"We haven't had sense enough to set up stores and control the businesses of our community. The man who is controlling the stores in our communities is a man who doesn't look like we do; he's a man who doesn't even live in the community. So you and I, even when we try to spend our money in the block where we live or the area where we live, we're spending it with a man, who when the sun goes down, takes that basket full of money to another part of town."

- Malcolm X

"Not all profit is equal. Profits involving a social purpose represent a higher form of capitalism, one that creates a positive cycle of company and community prosperity….Shared-value focuses companies on the right kind of profits—profits that create societal benefits rather than diminish them."

- Harvard Business Review

Introduction

I Just Love 'em!

"Settle down ladies and gentlemen, settle down!" I loudly announced as I walked into the rowdy classroom.

"Hey, Mr. Franco: You're our substitute teacher again?" asked Sean.

"Yes I am," I responded as the class bell sounded.

"Can I go to the bathroom?"

"Not yet."

"Yo, Mr. Franco! I was feelin' your lesson on entrepreneurship yesterday," DC abruptly stated.

"What did you enjoy about it?" I asked.

"How entrepreneurship can hook me and my boys up with jobs."

"Great point, DC," I said. "Job-creation is the number one thing in starting a business. As I mentioned during my presentation, if we had more businesses in our communities, a lot more African Americans would have jobs to provide for their families and this could reduce the temptation for some to commit crimes."

"I learned a little something as well," Sean said.

"What did you learn, Sean?" I asked.

"I learned that if you are well prepared with *mad* knowledge, you won't be afraid to launch your own company and you won't even care what others, who haven't studied at all, have to say about your plans."

"Excellent!" I said, beaming. "Gaining knowledge through *much* reading and studying is very important for entrepreneurs. It helps build their confidence."

"Yeah, because when you first mentioned how your company wants to use the barbers and stylists in our communities to be the spokespersons for FAMDO, I was lost. But after reading that newspaper article you gave me, I understood how they can help FAMDO's marketing plans," said Sean.

"Mr. Franco, I learned you aren't that big on marches and meetings," said Rasheeda.

"Well, let's make sure we don't dis the marches and meetings, as they were very important for the civil-rights generation and what they did for us in the 1950s and 1960s. But, today's black issues are going to require a do-for-self plan, focusing mainly on economics and entrepreneurship that would improve the conditions of our communities," I said.

"Mr. Franco, I learned you have a revolutionary business called FAMDO," said Rason, another student in the class. "And *revolutionary*—not like you're looking to start trouble, but it's like—you want to change the world! Part of FAMDO's mission—I think that's the word you used—is to make sure blacks are being hired by the companies we spend our money with."

"Yes, Rason," I said with a chuckle. "*Mission* is the word that I used. And I do believe FAMDO will revolutionize how we, as African Americans, spend money. As the leader of FAMDO, I would like to verify that the companies we are strongly supporting with our dollars are also hiring and promoting African Americans in the right way. Wow, I can see you guys are really learning something. Thanks for the great feedback. Now, let's look at the assignment Ms. Jackson planned for today."

"Wait a second, Mr. Franco," Shenise interrupted. "I got a question for you. Who's your favorite rapper?"

"I don't really have one at the moment," I said, as I began to hand out the assignment.

"Shenise, can't you tell Mr. Franco don't get down like that?" DC asked. "He probably likes that dude Kirk Franklin or, who's the guy that sings the fall-down song?"

"Donnie McKirkin!" exclaimed Sean.

"Yeah, dat's him, Donnie McKirkin," DC said. "Come on Mr. Franco, sing wit' me: We Fall Down...but we get up. We Fall Down...but we get up. I know you know it."

"Aiight DC, watch yourself," I warned. "And his name is Donnie *McClurkin*," I said.

"Mr. Franco, you probably don't like any of today's rappers 'cause they too gangsta for you, right?" asked Shenise.

"You may have a point," I replied.

"I bet you even think today's rappers are a problem," Shenise added.

