

# National Webinar Summary

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[http://www.results.org/skills\\_center/results\\_national\\_conference\\_calls/](http://www.results.org/skills_center/results_national_conference_calls/)

## Welcome

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

Welcome everyone to the September 2017 RESULTS Domestic Poverty webinar.

A special welcome to anyone joining the call for the first time — we're so glad to have you.

For those of you who don't know me, I'm Joanne Carter the Executive Director of RESULTS and RESULTS Educational Fund.

I want to start by saying that we're thinking about our RESULTS community members and all the people who've been impacted by Hurricane Harvey and Hurricane Irma. From what we know, all our RESULTS family are OK. But we know that some of them hundreds of thousands of others will be weeks and months and in some cases years, recovering.

One of the realities of these situations, and it is true in virtually every disaster and emergency, is that those who are living in poverty and otherwise marginalized, are most at risk — with the fewest financial resources, the fewest options both in the face of disasters and in the recovery from them. As a society, we need immediate responses, and that includes things like emergency access to SNAP for people who have suddenly been made more food insecure by these storms and their aftermath.

AND we **also need** our critical ongoing advocacy work to promote and protect programs and policies that reduce inequality, reduce vulnerability, and move people out of poverty permanently.

While the challenges have been enormous and multiple this year, I want to acknowledge all the amazing advocacy work you've done this year — in the First 100 Days, the Medicaid fight, and during the International Conference and the August recess.

You've had 145 face-to-face meetings with members of Congress already this year — already more meetings in just 7 months of this this year than in any of the last 9 years!

And 300 media pieces, already more than all of last year.

And if we look at where we thought we might be right now and where we actually are, we see the power of advocacy — ours combined with others. The prevailing wisdom said:

- The Affordable Care Act would be repealed – the ACA still in place
- That Medicaid would cut and converted to a block grant – Medicaid is unchanged
- That SNAP would be cut or converted to a block grant – SNAP is unchanged

This illustrates the difference between predicting the future and shaping it. Pundits predict it; grassroots advocates shape it.

We need to keep up this remarkable advocacy momentum with members of Congress and the media. And we also need to expand our outreach so we build our strength and gain even more advocacy muscle.

Because the risks continue — through the budget, through tax legislation, and more.

Today the US government released the latest Census data — you'll hear more on that in a moment from Meredith Dodson, our Director of Domestic Campaigns.

In the most basic terms, while the poverty rate has fallen slightly, more than 1 in 8 people in our country live in poverty. And the very federal programs that lifted millions of people out of poverty in 2016 – refundable tax credits and SNAP (formerly food stamps) – are under threat.

So, after we hear about the latest data, then Kristy Martino is going to help us strategize how we can use that poverty data to 1) generate media. AND 2) to build the movement. There is still an enormous opportunity to engage people who want to respond to the threats of this moment. People who want what you have to offer. So, use this moment and this fall to find new people and show them ways they can make a difference.

Later on the call we're incredibly fortunate to have a remarkable national leader with us: organizer, campaign strategist on progressive issues, and civil rights activist Heather Booth, to talk about what's at stake in upcoming budget and tax fights and what we can do.

Thank you for everything you do to shape policy, and reshape the predictable future, even in the most difficult times.

## Overview of New Census Poverty Data

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

New [U.S. Census poverty data](#) released today:

- The 2016 poverty rate was 12.7 percent
- Poverty was down nearly 1 percent between 2015-16 = 2.5 million fewer Americans in poverty
- 18 percent of children were below the poverty line – including 30.8 percent of Black children and 26.6 percent of Hispanic children
- More than 1 in 5 Black Americans live below the poverty line
- Almost 1 in 4 Hispanics
- Only 8.8 percent of Whites
- This is the legacy of structural racism that created the [racial wealth gap](#).

