

# National Webinar Summary

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<https://www.dropbox.com/s/1f1oqfgf54eonr4/RESULTS%20U.S.%20Poverty%20National%20Monthly%20Meeting%202015-12-12.mp4?dl=0>

## Experts on Poverty Story

Tianna Gaines-Turner, RESULTS Pennsylvania volunteer

*My name is Tianna Gaines-Turner I'm 37 years married with a blended family of six children. Me and my husband have been through many struggles together. Being homelessness twice and it seems no matter what we do clip coupons. We always seem to run out of food at the end of the month I sometimes find myself going to the food pantry twice. A month especially when the children are out of school on break.*

*I have been advocate 4/9 years my passion is speaking out about hunger and poverty. It is said that we have many children, are soldiers, and seniors going to bed every night with empty bellies. We have to use our voices to be advocates to speak out and inform policy makers on the importance of the programs to help less people out of poverty. I have had the honor to speak at the Republican House Budget Committee as an expert witness on hunger and poverty. The Speaker of the House Paul Ryan period plan coverage you with the sound of my voice to stand up and speak out tell you story. It matters and you can help inform policy makers to make change and protect the safety net. I have 3 children with medical disabilities and myself or with medical disabilities myself. This is the brief description in the part of my life story. thank you for listening I look forward to continuing to work with RESULTS and all that's on the call.*

## Welcome

Joanne Carter, RESULTS Executive Director (Washington, DC)

Welcome to the RESULTS US Poverty December webinar—our last meeting for 2015.

Just a reminder: If you're not linked in via the Fuze meeting, you can download the slides for today's call from the Take Action Box on the RESULTS Homepage

This December call is a moment to acknowledge some of the amazing things you've accomplished this year. I want to give you a perspective on some of those. And we're also in the last days of critical action on the Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit so we're going to hear an up-to-the-moment update from a special guest about what's happening in Congress, the role you've been playing, and what we can still do in the next few days.

First I want you to realize it's been an amazing year in our U.S. Poverty work because of you:

- We've had 184 media pieces so far in 2015, including 141 letters to the editor, 14 editorials, 16 op-eds, and 13 articles and radio interviews – the most we've had in over a decade
- You've had 116 face-to-face meetings (83 with House members and 33 with Senators) – more than double our average number lobby meetings over the last number of years.

- We've welcomed 4 new U.S. poverty groups with 4 more started but still in training (How many new states? – 2 of today, hopefully 5 by the end of the year)
- We've grown our network of experts on poverty who are truly now some of the most persuasive and effective spokespeople on these issues in our nation and have spoken and been published across the country.
- You've also held numerous outreach meetings and raised tens of thousands dollars for RESULTS (I can let you know the impressive final number in January).

And all of your work helped prevent deep cuts in the budget to SNAP (formerly Food Stamps) this year AND put us in the position of possibly making the EITC and CTC provisions permanent before 2017.

A real thanks to all of you who have sprung into action so quickly and effectively to lobby the House and Senate on the EITC and CTC to help ensure that as Congress looks to pass massive corporate tax breaks, that the EITC and CTC provisions are made permanent too. In the midst of everything you're doing for the holidays and everything you're doing in your life, there is nothing more important you could have done this holiday to make sure that our system protects the needs of low-income working families and that 16 million people don't fall deeper into poverty. And we still have a few more hours next week to make sure this happens so thanks for not letting up.

To support us in our advocacy right now on the EITC and the CTC, we have a great guest speaker to give us the latest on what's happening and how our work has been having an impact--Louisa Warren from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

Then you'll hear from Meredith Dodson on what you can do right now on EITC/CTC

And as we look toward 2016, Ruth Innocent, one of our Experts on Poverty, will lead us in a powerful training on using storytelling in your advocacy

Then you'll hear a share about the amazing work Houston has done this past month in support of the EITC and CTC. I'll let them tell the story but I had the privilege to join the Houston folks for an editorial board meeting with the Houston Chronicle and if there was ever a clear example of the power of stories, that was one — as soon as Cacie Waters started speaking about her family's experience with the EITC, the entire editorial board meeting shifted and I'm convinced that's what made it a success.

We'll end with an update on your fantastic fundraising efforts from Jerusa Contee and then some guidance on group planning and other exciting end of year opportunities.

