

# SNCC 60TH ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE, 2021

## Organizing The Black Community To Vote

Speaker 1 (00:00:14):

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Speaker 2 (00:00:21):

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Speaker 1 (00:01:55):

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Speaker 3 (00:02:40):

Good afternoon family and welcome. My name is Jamal Watkins and I proudly serve as the senior vice president of strategy and advancement at the NA AACP. I bring you greetings on behalf of our president and CEO, Mr. Derek Johnson, who holds from the great state of Mississippi, our board chair, Leon Russell, who holds from the great state of Florida, our vice chair, Karen Boykin towns from the great state of New York. But most importantly from our members, volunteer advocates and activists all around the country who are doing what it takes to make black lives matter and to achieve racial equity. Now we are here because it is next 60th anniversary. Now I would love to be with you all in community in person, but I know that we are doing this thing with COVID to stay safe. And so we are having a virtual dialogue and a virtual conversation, but today we're gonna hear from some amazing, what I would consider to be activists, leaders, organizers, campaigners, who are gonna really connect the dots about what it means to win elections, what it meant for us in 2020, what it means for us in 2022.

Speaker 3 (00:03:51):

And what does 2024 look like? Now? I know some folks are saying, wait a minute, we haven't even gotten to 20, 22, but we are gonna have a conversation to shake things up a little bit, to talk about black politics, electoral politics, direct voter contact. But before we jump in, I wanna lift up a few things. You know, first of all, I, I, I like this quote that I found from Judy Richardson, who was SNCC Phil's secretary from 1963 to 1966. And she said, um, in her comments that SNCC was a liberating experience for me in SNCC, that I knew the message was, do whatever you are big enough to do. And I'm gonna repeat that again, do whatever you are big enough to do. And when we think about that phrase, as it relates to the election, despite the pandemic 20, 20 two's election, I mean, 20 twenty's election had the largest increase in voting between presidential elections on record.

Speaker 3 (00:04:53):

What that means is that folks showed up and showed out in terms of voting despite the pandemic, and in cases of the black community state by state, we were doing what we were big enough to do by showing up in record numbers, to make sure that our voices were heard. And

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when it came down to the wire, you saw in state after state think Michigan, think Pennsylvania, think Georgia, the black voters showing up, staying in line for those that were brave enough to go vote in person, voting by mail, using drop boxes, early vote, and making sure that our vote and that our voice was counted. And what we saw was an unprecedented shift in politics. Now the NAACP were nonpartisan, but were not blind. It was time for the man in the white house to go, and he's gone kind of sorta, but he's still lurking.

Speaker 3 (00:05:41):

And I think our, our panelists are gonna lift up some of that. But we also know that we had historic turnout in places like Georgia, which elected not only one, but two democratic senators, including the right Reverend Raphael Warnock. And so as we have this dialogue today, we're going to do all things connected to politics and elections. But remember the backdrop of this is that as we think about SNCC, as we think about intergenerational leadership, we think about young leaders and our elders connecting the dots. We know that voting is hard, but it's our currency. And so without further do, I'm gonna start off with someone who, if you don't know her, you are, you are missing. One of, I think the bright jewel in our community nationwide say UFA is an activist community organizer and the chief executive officer. And I like saying that chief executive officer of the new Georgia project, a nonprofit organization that she co-founded with leader Stacy Abrams in 2013. Now I could give you all of insights accolades, but at the end of the day, she is an amazing leader, organizer, human being, I call her a friend. And so without further ado, the next voice you will hear from in regards to this subject matter is none other than CEO in say, UFA,

Speaker 4 (00:06:59):

Hello? Hello. Well, first of all, brother, thank you for that wonderful introduction. Um, I, I won't belabor the point or repeat things and my bio, but what I will say is that I'm very excited to be here. Um, I'm very excited to celebrate 60 anniversary, 60 years of organizing with the student non-violent coordinating committee, um, and to continue the legacy of multi-generational, um, to push, uh, towards an America, uh, organizing, push towards an America that our families deserve that we are not quite there yet. Um, but happy to be a part of that unbroken chain. Um, I feel like 2020. Um, it did not, if it did anything for me as a leader and for our organizing at the new Georgia project, was that it brought some things into absolute clarity. Uh, there are a lot of sort of, um, positions that we have taken theories that we were seeking to advance, um, about, you know, centering indigenous leadership, investing in black, organizing electoral, organizing as a key and important part of our issue organizing.

Speaker 4 (00:08:20):

And that the two are linked that it's not either or, and 2020 gave us an opportunity to test all of those theories and to show quite frankly, that we were right, uh, that when you trust black people, when you trust the folks that are at the center of these issues, um, to come up with solutions to the things that ALS, and then when you ask twice as many questions as you're talking, because you have twice as many ears as miles, the people will tell you and give you the direction that you need, um, so that we can fight together and that we can win. So, um, I'm happy to be here and happy to really get into it, um, and, and communicate the world as I see it, uh, what we saw in

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Georgia and across the deep south in 2020, uh, and the games airplane, uh, as we head into 22 and 24.