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# Measuring the Nation's Social and Economic Well-Being

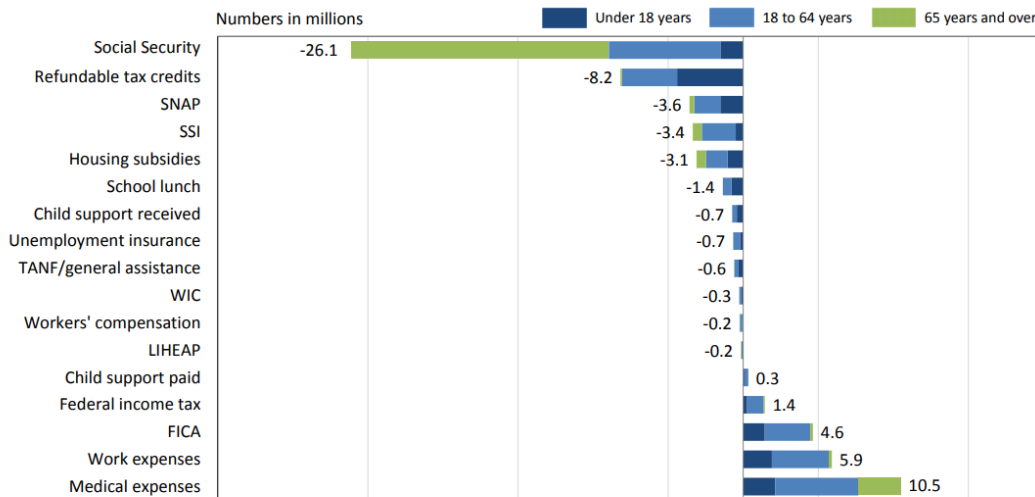
		2015	2016
	<b>Median household income</b> (in 2016 inflation-adjusted dollars)	↑	\$57,230 <b>\$59,039</b>
	<b>Percentage of people in poverty</b>	↓	13.5% <b>12.7%</b>
	<b>Supplemental Poverty Measure</b>	↓	14.5% <b>13.9%</b>
	<b>Percentage of people without health insurance coverage</b>	↓	9.1% <b>8.8%</b>



U.S. Department of Commerce  
Economics and Statistics Administration  
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU  
[census.gov](http://census.gov)

Source: Current Population Survey, 2016 and 2017  
Annual Social and Economic Supplements

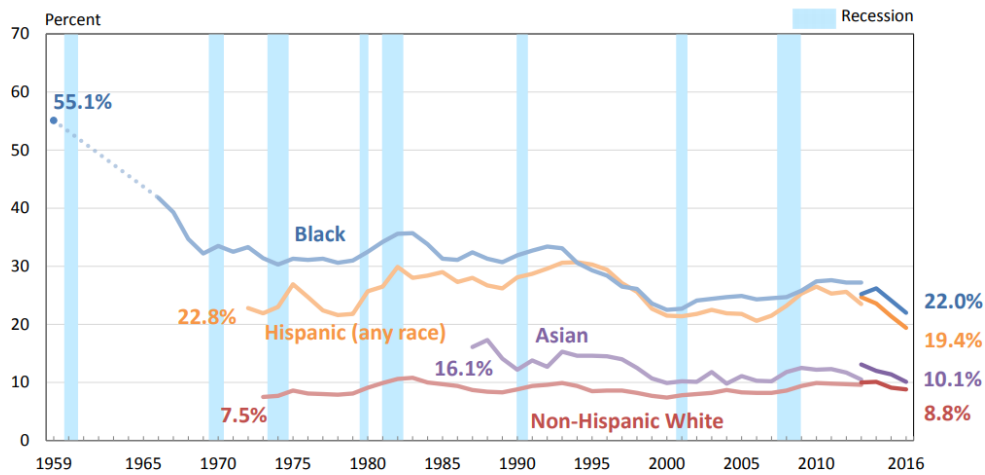
## Change in Number of People in Poverty After Including Each Element: 2016



U.S. Department of Commerce  
Economics and Statistics Administration  
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU  
[census.gov](http://census.gov)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2017 Annual Social and Economic Supplement.

