

National Webinar Summary

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

Welcome

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

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

- Thank you for important and productive summer (Kristy will announce stats later in webinar)
- Big month for us with release of 2015 Census poverty data
- Overview of Census data releases
 - On Tuesday, September 13 at 10:00 am ET, the U.S. Census will release its poverty data for 2015.
 - This is a great resource for lawmakers and the media
 - <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/>
 - On the same day, the Census will also release the Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM) for 2015
 - SPM takes into account the impact of programs like EITC, CTC, SNAP, and others on poverty
 - <http://www.census.gov/hhes/povmeas/methodology/supplemental/overview.htm>
 - On September 15, the Census will release the American Community Survey data for 2015
 - Allows you to search for state and local poverty data, which writers and editors want to see
 - <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/>

Agenda:

- Guest speaker: Elizabeth Lower-Basch from the Center for Law and Social Policy
- Overview of the September Action
- Jos Linn will lead our training this month with special guest Willie Dickerson
- Kristy Martino will celebrate your recent grassroots successes with some shares
- Jos will close the call with final announcements

Guest Speaker – Elizabeth Lower-Basch of CLASP

Facilitated by Meredith Dodson

Bio

Elizabeth Lower-Basch is CLASP's policy coordinator and director of the income and work supports team. Her expertise is federal and state welfare (TANF) policy, other supports for low-income working families (such as refundable tax credits), systems integration, and job quality. From 1996 to 2006, Ms. Lower-Basch worked for the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. In this position, she was a lead welfare policy analyst, supporting legislative and regulatory processes and managing research projects. Ms. Lower-Basch received a Master of Public Policy from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

1. Can you briefly explain what CLASP (Center for Law and Social Policy) is and what you do?

- National anti-poverty organization (www.clasp.org)
- Work at federal level and partner with others organizations at state and local level
- Look at poverty through generational and racial/ethnic lenses

2. Generally, what is the state of poverty in the U.S., including child poverty?

- The official poverty measure (OPM) is not perfect but it's good in that it has been tracked for 50 years
- OPM is based on the cost of food in the 1960s, which at the time was around 1/3 of a family's budget. They figured out that amount and multiplied it times 3 to come up with the measure.
- It serves as a benchmark for people; the bare-bones level for what it takes to meet basic needs
- Children are the poorest group in our society; working-age adults are in the middle, seniors at lowest rate of poverty b/c of Social Security
- Likes chart b/c shows dramatic drop in senior poverty b/c of public policy

3. Based on your expertise, what do you expect to see when the new poverty data comes out next week?

- 2015 numbers will probably look a lot like last year, maybe a slightly better
- Last week, the Food and Nutrition Service released hunger data showing that food insecurity has dropped, which is good
- Children still the most likely to be poor and younger children tend to be poorer than older kids

- Racial poverty discrepancies are huge; African-Americans and Latinos as groups are generally poorer than whites
4. **In addition to the official poverty measure, the Census also releases the Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM) which shows impact of safety nets, especially tax credits and SNAP. Too many times we hear that the safety net is not working. What is your response to those who say that?**
 - Advantage of OPM is that it has tracked over time but the disadvantage is that it only tracks cash assistance (Social Security, welfare), so SNAP and EITC/CTC are not included
 - Slide 8 shows the impact of SNAP and EITC/CTC on children; also shows that TANF is not as effective
 - Hard to do long-term track using SPM since it's not that old but [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities \(CBPP\) has done some work](#) to try to compensate for that
 5. **What do you think poverty in America would look like if these safety nets were not in place?**
 - If you look at official measure, child poverty has not moved very much but
 - Most supports are not reflected in the measure
 - Safety net has changed over time; plays bigger role now than it did when Census first started tracking poverty
 6. **Jos Linn of RESULTS Kansas City: Does the OPM include unemployment insurance or is that only found in the SPM?**
 - The OPM does include unemployment insurance
 7. **Bill Shickler of RESULTS DC: We use EITC/CTC/SNAP to show how they've been lifted out of poverty, who prepares that info?**
 - It is prepared by the Census bureau, via population survey done in April
 - CBPP also does their own version of this calculation
 - Meredith: Measure can be influenced by the time of the year; circumstances in the fall can be different than when they do the survey in April
 8. **Jeff Brosbe of RESULTS San Diego: Studies show that we should have at least a \$15/hr minimum wage, how would that affect poverty?**
 - Would have a big impact but don't have the numbers
 - Urban Institute has done some studies on it, especially impact on child poverty
 - Also have to make sure people have jobs and enough hours
 - MD: We need both MW and EITC, not either/or