Speaker 3 (00:09:18):

Thank you say, and, and for those of you who are, are watching and listening, um, you know, what what's most prolific about some of the work that say has led on is that Georgia didn't happen overnight. And if it weren't for brilliant black women, like in say, we would not be where we are, not only in terms of Georgia, but in this nation. And so I wanna reiterate that in this nation. And so when you think about the legacy of leaders who come out of Georgia in say is a part of that continuum of making it happen and making movement happen in a real measured way. Now, next up is my brother in the movement, Dominic Whitehead, who serves as vice president of campaigns at the NAACP. He is a strategist. He is an operative, he understands movement. And I would argue, he would say more importantly, he is a child of HBCUs.

Speaker 3 (00:10:10):

So I know that he reps hard, you know, HBCUs in terms of be Thum Cookman and Florida A and M. And although he's from Virginia, you would think he was from the great state of Florida, but none other than Dominic Whitehead in terms of the NAACP has really been on the cutting edge of our transformation. And shout out to someone who you all may know, Mr. Cortland Cox, who has really been a mentor, not only to Dominic myself, our pre CEO and others, but really is helping us connect the dots and to continue to build power in a new way. And so I'm gonna pass the mic to our brother, our friend leader, Dominic Whitehead.

Speaker 5 (00:10:47):

Thank you so much for the introduction. Um, Jamal, you know, I love, um, my HBCUs, um, Beth Cookman and FAMU, um, but good afternoon, everyone. Again, Dominic Whitehead, vice president of campaigns, um, here at the NAACP. Um, and I will not go into detail in terms of our resume because that's not what we are here for today. Um, we're here today to really go into detail about how do we continue the work that we did in 2020. And do we see that work happening in 2022 with all the obstacles that are faced against us? And I'm gonna take a step back from 2020 some things that NSAID even said and inspired 2020 was a tough year for us when I say for us, for black folk, um, it wasn't any different from 2019, 2018, 2017 to 2016, but what was different in 2020, the world was home.

Speaker 5 (00:11:35):

And the world was actually watching. And the world hasn't been home watching a very long time and the way they watch in 2020 due to COVID. So they was able to see what happened with the social unrest and the things that happened with George Floyd and the Monro and the list goes on with that. Uh, but because of that, it gave us an opportunity like any ACP organizations, like, um, new Georgia project, and won't vote when you hear from D shortly to be innovative and think in a different way and how we organize for ourselves and connecting the dots to political power and building long term black political power. Um, and so if I learned anything from 2020, I learned that we can be innovative, um, that we don't need the tools. We don't need the things that other progressive, I'll just use that word today, grouped, um, to tell us what to do and how to organize within our communities, not only to turn out voters, but both importantly, to connect the dots of

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the issues that truly matter to us, and just wanna better the lives of black folks and black communities across this country.

Speaker 5 (00:12:34):

And so that's the energy I'm taking in 2022, um, whether we have voting rights, which we should get those voting rights, uh, whether we have obstacles in front of us, um, in state like Georgia and Florida, um, we gonna continue to do what it is that we know how to do, um, and organize and hold folks accountable. And if they don't do what they supposed to do after we get them in office, what we gonna do in 2022 is continue to shift, continue to do this shift that we've been in over the last four years, since 2016. And the shift that we saw in 2018 when young people and people of color stood up and came out to vote and organized all over this country after 2016, the shift that we saw in 2020, the shift that we saw in the work that folks put into Georgia to get us over the hump and the Georgia runoff in, in early 2021. So that's the energy I'm on this this afternoon, that's the energy and the spirit I'm bringing. And that's the work that we got ahead of us. Um, so thank you again, Jamal. I'm so excited to be here and representing and, and supporting, um, SNCC 50th anniversary.

Speaker 3 (00:13:33):

And you all heard it here, folks we're talking about shifting. And so now for those of you who are church'd, who grew up in the church, you know, sometimes you gotta shift the atmosphere. And that also means you gotta double down in making sure that you're making real, the work on the ground and in communities, but in order to shift the atmosphere, it requires leaders. And we have another one, another, a phenomenal black woman who also has the title of president and CEO. This time of the Birmingham civil rights Institute. Also a founder of woke vote, a principal at an entity called think rubiks, none other than Dewan Thompson. I'm gonna read a quote from leader Thompson that sort of talked about the work ahead, where she was reflecting on 2020. She said, I, myself, along with other organizers and activists and mothers and students were on the front lines all over this country, asking for and demanding justice up against systems, we were not felt were seeing us and hearing us. Now, I know she probably wears three or four capes, but she also comes with gloves on to do the work. And so I'm gonna turn it over to my sister, my friend, another leader in this movement, none other than Deju Thompson. The floor is yours.

Speaker 6 (00:14:48):

Thank you so much, brother, Jamal. I appreciate, uh, the opportunity to be here today. This conversation feels like church. To me, it feels like home to me. Um, it feels like family to me and say the work that she has done, the work that Dominic has done, the work that Jamal has done, it has been done in a way that allows us to lift each other, which I think is one of the tremendous stories of 2020 in 2019 even is that we realized pretty early on that the kind of impact we wanted to have and the things that we needed to be able to do. It was not going to be possible without literally undergirding each other, whether that was mentally <laugh> to keep everybody mentally San, whether that was, Hey, I got \$2. Here's one for you. Whether that was, I've got three organizers, we gonna send one of 'em to, to Georgia, one on the Virginia and one on the Florida, whatever we gonna do, it required, um, a commitment to the whole.