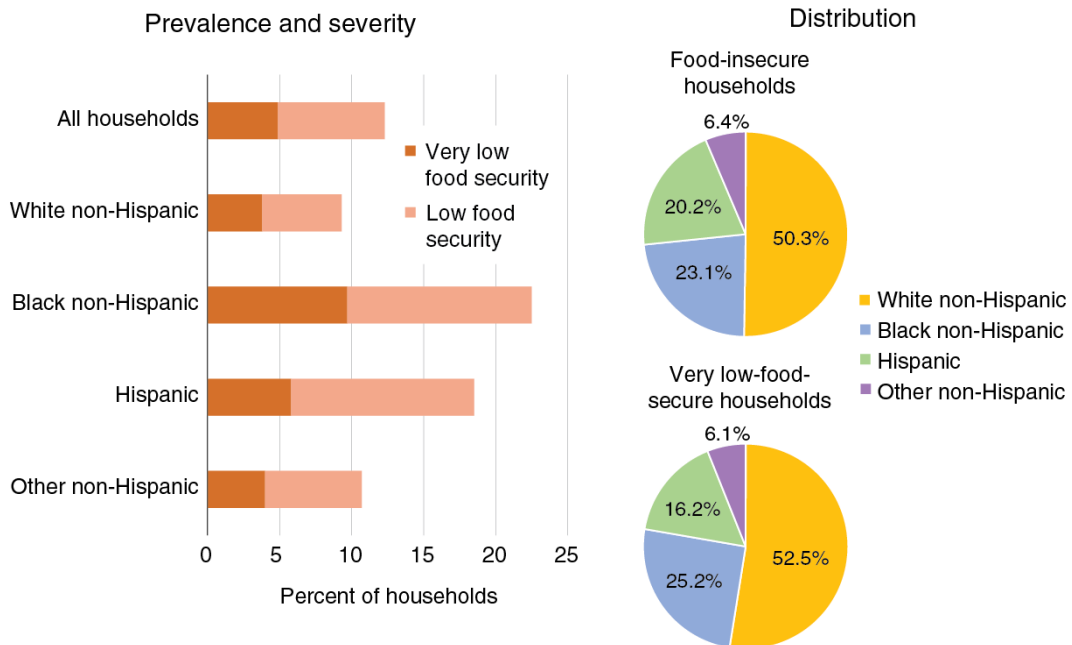
## Poverty Rates by Race and Hispanic Origin: 1959 to 2016



U.S. Department of Commerce  
Economics and Statistics Administration  
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU  
census.gov

Note: The data for 2013 and beyond reflect the implementation of the redesigned income questions.  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 1960 to 2017 Annual Social and Economic Supplements.

**Low and very low food security were more prevalent among U.S. non-Hispanic Black and Hispanic households, but half of food-insecure households in the United States are non-Hispanic Whites**



Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

For additional visuals, see the [webinar slides](#).

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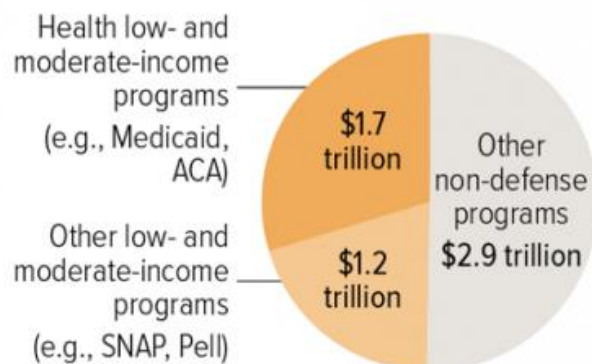
## Update on U.S. Poverty Campaigns

Meredith Dodson

- House budget leaders want to deep cuts to entitlement programs, including “fast-track” reconciliation cuts, in their 2018 budget
- Targets are SNAP, Medicaid, TANF, SSDI, EITC, CTC, among others
- House may vote on their budget resolution later in September
- Senate may vote on their budget in early October

### House GOP Budget Cuts Low- and Moderate-Income Programs By \$2.9 Trillion Over Decade

Total cuts, 2018-2027



ACA = Affordable Care Act

Note: Cuts in health low- and moderate-income programs reflect both the entitlement cuts in Function 550 (\$1.5 trillion) and other cuts in the budget (\$200 billion).

