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Expert on Poverty Share – Stephen Blobaum

(Des Moines, IA)

- I'm an angry, middle-aged white man who uses his white privilege and entitlement to end the racism that the white race started
- Been involved with RESULTS since 2014 and am also one of the Experts on Poverty
- I've also joined local Stand Up for Racial Justice
- My wife, me, and children will be affected by lack of living wages and the wealth inequality that creates unless there is a major sea change in this country
- There is no more go along to get along
- My family is personally accountable student loans, stagnant wages, bankruptcy, job cuts, long-term unemployment, and returns to school for retraining, while enjoying the blessings of long-term recovery from drugs, alcohol, and mental illness
- My family has been beneficiaries of EITC, WIC, SNAP, CHIP, Medicaid, TANF, FIP (Iowa), unemployment benefits, Pell Grants and child care assistance
- When my wife was pregnant with both of our children, I was working full-time but we did qualify for Medicaid and WIC and it was very important that we had that
- She got prenatal care she needed and my children got the care after they were born
- 2005 I was laid off and once again we needed Medicaid again
- 2009, I was laid off again but my wife began working so we qualified for CHIP
- I don't know what we would have done without those programs
- We went without insurance but at least our kids had insurance which was the most important thing for us
- As far as being an Expert on Poverty and volunteer, it has helped me advocate; I go at least once per quarter to talk to my members of Congress
- I'm a little frustrated at this point; I don't know what else to do other than actually getting out in the street to protest
- I can't stand to watch this
- We've come a long way in my family; we're very blessed
- It's burned into my mind what we've gone through as far as poverty and what those programs meant to us

- I definitely don't want to see Medicaid block-granted
- TANF, after it was block-granted, is a joke; no one is living on welfare, trust me
- The amount we got from TANF covered about a week's worth of groceries
- I don't know where people are getting the idea that people on sitting around living on welfare, it's just not true
- I'll continue to go to town hall meetings and meet privately and generate media
- I am thankful for RESULTS and for all of you
- I am especially thankful for my fellow Experts on Poverty; I love and adore them; we support each other
- We're not all out of the woods yet so we are able to love and support each other
- Truth to power! Thank you.

Welcome

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

Thanks so much Stephen for sharing your experience and for being committed to taking on issues of racism and economic inequality.

Welcome everyone. It is great to be with you all at this really critical moment.

Related to our Experts on Poverty, I want to also acknowledge two other RESULTS experts – Yvonne and Pamela – who were just at the FRAC (Food Research and Action Center) and Feeding America Joint conference last weekend here in DC and spoke at sessions attended by hundreds of people. We got feedback at how powerful and effective they were and also that other anti-hunger organizations were saying that this is the kind of leadership and advocacy that we need much more of right now. Bravo to all of our Experts!

As you know, right after the election, we launched our own RESULTS [First 100 Days campaign](#) to coincide with the first hundred days of the new administration and Congress – so that we would not be waiting around to react BUT so we could be pro-active in meeting face-to-face with members of Congress and generating media to say what we want to see prioritized and what we don't want to see happen.

We're just over halfway through this first hundred days and I want to thank you for everything you've done already to intensify your advocacy this year when it is needed so much.

It proves again that where you focus, you produce results.

In just over two months, you've had:

- 25 face-to-face meetings with members of Congress where U.S. poverty issues were discussed
- 47 meetings with congressional staff where U.S. poverty issues were discussed

And just last weekend 50 RESULTS REAL Change young leaders were in DC and meeting with Congressional offices.

As you'll hear later in the call, new data – directly from Congressional staff – shows that what we're doing to meet with members and build relationships is THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY to influence Congress!

- U.S. Poverty groups held 14 outreach events
- 93 media pieces in 33 different states

You've generated almost as much media in the FIRST 9 weeks of this year as you did in 6 months in 2016. That is exactly the kind of ramp up we need!

You've done an amazing work so far. We urgently need to keep it up. To get face-to-face with every member of Congress we cover; to reach out to and build relationships with all their staff who cover our issues.

To keep generating lots more media than we've ever done before for your members of Congress to read.

BECAUSE now is the time we really need to engage. MARCH is THE critical moment.

