

National Webinar Summary

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

Welcome

Joanne Carter, Executive Director, RESULTS and RESULTS Educational Fund

Good evening everyone, and thanks so much for joining us. On tonight's webinar, we're going to take a step back from our intensive focus on congressional strategy.

We've talked together about equity – both as a foundation of the policies we promote, and in terms of how we operate and relate to each other.

Tonight, we want to focus on what it really means to deliver on that as an organization – our role in undoing systems of oppression and moving toward a more just future.

Because we know that the challenges we're up against in our work to end poverty are not just political, but systemic. Racism, classism, sexism, homophobia, xenophobia and more have created a status quo that disadvantages and exploits certain groups and benefits others. Poverty – who it affects and what its consequences are – is shaped by these systems of oppression.

We can't end poverty without tackling the oppressive systems that helped create it and that continue to reinforce it.

The numbers bear this out. We've talked a lot about racial wealth inequality, and the historical connection between race and poverty in this country. In 2016, the median wealth of white households was 10 times the median wealth of black households. That gap has gotten bigger, not smaller, over the last decade. And while the majority of people living below the poverty line are white, people of color are much more likely to live in poverty: the latest census data shows that more than 1 in 5 Black American families live in poverty and almost 1 in 4 Hispanic families while 1 in 11 white families live in poverty.

This isn't a coincidence.

Behind it is a legacy of discriminatory policy and structural racism, and it's just one example of many where we see poverty bound up in larger systems of oppression.

We know that we have enormous work to do at the policy level: both to undo harmful policies, and to replace them with policies grounded in equity and justice. But there's also key work to do in our communities, in our relationships, and in our own movement.

RESULTS is an organization with a dual mission – ending poverty and fostering the advocacy movement to get us there. Our commitment to combatting oppression is central to both, and I've learned a great deal from many of you about how we can and need to be doing that better. From the Experts on Poverty, from REAL Change young leaders, and from many others of you.

I am very grateful for your candor and commitment to RESULTS growing and doing more to tackle oppression both in our model and in our advocacy.

As a staff, our own internal anti-oppression work has been a growing focus over the last few years. Everything from examining our operational policies, to our messaging, to ongoing training and learning for the whole staff. You'll hear in a minute about what our staff, our Board of Directors, and many of you as grassroots leaders are already doing to move us forward. So many of you on the phone have already been such powerful leaders in this work – and I want to thank you for everything you're doing to make us the strongest movement we can be.

But I also want to be clear that the things we've done so far are just a start. As an organization we still have a long way to go – I know I do too – and the answers won't always be clear or easy. But this is a chance to look honestly at who we are and how we operate, recognizing where privilege and power exists, taking down barriers, and embracing a more radically inclusive approach to our work. I am committed to learn and grow together.

And this can't be just a side project or a one-off effort. It's fundamental to how we come together as groups, when we visit our members of Congress, what we advocate for, what happens at the International Conference, how we communicate... and at every other level of our work. So, I hope tonight can be an important dialogue together, but also something that's just one small part of work that we'll advance together at the Conference this summer and through our meetings and calls and relationships all year long and beyond.

For some of you, we realize this may be a newer conversation, and we're so glad you're able to be a part of it. Some of you have been deeply engaged in leading this anti-oppression work for years. And many are somewhere in between. At such a deeply fraught moment in our country, I think re-centering ourselves in our own community is all the more important.

Systemic oppression means some people are deeply disadvantaged, but we are all diminished by these systems.

Focusing on this tonight is about making us all stronger together.

This work doesn't come with a tidy checklist to complete, though we are committed to taking meaningful, concrete steps as an organization. But we know it is ongoing and complex, and at times it's challenging and messy, which makes it more important that we take it on. So, thank you to those of you who are helping lead this work, and thank you to everyone for having the commitment to engage together. I welcome your partnership and I welcome your feedback.

Now I'm going to hand things over to Jos Linn to help launch tonight's discussion.

Overview of Anti-Oppression with Anecdotes

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

What is Anti-Oppression?

Oppression is the use of power to disempower, marginalize, silence or otherwise subordinate one social group or category, often in order to further empower and/or privilege the oppressor. Social oppression may not require formally established organizational support to achieve its desired effect; it may be applied on a more informal, yet more focused, individual basis.