Thank you again for all you do to shape policies and political priorities to create a more just and humane nation. I wish you a peaceful and very happy holiday.

## **Guest Speaker – Louisa Warren, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities**

Facilitated by Meredith Dodson, Director of U.S. Poverty Campaigns (Washington, DC)

### **Bio of Louisa Warren**

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- Assistant Director of State Engagement & Partnerships at the [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#)
  - Works with state-based organizations on advancing state and federal policy that reduces poverty
  - Also advises on issue campaign strategy on state fiscal policy
  - Before coming to CBPP, was a Senior Policy Associate at the North Carolina Justice Center
  - Worked on tax and budget issues, income supports, workplace standards, and prisoner re-entry
  - Also served as Director of the North Carolina Coalition for Lobbying Reform
  - Graduated Phi Beta Kappa with a BA from Grinnell College in Iowa
- 1. Can you explain how we've gotten to where we are today on a tax deal that could make the EITC and CTC provisions permanent? [What impact has local media coverage had on the debate, and how can advocates shape the final outcome in the next few days?**
- Critical, odd moment of waiting for the next 24 hrs
    - Collective efforts of organizations like RESULTS is why we're here
    - We've come a long way - struggled to make EITC CTC easy to understand/make it real for people (de-wonkify)
      - It is not well known, no social movement in the streets calling for action (like minimum wage, etc)
      - It is incredibly complex, yet so vital to lives, tools to reduce poverty
    - THAT is where we started earlier this year
  - We've since educated folks on what EITC CTC is
    - Had to inspire a sense of urgency (hurdle of 2017 expiration date not seeming urgent) and overcome the challenge of defining pathway for success in Congress
    - In early 2015: very few champions in Congress (except Sherrod Brown perhaps) and very few even paying attention/aware
      - We had the same challenge as with the public – understanding the issue, making the request, and creating a sense of urgency
  - We have come a long way in just a few months
    - We now have clear champions in both House and Senate
    - We've succeeded in making this issue as top leverage for making business extenders permanent
    - This bi-partisan commitment big success as well, massive progress in cultivating short term and long term benefits here
    - We've also been successful in getting more draconian measures off the table completely (ex: denying CTC for no SS#)

- We've made great strides in restoring bipartisan support for EITC (since Reagan - we needed new examples to stay relevant)
  - This all happened from large collective efforts from orgs like RESULTS (Louisa Warren astounded by our work)
  - Our work has been effective and impactful
    - Strategic challenge to grow a debate was that nationally, the media was not covering it, not high profile - needed to come from states, communities, constituents
  - If we get a win: celebrate our hard work
  - If things fall apart: we'll continue to work - this 2015 work will have strengthened our hand
  - Either way, we are conveying a sense of importance to support working families and help them make ends meet
- 2. Can you give us an update of where things stand right now with the work to save these key tax credits?**
- Like a bottomless 9th inning in the last few weeks (feel like we've had 6 "final last pushes"); a real roller coaster
  - Things are still fluid but things should resolve by early next week. Things could go one of two ways:
    - There is still big interest to make business extenders permanent (our leverage) - 4-5 congressional conversation leaders/negotiators, **quite certain if there is a permanent business tax extenders package, EITC CTC will also be made permanent** (challenge being that negotiations are tied up with a totally separate issue around ACA, other things being thrown in the legislation - need Congress and POTUS to agree, if not then...)
    - Talks collapse, little universal will for health tax provisions, Congress moves forward with just short term extension of business tax credits (2 years, but one of them is retroactive)
  - Monday is deadline for all legislation to be filed before 2016 - we will hear what happens, deal will be announced or short term leg will be advanced. We either celebrate or do rapid response, set up for 2016 continuing battle. (*UPDATE: Legislation to be released sometime Tuesday*)
  - If we "lose" we're not really losing because we've made so much headway, so we're still not dead if talks collapse.
- 3. How can advocates shape the final outcome in the next few days?**
- Rapid response communications directly to MoC and staff, amplify message in media: "we did it, will have huge impact on poverty, Congress should pass this deal now" – thank you AND urging support to pass deal (let's not take votes for granted, but no need to do deep vote count at the moment, just use clear message)
  - Only short term business tax extenders bill passes: we need to quickly send message what a disappointment this was, tone can vary from group to group, some harder hitting than others