Speaker 6 (00:15:44):

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And I think that that is something actually that shifted from 2016. And that shifted from some of the, the previous times before us, is that you had a lot of folk who were doing, um, good work, but it was disconnected, right? And then we had no option, but to come together, um, and do some things in 2020. And I think that allowed for the insights and the dos and the Jamal' and even myself to be able to operate in even more excellence because we had that backing. And so, as we talking about Le um, you know, that was one of the major lessons for me of 2020, um, is, you know, reminding people what we can do when we are actually on one accord, not necessarily all with the same strategy, right? There's several different strategies and several different tactics, but on one accord on what the goal is.

Speaker 6 (00:16:28):

And that goal was to, was to move the country far, far enough, further along so that we can now start dealing with some of the other issues that we needed to, to deal with. Whether that's in that, uh, you know, disparity in healthcare disparity in, in education dispar, you know, what's going on with gun violence and changing the criminal justice reform. We can, we can do everything we wanna do with the vote, but we still got all these other things that we need to do. And so I think that one of the things that I also learned from 2020, um, hadn't, you know, my backgrounds, I have been blessed to be in what we call in house for a long time. And then I've had an opportunity to be out on the field. Um, 2020 was a field year. You couldn't be in house say 2020, right?

Speaker 6 (00:17:16):

You couldn't be, um, you, the proximity to the work had to be right. You had to be right up in front and close and personal with it in order for it to be impacted a certain kind of way. Every single person that's on this chain today, they were out on the ground. They were out in person, they were knocking doors. They were doing things, not just from the CEO level, but from literally getting on the ground with each other. And that made the difference. And the last thing I would just say is that coming out of 2020 and going into the priorities of 20, 22 and 2024, in the words of Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth, I, I hear from Birmingham, Alabama, if you don't know who red, uh, Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth is, you should get to know him. He was, um, an incredible force during the civil rights movement, but he said we wanted confrontation, non violent confrontation, but we wanted confrontation to see if it would work, not just for Birmingham, but for the nation. We were trying to launch a systematic wholehearted battle against segregation, which would set the pace for, for the nation and how they could, um, organize against other issues. We're in that same moment right now, I feel the spirit of that. I'm not backing down from confrontation. What I am saying is that the systematic wholehearted battle against the things that we face, we've got the leaders to do it. So we're excited about what's possible as we move into 2022 and 2024.

Speaker 3 (00:18:44):

Thank you, leader Thompson. Now, folks, we are about to engage in a group dialogue with say, Dominic and Duana, and you'll have opportunity to ask questions when we get towards the end of the conversation, but we're gonna bring everybody together so that we can chat it out and talk about the things that matter connected to election. So without further ado, bringing back to the stage, all of us to have a dialogue and so ha friends, friends, we, we are, we are in a moment in

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this country. We're in a moment in our communities that have been really rocked and shocked by everything from COVID 19 to the Tom Foolery of a Donald Trump for four years. And, you know, I wanna wake this up a little bit and, and throw out a, a controversial topic that I think our SNCC veterans and young folks around the country all continue to wrestle with.

Speaker 3 (00:19:36):

We always hear this election is the most important election of our lifetime. That voting is our currency. That folks fought and died to vote. But can you talk to me about how you and your leadership role have navigated the reality of voter fatigue in the black community? And sometimes the reality that folks are gonna question and say, nah, I don't think that's the way to go. Actually, I don't even believe you that this is the most important election of our lifetime. I'm, I'm curious as to how you have, have had to work and how you have worked to navigate those realities.

Speaker 5 (00:20:13):

I'm on the panel full of black women, uh, who are, so I did <inaudible> first. So, uh, I'm taking your leadership cause black women run the world, save the world. So <laugh>,

Speaker 6 (00:20:25):

We love you though. I, I'll slide start by just saying, I didn't use the language of saying that this was the most important election of our time, right? Um, I think that what made our work effective in 2020 was that we were authentic and we were honest with people about the moment that we were in without making it seem like it was the bullet that was going to cure all or the shot that was gonna cure. All right. Um, it was a necessary tactic and strategy in the moment so that we could get to more work. Right. And that's how I talk about voting. And that's how I've heard my colleagues talk about voting and the process of, um, electoral politics. It is a part of a liberation strategy. It's not the only part though, and that's why we have so many different things.

Speaker 6 (00:21:12):

And I think when you come at it from that point of view with people, that first of all allows you to be honest about the fact that what you think might happen and while we're doing this, it is possible that it could go a completely different direction. Right. It doesn't mean that we shouldn't do the work though. Right? We have. And so I think that that for me, has been what has kept us, um, able to engage people, um, and them to get on board with us is that we don't, we don't couch the information in a way that makes it seem like it's our only hope or the Superman coming to save us. Right. It is a part of our saving ourselves. So I will start with that.

