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## **Expert on Poverty Share**

Angela “Nike” Sutton, Philadelphia, PA

- Thank you for having me.
- We cannot forget that just because people are in office that you don't support, that does not mean the fight is over.
- I am 40 years old and the mother of two. I am a survivor of gun violence, incest, homelessness, but I'm still fighting the good fight for my children.
- I want to talk to everybody about not giving up the good fight.
- Some of us woke from the election upset and disappointed but we are fighting for America, for the voiceless, for those who feel like their voices don't matter.
- This is the time to come together with our full armor of thinking and strategizing and find out the best way to approach candidates in office and President-elect and hold them accountable.
- We cannot get weary in this fight – we need to stay strong. We are not just fighting for us as individuals, we are fight for the whole America.
- We're going to become stronger than before and we are stronger together, as long as we stay strong together, do what's right, and hold those in office accountable for what they're supposed to do, what they said they would do, and what is right to do.
- I want to work with you to strategize on what we need to do. I am an open book and will work with you.
- We have a fight on our hands but we will not give up.

## **Welcome**

Joanne Carter, Executive Director, RESULTS and RESULTS Educational Fund  
(Washington, DC)

I want to start by saying, in this moment of deep uncertainty in our country and the world, how incredibly grateful I am for all of you and our national and global community of activists and allies.

I want to particularly welcome those of you who are new to RESULTS to this call.

RESULTS is a movement of passionate, committed people who use their voices to have a huge impact on political decisions that move us toward the end of poverty in this country and the world. We're in 100 communities all across the US and we have allies on five continents. We build relationships with our members of Congress. We write letters and op-eds and we build our networks locally. Just last year we played a critical role in making sure Congress included tax provisions to benefit low-income working families as part of a big tax package. We generated nearly 150 media pieces and had 225 meetings with members of Congress. That helped prevent 16 million families from falling into poverty or deeper into poverty.

Right now, whatever your political persuasion, I know many of you may still be trying to absorb this election and experiencing an array of reactions. And I know for many folks this is intensely personal too – how it will affect their own future or their family or friends.

I think it is important that we honor whatever reactions we feel. That we connect with our communities – as we are doing as a RESULTS community right now. And that we commit to advocate and organize with even greater energy and focus to drive the agenda we're committed to – to end poverty in the world and here at home and create a more just and equitable society.

Much is unknown right now, but what I do know for sure is that our work has literally never been more important than it is now.

I am not naïve about challenges ahead, But I believe that our greatest hope in **bridging divides, fighting back harmful policy and making real progress in reducing inequality and making anti-poverty and justice issues a priority in Washington** is through the kind of work we have done and will do.

We need to do what we do so effectively in RESULTS with even greater impact; even deeper engagement with our policymakers. The kind of relationships you've forged with members of Congress across the political spectrum have never been more important.

We also need to build new stronger coalitions in our communities. With more people willing to weigh in with Congress when it matters, then **we will** be able to make progress on anti-poverty issues we care about. And also push back more strongly, as a bigger more united community, against harmful policies and cuts to critical programs.

Going forward, I know we will achieve things we can't conceive of right now, and we will stop some bad things from happening. We have done it before in all sorts of political circumstances, and with all of you leading in your communities, we will do it again. And I am committed that we will be EVEN stronger in the next year.

So what are we specifically are we going to do:

- The new Administration will have its 100 day strategy and we will also have a RESULTS first 100 Day Strategy that will focus on getting face-to-face meetings with every member of Congress we cover (or as many as we can) in the first hundred days – so that we can help set the agenda and strengthen relationships that will be a base for action going forward.
- And we want to accelerate our work to get to all 50 states even sooner than we planned because our work with every senator will matter this coming year.

- We will provide you even more resources and support to deepen your local advocacy and coalition building work – the time is really ripe for this!
- We'll continue to develop and support new young leaders through our REAL Change Young Leaders fellowship for 100 young leaders each year .
- And we'll keep building our group of Experts on Poverty to ensure that the voices of those living in poverty (or who have lived in poverty) are not only heard but central to shaping the policies that will affect them.

Our work to increase awareness and identify concrete proposals to address the massive racial wealth gap in this country is a centerpiece of our strategy going forward and more important than ever post-election. That's why we're so grateful to have Dr. Maya Rockeymoore as our special guest speaker tonight.

Our end of year annual fundraising – our annual appeal and Friends and family efforts are so critically important this year in order to allow us to do all of this. And because we need flexible resources to respond to the unexpected challenges (and opportunities) that we know will arise!

I know that many of us are also feeling strongly that we need to work to undo the divisiveness, the xenophobia, and racism that came out in this election. I do believe that the work to build community connections and also work across the political aisles in DC in a bipartisan way can provide important avenues for that work, too.