<https://theantioppressionnetwork.com/what-is-anti-oppression/>

Anti-Oppression work is about recognizing the oppressions that exist in our society, mitigate their affects, and eventually equalize the power imbalance in our communities.

Real world examples from RESULTS volunteers

These stories are not about making people feel guilty. They are to raise awareness of issues that perhaps we don't always see. I can speak from experience that I have either said or thought these things myself over the course of my life and I thank those volunteers who shared them because they remind me that I need to be ever vigilant.

A young, female volunteer was told by an older volunteer that it was good she was coming to a lobby meeting with an older, male member of Congress because she was so young and attractive.

- Disempowering; negates the intelligence and experience she brings to the meeting

Repeatedly asking younger women when they plan to have children.

- Assumes that all women want to have children and that it's OK to ask people about intimate family decisions

A young volunteer was asked to share her story at the beginning of a lobby meeting to demonstrate the importance of young people's advocacy, but when she asked to present content on the issues, she was told it was better to have someone more experienced do it.

- Implies that because a person is young, he/she is only there for show and has nothing of substance to offer

In preparing for a lobby meeting, an African immigrant was told "you're African, so you probably have an experience with this issue from your village." African American volunteers have also been asked to share their "stories of poverty" when they don't have one

- Assumes facts based on a person's skin color or country of origin

A RESULTS Expert on Poverty is asked to share their story of poverty in a lobby meeting and nothing else, even when they want to help present the issue or request.

- Assumes that a person has nothing to contribute to the conversation except their own personal story

Guest Speaker: Maxine Thomas, RESULTS Expert on Poverty and Grassroots Board Member

- I am honored and proud that RESULTS is taking this issue on. From experience working with other organizations, everyone should understand how oppression plays a role in how policies are made and how we interact with each other
- I'm glad organization is taking it personal
- We need to understand how oppression impacts our nation, our organization, and our families
- Anti-oppression work plays a key role in our policy work
- We need a strong voice to communicate our policies and amongst each other
- Many people are impacted – race, religion, sexual orientation, gender
- This can help our efforts to end poverty
 - Board brought in a trainer who introduced RESULTS to what oppression is, how it looks like, how they can identify it, and how they can take steps to push for more equality
 - Back in December 2017, I was invited to attend a Regional Coordinator retreat – how to improve our organization and our work
 - Need to focus on echoing the same focus across the organization, and equip ourselves
 - Share the same information and understanding – without reinventing the same wheel – and share what staff and others have covered and done already in our anti-oppression work
- From the Board's standpoint, Joanne has spoken highly of the work the staff has done on anti-oppression in the workplace.
 - It's great to have an Executive Director and Board want to move this forward.
- We are forming a new Anti-Oppression Council on the Board
 - It will represent different stakeholders in the organization and identify strategies to strengthen the organization
 - Anti-oppression is a touchy subject but we are taking a deep look into it
 - The Council will be a collective voice to share tools and resources, it will have an open-door policy, and bring in expertise and training
 - Help move forward our anti-oppression work
 - Valuable information to move our actions and shape our country
 - The time is now

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- At RESULTS our mission is to end poverty, we are fighting poverty via policy, and different policies can perpetuate suffering from the impacts of poverty

Overview of RESULTS Anti-Oppression Work and the April Action

Meredith Dodson, Director of U.S. Poverty Campaigns

What RESULTS is doing?

- Within the Grassroots Network
 - Grassroots leadership training (June 2016)
 - Webinar-based discussions
 - Integration in Group Plans
 - Anti-Oppression [resources online](#)
 - Grassroots values statement under development
- In Our Policy Work
 - Breakdown of poverty and policies by race and ethnicity
 - Experts on Poverty advising our policy work
 - Conference sessions and webinars on racial wealth inequality
- Within the Organization
 - Intensive Staff Trainings
 - Organizational Policy changes
 - Staff working groups on 3 key areas
 - Woven into www.resultsconference.org and conference programming
 - There is so much more to do!

April U.S. Poverty Action

- http://www.results.org/take_action/april_2018_u.s._poverty_action

April is a key month:

- Possible House Farm Bill markup, could take food away from millions who are at risk of hunger
- Senators are writing their own bipartisan bill.
- Harmful cuts and changes to SNAP would make it harder for working families – including people of color and [persons with disabilities](#) – to put food on the table (see our Action Sheet for more)

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- Tailor our [talking points](#) for letters, calls with Congressional aides, or face-to-face meetings Congress telling them to oppose any efforts to cut or change SNAP that would lead to greater hunger in the U.S. – and hardship, in particular, for communities of color.

