

National Meeting Summary

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http://www.results.org/skills_center/results_national_conference_calls/

Welcome

Jos Linn, Grassroots Manager for U.S. Poverty Campaigns (Des Moines, IA)

Welcome to this month's webinar. You can download the slides from the Take Action Box on the RESULTS Homepage

- Thank you for doing planning in January
- Excited about the goals you've set – you're putting us on the road to another successful and powerful year of advocacy
- If you have not done planning or submitted it, please send ASAP to jlinn@results.org

Review Agenda

- Exciting call today as we look deeper into inequality in America. This is an issue that is getting more attention during the presidential campaign and gives us the opportunity to highlight this issue not only for the current Congress, but the next Congress and President as well
- To help us get there, we are thrilled to have guest speaker Debbie Weinstein of the Coalition on Human Needs here today to talk to us about President Obama's new and last budget which was released this week. She'll also talk about the importance of building on our EITC and CTC success last December by expanding the EITC for workers without children.
- After Debbie, we'll do a brief campaigns and issues update
- Training on talking about EITC for childless workers
- Shares from the grassroots
- Action overview: book club discussions about *Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates
- Final Announcements

Guest Speaker – Debbie Weinstein, Executive Director of the Coalition on Human Needs

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

Bio of Debbie Weinstein

- Became Executive Director of CHN in 2003 (www.chn.org)
- Brings over thirty years of advocacy experience to CHN on a wide range of issues at both the state and federal level.
- Prior to coming to CHN, served as Director of the Family Income division of the Children's Defense Fund, working on policy strategies to lift children and their families out of poverty.
- From 1983 to 1993, Debbie was Executive director of the Massachusetts Human Services Coalition
- Master of Social Work degree from San Diego State University

1. The President released his budget proposal this week. Can you briefly overview what was in that and why this budget proposal is important?

- Obama's budget is kind of vision for what our country ought to look like
- Congress not rushing to adopt it
- One section recognizes that low-income children need to eat 12 months a year so the President's budget proposed \$12 billion for summer food program and allows parents to use debit card all year
- Increase in funding for child care
- New emergency aid grants – \$2 billion over 5 years – for short term aid to prevent inconveniences from becoming crises
- TANF increase; first time in 20 years; also places requirements on states regarding spending
- Goal to end family homelessness by 2020
- Opening doors for youth by helping young people get first job
- Better unemployment insurance to 26 weeks

2. Let's talk more specifically about expanding the EITC for childless workers – why does this matter?

- Expansion of EITC to include workers without children living at home
 - Only workers who can be taxed into or deeper into poverty
 - Currently a work disincentive
 - Where this has been implemented like in UK it has been a work incentive
- Effects many young workers; currently available at age 25; proposal would expand it down to age 21
- More of a chance to pass because of bipartisan support including House Speaker Ryan and President Obama; Sen. Marco Rubio has also mentioned it

- May not happen in election year but should push candidates to increase chances of passage next year
 - Would be especially beneficial to young African-Americans and Hispanics
- 3. Question from Albuquerque: Why does lowering the age eligibility for the EITC for childless workers only go down to 21? Why not lower it even further for younger workers?**
- I agree with you. I think it should go lower but there are some lawmakers who are hesitant to go that low because they don't want students in college claiming the EITC. If they are working – and that's what the EITC is based on, work –they should get it but others object to it.
- 4. Question from Des Moines: What is your take on Republicans in Congress refusing to have the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) testify as to the President's budget, as is tradition?**
- Republicans are very divided
 - Extreme members looking to “drop” all over administration and show anti-government, anti-poverty stance
 - They are not inviting Director of OMB to testify but Director of Treasury and other members of administration will testify

U.S. Poverty Campaigns Update

Jos Linn

Here are actions you can take this month to push members of Congress on issues impacting poverty in the U.S.

- **Follow up on your face-to-face meeting requests.**
 - Congress is on recess the week of Feb. 15! Contact about meetings and town halls and see the [January Action](#) for tips on requesting meetings
 - Take EITC Lobby Request with you (find all Lobby Request Sheets on our [Issues page](#))
 - If you get a meeting or town hall, contact Jos Linn to help you prepare (jlinn@results.org)
- **E-mail Congress about expanding the EITC for childless workers**
 - http://capwiz.com/results/issues/alert/?alertid=9823986&MC_plugin=2201
 - Forward this alert to your Local Action Networks
- **Use election coverage to generate media about important anti-poverty programs**
 - EITC: http://capwiz.com/results/issues/alert/?alertid=59692501&MC_plugin=2201

- SNAP:
http://capwiz.com/results/issues/alert/?alertid=64248626&MC_plugin=2201
- **Check out our blogpost** with the video of the EITC Awareness Day event in DC:
 - http://www.results.org/blog/build_on_eitc_awareness_day_to_push_for_expanding_the_eitc/

2016 Campaigns Update

The RESULTS Board of Directors is meeting this weekend, and their agenda includes discussion and likely approval of our campaigns for the year. Obviously, we'll work to build on the momentum of last year's huge victory (The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities says it is the biggest anti-poverty legislative victory of the past 20 years outside of the *Affordable Care Act*) by pushing to expand the EITC. Stay tuned for more information.