9. **Steve in Las Cruces, Slide 6 shows for younger, student-age people in all ethnic groups a drop in poverty (slide 6), does that have to do with them being in school?**
 - Probably right, could be b/c of students
 - We need more data
10. **Lindsay Saunders of RESULTS Raleigh, NC: If a member of Congress says EITC is better than increasing the minimum wage or vice versa, what do you say?**
 - Both are important, fit together and strengthen each other
 - Often people who like EITC more don't work to expand it so need to hold them more accountable for that
 - Meredith: Push the key ask if you have limited time; don't let them get away without holding them accountable
 - EITC expansion for CW also a CLASP request; would expand for younger workers which faces higher poverty rate
11. **Bill Shickler or RESULTS DC: AFL-CIO study show that if the minimum wage had been raised with inflation since 1970, it would be \$24/hour, why EITC is important – highlights that gap. Even going to \$15/hour is too low.**
 - That is true and graph we use that shows how MW has lost value
 - EITC/CTC are in a way filling that gap

Overview of September Action

Meredith Dodson

The full September Action will be available after Tuesday's Census poverty data release.

- Will include highlights from the data and talking points for letters to the editor and op-eds.
- We will also have several sample LTEs available to help you get started.
- Visit http://www.results.org/take_action/september_2016_u.s._poverty_action/ on Tuesday afternoon (will also link to in the Weekly Update)
- We'll also do an email blast about the Census data with a link to our online LTE that you can forward to your local networks

You can [get ready now](#) by:

- **Looking for hooks** using our [Media Guide](#).
- **Connecting with local reporters and writers.**
- **Coordinating your targets with your group.**

New data shows impacting of expanding the EITC for different types of workers in each state.

- Source: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities: <http://www.cbpp.org/blog/expanding-the-eitc-would-help-workers-in-every-state>

As always, if you have questions or need help with your letters and op-eds, please contact Jos Linn (jlinn@results.org) for assistance.

September Action Resources

- **RESULTS September U.S. Poverty Action:** http://www.results.org/take_action/september_2016_u.s._poverty_action/
- **New State Data on EITC for Childless Workers:** <http://www.cbpp.org/blog/expanding-the-eitc-would-help-workers-in-every-state>
- **CBPP EITC State Face Sheets:** <http://www.cbpp.org/research/federal-tax/state-face-sheets-the-earned-income-and-child-tax-credits>
- **EITC Letter to the Editor:** http://capwiz.com/results/issues/alert/?alertid=59692501&MC_plugin=2201
- **SNAP Letter to the Editor:** http://capwiz.com/results/issues/alert/?alertid=64248626&MC_plugin=2201
- **RESULTS 2016 Lobby Requests:**
 - [Expanding the EITC](#)
 - [Reducing the Wealth Gap](#)
 - [Protecting SNAP](#)

September Training

Jos Linn, Grassroots Manager for U.S. Poverty Campaigns (Kansas Coty, MO)

How to Get Your Letter to the Editor Published with Guest Speaker Willie Dickerson

Background on Willie Dickerson

- Member of RESULTS Snohomish (WA)
- Been involved with RESULTS since early 1990's, regular volunteer since 2000
- 59 published media pieces on RESULTS U.S. Poverty issues since 2014 (30 different publications in 14 states)
- Overall, 294 RESULTS published letters, op-eds, and articles since 2014 (out of 1426 written)

1. What are your “secrets” to a good letter to the editor ?

- Write letters or send them in, otherwise there is no hope
- Your letters don't have to be perfect

- Sometimes “great letters” are not published and then the one I don’t like, the one that I almost don’t send, gets published
- Keep it simple; 1-2 facts (less than laser talks, even!)
- Once you “hook” to something in the paper/something in life, go from there

2. How do you come up with so many creative hooks for your letters?

- Commit to write, it forces yourself to do it
- Look online, what’s going on and how to connect something to your letter
- Time of year: schools just starting (education....)
- When travel (found paper in gas station and responded)
- Respond to other letters – RESULTS Australia has responded to an original piece with 3 more.