Speaker 4 (00:21:50):

Yep. What's on your mind. <laugh> yep. <laugh> everything Jo says. That's my answer. Um, I think the only thing that I will add is that, you know, at, at the core of all of the work that we do, our messaging, our mobilization, tactics, everything, um, is a very bold, very aggressive research agenda, right? Like we have taken the position that our identities alone don't make us experts in the politics of the communities that we come from and the co and the politics of the communities that we organize with. And so what they say, we study to show ourselves approved, right? So what we tend to lean on are messages that our research has shown us is designed to move people

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to act. And what our research has showed us is that talking about some, uh, ancestors, generic ancestors that were martyred, and let's be clear that we're murdered by vigilantes or, and ignored by the state is powerful with a certain segment of the population.

Speaker 4 (00:23:08):

But the thing that's actually gonna move people to act is that if you connect the act or the power of the vote with the change that they have told you, that they want to see. Yeah. And so you will hear me say this over and over again, that we train our organizers, that you have twice as many ears as you do mouths. So before we even start talking about the vote or the upcoming election is what do you care about? What are your hopes, your dreams, your aspirations for yourself, for your family, for your community, and what can't you stand to see continuing? What's the thing that keeps you up at night. Yeah. And then we talk about how voting can impact that. Right. Cause that's what they told us that they already cared about. And so it's less, it's very, it's much, much, much, much less about your ancestors died for this. Again, I don't think that people woke up and was like, I'm going die for the right to vote today. Right? Like that just not said no one ever. Right. <laugh> um, and so we gotta tell the truth so that we maintain credibility with the folks that we organizing with. Right. And then number two, why wastes time? You got like 15 seconds to capture people's hearts, minds, eyeballs, ears, attention. So you lead with your strongest message. And in this moment we are finding that your ancestors diaper, this is not our strongest message.

Speaker 5 (00:24:34):

No, I think that's right. Um, both what, uh, instate said, angel said, the only thing I would add to that is, is two things. And we said, it's a lot, Jamal, you know, this at ne AAC, P civic engagement is in our DNA. It cannot be September, August through November. We cannot be engaging people October through November. It can't be, let's do the souls of the polls. It can, we have to get away with that. But it's a part of our work. Absolutely. But it cannot be the after thought it should not be an afterthought in terms of how we organize and both Dewan and NCAA just said it a sec, said it a second ago. I'm looking at this thing as issues as the way of life. I, I think about my, I make everything personal at this point. I think about my youngest brother who do not have a college degree.

Speaker 5 (00:25:17):

Who's been, um, in and out of the judicial system with the prison system. Right. Um, and he's asking like, why does voting matter? And now talk about the issues and the situations and the experiences that he's been in. This is what I voting matter, but it cannot matter to you only, it cannot matter to you more than matters to me. Can that matter to you more than it matters to how you take care of yourself and your family. So thinking about those issues, that insight just mentioned a second ago, those issues matter in a deeper way and connecting and organizing around those issues. That is how we move away from this is the most important election of our life to I am. I I'm over it. Every election we get, it is important. Um, but what for me is how do we build a sense of community, um, in terms of organizing around the issues that we are at a place.

Speaker 5 (00:26:05):

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So we are taking care one of cells and taking care of one of cells, that's uplifting the issues that matter to us through research and through personal experiences, then taking that to action and doing true civic engagement work, and a part of that is at the ballot box. But a part of that as well is also after you get to the ballot box, holding the, the pictures accountable. A part of that is also is finding the DS, the inside the Jamal's, the Dominic to do this work or finding the new AMA Presleys, et cetera, to run for office, to represent communities that look like us so we can have representation. So I'm looking at this as civic engagement, as the BNI community's DNA, um, long term, um, civic engagement is a key component to the work that we do issues the way of life. And then most importantly, this is all about intergenerational organizing, connecting the dots of the people behind us to build something for them to come up, to continue this work, and also continue to find new leaders. And that's how we move away from this is the most important election of our lifetime. Um, and my opinion around that.

Speaker 3 (00:27:04):

No, no, thank you all for lifting up, you know, some of your, your, your nuggets, if you will, you know, I'm stuck with the, the notion to wanna of, there are many pathways to our victory and voting as one of them and say, I love the framework that we got twice as many ears as we do mouths. I, I probably need to work on that personally. I would argue that's a, that's a good takeaway, but Dominic I'm

Speaker 6 (00:27:27):

Ministering to myself

Speaker 3 (00:27:28):

Half the time. <laugh> yeah. Sometimes we gotta be listening to the people, but Dominic, I, you open up a, a, a train of the conversation I wanna dig into, which is you think about SNCC and how, as a, as an entity back in the day, it was some college educated black folks. I mean, they were in college, they were meeting, they were in schools, but a lot of us weren't in college. You passed forward to today, the racial wealth divide, the education gaps in our community. A lot of our folks are not necessarily flourishing. How do we continue to engage and connect with community folk who are not a part of the black middle class who are not on zooms and on social media platforms who don't have a luxury of flipping a passport to go to Mexico during the pandemic? What does that mean for us in connecting with our people who are still left behind and connecting the dots to this thing called voting, curious to hear your thoughts, and I'm gonna pick on you first, cuz you started something new called woke vote that I think probably is getting at that, you know, at the heart of that question,

Speaker 6 (00:28:32):

You know, I, um, I don't know. I almost felt attacked about by the, uh, <laugh> by the fact that you said for, for the folks who were flipping their passport, cuz I'll do that too. I at least. Um, but what, I will say two things that came to mind, I will challenge the notion that everybody who was with SN were all college educated. Right. Um, because some of them were 17 years old, 15 and 16 years old. When you look at the children's crusade in Birmingham, those were literally students who were in the fifth grade up until high school who marched out of those schools and went to jail. Right. Um, and so I think that the, the first thing is saying that there has to be, um, a



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composition that allows for everybody to have a role, right? So you had those, um, those folks who were educated in strategy and policy, some of those other things who were getting that from college, but you also had the raw energy and the commitment and the talent pool from those students.