"I think it's more to it than that," I said. "But the images the mainstream rappers put out are often not healthy for us as a community."

"Come on!" Shenise said in frustration. "All you old hip-hop heads always blamin' today's rappers for somethin'. But they just tellin' their stories. They ain't the ones pullin' the triggers or knifin' dudes. Ya'll just don't understand."

"Well Shenise, let me tell you a story," I said. "When I was a teenager, I was really into playing basketball.

And I usually played against the best. Many times, I got my butt kicked by these guys, but I kept coming back," I explained. "By doing so, I *saw* what it took to be a successful player. Then I realized that by keeping at it—no matter how many times I got beat—I was not only getting better, but I was also showing the younger players in town what it took to get to the next level. By all of us playing up to the competition, our high school's basketball teams had great success over the years, and many of us went on to earn basketball scholarships at the college level."

"Yeah Mr. Franco, but what does that have to do with our rappers?" Shenise asked.

"Here's my point," I said. "If African Americans continue to play down to the competition, which includes bragging with the N-word, getting into criminal activity, and having sex with many partners as today's rappers like to boast about, our communities will *never* get to the next level. And it's not just the rappers, but it is also the mainstream media—which African Americans don't own—that controls our minds and keeps us in a messed-up or oppressed state as a people. So I believe I understand better than most, Shenise."

"Mr. Franco, I have to admit, you got that off," Shenise said. "My bad for comin' at you the way I did. And, you've definitely have given me something to think about."

"That's okay, Shenise. Now, after everyone does their assignment, I have another lesson today regarding faithfulness," I said to the class. "As DC just sang, there'll be times when you fall as a teenager, entrepreneur, and even as community. But guess what? We've got to get back up and remain committed to a vision. I think you all will like this lesson."

FAMDO is more than a book. It's a forward-thinking, radical company and blueprint for how African Americans can take responsibility for our communities, our youth, and the images depicted about us in media. The book outlines the concept and structure of FAMDO, but you, the reader, provide the necessary fuel to make the FAMDO machinery operational.

As you read, you will be encouraged to take action on some level aimed at forwarding the plan to empower African-American communities. Your involvement may take varied shapes and forms—ranging from simply purchasing a FAMDO product, to helping generate profits back to black communities, or identifying effective nonprofit programs that FAMDO can fund to improve our neighborhoods. Whatever steps you take, you will become part of a new generation of problem-solvers, change-agents, and money-makers who fund the cause of rescuing the African-American community by making conscious purchasing choices. You will become the architect and builder of a financial structure aimed at strengthening our communities. You will become an active and vocal partner in a plan that previous generations of black activists and civil-rights leaders dreamed of and longed for us to achieve.

We can no longer afford to simply continue complaining about the myriad of problems facing African Americans and our communities. In light of today's dismal economic climate, the rampant racism that remains prevalent in the upper echelons of corporate America, and the mass number of black youth living beneath the quality of life our forefathers envisioned—we must stop *talking* about the problems and take massive action to begin *solving* the problems.

FAMDO offers a comprehensive, actionable plan that allows every empowerment-minded individual to participate in a workable take-back program. Building upon the rich history and indelible legacy of African-American leaders who have made tangible changes in the way society relates to us as a people, the FAMDO company is targeted at transforming the impoverished state of many black communities today. It seeks to change how this state-of-affairs affects our youth and our business communities. It exposes the nightmare the American Dream has become for a disproportionate number of African Americans and leverages our spending power and the proliferation of information via the Internet to do so.

So, what is FAMDO positioning us to take back?

FAMDO's plan will allow us to take back our spending power, to take back our neighborhoods, to take back the direction of our youth, and to take back the way the media handles black images and contracts with black businesses.

FAMDO—the book, the concept, the company, the way—inspires African Americans to use the power we already have to take back our pride, our dignity, and...our future.

Chapter 1

A New Way of Doing Things

A Monday to Remember

This particular Monday morning started out like any other. The alarm went off at 6:00 a.m. I got up, showered, and dressed. My wife and I woke up our twin five-year-old boys, and we washed, fed, and got them ready for their last day in daycare. The very next day was to be their first day of kindergarten.