3. How do you stay motivated to keep writing letters as much as you do? And what is your process/routine?

- Decided letter writing was my goal
- I’ve set letter-writing goals for last 3 years, then write letters every day to reach it
- Need support: my brother (the late Bob Dickerson) helped keep me motivated and gave me ideas and feedback
- I decided that I would write before breakfast each day because I love to eat, so that motivates me to get it done
- Now it’s a habit, doesn’t feel like my day is complete without sending a letter
- Realize why? Teacher for 35+ years and motivated by experiences of kids who experience hunger and poverty, want a better world for my children and grandchildren

4. How do you find the papers you plan to write to?

- I’m still working on the keeping track – write name of paper wrote to, highlight with date if published
- Anything within my reach – magazines, stuff at the library
- Once you find hook – big stories might be covered by AP, so “Google” headlines
- If I haven’t seen it or it’s been 30/50 days, I write back to paper – and even respond to my own LTEs without
- Many papers hungry for letters
- Go for states where RESULTS hasn’t been published, find via Google

5. Christine (Kansas): I got response from paper when I submitted my letter, but never published. Do you have any tips?

- It is disappointing! USA Today has twice said they would publish me and never did. If you call them, be positive and curious about protocol – don't mess up relationship. In general I don't resubmit if chance will get published, but will redo/rewrite especially if responding to something specific.

Shares

Kristy Martino, U.S. Poverty Organizer (Kittery Point, ME)

Celebrating Your Media Advocacy

- 96 media pieces (76 LTEs, 11 articles, 7 op-eds, 2 editorials)
 - 54 SNAP pieces, 36 EITC pieces
 - Let's get a bunch more this month!

Celebrating Your Direct Lobbying (Face-to-Face Meetings)

- 100 members of Congress (66 House, 34 Senate)
- 5 congressional candidates, 1 presidential candidate (Clinton)
- 31 face-to-face meetings since the RESULTS International Conference – one of our most active summers ever

Shares

Speaking of your activities this summer, let's go to **Cacie Waters in RESULTS Houston and San Antonio** to tell us about an interesting town hall she attended last month.

- *Our Congressman does his DC2DQ events, where he does town halls at every Dairy Queen in his district*
- *Bryson Rodriguez, a RESULTS REAL Change Fellow and I went to one. We introduced ourselves to staff members before event, greeted Congressman Hurd, walked into DQ together.*
- *Congressman Hurd opened off with thanking audience for attending, and discussed what he has accomplished as U.S. Rep. for CD 23.*
- *He then opened it up for a few questions, Bryson and I made our way to the line.*
- *While in line one of the staffer we talked with before event as if we would share our experience at the event after speaking to Congressman Hurd - we agreed and before leaving we were able to introduce ourselves, RESULTS, and our asks and Hurd's response while they recorded us. Very neat.*
- *I thanked Congressman Hurd for his vote of support on the 2015 omnibus bill, and let him know what those provisions will mean for those living in poverty and fighting to stay out of poverty. I then briefly explained SNAP's success being its federal control and funding, allowing it to effectively respond to the economy and local needs. I then mentioned the child poverty rate being higher than the national poverty rate and finally asked if he will protect SNAP as the U.S. Rep. for CD-23.*

- He replied, "Oh absolutely, I support SNAP. It's 2016, no person, no child should be living in poverty." He then asked us to meet with his District Director to introduce ourselves and go over our requests.
- We introduced ourselves and this led to his District Director setting up an in district meeting with Bryson and I to discuss RESULTS and SNAP in more detail.
- Longest meeting with a congressional staffer I've ever attended - 2 1/2 hours. We discussed what Hurd would like to do, and plan to stay in touch to see how he can support RESULTS and SNAP/EITC

Thanks, Cacie. Now, in addition to members of Congress, we want to use this election year to reach out to candidates for office as well. **Judy Zobel of RESULTS Des Moines** is going to share about a recent meeting they had with a candidate running against their current representative.

The Des Moines group decided it would be important to meet with candidates for office as well as our sitting reps. If they are elected, this would insure we had a relationship with them.

To this end we made an appointment with Jim Mowrer who is running for Congress.

Two things important:

- *Make sure he really understands what RESULTS is all about and wishes to continue his association with us*
- *Make sure we come off looking knowledgeable about the issues...not just a chat but a substantive discussion*

I mentioned the Results website when I scheduled the meeting so his aide really understood the impact Results might have. We spent time filling him in on the goals of our organization. It didn't hurt that he remembered Jos from a previous encounter.