Speaker 6 (00:29:31):

Right. Um, when MLK came to Birmingham, the, the, the parents and the, and the adults actually started to say, look, we are, we can't lose our jobs for this. We actually can't do this. And they were ready to shut it down for a moment. And it was the children, the young adults who said, no, we going, we going, we gonna pick this up. Right. And so I think it's when we talk about it that way, and we illuminate history for all of the different people that played a role and, and, and imagine reimagine what those leaders look like and what you know, where they came from and what they were doing at the time. People can see themselves in, in some of those different, um, um, individuals, right. They may see themselves more aligned to listen. I ain't going, I can't get out there and go to jail for it, but I can feed everybody when you get out.

Speaker 6 (00:30:20):

Cuz that was happening. Right. I can't, you know, I may came March with you. Um, but I can fund the work. Right. Cause that was happening. And so it's giving people, um, a framework of how to get in in, but the last thing I will say to your question about is how do we engage folk, um, for not in a black middle class, part of this is challenging, the traditional mindset of who's worth engaging, right? And the, the work woke vote came out of the space of, we felt like the traditional model for engaging, particularly in black communities and in Southern communities was that you only were engaging voters who had a 40 to 70% or 40 to 90% re uh, voting record right. Of voting every single time. And we're like, well, we loo we didn't missed out on 50 to 60% of our community who have reasons, um, for not voting right.

Speaker 6 (00:31:12):

Who have been told that, you know, if they vote, somebody may come after their family or whatever the trauma may be. And so the enga, so someone decided that the work to engage them was not the work that needed to be done. And so that's where, what vote starts. We start at people, um, with voters who have, or with non voters who have either zero propensity score up to 30% and we give them a reason to get involved. That levels the playing field, that's true equity. That's putting the resources in communities that haven't had the resources before. Um, and our firm think Rubics, we literally sat down and created a white paper and thought process and strategy and had it, you know, considered by all kinds of different analysts to show and prove that that, that is actually more effective to do that than to go after some of those individuals with the 60 to 70% background. And so that's, that's how we are challenging that Jamal, um, is starting with in, in, in legitimizing and validating the need to engage those folk who are not in the black middle class or who are, but do not have the higher propensity traditional voting model.

Speaker 5 (00:32:24):

Yeah, I would, um, I mean, I would agree with agree with everything Devana just said, I would, I would add it and just say, I'm glad you said propensity model. Cause I, you know, as much as we said, I hate the word low propensity voters, <laugh> it triggers me as much as we all said. But

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oftentimes I think we, we typically said when it comes to black voters, right, you hear when you think of white voters that we have to engage. Sometimes we call them working class. Uh, we find another word, um, that we call our votes, low propensity voters. Um, but to that point, I think to your question, Jamal, for me, it really is, um, going to the people in terms of engaging those folks, going into community where they are and where they at and kind of what's doing, I'm sure doing a new Georgia project, hiring people or painting up organizers, we're doing that not a C P that honestly look like the communities feel like the communities have the same experience as the communities that we are engaging in.

Speaker 5 (00:33:27):

We're having conversation in, uh, and that we are hoping to move the needle, not just on voting, but engaging them around a larger picture in terms of civic engagement and this being real, when it comes to, you know, the black middle class, you know, everyone is not the trusted messenger. Um, though ACP is a great messenger to some folks. We might not be the right messenger to some folks. I ain't gonna pick on Delta, sit in the theater cuz uh, say up here today. Um, but alpha Kappa alpha might not be the right <laugh> might not be the right messenger in some communities. So finding out who those trusted messengers are in those communities, um, to those communities. So it might not be a group that's associated with the black middle class, but does not mean that the NAACP and the links and all these other civic based organizations work going van.

Speaker 5 (00:34:15):

Oh no, it doesn't mean that we continue to do the work that we do, but we do it in a more strategic way to point that Jwan said earlier, there's a lane for all of us. And so that might not be the lane for you and that community, it may be somebody else to engage in that community. And that is okay. So let's take a step back, um, and do that. And the last, last thing I would say, I would say, let people organize, let people, or don't let people organize, right? Like when I say, let people organize, don't come in and say, it should be done this way. Or I never seen it like that. I never seen it like that. The theories that you do, we ain't seen it like that done before. And if you've done it, you've been losing for years.

Speaker 5 (00:34:53):

So let people organize around the way they organize and be helpful with resources to get them to where they need to be at scale. But don't tell them how to talk to whomever they're talking to in their community when they're all living the same thing day in and day out and you living somewhere on the beltway or whatever you living across the world and you just learn about a candidate getting in and these people are worry about a way of life. We about keeping the lights on tuition for their children, vacation jobs, food, you name it, whatever they worried about just for they're worried about, they're not worried about the candidate just in that moment. So let folks organize.