November Action Training

Kathleen Duncan, RESULTS Houston and NW Montana volunteer

Hello, this is Kathleen Duncan from RESULTS Houston. I am happy to lead our speaking training this month. This month, we're going to return to an oldie but goodie exercise – the fill-in-the-blank laser talk. Here's how this will work.

I will read through the laser talk a few times, changing it up each time to help you learn it. First, I'm going to go through the talk and I just want you to listen and pay attention to the key facts. Note: this laser talk assumes you're talking to a member of the Senate. Here we go.

Engage: *I'd like to discuss with you a bipartisan proposal to address poverty that both House Speaker Paul Ryan and President Obama support.*

Problem: *Did you know that there is one group of workers who are actually taxed into or deeper into poverty: low-wage workers without children.*

Inform: *The [Earned Income Tax Credit](#) and [Child Tax Credit](#) are pro-work tax credits that lifted [9.8 million people](#) out of poverty in 2014 – more than any other program except for Social Security. But the EITC for childless workers is so small, many workers cannot make ends meet. Speaker Ryan and President Obama have proposed to expand the EITC for these low-wage workers who don't claim dependents. This would benefit 13.5 million working Americans, including 2 million African-American workers and 3.3 million Latino workers. Additionally, it would lift 500,000 people out of poverty.*

Call to Action: *Will you speak and/or write directly to Senate Finance Committee Chair Orrin Hatch and Ranking Member Ron Wyden, urging them to help working Americans meet their basic needs by expanding the EITC for workers without children in the home?*

Now I'm going to go through it again but this time, I'm going to leave out some of the key facts. When I get to those blanks, just shout out the answer there with your group. Here goes.

Engage: *I'd like to discuss with you a bipartisan proposal to address poverty that what two people both support? (PAUSE) **House Speaker Paul Ryan and President Obama.***

Problem: Did you know that there is one group of workers who are actually taxed into or deeper into poverty. What is that group? (PAUSE) **Low-wage workers without children.**

Inform: The Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit are pro-work tax credits that lifted how many people out of poverty in 2014? (PAUSE) **9.8 million people.** This was more than any other program except for Social Security. But the EITC for childless workers is so small, many workers cannot make ends meet. Speaker Ryan and President Obama have proposed to expand the EITC for these low-wage workers who don't claim what? (PAUSE)

Dependents. This would benefit how many working Americans? (PAUSE) **13.5 million Americans.** Including how many African-American and Latino workers? (PAUSE) **2 million and 3.3 million respectively.** Additionally, it would lift how many people out of poverty? (PAUSE) **500,000.**

Call to Action: Will you speak and/or write directly to Senate Finance Committee Chair whom? (PAUSE) **Orrin Hatch.** And Ranking Member whom? (PAUSE) **Ron Wyden.** Urging them to help working Americans meet their basic needs by expanding the EITC for whom? (PAUSE) **Workers without children in the home.**

Now I'm going to go through it a third time. I'll leave in the blanks again but this time, please don't shout out the answer. Instead, just think the answer silently in your head and then after a pause I will give it to you. This will help you internalize the facts.

Engage: I'd like to discuss with you a bipartisan proposal to address poverty that what two people both support? (PAUSE) **House Speaker Paul Ryan and President Obama.**

Problem: Did you know that there is one group of workers who are actually taxed into or deeper into poverty. What is that group? (PAUSE) **Low-wage workers without children.**

Inform: The Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit are pro-work tax credits that lifted how many people out of poverty in 2014? (PAUSE) **9.8 million people.** This was more than any other program except for Social Security. But the EITC for childless workers is so small, many workers cannot make ends meet. Speaker Ryan and President Obama have proposed to expand the EITC for these low-wage workers who don't claim what? (PAUSE)

Dependents. This would benefit how many working Americans? (PAUSE) **13.5 million Americans.** Including how many African-American and Latino workers? (PAUSE) **2 million and 3.3 million respectively.** Additionally, it would lift how many people out of poverty? (PAUSE) **500,000.**

Call to Action: Will you speak and/or write directly to Senate Finance Committee Chair whom? (PAUSE) **Orrin Hatch.** And Ranking Member whom? (PAUSE) **Ron Wyden.** Urging them to help working Americans meet their basic needs by expanding the EITC for whom? (PAUSE) **Workers without children in the home.**

I hope you found this exercise helpful each of you to practice with your group today before you leave. If you need help with remembering the language, you can see a link to this laser talk in the PowerPoint. And if you have questions about the Laser Talk, the ETIC for childless workers, or how to use this in meetings and town halls, please contact Jos at jlinn@results.org.