Up until this point, our work has been preventative. To push Congress to avoid doing harmful things – like block granting SNAP – plans that we knew were likely in the works but not yet officially proposed by Congress. Well, that has changed now.

This past week, we've now seen the House's plan to undo the *Affordable Care Act*, which includes drastic changes to Medicaid, America's largest health program and one serving tens of millions of low-income Americans

In a few minutes, you'll hear from Tricia Brooks, one of the national experts on Medicaid on details about the hugely harmful effects of the changes to Medicaid that are being proposed in the new House bill.

Let's use the final weeks of our First 100 Days Campaign to make a difference at this critical moment. Threats that were theoretical are now very, very real.

And not only is our work on Medicaid is absolutely critical to protect this essential program right now. BUT ALSO the power and success of our efforts now will also set the stage for other fights to come-on SNAP for example – if we can respond strongly and effectively now then we are in a stronger place to protect other critical anti-poverty programs in the future.

I want to end by saying we are devoting a chunk of this call to supporting your outreach efforts. We have a once in a generation opportunity with organizing – to tap into the millions of people who are hungry for ways to get more deeply engaged in effective advocacy to make change. Setting up events but also going to where people already are. You have so much to offer them and we collectively need to be stronger to both stop bad things and move forward policies to end poverty.

And please make please make plans to come to the RESULTS conference in DC on July 22-25th in DC. Invite new people. If every group brought one or two new people to DC we would

have an even more powerful, effective presence on Capitol Hill and build a stronger community of advocacy leaders nationally.

We can come out of this moment much stronger if we reach out and connect with the people who are looking for what we have to offer!

Explanation of New Focus on Medicaid and Introduction of Guest Speaker

Meredith Dodson, Director of U.S. Poverty Campaigns

- SNAP threats are still real but timing has changed
- While Congress could still surprise us, key House and Senate leaders have indicated that they likely will not address changes to SNAP and other “welfare” programs until 2018
- The delay caused by strong opposition to repealing the ACA, along with Speaker Ryan’s desire to do tax reform in 2017 is likely prompting this shift in focus
- However, one vital anti-poverty program is under the chopping block right now - Medicaid

Guest Speaker – Tricia Brooks, Georgetown Center for Children and Families

Facilitated by Meredith Dodson

Bio (Full bio at: <http://ccf.georgetown.edu/author/tricia-brooks/>)

- Senior Fellow at the Center for Children and Families and an Associate Research Professor at the Georgetown University McCourt School of Public Policy.
- Works on policy and implementation issues affecting coverage for children and families in Medicaid, Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and the health insurance marketplaces.
- Co-author of an annual 50-state study on Medicaid and CHIP eligibility and enrollment policies
- Prior to joining CCF, served as CHIP director in New Hampshire for 15 years.
- Served as a technical expert for Maximizing Enrollment, a state learning collaborative; the CMS Express Lane Eligibility Technical Advisory Group; and the Consumer Experience Survey Technical Expert Panel.
- National Advisory Board member for the Ford Foundation’s Work Support Strategies.
- Holds Master of Business Administration from Suffolk University.

Questions

1. What does Medicaid do, including that changes that the *Affordable Care Act (ACA)* Medicaid expansion created? (just general info about who it serves, services provided, program structure, and successes of the program)
 - ACA/Medicaid have driven uninsurance rates to all-time lows, across the board
 - We are covering 95 percent of children
 - Non-elderly uninsured population has dropped from 18-11 percent
 - Medicaid has been around for 50 yrs
 - It is a permanently authorized program – guarantee of federal matching fund to the states
 - Guaranteed coverage to individuals
 - Feds have set mandatory minimums to protect consumers
 - States already have a lot of flexibility
 - They direct administer the program
 - They have a wide range of options of benefits they can provide (beyond core services); they decide how much they pay providers
 - This is a partnership but states get to make a lot of decisions
 - Eligibility for Medicaid
 - Minimum standard for eligibility: Children birth-18, 133% FPL, “deemed newborns” and pregnant mothers, some persons covered under old welfare program
 - States can cover kids 19-20 yrs old
 - Median income for Med and CHIP is 250% of the federal poverty line (FPL)
 - ACA expanded Medicaid to all adults below 138% FPL (\$16K per year)
 - Low-income seniors can be duly enrolled in Medicaid and Medicare
 - Disabled adults can also be eligible
 - Children make up largest share of enrollees in Medicaid (almost half) but lowest in spending; disabled/seniors are the opposite
 - Benefits: doc visits, hospitalization, states have flexibility on other things like vision, mental health
 - Consumer protections are also built in on how much out-of-pocket they have to pay
 - In 2014, the federal government covered 50-74 % of Medicaid costs (varies by state)