Speaker 4 (00:35:29):

Oh, do it's like we standing next to you brother, but <laugh> like, you got warn us, right. Told me to eat these sending shots like that. <laugh> no, I'm kidding. Um, I love it. And I love everything you said. I would just say this simply put, uh, there is no black liberation for some, if it is not for

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all right. And so I don't think that, um, being educated in America's post-secondary institutions necessarily prepares you to be the kind of accountable leader that we need to move our people forward. Right. That, that is, I mean, having acquired multiple degrees, uh, from some of this country's finest institutions, I can tell you that everything that I learned, uh, about, uh, organizing came from church basements from the black, uh, sorority meetings, uh, you know, Jamaican independence, day preparations, uh, church, like it is just, it's not often found in a classroom, uh, that academics are not necessarily the best organizers.

Speaker 4 (00:36:40):

And you're talking about somebody who used to work for a faculty union. Um, and so yeah, uh, a plan, if you have people are serious about liberation for, for black people. Um, and they only imagine a leadership, uh, that is reflective of only a slice of that community and they're not serious about us winning, uh, and they're not serious about us getting free. Um, and to Dominic's point again, like let people organize that there are people who want to show up who wanna stand tall. Again, there are people who have politics and who have an analysis and they don't always look and sound the way that people think that we should, they don't wear hard bottoms and Euro cut suits. Uh, I just don't right. <laugh> um, and it doesn't matter, uh, because they have a message and they are authentic leaders and guess what they have followers.

Speaker 4 (00:37:40):

Um, and that's what we need in this moment more than anything. Um, and yeah, I think that, that's what I said. We not claiming any easy victories. We're not lying to the people. We need everybody to grab a shovel in this moment. Um, and creating as many arm ramps as possible for the broadest, most diverse, uh, sort of representation of black folks, blackness. Um, I think it's really important. I'm talking about black queer folks. I'm talking about black migrants. I'm talking about black people. Don't that don't look black, right? <laugh> right. I'm talking about black people who are currently incarcerated black people who are formally incarcerated. Um, all of us, uh, I think it's super, super important. Um, as we, again, thinking about what real liberation looks like, um, that includes us all.

Speaker 3 (00:38:32):

Now, you all know, um, this wasn't rehearsed and I appreciate the candor. And so when Devana sends out a message that says, you know, who is worthy of being organized and engaged, that's a message because I do think to what insight you just lifted up that if we not talking about all black folks, then we are missing the mark and, and Dominic, you know, you, you, you did throw out on the table, let people organize. I think that's a, that's another word because it is hard. I think for any community that they're not being supported to actually get in the fight that may not directly. And I'm saying this, you know, from my own perspective, if we don't make sure that those communities are directly in the driver's seat, then it's a bunch of us trying to come in and tell folks what to, that don't work.

Speaker 3 (00:39:22):

You, you already know if you come into my mama's kitchen, you're not gonna tell her how to cook. And so when you think about the reality that we're in right now, I appreciate you all for speaking truth to power on this front. Now we are about to slide into the Q and A's part of this,

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this discussion. And you know, one of the questions that has popped up that I want you all to sort of wrestle with and lift up is, you know, what resources are we deploying right now? Think about the Virginia elections. Think about Louisiana, who just got hit with hurricane artists, same with New Jersey. What does that mean in for 2021? What are we doing right now? And how does that connect us? Getting ready for 2022?

Speaker 5 (00:40:09):

I can jump in here. Um, given that we, we are actually doing some work in real time, um, right now, um, in Virginia, uh, one of the things I, I, I think that we are focusing on what we've been doing in terms of the research. Uh, we like to use just like in 2017, uh, Virginia and these, these off year, which they're clearly important, like all elections election cycles. So really center us from a big year, like 20, 20, or a big year, like 2018 to really get us right. Um, in the right direction, um, for what's coming up in 20, 22 and beyond around us. And, but any ACP right now, as I stated earlier, I think in the opening, um, we had to be innovative, um, in 2020 and think through, um, how we were approaching program and making sure that people were really doing the work in their communities in a different way.

Speaker 5 (00:40:56):

And, and so for us, in terms of resources at the national level, uh, at the AAC, one of the things that we are doing differently and we've been doing the last few years, we were working directly with our state conference. So our, all of our units that we have, or our branches in the state of Virginia and our state conference hand in hand, and we are allowing them to help us shape, or they have helped shape the program in terms of what that looks like. Number two, um, we are expanding our relational organizing program and how we are spending our relational organizing program for folks to get involved. We have spend, everyone who volunteered for us last year asking to volunteer in Virginia. This is not just about Virginia, to not all of us. And we're saying this is black political power, and we're going to build this, let's use this moment and do the same thing that we did in Georgia in 2020, I mean, 2021, what we did in November of last year, this time in 2020, and let's put that energy there.

Speaker 5 (00:41:47):

Um, so for us, we're running aggressive, um, volunteer program in a pay program, um, when it comes to phones, SMS, our no contact canvas program that we are continuing to expand out to make sure folks are safe, um, in terms of canvassing, um, and engaging the black community a deep way, but I won't lie to anyone here. Um, folks are seeing it, the black community in Virginia right now, they are not enthused about this upcoming election cycle for a lot of different reasons. Um, and they're not due to candidates due to lack of candidate engagement due to fatigue, right? Virginia have elections every single year. Um, so due fatigue to what's going on. So what we are doing, um, in terms of ACP, along with a few other groups, I've shot a few out, um, got a call in a moment where black voters matter.