After dropping the boys off and picking up my morning coffee and daily newspapers, I hopped on the New Jersey Transit train for the usual 15-minute ride to Newark, New Jersey, then switched over to the PATH train that would take me to my stop in New York City.

As I walked the four blocks to the technology company where I worked, an impression hit me, *"Don, don't come to work tomorrow."* I shrugged off this impression at first— assuming it was no more than fatigue from my familiar routine. I continued on to my office, giving my usual greeting to the receptionist, and tossing out The Wall Street Journal, which I typically read during my commute.

After turning on my computer and checking my messages, I began my usual tasks—calling professional and college sports teams to sell them a streaming-video software package. The product was designed to allow basketball, football, and baseball teams to record games and to receive up-to-date videos of their players and opponents from the Internet. Sports teams look for any advantage they can gain over the competition, and our Internet-scouting package provided just that. But after a few phone calls and conversations, I sensed the impression again saying, *"Don, don't come to work tomorrow."*

In addition to being an employee with this technology company, I had envisioned a social-entrepreneurial company that had to be part of the African-American experience. This company I dreamed of would give money back to black communities, across the country, after becoming profitable selling clothes, space on its website to advertisers, and, as I like to say, *whatever* it could sell; including toothpicks. These donations would allow effective nonprofit organizations to empower people, especially African-American youth. Further, this company would *watch dog* major U.S. corporations to make sure they hired and promoted African Americans.

I mention my vision because during my lunch break on this perceptive Monday, I read that Harry Belafonte was making an appearance around the corner from my employer the next day. I began to think, "Wow! Wouldn't it be great if I could get Mr. Belafonte's ear and let him hear about my revolutionary company? After all, Mr. Belafonte has been a soldier of community empowerment and social justice for many years and who knows where this could lead?" But the impression came again, and this time it hit me like a ton of bricks: "Don, stay out of the City tomorrow!" With that, I knew something was up and I committed to not seeing Mr. Belafonte, nor coming into the City on Tuesday.

I called my wife and told her that I would be working from home the next day, and also alerted management

that if they needed me, they could reach me there on Tuesday. As the workday came to an end, and as I took my reverse commute back to New Jersey, I wasn't aware that that day would be the last time I'd see the buildings that housed that lower Manhattan train station. Because, just above that New York City train station was the World Trade Center, where, on Tuesday, September 11, 2001, nearly 2,800 lives were lost in a horrific terrorist attack.

The Decision

After 9/11, I shelved my vision to start a social-entrepreneurial company. Because of the infamous airplane attacks, I felt more comfortable within the safety of a corporate career than I did stepping out to pursue my vision. But as I read the business pages of my daily newspapers and studied the issues arising in business, technology, media, and education in the post 9/11 world, my vision seemed to bounce off the shelf and back into my being. I knew that it was my true calling, and I decided to take the plunge into my new venture.

In 2004 I left corporate America to start my new company, FAMDO. The company is a for-profit enterprise that utilizes social entrepreneurship to empower African-American communities. This empowerment occurs through partnerships with key community influencers, (i.e. black hairstylists and barbers), solid role models, technology, and give-back donations from FAMDO's after-tax profits.

FAMDO is a powerful acronym that denotes: For All Minds Desiring Ownership. The company is designed to promote the ownership of businesses, schools, investments, and homes within local African-American communities. After all, these investments are the things that create true wealth. Ownership also results in African Americans taking responsibility for some of the issues impacting black communities as well.