We then talked about EITC and working childless adults and how that affects Iowans. You always think that the person listening knows all there is to know about the topic but he was surprised by the numbers of vets affected by this issue. He is a vet so this caught his eye. Then we discussed SNAP with him.

It has been a long time since I've heard anyone from Iowa speak as a true champion of our issues but he certainly did. He is a public policy wonk and had his statement of no cuts to entitlements ready for us to hear...music to our ears.

His aide took pictures of our group meeting with him and put them on [his Facebook page](#). The caption read: "Earlier this week Jim met with members of RESULTS to discuss actions we can take to fight poverty here in Iowa and throughout the country. This campaign is all about standing up and putting working families first again. Thanks for the meeting and we look forward to continuing the discussion!"

I think we accomplished our goals for the meeting and this certainly was a good experience for our group.

Fundraising Update and Final Announcements

Jos Linn

Fall Fundraising Campaign

RESULTS advocates play a critical role in ensuring our organization has the resources needed to end extreme poverty. Your fundraising brings in critical support for our work – including funding staff and our efforts to expand to all 50 states.

Now with Labor Day behind us, kids back to school, and football season starting – you'll have the chance to help this fall. The RESULTS annual Virtual Thanksgiving Feast fundraising campaign is coming in November. Is your group planning to participate? The Development Team wants to know! Email development@results.org and look out for more details in the coming weeks.

2017 Grassroots Fundraising Planning

In addition to 2016, we are also looking ahead to 2017. This October we begin the process of finalizing RESULTS' 2017 budget. We need your help to do this: we are asking for your Group's estimated 2017 fundraising plan now, so we can use this information to shape the overall budget. We understand that you probably don't have your plan completely figured out yet – or maybe you haven't discussed it at all yet – and that's okay. We just need a general idea of what you are planning to do.

In 2017, RESULTS will be doing our Friends and Family Campaigns in the spring, at Thanksgiving, and during the year for celebrations like birthdays and anniversaries. We'll also be supporting fundraising events throughout the year. When you sign up to fundraise for RESULTS, you have the support of the Development team behind you. That means during your FFC or event, you will get one-on-one support from Development Staff, customized fundraising materials, and a personal online fundraising page

We will also provide extra coaching for groups fundraising for the first time, including a special First Time Fundraising Kit that we'll email you after this call.

We have a goal of getting five new groups to take on fundraising in 2017. If your group hasn't done fundraising before, consider joining a Friends and Family Campaign in 2017 to help us reach this. \$500 is a great starting goal for first time fundraising groups – that's only ten people giving \$50.

To make sharing your plans easy, we have a Google form you can fill out with your estimated 2017 fundraising plans. Please discuss plans with your local RESULTS Group and complete the form by **September 21**. You can access the form by going to:

www.tinyurl.com/2017GRFundraising. If you have questions, contact Mea Geizhals, Grassroots Fundraising Manager, at mgeizhals@results.org or 202-783-4800 ext. 131.

Other Announcements

- **Try for Meetings and Town Halls Next Month.** Congress goes on recess October 1 and will be out until after the election. If you didn't meet with them this summer, contact

schedulers about setting up meetings and attending town halls in October. When you get a meeting, contact Meredith Dodson (mdodson@results.org) for help in getting ready.

- **Please Fill Out Lobby Report.** After any face-to-face meeting or town hall where you ask a question, please fill out our Lobby Report Form so we know how it went. www.tinyurl.com/RESLRF.
- **RESULTS U.S. Poverty Free Agents Calls** on Tuesday, September 20 at 1:00 pm and 8:00 pm ET. Join at <http://fuze.me/32256018> or (201) 479-4595, Meeting ID: 32256018#.
- The next **RESULTS Introductory Call** is this Wednesday, September 14 at 9:00 pm ET. Register for an upcoming Intro Call on the [RESULTS website](#).
- Find these and other events on the [RESULTS Events Calendar](#).
- The next U.S. Poverty National Webinar is **October 8 at 12:30 pm ET**.
- The **2017 RESULTS International Conference** is now set! We'll be gathering in DC July 22-25, 2017 at the Washington Court Hotel. Mark your calendars now and we'll have more details for you soon.

Wish each other good luck on getting media published around the U.S. Census Poverty Data release!