Source: CBPP analysis based on Congressional Budget Office and House Budget Committee data

CENTER ON BUDGET AND POLICY PRIORITIES | CBPP.ORG

## September Actions and Training

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

September Action: [http://www.results.org/take\\_action/september\\_2017\\_u.s.\\_poverty\\_action](http://www.results.org/take_action/september_2017_u.s._poverty_action)

### Action #1: Submit an LTE on the New Poverty Data

Use the 2016 Poverty Data release as a hook to write your own letter to the editor and get it published. Take the sample text below, personalize it, and submit it to your local paper.

To the editor:

New census data shows that 1 in 8 Americans are living at or below the poverty line. So why are some members of Congress taking aim at the very programs that help working families put food on the table and get the basics to survive?

Programs like SNAP (formerly food stamps) and the Earned Income Tax Credit lifted X million people, including X children, out of poverty last year. Gutting these programs to pay for a tax break for millionaires is unconscionable. I hope I can count on our representatives [INSERT YOURS] to stand with families and kids here in [YOUR STATE].

[YOUR NAME]

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## Action #2: Building the Movement: Use Poverty Data to Empower Others

- Plan an advocacy training in your community
- Help people understand the significance of the new poverty data
- Help them see the connection between the poverty rate and anti-poverty programs such as SNAP, EITC/CTC, and Medicaid
- Plan to train people to take action. For example, you could show them:
  - The EPIC Laser Talk
  - How to Write a Letter or an LTE
  - How to Meet with Members of Congress
- The purpose is to show people that taking action on important issues makes a difference AND is easy

## September Training

Kristy Martino

Now is the time to listen, learn, and take action together

### Hold a “Community Conversation”

- Market your event as a conversation about poverty, advocacy, taking action
- Utilize tools like the Census data, short films, panel discussions, advocacy trainings

### Cover the What, Why, and How

- Ground folks in the **what** of poverty: new data, national, state and local figures
- Share your own **why**: why do you do this work? Then hear from others why they showed up!
- Get to the **how**: now that we know the what and why, incorporate solutions, let people know what they can do about it and that they are powerful

### Give and Take (Action)

- As in any meaningful conversation, there is a give and take - make sure you are giving skills and information and taking feedback, listening as much as you are speaking
- Adding a training and action component to your community conversation builds skills, gives your audience a tangible takeaway for their time
- Give your audience a thought provoking, exciting event and they will want more

### Remember: You Are Planting Seeds

- View every interaction as a planted seed that will grow with care and attention
- Your goal should be to share information, education the public, and learn from others

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Make sure to follow up and provide options for next steps: join the group's action network, come to next event or meeting - keep in touch, keep listening!

### Resources to Help with Local Advocacy Trainings

- **September Action:**  
[http://www.results.org/take\\_action/september\\_2017\\_u.s.\\_poverty\\_action/](http://www.results.org/take_action/september_2017_u.s._poverty_action/)
- **Outreach Resources** (PPTS, Action Sheets, Forms):  
[http://www.results.org/take\\_action/domestic\\_monthly\\_action\\_archive/](http://www.results.org/take_action/domestic_monthly_action_archive/)

If you cannot find the resources you need on our website, please contact Jos Linn ([jlinn@results.org](mailto:jlinn@results.org)). Also, please let Jos know when you schedule an event.

## Guest Speaker – Heather Booth

Facilitated by Meredith Dodson

### Bio

Heather Booth is one of the leading strategists about progressive issue campaigns and driving issues in elections in the United States.