After seven years of developing FAMDO, my commitment to the vision remains solid because I firmly believe that the company will affect major change within local African-American communities and the youth. For example, an important part of the FAMDO vision involves providing a "para-parenting" component to offer guidance to young African Americans. Through this para-parenting component, FAMDO, and the non-profit organizations the company will back financially, will provide parenting-like direction to help youth set out on a path of a productive future. Note the following excerpt from an article in The New York Times titled, "Plight Deepens for Black Men Studies Warn":

Substandard schools, absentee parents, racism, the decline in blue-collar jobs, and a subculture that glorifies swagger over work have all been cited as causes of the deepening ruin of black youth. Scholars—and the young men themselves—agree that all of these issues must be addressed.[1]

This news, along with several other insights I've gathered during my ongoing studies over the past few years, called to me and drove me to create an even bolder approach to ensuring youth and community empowerment. One notable revelation points to the reality that African Americans will have to "turn up the heat" in holding corporations accountable for hiring and promoting blacks, for advertising on black-owned media outlets, for using black-advertising agencies, and for ensuring that African-American businesses are part of their minority-supplier programs. From the initial planning of FAMDO, the company has included a watch-dog component to protect employment and business relationships of African Americans. But with the current jobless rate for blacks standing at nearly twice that of whites (the same since 1975[2]) I knew FAMDO's watch dogging had to start sooner rather than later. And, if boycotting is needed for African Americans to gain more equality, FAMDO is ready to bravely lead the effort.

I pray that African Americans support FAMDO because black communities are in greater jeopardy today than they were when I started the company seven years ago.

Good Lookin' Out!

“Come on Champ! Let us in.”

“Yeah Champ, tell us about your next moves and why you joined the Nation of Islam.”

“Plus, we want to hear your prediction for the second Liston fight? So come on and talk to us.”

“Yeah champ...come on out and talk to us. You always got something to say!”

These were the words of white reporters who gathered in front of the Harlem restaurant the day Muhammad Ali came into town. At the restaurant’s entrance, which was protected by the Fruit of Islam (FOI), the reporters hoped to get the scoop on what was happening with Ali, the new champ formerly known as Cassius Clay. Ali, who had just upset a bruiser of a fighter named Sonny Liston, was now the heavyweight champion of the world and had become instantly controversial because he had changed his name and joined the Nation of Islam.

While the reporters focused on Ali eating his lunch at the restaurant’s counter, a tall, handsome black reporter turned the corner and headed toward the packed restaurant. The rookie black reporter had been assigned to talk to Ali. But from the size of the crowd in front of the restaurant, he realized that getting face time with the champ would be nearly impossible. *‘How in the world am I going to get time with the champ, especially with all these reporters ahead of me?’* he thought. *‘Plus, I don’t know if can get by FOI.’*

As the young reporter stood in front of the restaurant perplexed and bewildered by his predicament, he noticed the champ looking at him through the restaurant’s glass door. After all, this reporter was black and his 6’4” frame made him stand head and shoulders above the others. He watched as the champ called members of the FOI over and pointed in his direction. “Let the brother in,” Ali told his security team.

The young reporter was overwhelmed with excitement when he heard the words he longed to hear, “Brother, the champ wants to speak with you!”

Although everyone in the crowd realized who it was the champ was referring to, a few white reporters responded to the call of “brother.” These wishful thinkers were quickly corrected by the FOI and the young reporter was allowed inside and was seated nearly thirty feet away from the champ. He was instructed about important Islamic rituals—such as refraining from shaking the champ’s hand and not speaking with the champ until he completely finished his meal. Soon, Ali walked over to the booth where the anxious young reporter waited. The first question the reporter asked was, “Champ, why did you help me out like that?”

“Because you are my brother,” Ali replied. “And the only thing that I ask is that you look out for another brother whenever you’re in a position to do so. Now, let’s begin the interview.”

This story, from the mid-1960s, was told by the tall, handsome reporter, Gil Noble. Mr. Noble is the host of “Like It Is,” a Sunday morning TV show that airs in the New York metropolitan area. The show, which addresses African-American concerns, has taught me a lot about black history and issues. When I heard this story, I recognized how it spoke to who I am. My whole existence is about lending a hand as I am in a position to do so. And I have found that somewhere in my life’s journey I was given a purpose to serve others.