- People enrolled under ACA's Medicaid expansion were originally covered at 100 percent by the federal government and will slowly go down to 90 percent and remain there (95% right now)
2. What would the new House health care proposal do to Medicaid (including the Medicaid expansion)?
- House bill – the American Health Care Act (AHCA) – has been voted out of the House Energy & Commerce and Ways & Means Committees
 - Fundamentally repeals and replaces large parts of ACA
 - Congress is using reconciliation process to move this legislation to get past filibuster in Senate; reconciliation only allows things provisions that have a budgetary impact
 - AHCA threatens the future of Medicaid beyond the ACA Medicaid expansion
 - Changes to the ACA
 - Eliminates the individual mandate (requirement to have insurance) and ends the taxes to pay for ACA
 - Offers some tax credits but no longer based on income (now based on age; they range from \$2K-\$K per year)
 - Does away for cost-sharing reductions so deductibles will go up
 - Insurance companies will be able to charge older Americans five times rate of younger patients (it's three times under the ACA)
 - Insurance companies will be able to charge a 30% surcharge in premiums for people who have lapse coverage
 - AHCA is projected to eliminate coverage for up to 15 million people
 - It also defunds Planned Parenthood
 - Changes to Medicaid
 - ACA Medicaid expansion will wither on the vine
 - Phases it out; after 2020, no enhanced no match for new people or if people lapse coverage
 - For traditional Medicaid, the federal government will cap payments to states chained to CPI (which is lower than health care inflation)
 - This will create a gap in funding and will squeeze Medicaid in future
 - The largest fed expenditure to states is Medicaid, so this will have impact on local budgets and state economies
 - States will have to increase spending or cut services, enrollment, payment to providers, etc.

3. What is the best messaging for advocates to use in media, lobby meetings, and calls to push back against these changes?
 - Highlight that these changes mean a loss of coverage for millions (both in the ACA marketplace and Medicaid)
 - Will reverse all the progress we've made
 - Highlight individual stories of what changes will mean
 - On the marketplace, we will see spikes in insurance premiums, which is not keeping with Trump promises
 - We should not cut coverage for low-income people just to cut taxes for the wealthy
 - Talk about children, seniors, disabled affected
 - Changes will also increase medical debt for consumers
 - Impacts on state budgets also a good talking point
 - Use all the tools necessary to get the word out
 - Better messaging is to emphasize the cuts to Medicaid; people hear about ACA and not enough about Medicaid
 - Gov't is about to renege a 50-year promise to provide health care to low-income Americans
 - 70 percent of American support Medicaid
4. How will cuts and changes to Medicaid impact opioid epidemic (Diana Tyree-Eddy of RESULTS Bremerton, WA)
 - In Appalachia counties of OH, 3-8% of newborns are born exposed to opioids in the womb
 - They spent 25,000 days in hospitals in 2013, costing OH \$100 million
 - Impact not only people addicted but also children – has a trickle out effect for years to come
 - Additional Info:
 - <http://www.statenetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/State-Network-Manatt-Medicaid-States-Most-Powerful-Tool-to-Combat-the-Opioid-Crisis-July-2016.pdf>
 -
 - <http://www.businessinsider.com/obamacare-medicaid-expansion-states-in-danger-opioid-epidemic-2017-2>
 -
 - <http://healthaffairs.org/blog/2017/01/30/repealing-the-aca-could-worsen-the-opioid-epidemic/>