Because this isn't just about creating better government policies, but creating a society that is built for all of us, where justice and equity and dignity are principles that define us and shape our national agenda.

## **Guest Speaker – Dr. Maya Rockeymoore**

Facilitated by Meredith Dodson, Director of RESULTS U.S. Poverty Campaigns

### **Bio**

- Dr. Rockeymoore is the President and CEO of the [Center for Global Policy Solutions](#) (CGPS) which advances social change by providing clients and partners with innovative policy analysis, project management and communications aimed at improving public policy.
- Served as the vice president of research and programs at the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation (CBCF).
- In Congress, she served as chief of staff to Congressman Charles Rangel (D-NY) and professional staff on the House Ways and Means Committee .
- She is the author of *The Political Action Handbook: A How to Guide for the Hip-Hop Generation* and co-editor of *Strengthening Community: Social Insurance in a Diverse America*.
- She serves on the board of the National Council on Aging, National Academy of Social Insurance, Economic Policy Institute, Campaign for America's Future.

- She has appeared on NPR, CNN, Black Entertainment Television, ABC World News Tonight, Fox News, Al Jazeera, and C-SPAN.

### Remarks by Dr. Rockeymoore

- I thank you for inviting me. I thank Joanne for her acknowledgement and to Angela for saying how we all feel – that we cannot give up. I also thank your army of advocates taking time out of their busy schedules to be on this call tonight.
- We cannot sugarcoat what has happened to the US.
- We are at our “zero moment.”
- We can choose to ban together as Americans of all backgrounds and fight for the future of our country or we can sink to the forces of darkness that want to divide ourselves by race, religion, gender, ethnicity, ability, and country of origin. All these factors have come in play over last year. It has undermined our democracy
- What just happened?
  - Nothing disturbs me more than to hear people say at least we have a system of checks and balances that will stop Mr. Trump.
  - With this election, the Republicans control Executive branch of the federal government, the Senate, and the House. And because Republicans refused to confirm Merritt Garland, President Obama’s nominee to the Supreme Court this year, they will soon have control of that as well.
  - Because of this, at the federal level there *no* checks and balances to a Republican-led agenda. This may not only undermine the issue of poverty, but the future of our nation.
  - Also, a majority of state houses and governorships are controlled by Republicans. This means even the states likely will not serve as a back-stop or check to the federal system.
  - I hate to sound dire but we need to know where we stand right now.
- Why I am so passionate about this is not only because of poverty but also diversity and inclusion.
  - We need to be about the business of making a more perfect union where there are no divisions, where everybody belongs, where we see ourselves united as one people.
  - This work is not going to be pretty and it’s not over on Election Day; it’s just beginning.
  - The work not only needs to be done through formal channels of democracy, but also informal channels (talking to neighbors, friends, family) so they understand the significance of where we are.

- If we do not do what we need to do as the defending army, we could see things rolled back 50-100 years; we could see ourselves go backward as a society and our ability to have an economy that includes all.
- One dominant narrative in this election was that middle America/white America has been feeling the pinch of a poor economy and they will do anything to make their economic situation better.
- Let me give you a picture of what it looks like from the point of view of race and ethnicity in this country.
  - For the last 5 years, CGPS has co-managed the Closing the Racial Wealth Gap Initiative.
    - It is designed to build awareness with people and Congress on the racial and ethnic wealth gap and why it exists.
    - We also have the Color of Wealth Network – 200 advocates, practitioners, academics and others who create research and information around the country to inform the national debate about inequality, which is not just about the 1 percent and everyone else, but race and ethnicity.
  - **When looking at inequality, it's not just about income. For every dollar that white America earns, AA and Latinos earn 67 cents.**
    - But the gap is even starker when looking at wealth (what we own minus what we owe).
    - Wealth provides that extra layer of stability in tough times (savings, retirement, business income).
    - Unfortunately in this country, we've had a long history of exclusion for people of color (Native Americans, African Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans).
    - Policies have contributed to this – discriminatory lending practices, Homestead Act (gov't gave free land to whites only), GI bill (initially only given to whites), red-lining (African-Americans steered into certain (poorer) neighborhoods which meant schools in poor neighborhoods had the fewest resources).
    - These practices are not only historical but also contemporary.
  - **Looking at households with no tangible assets by race and ethnicity.**
    - African-Americans and Latinos most likely to have no assets whatsoever; no cars, no home, no financial assets (savings) to tie them over if their income drops.
    - For every \$1 of wealth, African-Americans own 6 cents and Latinos own 7 cents.
      - This translates into a lack of liquid wealth; they cannot convert their assets into ready cash.