## EITC/CTC Action Overview

Meredith Dodson, Director of U.S. Poverty Campaigns (Washington, DC)

- If Congress does not save key EITC and CTC provisions:
- Roughly 50 million Americans, including 25 million children, will lose some or all of their tax credits if the EITC and CTC improvements expire.
- More than 16 million people, including 8 million children, will be pushed into, or deeper into, poverty.
- [Tax legislation may be attached to “omnibus” spending bill](#) or as separate legislation before or after the omnibus
- Tax proposal likely to be released Monday (*UPDATE: Tuesday or Wednesday*). The plan will either permanently extend some tax provisions, including the EITC and the Child Tax Credit, or temporarily extend expired business tax breaks only.

**TAKE ACTION:** A “Rapid Response” will be key. **Use the media to draw attention to this issue, regardless of Congress does.**

1. If it's a permanent tax deal, we'll use the media to say “Thank You” for including the EITC/CTC provisions and reinforce the message that this needs to get done
  - We want to make sure this key victory for 50+ million Americans doesn't get overlooked
  - This will also lay groundwork for other efforts to move anti-poverty policies
2. If it's a two-year tax deal, we'll use the media to hold Congress accountable
  - Express how incredibly disappointed we are and that we must make these provisions permanent in 2017.

Once we see the proposal, we'll have a sample letter to the editor (LTE) available so you can take action fast. Look for an e-mail from us once the plan is released.

*UPDATE: RESULTS will delay our Weekly Update this week until after the tax plan has been released.*

## November Action Training – Powerful Storytelling

Ruth Innocent, RESULTS Raleigh Volunteer and Expert on Poverty (Raleigh, NC)

### Stories Matter

- Effective way to influence policy makers, bust dangerous myths around poverty
- Studies show stories are 22 times more likely to be remembered than facts alone
- Your voice can empower others to speak up, or be a voice for those who feel left behind
- If we don't tell our stories, someone else will (and they may not get it right)

### Training Tool - Public Narrative

- Translating values into action
- Connecting the head to the heart

- Link our own "calling" to a community call to action
- Overcoming apathy with hope

### **Narrative Plot Elements - Where to Start**

- Structured format to frame your story:
  - Challenge: Why did you feel it was a challenge? What was so challenging about it? Why was it your challenge?
  - Choice: Why did you make the choice you did? Where did you get the courage – or not? Where did you get the hope – or not? How did it feel?
  - Outcome: How did the outcome feel? Why did it feel that way? What did it teach you? What do you want to teach us? How do you want us to feel?

### **Story of Self, Us, and Now**

- Linking your own story/purpose to others, and calling on them to take action
- Story of Self:
  - Why did *you* decide to advocate, share, join?
- Story of Us:
  - What are the shared values, goals, choices your community must make?
- Story of Now:
  - What are our shared challenges and **what is our call to action?**

On Monday, December 14 at 8:30 pm ET, RESULTS hosted **Powerful Speaking: Telling Your Story to Create Change**. This webinar featured several of our [Experts on Poverty](#). They shared how they've developed their own stories, why these stories truly matter, and how you can draw from your own experiences to speak powerfully about poverty. You can listen to a recording of the call [here](#).

## **Grassroots Shares**

Facilitated by Jos Linn, Grassroots Manager for U.S. Poverty Campaigns

### **Kathleen Duncan, RESULTS Houston**

*My name is Kathleen Duncan and I'd like to share about RESULTS Houston's recent media work with the Houston Chronicle. David Schubert of RESULTS Houston global group was able to secure a meeting with the Editorial Board of the Houston Chronicle for the day after the Houston fundraiser. RESULTS Executive Director Joanne Carter was in town for the fundraiser so as to maximize Joanne's time when in town, we set up the meeting. We also decided to include Cacie Waters in the meeting as well. Cacie is a new volunteer in Houston and a former REAL Change Fellow. She has attended the International Conference for 3 years, 2 years as a REAL Changer and this last year as a Narrative Project volunteer. She started off in RESULTS*

*lobbying for our Global issues, something she cares deeply about. But like some REAL Changers, Cacie is comfortable lobbying for both Global and US Poverty.*