She has been an organizer starting in the civil rights, anti-Vietnam war and women's movements of the 1960s.

She was the founding Director and is now President of the Midwest Academy, training social change leaders and organizers. She has been involved in and managed political campaigns and was the Training Director of the Democratic National Committee. In 2000, she was the Director of the NAACP National Voter Fund, which helped to increase African American election turnout by nearly 2 million voters. She was the lead consultant, directing the founding of the Campaign for Comprehensive Immigration Reform in 2005

In 2008, she was the director of the Health Care Campaign for the AFL-CIO. In 2009, she directed the campaign passing President Obama's first budget. In 2010 she was the founding director of Americans for Financial Reform, fighting to regulate the financial industry. She was the national coordinator for the coalition around marriage equality and the 2013 Supreme Court decision. She was strategic advisor to the Alliance for Citizenship (the largest coalition of the immigration reform campaign). She has been a consultant to many organizations including the Voter Participation Center, Center for Community Change, and MoveOn.

She is currently working with Americans for Tax Fairness ([www.AmericansforTaxFairness.org](http://www.AmericansforTaxFairness.org)) on the campaign to influence the upcoming debate over new tax priorities.

### Questions

I first want to say how much I appreciate Meredith's work as part of the movement on so many issues. RESULTS paves the way in a lot of this work.

#### 1. What's at stake in the budget and tax fight?

- This is about whose country is this

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- If Congress has tax cuts for the wealthiest, their rationale is to cut social programs to pay for them... unless we stop them
- All our priorities are at stake
- This is a continuation of the health care battle; the next round will be around tax fairness
- This is also a battle on race and gender b/c there is a disproportionate discriminatory impact of these cuts on these populations
- Heather asks ATF Legislative Director **Sandra Salstrom** to weigh in where are in the tax debate at this time
  - We're in first phases of this process – the budget
  - Congressional leaders want to use budget reconciliation, which is a fast-track maneuver to allow Republicans to go it alone (i.e. cannot filibuster in the Senate)
    - This makes it easier for them to fast track tax cuts and use cuts to social programs to pay for them
  - House may try to pass their budget resolution by the end of September
  - Senate may take their budget up in committee at the end of September
  - Both chambers are hoping to have their respective budgets passed by the Columbus Day recess (week of October 9)
  - Most basic level – reconciliation allows Republicans to use fast-track process to cut taxes for the wealthy

## 2. Lessons learned from previous fights/what it will take to win?

- Because of the enormous size of the opposition, we must be united and clear in what we're asking for, what we're driving for
  - This is bigger fight than health care, which was about 1/7 of economy;
  - This fight includes all the big corps
  - It includes people who just want to destroy gov't
  - We need to stay together
- We need to be united and on message
  - Tax cuts for millionaires/corps paid for by cuts to Medicaid/Medicare/education, etc.
  - They are going to say things that are very appealing and we have to expose the lies and the impacts of these cuts
- We need to make this a movement
  - Tax fight is harder than health care
    - People were already working on health care for 8 yrs.

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- Message is easier, e.g. it's easier to build support for services that help your mom who has cancer
  - Need to drive this into action, give it visibility
  - We also need to have a surgical approach
    - If they do reconciliation for taxes, we only need 3 key votes'
    - Key targets – AK, AZ, NV, ME, WV
  - Need broadly visible actions to expose the anger of the public
- Need to show this is a political battle
  - If members of Congress try to cut taxes and pay for them by cutting social programs, they need to know there will be a political price to pay

### 3. What is the key messaging we should be using to ensure that any tax legislation is what we want?

- a. **Sandra:** Be disciplined
  - i. Say tax cuts NOT tax “reform”
  - ii. Highlight the tradeoffs – cuts for wealthy by cutting Medicare, Medicaid, child care, etc.
- b. **Heather:** ATF just did a national webinar on this issue, use resources in your own area – <https://americansfortaxfairness.org/webinar/>
  - i. [www.StopTrumpTaxCuts.org](http://www.StopTrumpTaxCuts.org) provides data, trade-offs, shows what's at stake
  - ii. Shortest version of the message on signs – “Don't cut Medicaid to give Tax Cuts to the Rich” or “Not One Penny in Tax Cuts for the Rich”