Anti-Oppression Discussion

Kristy Martino, Senior Campaigns Organizer, U.S. Poverty Campaigns

Set Norms of this discussion

- We are doing this exercise to recognize issues of oppression and bias in our local groups
- This is about awareness, not blame. This about doing the work to change systems that perpetuate oppression.
- As we go through this process tonight, it is important to remember that all of us have different knowledge, attitudes, and experiences with the issue of oppression. Therefore, it is most important for us tonight to listen to each other. We do not have nor are we looking to find all the answers tonight. This is more about asking the questions and seeing what our initial responses say about how we see things in the world and in particular in our advocacy work
- We want everyone to feel comfortable sharing their thoughts. Tonight is about getting a conversation started, not having a debate. We also know this is an important and sensitive issue. Therefore, if someone says something you take issue with tonight, don't ignore it. Jot it down and share it with [Jos](#) or [Meredith](#) via e-mail and we'll follow up with you.

Consider the following questions in your group tonight or on your own for about 5 minutes and then we will open it up for people to share their thoughts.

1. When you think about your RESULTS work, what circumstances in your life have allowed you to the opportunity to do this work?
2. Think about your group – does everyone look the same or come from similar financial backgrounds?
3. Do you feel that your local RESULTS meetings are welcoming of people who come from different racial or ethnic backgrounds, different cultures or countries, LGBTQIA+ persons, persons with disabilities, people from a different socio-economic status or different family structure?
4. How is power expressed in your group? Who speaks in meetings, and who doesn't? Where and when do you meet? How would someone from a non-dominant group experience this?
5. Is there anything that RESULTS has provided you that has helped you reframe your language or how you speak about your work? Is there anything you would like to see?

Grassroots Shares

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- **Maxine Thomas, RESULTS Indianapolis (and Board):** I recently attended a hunger conference here at a local university. There was me, an African-American, and our Global group leader, who is white. For me, when I was speaking, it felt as people were not paying attention but when she spoke, they listened more closely.
- **Jos Linn, RESULTS Kansas City (and staff):** I've had to learn myself to give my own sense of control and let newer and/or younger advocates take the lead in leading meetings. I was assuming that because they were new, I needed to take charge and run things. However, I learned that when I stepped back, they stepped up and did so much better than I ever imagined.
- **Susan Burket, RESULTS DC:** My impression is that our group has not had the opportunity to have people of varied economic status attend. In general, it does take privilege to be able to volunteer at all.
- **Meredith, RESULTS DC (and staff):** I got to speak on a panel (organized by a group of folks including RESULTS Maryland volunteers) on the 50th anniversary of the Kerner Commission -- and it was striking to me that I was the only panelist who was not a person of color. That is definitely NOT my experience of most panels that touch on poverty issues – persons of color are usually lacking on these panels.
- **Mary Albertson, RESULTS Detroit:** I've enjoyed young people participating in our meetings and want to give them more opportunity to speak. One time, we met with our member of Congress and he told us flat out that we need to be more diverse. We have tried to be more flexible in our meetings to help those with different schedules, but we need to do more.

Next Steps

- **Keep the conversation going in your group.**
 - Think of ways you can make your meetings more inclusive of different people; how you can shift power dynamics in how your group is run. Think about a time when you felt disempowered and how you can shape your group to make sure no one feels that way.
 - Examine these issues more closely and discuss them in your April group meetings. The [Invisible Knapsack](#) by Peggy McIntosh is a good resource for looking at privilege and examining how it impacts your life and those around you. Read the article and talk through the questions it poses in your group. Afterward, think about ways that your group could address these issues in and outside of your RESULTS work.
- **Keep the conversation going on our follow-up webinars.**
 - **Tuesday, April 17 at 9:00pm ET.** If you are not able to do the exercise in your groups (or you are not in a group currently), join us for a discussion of the Invisible Knapsack by Peggy McIntosh. This short article explores white privilege and asks us to consider how our skin color plays a role in our life experiences. In

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our discussion, we will consider our own privileges, how they impact our experiences, and how they impact our work as RESULTS volunteers. Read the [Invisible Knapsack](#) article beforehand, if you have not done so already as part of your group meeting.