Speaker 5 (00:42:30):

Um, and a few other groups right now, um, is really coordinating, organizing one message together. Um, we are divided and conquering. Um, so in areas where any ACP ain't strong for black vote, we ain't even going there, right? We going, we are strong at, and when we can engage

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at people can, um, really have that, see the impact from the work that we are doing. All of this matters, all of this matters because in 2022, if folks are feeling like this and Virginia right now in 2021, what does that mean for January of next year? When we gotta begin to organize and all of these key states where we got a slew of us, Senate races, gubernatorial races, statewide races, local races on the ballot, across the country with a handful of black candidates running, um, in some of these seasons, when you think about Val DiIT in Florida, you think about Mandela Barnes, um, who is running over, uh, uh, uh, Wisconsin and other folks across, across the country.

Speaker 5 (00:43:23):

So for us, it really is using this moment right now to center ourselves and to see where we are in real time. Um, but folks can get involved by going to [acp.org](http://acp.org). Real time can sign the volunteer right now. And I promise you, we have a program where we will send you a list of black voters at Virginia. We have a script, a call center, you name it resources, we'll send it to you. You will have a list of tens and 15 voters to contact and to encourage those folks to vote. Um, and we actually have messaging specifically for Virginia for you. So if you're out of state, we want you to say you're out of state, but you're gonna talk with them and say why this election is important for you being out of state and why they want, why you want to see black folk winning Virginia by voting this. So those are some of the things that we are doing right now. And I hope that answers the question in some way, um, around what's happening in Virginia, from the standpoint of any ACP and how we're looking at the future as well.

Speaker 3 (00:44:12):

And I'm gonna fund it to you and say, and broaden the question, cuz somebody just asked, how can they get a job in this work? And so I know y'all are prepping for 2022. What are some of the things you're doing in Georgia Duana in multiple states, including Alabama to get ready for next year?

Speaker 4 (00:44:31):

Well, we hire first of all right, so go to our Instagram, go to our Facebook page, go to our website. We absolutely are hiring. Um, and so see if any MV openings that we have, um, uh, sort of align with your skill set and your interest. And if there are skills that you have or interests that you have, that you don't see reflected in our, um, in our online collateral hit [us@infoatnewgeorgiaproject.org](mailto:us@infoatnewgeorgiaproject.org) and be like, listen, I train pigeons. And here's how I think it's going to contribute, uh, to winning for black folks in Georgia. And we can have a conversation I'm saying we gonna hire you to train pigeons. I'm just saying, if there are skills that you have that you think, uh, movement needs in this moment that I definitely wanna hear about it. I would also say that, um, you know, we pay a lot of lip service to municipal elections and local elections.

Speaker 4 (00:45:32):

And the truth of the matter is that there are elections every year in Georgia. This year, there are 1600 municipal elections and cities and counties all across the state of Georgia. And so while a lot of people are waiting until November 22 to, to see how bad, uh, these anti voting bills are gonna be and what impact it's gonna have on voter suppression, um, or voter turnout that we are not waiting that, you know, Senate bill 202, which is the Georgia trash version of these anti

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voting bills. These anti-democracy bills that have been introduced in 48 out of 50 of these United States. Um, the unique thing about SB 202 is that it creates five new crimes for voting. Two of them are felonies, three of them are misdemeanors. And so we are currently have about a thousand Georgians that are being investigated by the secretary of state, um, for various, you know, voter violations, voting violations.

Speaker 4 (00:46:36):

And they absolutely intend to add more to that number with the addition and the creation of these five new crimes. And so I think that there's an opportunity for civil disobedience this year. There's an opportunity we're training an extraordinary number of attorneys, right? That not since the voting rights act of 1965 was passed, have we needed a criminal defense bar with, uh, expertise in voting crimes that wasn't, that has not been a real thing. And so if say only 10% of the people that Georgia is currently investigating, actually get charged and have to go to court. That's still a hundred people. There are not a hundred lawyers in our country who are criminal defense lawyers with an expertise on defending people against voting crimes. That expertise does not exist. And so we are working to build it right now in this moment with a number of impact litigation outfits and organizations, we're testing messages, right?

Speaker 4 (00:47:43):

Like, I mean, there's only been one time in history where there will likely be two black men running against each other for the United States Senate, Georgia will have that situation. Most likely come may, um, 20, 22 with Herschel Walker being Trump's favorite and Senator Warnock, the incumbent, um, running as a Democrat there's is another opportunity to give America their first black woman governor. Uh, and so black people, black voters are going to be very essential to what's happening in 2022. And so figuring out our program now is gonna be super, uh, super important. And then I'll end with this. The enthusiasm gap is real. Like we don't rely just on enthusiasm to mobilize people. Um, and I feel like that's part of why we've been effective, cuz we just waiting on people to be excited about Democrats, baby, we'd be waiting for GDO. We'd be waiting all day.

