

Dear Fellow MORE² Believers,

This week I attended the Dedication Ceremony for the Christopher S. Bond Bridge and was reminded of what a great organization we have. We have left our footprint on that bridge and on future projects as the process MODOT used here is replicated around the country. This has been such a powerful experience for Missouri it is great for MORE² to be listed as a player.

And listed we were. In the program booklet MORE² was listed as one of the Project Participants that were part of making today's event a reality. We were listed again as part of the kcICON Workforce Development Advisory Committee with Rev. Margaret Roberts as our designated representative to that group. Way to go MORE²!!

They spelled it out: "To date, **90 individuals** have received On-The-Job Training on the kcICON Project. There are currently **31 OJT's** still employed on the project, and **16 individuals have graduated** from the OJT Program and continue to work on the project, having learned the necessary training to build and sustain careers in heavy highway construction." These lives and those of their families have been touched and forever changed by our ability to leverage the permission given in the federal legislation to use one half of 1% of the allotted money for the bridge construction of minorities and women. WOW!

Now get this: "Our local partners have joined with the national transportation advocacy groups in using MODOT's workforce development model to encourage our nation's leaders to incorporate similar program language in the new transportation bill pending before Congress. As a result, new legislation could positively impact communities and the underutilized throughout our nation." The work of MORE² has not only had an impact on today, but the future for a lot of people across the country as well. Indeed, MORE² leaders had conversations last week in Washington DC with Senator Bond and others about making this model MANDATED as federal law.

No, we didn't do it single-handedly, but we collaborated with our partners to make it happen. That is what organizing is all about. It takes everybody working together to get the job done and we learned that lesson on the kcICON Bridge Project. We collaborate to achieve our goals and we learned to work effectively by joining together with partners.

As I sat there with 700 others hearing that because things have gone so well the bridge would be open a year ahead of schedule and under budget, I was proud of MORE² and you should be too. Keep up the good work!

Rev. Ron Brooks
Co-Chair, MORE²