Burdened

In 1998, when my family moved into our newly-constructed home, it was a time of intense excitement. We had overcome the various challenges of saving for the down payment, cleaning up our credit, and dealing with our grouchy home builder. It was finally time to close the deal. “Congratulations!” said the attorney at the closing of our dream house. “You are now proud New Jersey home owners.” Visions of new furniture in every room,

large family gatherings during the holidays, kids in the pool during the dog days of summer, and friends visiting for cook-outs filled our future plans. Yet, while our personal aspirations were soaring, the situation in our communities was becoming increasingly worse.

On routine drives to work, church, or to grab a take-out dinner, I noticed young African-American men hanging out on street corners during prime working hours. And, as I heard news of various murders in my own hometown and surrounding areas, I began to realize that many black communities were spinning out of control. I began taking note of the distasteful videos being aired on TV and was stunned by the negative and self-destructive images being impressed upon the minds of our youth. I sensed the absence of vision and purpose in our communities.

Although I was making a great salary as a pharmaceutical sales and marketing executive at this time, I desperately wanted to use my business skills to become a change-agent in the African-American community. Increasingly, inequalities in business began to haunt me, namely I was disturbed that:

- At the turn of the 20th century, African-American businesses accounted for only .4 of one percent of this country's total business revenues.[3] This is significant because over the past 30 years, more than 70 percent of new employment in the United States has come from small businesses and not from large corporations.[4] Additionally, because African Americans make up 13 percent of the total population, $13 of every $100 of this country's business revenues should be created by African Americans. However, black businesses don't even produce $0.50 of every $100.00.

- In inner cities, finishing high school is an exception—half of all black men do not finish high school.[5] Legal work is scarcer than ever and incarceration rates for blacks have increased despite an overall decline in urban crime.[6]

- Among black dropouts in their late 20's, more are in prison on any given day (34 percent) than in the workforce (30 percent), according to an analysis done in year 2000.[7]

- The share of young black men without jobs has climbed relentlessly, with only a slight pause during the economic peak of the late 1990's. In 2000, 65 percent of black male high school dropouts in their 20's were jobless—that is, unable to find work, not seeking it or incarcerated. By 2004, the share had grown to 72 percent, compared with 34 percent of white and 19 percent of Hispanic dropouts. Even when high school graduates were included, half of black men in their 20's were jobless in 2004, up from 46 percent in 2000.[8]

- African-American youth, between ages 13-19, represent only 15 percent of U.S. teenagers, yet they accounted for 66 percent of new AIDS cases reported among teens in 2003.[9]

- The overall rate of out-of-wedlock births in the U.S. is 33 percent. For blacks, this rate is 70 percent. This statistic is crucial because research shows that children raised by their married, biological parents do better across every measure of economic, social, health, and educational well-being than children raised in other family arrangements. In fact, when comparing families of similar socioeconomic status, black children raised in these "traditional households'' have similar outcomes as their white counterparts.[10]

- The wealth gap between white and black Americans is the widest it has been in the 25 years since the government has kept figures on net worth. According to the most recent information, the median net worth of a white household was $113,149 in 2009. The same figure for black households was only

$5,677. Not only is the gap terrifyingly wide, it is also getting worse.[11]

- Further, I personally worked for a New Jersey-based pharmaceutical company in year 2000. The company had a sales force of 1,200 sales representatives. Yet, only one rep was African American. The company also had 120 sales force managers, and only one was African-American.

  Faced with these glaring inequalities, my decision to lead a company aimed at addressing economic and societal issues in African-American communities was quite a challenge. I asked myself, '*Who, besides me, is willing to put everything on the line to ensure that African-American communities and our youth receive social justice, equality, and empowerment?'* Answering this question fueled my burden for empowerment and continues to push me toward realizing my vision.

Can't Quit Purpose

"Don, I can't believe you're still promoting FAMDO!" - A close friend

I anticipated rave reviews and passionate support for developing my community-empowerment company from other African Americans, but that wasn't the case. Instead, my vision was met with heated debates, ridicule, and became the root of financial debilitation and significant stress for me and my family. Yet, because I have fully embraced FAMDO as my life's purpose, I will not give up.

