center was incorporated in January 1977.

**MISSION** is to enhance the quality of life for the local community by not only meeting physical needs, but also helping to promote restoration and dignity to homeless individuals, home bound seniors, low-income families and at-risk youth through its programs and services. For 51 years, MDCC has stood firm in its commitment to meeting pressing needs of the community, filling in gaps in services to all people no matter what their age, race, creed or religious preference. We touch the lives of over 20,000 individuals and their families annually through our referral assistance program, hot lunches, food, clothing and furniture distribution, holiday food bag distributions, social services, spiritual and job counseling; and after school and summer camp programs. Iris Woodridge was a recipient of the National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise – Achievement Against the Odds Award in November 2001. Mother Dear was a compassionate woman with a big smile, a big heart, and a lot of action. Services she provided went beyond just feeding the homeless and the needy. She provided Social Services, Spiritual and Job Counseling, Teen Job Training, Courtesy Patrol, Educational programs and Recreational classes. She distributed food commodities, free clothing and served lunch daily. With a hand full of seniors, she fed over a hundred individuals daily cooking on a hot plate in a one-room facility. Mother Dear died one month after moving into her new facility at 467 Florida Avenue, N.W., in 1987, however, under a new generation of family leadership, her legacy lives on through several family members and four seniors from NCBA and SCEP Senior Aide programs. Meals are now prepared in a commercial kitchen.

MDCC and its Directors have received numerous local and national community service awards since its inception. The late Rev. Annie M. Woodridge, then Director of MDCC, was honored in 1983 as Washingtonian of the Year for her contribution and dedication to the needs of the local community. She also was awarded the Community Service Award on Mental Health Service posthumously in 1987. In 1990, her daughter, Iris Woodridge, was also honored as Washingtonian of the Year for her community service work. In 1992 Iris Woodridge was awarded the Torch Lighter Award., Howard University Human Service Award in 1992, MDCC received the UPO Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Service Award in 1994, Lockheed Martin's Community Service Award for feeding the homeless in 2002 and the North Capitol Collaborative Prevention of Child Neglect & Abuse in D.C. Award in 2007.

It was Mother Dear's steadfast faith and her trust in God to supply all needs that the Center exists today through the generous donations of private sponsors. It was the joy of giving and the love she expressed to all mankind, no matter what state they were in that Mother Dear's Community Center is known city wide and is seen as a "Beacon of Light" in the Washington metropolitan area.

### Objectives and Services:

- Assessing community needs and develop programs to address those needs
- Emergency Assistance for rent, mortgage and utilities
- Youth counseling and mentoring programs to develop leadership skills
- After School and Summer Camp: Educational programs of academic excellence so that, "No Child Is Left Behind" After School and Summer Camp program: Academic curriculum in Reading, Math, English and Writing; educational field trips, Bible Study, dance, music sewing and more. End of the summer 5 days excursion trip to a major city.
- Developmental and social skills for at-risk youth and young adults to help develop future leaders and promote harmony in the home.
- Monthly Food and Bi-weekly Fresh Produce Distribution: To Address hunger needs. Pre-Thanksgiving, Thanksgiving and Christmas meals to homebound seniors and the homeless; and Holiday food bag distributions.
- Emergency Shelter Liaison: Assist homeless individuals find emergency shelter.
- Community Service: Host agency for ex-offenders who have to do community service and Youth community service - teaching our youth the concept of giving back to the community by volunteering to serve homeless
- Weekly clothing distribution
- Weekly Bible Study and Worship Service

Mother Dear's Community Center network with numerous organizations in D.C. to bring wholeness to families and the community. We serve on an average 370 people per week and have distributed over 31,570 pounds of food and 54,494 pieces of clothing, shoes, books, toys and computer equipment in 2007. 4,440 people fed during the 2007 Holiday season with a total of 12,050 people being served. These are just a few of the programs and social services provided by a staff of four and volunteers during the holiday season. Mother Dear's motto says it best, "Destiny makes us brothers. If you lift somebody up as you go up, we'll all rise together."

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[www.mother-dears.org](http://www.mother-dears.org)