### 4. Closing tips?

- a. Meet with members of Congress in the district, esp. key Republicans
- b. Call-in days: use the ATF call-in number – 1-888-516-5820
- c. October 4 – Day of Action around the country
  - i. Small group face-to-faces
  - ii. Small press conferences

### 5. I came in this movement in CR movement in 1960

- a. There were times when it seemed like we couldn't win
- b. In 1964 – I was registering voters in Mississippi and things seemed dire. But because we were organized, we got the Voting Rights Act passed the same year.

## Grassroots Share

Lindsay Saunders, RESULTS Raleigh

Thanks for allowing me to share my personal story about Medicaid and recent Town Hall experience on tonight's webinar. I have been a RESULTS volunteer for nearly 4 years and one thing it's taught me is to be brave and bold. Tonight I'm doing that again.

In early August, I dialed in for a webinar, "When Congress Returns: What's at Stake for Struggling Americans This Fall" with the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. After that, I replied to the follow up email from the State Strategies Manager, Deborah Swerdlow. She offered support in communicating that information and helped me put together some talking points. Then I decided that I needed to start speaking more publicly about my personal struggles and why I believe budgeting, health care, nutrition, and a livable wage are so important.

But for me, now, the real bravery comes in talking about my struggle with depression and anxiety most of my life and finding out this summer that were it not for Medicaid I might not be here since my parents would not have been able to get me mental health care. When I was almost 14, I was hospitalized for severe anxiety and depression, but my parents did not have health insurance because, though they worked hard with the family business. Let's face it: health care is expensive. They had to apply for Medicaid and sign away their rights away to their child, with reassurance that they would get me back. And they did, but I cannot imagine being faced with that decision; I still carry that burden. I carry the shame from the stigma from dealing with mental health challenges, while also fighting to be a warrior for change in hopes that families and children will have more opportunities with more fairness, transformative resources, and love.

On August 23rd, Congressman David Price, a Democrat, held a Town Hall and I went prepared to get real with facts and why they're personal for me. If you're not familiar with my Representative, he's kind of like that man from the movie "Up," an adorable sweet smart grumpy determined old man. He's a good listener though so here is how it went:

I got in line and ended up being one of the last in line, but was determined to speak. Finally it was my turn. I said, "I appreciate how much support you have lent to Medicaid. I probably wouldn't be here today if it weren't for Medicaid helping me get care for my childhood depression.

And then I took a moment to thank him for cosponsoring the Reach Every Mother and Child Act and the READ Act, both USAID supported policies. Here is a summary of the exchange:

Lindsay: "I have heard you speak about it and saw your ([Rep. Price's statement on the Trump budget published online](#)), so I appreciate how bold you have been about that. It's good that your statement specifically calls for a bipartisan budget agreement to lift the nondefense discretionary spending caps. And I understand that as a Democrat, you do not have a formal role in crafting the budget resolution, but you can play an important role in the public debate over the budget by speaking out and educating your constituents.

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“As someone who is concerned about poverty programs and equality in this country, I would encourage you to

“Call for a budget that protects critical investments both at home and abroad, protects poverty-reduction programs and other programs for the most vulnerable, and ensures that tax reform is revenue-neutral and progressive.”

He was so funny with his response: “Good!”