In 2007, when our country's economy began to weaken, I took on a few part-time jobs to make extra money for my family. One job with a pharmaceutical company and the other was substitute teaching in an inner-city school district. Although the pharmaceutical job proved to me that I still had the ability to persuade doctors to write prescriptions for the pharmaceutical products I was selling, I was more intrigued with the substitute-teaching job. It thoroughly convinced me that African Americans *must* implement new approaches for preparing black youth to fulfill their purpose.

While substitute teaching, I was shocked by the stories I heard from the young people I encountered in the schools. One of these stories went like this:

"Me and my niggas was on the corner last night, and this nigga pulled up and I was like, 'Sup nigga?! I got my niggas, you go get your niggas then we can do whatever you want, nigga!'"

After I recovered from this assault of the N-bombs, it was obvious to me that a major shift was required to alter the way our young people speak to and about each other.

I also immediately recognized that the student leading this conversation was completely blind to the purpose of his life.

Despite my strong commitment to serving African-American youth and the African-American community, I seriously considered giving up on my vision. I was facing a harsh absence of customers, sponsors, and investors and considered becoming a teacher or going back into pharmaceutical sales full-time.

As fate would have it, I came across a teaching CD titled, "The Dip" by Seth Godin. Mr. Godin is a best-selling author and his teaching spoke directly to my situation. The main point of the teaching states that when we initially take on a new task, like starting a new business or embarking on a new fitness plan, we are really excited and energetic about it. But, as the beginning stage ends we enter a period Mr. Godin calls "the dip." During this stage, we begin slacking off on our commitment. For example, if we started on a fitness plan, we stop going to the gym regularly during "the dip." Or, if it's a business we've started, our enthusiasm begins to fade due to lack of customers and investors during "the dip" period.

Mr. Godin's teaching advises that if you are not looking to be the best at what you are doing, you *should* quit. However, if you are looking to be the next Michael Jordan or Pablo Picasso—in other words, top dog in your field—you have to work through *the dip* to fulfill your objectives and to rise to the top.

After digesting that teaching there was no more quit in me. It became even clearer to me that no one, and I do mean no one, was going to take on the task of preparing African-American communities for success the way FAMDO would. And I became even more determined to make FAMDO the "Michael Jordan" of community empowerment—after all, my life's purpose and the purposes of generations of African Americans was at stake.

What is a Social Entrepreneur?

One of the best definitions I've found for the term 'social entrepreneur' is from www.ASHOKA.org, a leading non-profit organization fostering social change generated through compassionate entrepreneurs. ASHOKA defines the term this way:

"Social entrepreneurs are individuals with innovative solutions to society's most pressing social problems. They are ambitious and persistent, tackling major social issues and offering new ideas for wide-scale change. Rather than leaving societal needs to the government or business sectors, social entrepreneurs find what is not working and solve the problem by changing the system, spreading the solution, and persuading entire societies to take new leaps." [12]

A great example of a social-entrepreneurial company is Newman's Own, a venture started by the late actor Paul Newman. The premise of the business is that by selling various products, such as pasta sauces, popcorn, juices, and other food products, Newman's Own provides financial support to various nonprofit organizations. As of 2010, the company has provided over $300 million to thousands of effective nonprofit organizations since 1982.[13]

Respectfully following in the footsteps of Newman's Own, FAMDO will generate income as a for-profit venture and then give the profits back to effective nonprofit organizations that service the black community.

Social-Issue Purchasing (SIP)

As social-entrepreneurial companies (SECs) gain a solid footing in the American economic landscape, I believe many will rally around a particular social issue or cause—rather than gaining notoriety for offering a single product or service. By establishing a reputation of addressing a particular social issue, SECs will draw support from consumers who share similar beliefs. Both the SEC and its consumer groups will likely work hand-in-hand to create a *pool of profits* from the sale of a variety of goods and services. Finally, the SEC and its customers will determine the best way to use the profits in addressing their social concerns on an annual basis.