Thank you, everyone. Now let's go to Ginnie Vogts for our Shares section.

Grassroots Shares

Facilitated by Ginnie Vogts, RESULTS Columbus volunteer

Welcome, let's first here from Nancy Lee McClure of RESULTS Bernardsville, NJ, who will share about a recent Town Hall her group attended with Rep. Leonard Lance.

Three members of our group attended a Leonard Lance town hall last month. In good bird-dogging fashion we came prepared with identical lists of 3 questions and positioned ourselves randomly around the room. He called on all three of us, and we now have plenty of issues to follow up on.

Our three issues were the expansion of the EITC to childless workers, support for the Vote to End Hunger coalition, and protecting SNAP in future legislation.

On the EITC, we mentioned that expanding it is a policy that Paul Ryan supports, and Rep. Lance expressed his admiration for Ryan, and said that he would like to know more. He also said that he supports policies that strengthen and improve opportunities for the middle class.

Next we told him briefly about the Vote to End Hunger coalition, mentioning some of RESULTS' partners in the coalition, such as Meals on Wheels and No Kid Hungry. Again he expressed a desire to know more, and stated that no child should go hungry, period, regardless of who their parents are or what choices they have made.

On SNAP, he was concerned about the increase in SNAP participants and expenses, but we pointed out that it is well-designed to expand in bad times and contract in good times, and promised to send him information to support that.

In addition, we met the Democratic candidate who is running for Lance's seat in Congress, and will meet with him later this year.

I got a big laugh, and I think, made sure that Lance will remember me. He had offered to meet with a gun-safety group, and promised to provide doughnuts. When it was my turn to speak, I told him how disappointed I was, because our RESULTS group had met with him several times, and he never had doughnuts for us!

So maybe we'll take him some doughnuts next time.

Let's now go to Jos Linn to share about a recent event he attended with one of the Presidential candidates.

Being in Iowa has its perks. We have frigid weather, more recipes for bacon and corn than should be allowed, and every 4 years we get invaded by presidential candidates before Iowa caucuses. We really are lucky to have the opportunity to interact with these candidates. Fortunately, a few weeks ago I got the opportunity to meet with one candidate – former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. Our friends at Every Child Matters set up a sit-down meeting with Secretary Clinton and having been a closely ally with ECM over the years, RESULTS was invited to attend. So I drove 50 miles to Newton, IA in chilly temps to meet with her in an elementary school classroom.

There were about 40 of us there to talk about poverty and children's issues. I was encouraged right off the bat when on her own Secretary Clinton, in talking about the challenges that low-

income families face, talked about the importance of the Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit and how grateful she was that Congress made the expiring improvements to these credits permanent last December. In the 30 minutes we met with her, she mentioned the importance of the EITC at least three times.

Sadly, during the formal Q&A, I didn't get to ask a question. However, I'm a RESULTS volunteer and we know what that means - you take the lemons and make lemonade. So I waited as she took selfies with people and then wedged my way next to her. I thanked her for mentioning the importance the EITC and then asked what she would as President to build on the December success regarding the EITC and CTC. She said that we have to do whatever we can politically accomplish. She knows that families need that income base and that there are negative consequences if they don't. She said making the provisions permanent was a good start but we have to go further.

I was pleased that on the eve of EITC Awareness Day, one of leading candidates for President was talking up tax credits for working families in front of advocates and the press. As the election season continues, I hope you will take advantage of opportunities in your state to talk to candidates about poverty, and not just with Presidential candidates, but congressional ones as well. They need to hear it. It's well worth the time and 50 miles of driving.

February Action Overview

Jos Linn

February Action: http://www.results.org/take_action/february_2016_u.s._poverty_action/

[*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.

Only when we look at some of the underlying assumptions we have about race in America can we better understand where communities of color are coming from

It's one thing to see these issues from our own perspective; it's quite another to see it from theirs

This book is a great way to do it. Granted it's only one person's view, but it is a powerful one at that. It's beautifully written and I feel privileged to have read simply because of the assumptions it forced me to question.