- **Tuesday, May 15 at 9:00pm ET.** Join us for a reflection on the many aspects of ourselves – our age, religion, ethnicity, income, gender, and sexual orientation – that impact our work as RESULTS volunteers. We will complete "cultural sketches" of ourselves to understand how our identities influence our values, decisions, behaviors, and opportunities. There is no need to prepare for the discussion - just come open to exploring your identity!
- To participate in these webinars, login at <http://fuze.me/33986526> or dial (201) 479-4595 Meeting ID: 33986526#

Additional Resources

- **So You Want to Talk about Race** by Ijeoma Oluo (book):
<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/35099718-so-you-want-to-talk-about-race>
- **Take the Implicit Bias Test** from Harvard University (online exercise):
<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>
- **The White Savior Industrial Complex** by Teju Cole (article):
<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/03/the-white-savior-industrial-complex/254843/>
- **The Urgency of Intersectionality** by Kimberlee Crenshaw (video):
https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle_crenshaw_the_urgency_of_intersectionality
- **The Case for Reparations** by Ta-Nehisi Coates (article):
<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>

The Road to Zero Wealth from Prosperity Now and the Institute for Policy Studies (research paper): <https://prosperitynow.org/resources/road-zero-wealth>

RESULTS International Conference

Meredith Dodson and Funke Aderonmu

Welcome to Funke Aderonmu, our new Emerson Hunger Fellow

- 2017-18 [Emerson Hunger Fellow](#)
- Spent last six months working with [DC Greens](#), a nonprofit working to advance food justice through food education, food access, and food policy
- Recent graduate of University of California - Davis with degrees in economics and international relations
- Volunteered with the UC Davis Innovation Institute for Food and Health working on local food insecurity issues

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- Spent time in Kenya working on a project providing clean energy fuels to low and middle-income households
- Will be at RESULTS through July

Why You Should Attend the 2018 RESULTS International Conference

- **Come hear top-notch speakers.** Hear Kristin Rowe-Finkbeiner of MomsRising; Tishaura Jones, Treasurer for the city of St. Louis; Heather Booth, civil rights activist and co-found of the Midwest Academy; Jennifer Flynn Walker of the Center for Popular Democracy, and many more. [See the Conference website](#) for more about our speakers.
- **Learn how to be effective AND non-partisan** no matter what happens in November.
- **Election Track.** Get trained on how to get candidates and new members of Congress in a deeper way and make poverty an election issue.
- **New issue.** We're exploring taking on housing issues to address segregation and the racial wealth gap. Learn more at our housing session at the IC.
- You've marched and made calls – take it to the next level at the Conference!
- **Register at www.resultsconference.org!**

Final Announcements

Jos Linn

Spring Friends and Family Campaign

Why join?

- Raise needed funds for our work
- Grow your network of advocates and supporters by spreading the word about your great work to end poverty
- *Don't wait!* Fundraise this spring to avoid competing with mid-term elections fundraising in the fall
- Joanne's Challenge: 100% Group participation in grassroots fundraising in 2018 – let's make it happen!
- So many resources are available!
 - Campaign guide with sample talking points, emails to send to your networks, and social media posts
 - Personal fundraising website on Salsa Labs, our online giving platform
 - One-on-one support from Mea Geizhals, Grassroots Fundraising Manager

Details

- Campaign will be May 1 – May 31, 2018

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- Support Moms, Champion Kids: Mother's Day hook, highlighting Reach Every Mother and Child Act (Global); protecting SNAP and Medicaid (US Poverty)
- Get started at: <https://results.salsalabs.org/momsandkids>
- **Save the Date:** Campaign Kick Off Training, Thursday, May 3 at 8:30 pm ET. Join online at: <http://fuze.me/37000190> or dial (408) 610-1042, Meeting ID: 37000190#
- Questions? Mea Geizhals, Grassroots Fundraising Manager, mgeizhals@results.org or (202) 783-4800 x131

Announcements

- **RESULTS Introductory Calls on April 4 at 8:30pm ET and April 20 at 1:00 pm ET.** To participate, call (712) 775-8972, passcode: 761262. Register [here](#).
- **U.S. Poverty Free Agents Calls, Tuesday, April 17 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#.
- **House and Senate Recess, April 30 – May 4.** After any lobby meeting, please complete the [RESULTS Lobby Report Form](#) to let us know how it went.
- Thank you for being on the webinar tonight. **Our next U.S. Poverty webinar will be on Tuesday, May 1.**

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