- Whites had \$23,000 in liquid wealth in 2011, African-Americans had \$200, Latinos had \$340 (Asian-Americans did better but not as well as whites).
- This is important because we're told that this election happened because whites were on the losing end of the economy.
- But here we are faced with data on who is on the losing end of the economy and these people did not vote for Donald Trump.
- The people who are truly at the margins of the economy – who are truly struggling – defined their interests by voting for Hillary Clinton.
- **Affordable Care Act (ACA)**
  - Republicans have been arguing against the Affordable Care Act is bad for America and have taken about 60 votes to repeal it.
  - One central element of their agenda is trying to take away health care for those people who need it.
  - Let's review some of the things the ACA has done:
    - It eliminated gender rating
    - Provides greater access to preventative health care
    - Broadens access to health care for small business
    - Allows young people to stay on their parents' insurance plans until 26
    - Allows people with pre-existing conditions to actually get health care
  - Now Republicans are arguing that this was not a good idea.
  - In 2013 before the ACA, people of color were most likely not to have access to health care.
  - After 2014 and the ACA went into effect, the numbers of people of color (and even whites) who were uninsured declined.
  - Before the ACA, over half of uninsured persons in the U.S. were people of color; the ACA is actually working at reducing the uninsured rate for all populations but especially people of color.
  - The ACA is also very important for children of color. Before the ACA, the uninsured rates for Native American and Latino children were significant. However, with the ACA, that rate is going down.
  - In addition, the health gap for children of color is narrowing, meaning the disparities are closing because of the ACA
  - So why are the Republicans declaring the ACA as enemy #1 when it has brought life-saving health care to millions of adults and children?

- Before the ACA, the number one driver of bankruptcies was health-related issues; this is an economic question as much as a health question.
- **Social Security**
  - Social Security is critically important for millions of American, especially seniors who rely on it for retirement, and disproportionately important for seniors of color.
  - Social Security is also one of the largest anti-poverty programs for children.
    - Children of retired workers, disabled parent(s), parent(s) death
    - This is a major anti-poverty program and a backstop for those who face disability, death, or retirement (which we seem to never be prepared for)
  - Republicans want to dramatically cut or privatize Social Security. We can only presume, based on Trump's appointees to Social Security transition team and the Republicans in Washington over the last several decades, that they still want to cut or privatize it.
  - Without Social Security, the poverty rate would dramatically increase for all children (white and people of color).
    - From 21 to 39 percent for white children
    - From 40 to 58 percent for African American children
    - From 28 to 45 percent for Latino children
    - From 16 to 29 percent for Asian children
  - Social Security is a big part of the income of families with children (more than a one-third for all families).
  - We're going to have to stand up and fight for these programs. If the previous agenda for Republicans becomes the agenda for the new Congress, we know these programs are on the chopping block.
  - 2/3 of Social Security kids live in multi-generational families and 6.4 million children rely on Social Security, directly or indirectly.
- We're going to have to stand up for these programs.
  - There is an agenda afoot to undermine these programs – it is the Republican agenda.
    - They will go after the ACA, Social Security, and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, which protects consumers against banks pushing bad loans and other products.
  - This is an existential threat.
  - If we're serious about fighting poverty, we have to fight against this agenda which is seeking to devastate the economic security of Americans across the country.



- We also have to ask about race in this election.
  - We've just seen the statistics that show how these programs have not only helped people of color, but white Americans
  - Yet whites overwhelmingly voted for a party and agenda that will undermine their economic security for possibly decades and generations to come.
- We've got to work in coalitions across race, ethnicity, ability, sexuality, religion, gender (across every possibly identity group) – we need the collective strength and collective impact of people to make a difference.
- CGPS' mission is to drive society toward inclusion, and we are not giving up this mission.
- We will analyze everything that is going on in Congress and communicate to the public what's at stake.
- We will seek to talk to unusual suspects, people we have not talked to before; people you would think would not be within our frame of consideration.
- We need to change the narrative – we cannot let the conversation led by Trump during the election (derogatory statements about women, Muslims, other people of color, immigrants) be accepted and normalized in our country.
- We have to reinforce the narrative of diversity and inclusion and bring back the notion of respect in our dialogue with each other.
- We need to speak to middle America, who did not see their economic interests in one of the most progressive Democratic agendas ever; they must understand the impact of these policies.
- We need to advocate in partnership with RESULTS and other organizations on Capitol Hill.
  - We are looking forward to working together with the alliance of RESULTS and others.
- Thank you for having me.
- What about regressive tax cuts that benefit the wealthy and corporations and their impact on the racial wealth gap?
  - Tax cuts exacerbate the racial wealth gap; tax cuts that go to wealthiest Americans are going to the whitest Americans.
  - When we have such deep economic inequality in this country and its reinforced by the tax code - most tax benefits go to wealthiest Americans - they look down on lower-income people saying they are taking welfare.
  - In actuality, the wealthy are getting more welfare than anyone else through these tax cuts that allow them buy boats, planes, etc.