Overview of March Action and Training

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

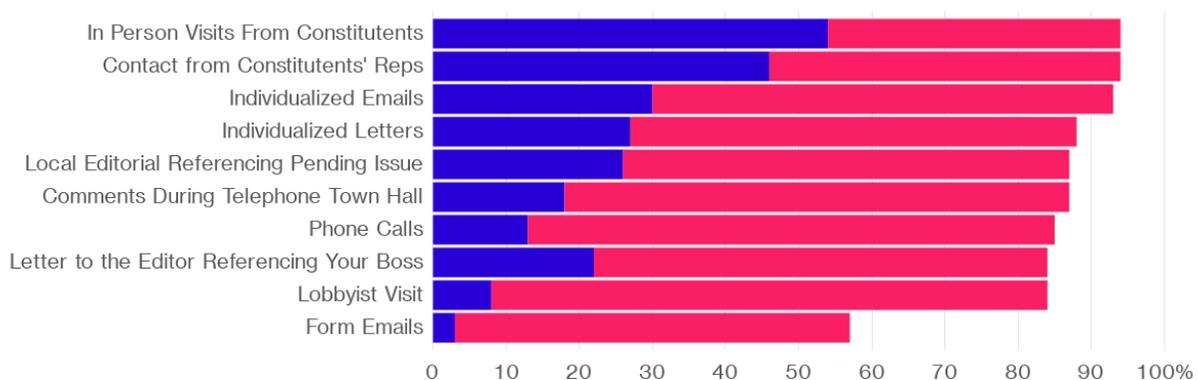
Outreach

1. Extraordinary moment in our work
2. Millions of people are wanting to advocate, many for the first time ever
3. Also facing the greatest threat to core anti-poverty programs
4. Proposals to cut Medicaid and SNAP could force millions deeper into poverty
5. We need as many voices as possible to combat these threats
6. RESULTS volunteers are uniquely positioned to build this movement

Want To Be Heard? Show Up!

Influence on Washington D.C.-based congressional staffers by communication type.

■ A Lot of Positive Influence ■ Some Positive Influence



Source: Congressional Management Foundation

*Bars do not add up to 100 because not all surveyed categories are displayed

Bloomberg

[CMF's data also shows:](#)

1. Relationships matter.
 - a. 99 percent feel that meetings with members of Congress and their staff are important to understanding constituents' views and opinions. "Constituents and groups that emphasize long-term, qualitative relationships are much more likely to be sought out and listened to by decision-makers when Congress considers public policy that will impact their issues." (p.20)
2. Personal and localized information is important.
 - a. Hearing personal stories related to the issue: 79 percent said it was important but only 18 percent said they received it frequently
 - b. Local data on impact of legislation: 91 percent said it was important but only 9 percent said they received it frequently

- c. Constituent reasons for supporting/opposing a bill: 90 percent said it was important but only 50 percent said they received it frequently
- d. Getting specific requests: 88 percent said it was important but only 59 percent said they received it frequently

March Action: http://www.results.org/take_action/march_2017_u.s._poverty_action

Engage in different activities. There's no one right way to do outreach. Be creative.

1. Have an outreach meeting.
 - a. Plan. Determine what you want to do, whom to invite, and where to do it. The [March Action](#) has a sample outreach meeting agenda to help you.
 - b. Invite. Each person in your group make a list of people to contact and personally invite them to come. Follow up a day before the date to remind them.
 - c. Execute. Have a great meeting that includes info about RESULTS, local successes, an action, and a request to get involved. For resources (PPTs, brochures, forms, please contact Jos Linn (jlinn@results.org)).
 - d. Follow up. Personally follow up with everyone who came and invite them to your next meeting.
2. Offer to do an Issue or Advocacy Training for a local group.
 - a. Instead of getting people to come to you, go to them.
 - b. Reach out to local groups (social justice groups, book clubs, faith communities, supper clubs, etc.) and offer to do a presentation for them.
 - c. Train them on threats to anti-poverty programs, how to meet with lawmakers, media, or something else.
 - d. Contact Jos Linn for help (jlinn@results.org).
3. Invite someone to a local lobby meeting.
 - a. Show people what it's like to be a volunteer, first-hand.
 - b. Offer to let them participate as little (just observe) or as much (have a speaking part) as they wish.
 - c. Follow up afterward to see what they thought of the experience and to provide an additional action they can take

Grassroots Share: Debbie Baskin to talk about alternative ways to do outreach

Outreach meetings and events are only as good as your follow-up. If people come to an event or talk to you one-on-one and then never hear back, they'll move on.