You won't come away with all the answers to how to address race and inequality in America, but you will come away asking better questions.

This is just the beginning of this process. Next month, we hope to delve deeper into the racial wealth gap. But for now, here's what to do for the February Action:

1. **Read [*Between the World and Me*](#) by Ta-Nehisi Coates.** If you cannot get the book or get it read in time, please read these articles:
 - Except from *Between the World and Me* in The Atlantic:
<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/07/tanehisi-coates-between-the-world-and-me/397619/>

- “The Case for Reparations” in The Atlantic:
<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>
2. **Read the February Action**, which includes information on the racial wealth gap and additional reading resources, and questions for your group book discussion.
http://www.results.org/take_action/february_2016_u.s._poverty_action/
 3. **Meet with your local RESULTS group to discuss the book.** Conduct it whichever way you feel comfortable. Take notes and let us know how it went; share how the discussion went with your Regional Coordinators and RESULTS staff (jlinn@results.org).
 4. Optional: **Join our online “Virtual Book Club” discussion** of *Between the World and Me* on Thursday, February 18 at 1:00pm and 8:00pm ET. This is an opportunity to discuss the book with RESULTS staff and volunteers around the country. Join whichever call is most convenient for you (U.S. Poverty Free Agents should plan to join one of these calls as well). Login at: <http://fuze.me/27491886> or dial in by phone at (201) 479-4595 and enter Meeting ID: 27491886#.

Announcements

Stephen Blobaum, RESULTS Des Moines volunteer

Hi folks. I’m Stephen Blobaum of the RESULTS Des Moines group. I have a Announcements I’d like to make.

- First and foremost – registration for the **2016 RESULTS International Conference** is now open! This is the biggest event of the year for RESULTS. Last year was my first RESULTS Conference and to put it simply, I was blown away. It was educational, informational, and inspirational. I am planning to come back this year and I hope I see you there.
- And we’re thrilled to announce that acclaimed activist and author [Barbara Ehrenreich](#) will be one of our speakers. Ms. Ehrenreich has been a tireless advocate for the working poor and we are thrilled she can be at this year’s conference. We’ll have more speaker announcements soon.
- Go to www.resultsconference.org and register today. Registration is only \$125 for RESULTS volunteers but you have to register before April 30 to get that rate. There are also links on the registration pages to the hotel website where you can book your hotel room.
- Finally, if you or someone you know is 18-28 years old, we are now taking applicants for the [2016 REAL Change Fellowship](#). This is a tremendous opportunity for young people to become leaders in the fight to end poverty.
- I look forward to seeing you all in DC!

Here are some other Announcements.

- **Congress is on recess next week!** Follow up on your face-to-face meeting requests and also ask about town halls. Once you get a meeting or town hall on the calendar, contact Meredith Dodson (dodson@results.org) or Jos Linn (jlinn@results.org) to set up a lobby prep call. Also, don't forget to take copies of our new Lobby Meeting Request Sheets (in the box on our [Issues page](#)). Once you've had your meeting, please fill out our [Lobby Meeting Report Form](#) .
- **Please send in your Group Plans.** Thank you to everyone who has already sent in their [2016 Group Plan Summary \(PDF version\)](#) outlining your group goals for this year. If you have not submitted your plan yet, please send a copy to Jos Linn at jlinn@results.org as soon as possible.
- **Outreach Training Webinar, February 16 at 9:00 pm ET.** Join this [training webinar and discussion](#) about how to do successful outreach. You'll learn outreach tips and skills from RESULTS staff, learn about outreach resources available to you, and get answers to your questions about how best to recruit new people. To join the webinar online, go to: <https://www.fuzemeeting.com/fuze/f2988286/31404402> or dial in at (201) 479-4595, meeting ID 31404402#.
- **RESULTS Virtual Book Club Discussion: *Between the World and Me*, February 18 at 1:00 pm and 8:00 pm ET.** U.S. Poverty Free Agents will participate in these calls in lieu of our regular calls. Join online at: <http://fuze.me/27491886>; or by phone at (201) 479-4595 and enter Meeting ID: 27491886#.
- **RESULTS Introductory Call, February 26 at 1:00 pm ET.** Encourage people you know to get involved with RESULTS. Invite them to attend our next RESULTS Intro Call. Go to the [Intro Call registration form](#) to sign up for an upcoming call.
- **Our next U.S. Poverty Webinar is Saturday, March 12 at 22:30 pm ET.**
- Find these and other events in the [Events Calendar](#) on the RESULTS website.

OK, to close the call, Jos has unlocked the Mute function on the call so let's unmute all our lines and wish each other a very Happy Valentine's Day!