- Trump introduced his plan in election and it includes more tax cuts.
- This is not in the economic interests of the families who claim that they want to be more economically secure.
- Trump made a racial appeal, he took a white ethno-nationalist stand in the election, and argued he wanted to Make America Great Again. For people of color, when was this “again”, when was this time? For people of color, there has not been a time when their economic situation was so rosy that we feel we needed to go back to it.
  - Many people were relying on and attracted to an America that Trump presented in which white Americans were able to economically benefit from a system that was rigged in favor of them. It reduced competition and kept people of color out of the labor market and the economy.
  - Our country is changing demographically; people of color will outnumber whites by 2043 (“majority minority”) – we are becoming more diverse.
  - If Republicans in Congress with Trump want to take us back to a time of more distinct white privilege, where people of color did not have economic and educational opportunities, it will be a future that is nihilistic. It will be like apartheid South Africa, a pre-1960s America.
- This should be terrifying because as you age, you benefit from younger workforce that is more racially and ethnically diverse. If they cannot participate in the economy and pay taxes that fund your Social Security, your local and state taxes, and ensure your roads don’t have potholes – if they are so marginalized in the economy that they cannot contribute – then we are undermining the fundamental nature of our economy and setting ourselves up for a collapse.
- Why are some pushing to cut these programs and cut taxes?
  - Their rationale changes based on circumstances.
  - They say that we need to cut these programs in order to save them for future generations.
  - These are the same people that say we can’t afford these programs but are also arguing for tax cuts. This means they are giving away the Treasury to benefit the pockets of the wealthy while arguing that working class Americans should settle for benefit cuts to save it for future generations.
  - Don’t you see that’s a contradiction? If you want to save systems for the future, then you shouldn’t talk about tax cuts in the same breath. You want to make sure there is an abundance in the U.S. Treasury to meet our needs – it’s hypocritical otherwise.
  - They also argue that there is a trickle down effect – that this tax cut money will make it down to middle class and lower-income people and everyone will be happy. But all the data show that that’s not actually true.

- Tax cuts for the wealthy, who already have an abundance of wealth, don't go spend this money; they don't need to. It does not trickle down to others in the economy; it just goes into pockets of people already wealthy for more houses, boats, and cars, and accumulate wealth for *their* future generations.
- The arguments behind these are spurious and we need to challenge them on the fundamentals of their merits.
- Thank you having me on.

## Final Announcements

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

- **Take Action**
  - It's important that we take the information we've learned today and put it into action
  - Part of RESULTS' and CGPS's agenda for reducing the racial wealth gap is by expanding the EITC for workers without children.
  - This is the only group taxed *into or deeper into* poverty.
  - EITC proposals in Congress would benefit 13-16 million workers.
  - **Call or write your members of Congress urging them to support efforts to protect childless workers.**
  - Find background info and talking points at: [http://www.results.org/uploads/files/2016\\_Outreach\\_Action\\_\(EITC\\_+\\_wealth\\_inquality\).pdf](http://www.results.org/uploads/files/2016_Outreach_Action_(EITC_+_wealth_inquality).pdf)
- If you're new, we hope you liked what you heard today and want to learn and do more. RESULTS greatest success is our volunteers. These committed, passionate, everyday people have done extraordinary things in the last 36 years and have helped and saved countless lives. But like every movement, we need more voices – **we need your voice**. So please sign up to join one of our local groups. They have all the information you need to get involved. And if you're calling in on your own and want to know more about joining RESULTS, please contact Jos Linn at [jlinn@results.org](mailto:jlinn@results.org).
- If you'd like to learn more about RESULTS, join our next bi-monthly **RESULTS Introductory Call** on Friday, November 18 at 1:00 pm ET. Register for an upcoming Intro Call on the [RESULTS website](#).
- **RESULTS' Virtual Thanksgiving Feast** is going on right now! It's not too late to ask your friends and family (and potential new volunteers) to financially support our important work!
- Remember to save the date for the **RESULTS International Conference**, July 22-25, 2017 in Washington, DC

- Find these and other events on the [RESULTS Events Calendar](#).
- Thank you for being on this month's webinar! See you next month for the RESULTS National Webinar on **Saturday, December 10 at 2:00 pm ET**. This will be a joint webinar with our Global Poverty volunteers.

Have a safe and happy Thanksgiving!