I have termed this new way of doing business as the "social-issue purchasing" (SIP) philosophy. Long-standing companies, such as General Motors for cars and Prudential for insurance, have followed the one-product/one-service strategy for years; but SECs will lead a new way of doing business with a SIP process in place in this country.

With the SIP philosophy in mind, FAMDO's goal is to be known as the "community-empowerment company," and not necessarily a clothing-line company or a media company selling space on its website to advertisers and sponsors. To underscore this point, I often say FAMDO could even sell toothpicks if that's what will give it the resources to empower African-American youth and communities. The company's goal is to acquire a large pool of profits each year, regardless of what it sells, and to use those profits to make meaningful donations to support effective African-American non-profit organizations.

FAMDO's SIP

Each time a customer buys a FAMDO product or service, or financially supports a sponsor that has partnered with FAMDO, that consumer becomes part of the machinery that empowers local African-American communities. Imagine the profits from every FAMDO t-shirt sold going into the company's pool of profits, then being used to empower African Americans. At the end of the year, both the consumer and the company get to decide which African- American nonprofit organizations are to receive funding by voting at the FAMDO website (www.FAMDO.com).

Think about what would happen if FAMDO enters a partnership with one of the country's major fast food chains. Every burger purchased would support community empowerment. How will this be achieved? FAMDO will promote its fast food partner within black communities and will leverage the most-profitable advertising deals, thus achieving profits that allow even more money to be funneled into our communities for empowerment services.

Like the word sip, the term "SIP" refers to a small amount. FAMDO will ask African Americans to do one small thing, such as buying a book, an item of clothing or some other minor purchase each year to guarantee the company's profits for recycling money back to our communities. The company's SIP philosophy does not depend solely on the support of African-American athletes or entertainers. Rather, it is dependent upon the support of a healthy percentage of blacks to generate revolutionary change within our local communities.

Let's Be Clear

The FAMDO strategy to empower black communities *does not* place me in the category of a racist. The company's mission to address African-American issues is aimed at developing stronger individuals, families, communities, and a more economically-balanced nation. Further, a number of great companies target their products and services to a specific segment of people. Black magazines, for example, focus on black issues. Similarly, in order for the company's community-empowerment mission to become most effective, FAMDO must streamline its activities and cannot be all things to all people.

The company is focused solely on changing black communities in a revolutionary way through an innovative approach. The word *revolutionary* here does not mean that FAMDO will become socially rebellious or serve as an advocate of separatism. Rather, in the way that companies like Microsoft, Google, and FaceBook have drastically impacted our culture, FAMDO seeks to create a revolutionary economic change through proactive and relevant means.

Finally, FAMDO seeks to confront issues surrounding ethnicity and inequality as they relate to economics impacting African-American youth and communities. And, while I firmly believe that we are all part of the human race, the two 800-pound gorillas in the room—specifically, ethnicity and inequality—will be discussed in the book. And, what I know for sure is that an empowered African-American community means a more empowered America.

"Don Franco's voice is powerful and poignant. Don't miss his book, The FAMDO Way: A Social Entrepreneur's Faithfulness!"
- Dr. Cornel West, Professor, Princeton University

"Don Franco speaks with a pure heart. His message of economic empowerment is one that's often mentioned but rarely detailed, explored, and explained. Franco does that in The FAMDO Way: A Social Entrepreneur's Faithfulness, and everyone who reads it is better and smarter for it."

- Chris Broussard, NBA on ESPN

"I commend Don for writing this important book on economic development in the black community. While the country is experiencing a 10 percent unemployment rate, for black men, the rate is nearly 40 percent. No one is going to address this issue but us."

- Dr. Jawanza Kunjufu, Author, Reducing The Black Male Dropout Rate

"Don Franco has designed a necessary and vital plan to revitalize the minds and pocketbooks of black communities in America. Like an architect, he laid a solid foundation upon which the black community can build empires collectively."

- Cathleen Williams, RN, Esq., TV Talk Show Host, I'm Just Saying!