Lindsay: *“That’s my call to action.”*

Congressman Price: *“That sounds about right. You know, you don’t like a big spender to me. You sound like someone who understands that we need fiscal balance and a good fiscal plan going forward, but it is not a fiscal plan at all just to whack away incessantly at the domestic discretionary portion of the budget. That’s 17% of the budget and it bears the brunt of 100% of the Trump budget’s efforts at debt reduction. As I said earlier, that gives you the worst of both worlds. You don’t solve the deficit that way.”*

Our politics just makes that impossible right now when we need it more than ever. And now I guess this savaging of Medicaid, *it’s not the first time we’ve heard this. This has been a part of the Ryan budget for a long time, but it’s much, much worse now.*

Let me just say this for a minute but there seems to be an idea out there that what the Trump and Republican budget have out there is simply rolling back Medicaid expansion. *By the way, it’s a disgrace that we did not find a way to expand Medicaid when we could. I hope we can still find a way to do it. The Medicaid proposals we’re being hit with here have nothing to do with the ACA. This is Medicaid that we’ve counted on for so long, that so many people count on. It’s a very bad idea to do these things to Medicaid.*

And then, he thanked ME for sharing how it benefitted me and sharing what I went through.

So now, I say to you, don’t be afraid to share your story, when you are ready. Speak up and take opportunities to be heard.

## RESULTS Announcements

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

- **Join the RESULTS Anti-Oppression Working Group** for our next webinar discussion on Thursday, September 28 at 8:30pm ET. Building on our excellent discussion from August, this month we’ll be looking at the role of racism and bias in employment practices, recently highlights in a [New York Times op-ed](#). If you care about the problem systemic oppression, please join this robust discussion. To join the webinar, go to: <http://fuze.me/34326078> or dial in by phone at: (201) 479-4595, Meeting ID: 34326078#.
- **We need your group info.** As you know, we are switching over to a new advocacy database that will help us better support you in being the effective advocates you all are. As part of this transition, we need updated information about your groups. Please ask everyone

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in your groups to fill out this form, [www.tinyurl.com/RESVollInfo](http://www.tinyurl.com/RESVollInfo), so we have accurate information about your groups (should take less than 5 minutes). Please make sure to follow up with each member of your group to ensure they fill it out.

- **Next RESULTS Introductory Call, Wednesday, September 13 at 9:00pm ET.** Register for an upcoming Intro Call on the [RESULTS website](#).
- **U.S. Poverty Free Agents Calls, Tuesday, September 19 at 1:00pm and 8:00pm ET.** Login at <http://fuze.me/32256018> or dial in by phone at (201) 479-4595, Meeting ID: 32256018#. Contact Jos Linn for details ([jlinn@results.org](mailto:jlinn@results.org)).
- **Using VolunteerMatch to Grow Your Group, Thursday, September 21 at 8:30 pm ET.** Join at: <http://fuze.me/35674518> or dial (201) 479-4595, meeting ID 35674518.
- **Mapping Your Community for Outreach and Engagement, Wednesday, September 27 at 8:30 pm ET.** Join at: <http://fuze.me/35674518> or dial (201) 479-4595, meeting ID 35674518.
- **Save the date!** The next **RESULTS International Conference is July 14-17, 2018**, at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in downtown Washington, D.C. Mark it on your calendar, and keep an eye out for more details!
- Find these and other events on the [RESULTS Events Calendar](#).
- Thank you for being on tonight's webinar! Our next National Grassroots Webinar is **Tuesday, October 10 at 8:00pm ET.**

## Final Action – Send in Letters to the Editor about New Poverty Data

Jos Linn

Use the 2016 Poverty Data release as a hook to write your own letter to the editor and get it published. Take the sample text below, personalize it, and submit it tonight to your local paper.

**To the editor:**

**New census data shows that 1 in 8 Americans are living at or below the poverty line. So why are some members of Congress taking aim at the very programs that help working families put food on the table and get the basics to survive?**

**Programs like SNAP (formerly food stamps) and the Earned Income Tax Credit lifted millions of people, half of them children, out of poverty last year. Gutting these programs to pay for a tax break for millionaires is unconscionable. I hope I can count on our representatives [INSERT YOURS] to stand with families and kids here in [YOUR STATE].**

**[YOUR NAME]**

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