- Plan your follow up before your event so it's easier to do afterward.
- Make it personal – call them afterward

To see if they have questions

- Remind them of your next meeting
- Make them feel welcome and invite them to take a role in the group

Grassroots Share: Jami-Lin Williams to talk about follow-up with new advocates

Resources

- March Action (which includes a sample outreach meeting agenda): http://www.results.org/take_action/march_2017_u.s._poverty_action
- Find Outreach Resources at http://www.results.org/take_action/domestic_monthly_action_archive/, including:
 - RESULTS Overview and Advocacy Training PPT
 - RESULTS Threats to Safety Nets PPT
 - RESULTS U.S. Poverty Quiz PPT
 - One-page Action Sheet on SNAP
 - One-page Action Sheet on the EITC
 - One-page Action Sheet on Medicaid (coming soon)

Introduction of New Hunger Fellow Ashley Burnside

- Originally from Ann Arbor, Michigan
- Graduated with honors from the University of Michigan with a degree in social theory and practice and a minor in community action and social change (2016).
- Spent summer working in Detroit in a racial justice organization called Focus: HOPE analyzing data on food and education access.
- Interned at Rep. Daniel Kildee's office and at the Human Rights Campaign, where she focused on HIV/AIDS issues and transgender equity.
- Hunger Fellowship field work was at Denver Urban Matters (DenUM) to register clients to vote.
- Also facilitated meetings with the DenUM Community Leadership Team to help clients organize around a shared interest within the Denver community.

Announcements

Ashley Burnside, 2017 RESULTS Congressional Hunger Fellow

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- Also facilitated meetings with the DenUM Community Leadership Team to help clients organize around a shared interest within the Denver community.

Announcements

- Please **finish and submit your First 100 Days Plan ASAP** at: www.tinyurl.com/First100Plan.
- **Training Call: Creating Bi-Partisan Support for our Issues in our Communities: A Learning and Sharing Lab, Wednesday, March 15 at 9:00 pm ET.** Login online: <http://fuze.me/34116938>; or via phone (201)479-4595, Meeting ID 34116938#.
- **RESULTS Race and Advocacy "Book Club" Webinar, Thursday, March 16 at 8:00 pm ET.** Join this conversation around the book *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* by Michelle Alexander. This will be the first of four sessions to discuss the book. Please read the Introduction and Chapter 1 before the first webinar. To participate, login at <http://fuze.me/34326078> or dial in by phone (201) 479-4595 Meeting ID: 34326078#.
- Make your voice heard this summer at the RESULTS International Conference in Washington, DC! Discounted early bird registration is available until mid-May. Go to www.resultsconference.org to register today. Urge young advocates to apply for the REAL Change Fellowship: www.results.org/realchange.
- **U.S. Poverty Free Agents Calls, Tuesday, March 21 at 1pm and 8pm ET.** Login at <http://fuze.me/32256018> or dial in by phone at (201) 479-4595, Meeting ID: 32256018#. Meredith Dodson will be hosting this month's calls.
- **Next RESULTS Introductory Call, Friday, March 24 at 1pm ET.** Register for an upcoming Intro Call on the [RESULTS website](http://www.results.org).
- Our next National Grassroots Webinar is **Saturday, April 8 at 12:30pm ET**
- Find these and other events on the [RESULTS Events Calendar](http://www.results.org/events).

Final Action

Jos Linn

Take Action Today!

Tell Congress to Protect Medicaid

Call your Representatives and Senators and leave this message:

My name is _____ and I am a constituent from _____. I am calling because I am alarmed about proposed changes to Medicaid. The House plan to block grant or cap Medicaid spending would result in lost coverage, rationed benefits, and end the program as

we know it. It would harm tens of millions of children in low-income families, seniors, people with disabilities, and others who have no other access to health coverage. It would also shift \$370 billion in Medicaid costs to states, including _____ [your state], over the next ten years. Under this plan, no one's health care is safe. I urge Rep./Sen. _____ to tell Congressional leaders to strongly voice his/her support for protecting the structure and integrity of Medicaid.

Call the congressional switchboard at **(202) 224-3121** or find direct numbers at:
<http://capwiz.com/results/dbq/officials/> and leave this message (or your version of it).

If you cannot get through to leave a message, go to:
<http://capwiz.com/results/issues/alert/?alertid=12788156> and send an e-mail message about protecting health care for low-income Americans!