*When in 2015 the US Poverty Campaign Issue continued with focus on the vital EITC and CTC, Cacie realized she could speak from personal experience and came forward to the delight of the Texas volunteers. Her mom and twin brother who are successful recipients of the Earned Income Tax Credit. Cacie spent time at this year's International Conference sharing her story with congressional offices. She did a knock-out job presenting her story then and so we all decided to include her in our meeting with the Chronicle.*

*In the meeting, which took place on November 23, we were going after an editorial. We shared information about the EITC and CTC in Texas and the importance of making the expiring provisions permanent. Joanne, of course, did a superb job of presenting the case for an editorial on EITC and CTC. And Cacie once again did a great job sharing her story. The editors were receptive and on November 28, they printed a strong editorial urging Congress to make the EITC and CTC provisions permanent. However, typically, editorials don't include personal stories but the Editorial Board was intrigued by Cacie's story. Cacie had previously submitted an op-ed sharing her story to the Chronicle but to no avail. But once the Board met her and heard her story first hand, her piece was resurrected. So, just two days after they printed the editorial, the Houston Chronicle printed Cacie's op-ed about her family's experience with the EITC and CTC. It once again proves that stories matter. I firmly believe her story played a key role in the Chronicle deciding to write the editorial and it certainly was the reason they printed her op-ed a few days later.*

*We were thrilled when we got both pieces published. And we did exactly what RESULTS teaches us to do when we get media published. We sent copies of the editorial and op-ed to newly appointed House Ways and Means Chair Kevin Brady, who represents an area just outside of Houston, hoping to influence him in tax negotiations.*

## **Fundraising Update**

**Jerusa Contee, Senior Development Associate**

- Thank you to everyone who participated in fundraising this fall!
- 27 Groups Participated in Friends and Family campaigns!
- 14 Groups hosted fundraising events!
- We met our November Challenge by raising at least \$25,000 that month through Friends and Family and thus earned an additional \$10,000 donation as a matching gift.
- Of our overall \$100,000 goal for this fall, we are getting there – we've raised \$61,000 so far. Thank you for all your hard work!
- Be sure to do your own end-of-year giving to RESULTS. Find out more at: [http://www.results.org/support\\_results/donate\\_to\\_results/](http://www.results.org/support_results/donate_to_results/).

# Announcements

Jos Linn, Grassroots Manager for U.S. Poverty Campaigns

## 2016 Group Planning

- In January, we will again do 2016 Group Planning.
- Fill out the [Individual Planning Form](#) (also in [PDF form](#)) now so you'll be ready in January.
- Bring the completed form to the January 9 National Webinar. We'll do group planning on that webinar.
- More Group Planning materials are coming! Find them on our [Group Resources page](#).
- If you have questions about group planning, please contact Jos Linn ([jlinn@results.org](mailto:jlinn@results.org)).

## February Action Preview

- We plan to talk more about the racial wealth gap in 2016.
- [Between the World and Me](#) by Ta-Nehisi Coates has been a critically-acclaimed and award winning book looking at race in modern American society.
- To educate ourselves on this issue, in February we want your groups to read his book and discuss it in your monthly meetings.
- We urge you to buy the book or rent it from your local library so you'll be able to read it before or during February.

## Final Announcements

- Please Fill out our Lobby Meeting Report Form for any lobby meetings you've done recently. [www.tinyurl.com/RESLRF](http://www.tinyurl.com/RESLRF).
- RESULTS Powerful Speaking: Telling Your Story to Create Change webinar, Monday, December 14 at 8:30 pm ET. To participate, login at: <http://fuze.me/27440970> or dial in at (201) 479-4595, Meeting ID: 27440970#.
- RESULTS Free Agents, December 15 at 1:00 pm and 8:00 pm ET. Login at <http://fuze.me/27491886> or by phone at (201) 479-4595, Meeting ID: 27491886. Contact Jos Linn ([jlinn@results.org](mailto:jlinn@results.org)) for details.
- RESULTS Offices will be closed December 24-January 3. Happy Holidays!
  - For U.S. Poverty staff, Jos will be on vacation beginning December 17, Meredith beginning December 22, and Kristy beginning December 23
- Find these and other events in the [Events Calendar](#) on the RESULTS website.
- Our next U.S. Poverty National Webinar will be **Saturday, January 9 at 12:30pm ET**. Because of Group Planning, the call may run until 1:45pm; please plan accordingly.

Now let's open up all the phone lines and wish each other a very Happy Holiday!