Speaker 4 (00:48:44):

Right. <laugh> and so I think that, um, you know, listen, Joe Biden is the most popular Democrat in Georgia. That's not named Stacy Abrams, right? And we just got back some really disturbing polling numbers. It says that, uh, his approval rating has gone from 90% down to 65%, uh, amongst the black ate in Georgia and Stacy's is dropped right, is being dragged down by the overall lackluster feelings that people having by Democrats in general. And so I think that there's real opportunity to test messages, test tactics, and to figure out like how we mature the electorate so that people are not necessarily voting for somebody that they want to have a beer with. Not necessarily voting for somebody that they like. Right. But that we need to make sure that as a part of our overall strategy and plan to win, that we are electing people that we can talk to and who are accountable, um, and that we can put our feet on they next, uh, should, should the situation call for it?

Speaker 4 (00:49:46):

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Uh, we are looking. Yeah. And I think that that's what's happening right now in 2021 that we're not waiting for 20, 22 in order for that to happen. Cuz the primaries are in may. Um, I also say that there's an election in Atlanta for mayor, right. And when we talk about, and it's messy and it's ugly and we gonna get through it, um, and it's important and at a time where black voters and Georgia voters and voters in Atlanta are at the center of the American political universe, some of this stuff we don't need, um, but we will get through it.

Speaker 6 (00:50:20):

Whew, my God, I, um, mama have to have a Baptist fit <laugh> and I'm not even Baptist <laugh> um, you know, I think part of this is in, in to Insight's point endos part, we are at wo vote, think Rubics looking to hire, um, potentially on all levels, right? We need executive level leadership. We need clerks who just have a passion to wanna learn how to do this. Right. Um, so for you all in between, if you have the desire to do this work right now and moving into 2022, please come to what vote.us or think rubiks.com. Um, and we'd love to, to, to figure out how we can get you involved. A couple of things to answer what we're doing right now. One of the, the unique things about walk vote is that the way in which we got sort of started is that we were trying to answer or create a solution to an immediate issue, which was we had the opportunity.

Speaker 6 (00:51:25):

There was a seat that was vacant for the first time in 25 years. Um, and we felt like we could put somebody different in that role. It really wasn't about Democrat or Republican. It was about the opportunity. And so we launched and, and we did some things fr because of the opportunity. And so what that did though, was it illuminated what was possible in places like Alabama and Birmingham for the first time in quite a while. And that was able to then allow us to empower people in other states to say now, what is the thing that's I that's possible now that you realize that, you know, we have this power or that you may have forgotten, or you may have not have been resourced or whatever with the proper resources, what can we do? And so what we find is that not only are we having to show up electorally, we are also having to show up for like issues and things of that nature.

Speaker 6 (00:52:16):

So right now what vote is on the ground for Julius Jones in, um, Oklahoma, you know, trying to get justice for Julius, we are showing up, um, we're creating literacy rooms in five different cities that are attached to HBCUs where our fellows attend, that they didn't even have black libraries or black books, enough black literature on the campuses to teach themselves some more about the strategies once they got out of a fellowship program. So we're creating black literacy rooms at five different HBCUs to support that. Um, we are doing digital support in, in Virginia because we realized we didn't have as many people on the ground there. And we had, um, our counterparts and, and, and our, and our partners with live voters matter and others who are physically there and doing the work. So it's, Hey, how do we support them and give and create capacity for the work that they're already doing.

Speaker 6 (00:53:06):

So we've been doing that. Um, and, and we just finished one of our fellowships, which as you all know, or may not know, um, our fellowship process is that we identify anybody in any city who

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wants to learn how to do this work and put them through a 12 week, uh, uh, learning, uh, opportunity that helps them to, to start from what is the constitution like, what, how do you get a bill passed? What does it mean to run for? You know, because there are just certain questions that, you know, haven't been taught in our, in our, in our, in our system, hasn't been, you know, uh, sort of aligned with, um, why it matters. Uh, and so people are coming to terms with those things. And so we just finished graduating, um, 27 people out of our fellowship from 16 different states. And so getting ready to, um, then we align them with the local issues or the local organizations in their community that may be doing the kind of work that they're, that that's important to them.

Speaker 6 (00:54:08):

So that's how we are working right now. And we always use this. What can, what feels like a little bit of a gap, but is really not, um, in between the, the, the election cycles is to research, right? Um, we can't be everywhere. Wot vote is not, not trying to be funded. We not the legal women voters and we not, some of these other institutions, we not the NAACP who has a chapter on every corner. Right. And we, and we are happy for them, but we come in to do a specialized thing in the margins. Right. So identify, and so we have to be very strategic about where we can be impactful. So we have to, to insights plan earlier, we have to do the research on that, so that when we do get on the ground, we know that we're impacting change for that electoral process in that area.

Speaker 6 (00:54:52):

So we are in the process of doing that research and determining where we are gonna be able to be most helpful in 22, knowing that part of that is in places like Georgia, where the Atlanta election is actually impacting Birmingham, um, you know, because of, of regional leadership, uh, we already know we're gonna have to be in Florida. We already know we're gonna have to be in North Carolina. We already know we're gonna have to be in Ohio. And so what does it look like to start, you know, being strategic about that in 2021 and raising the resources to do what Dom said, which is hire local, engage, local support, local, um, and folk who, who might not be able to get the kind of resources we can get because of our relationships. So being able to put those resources on the ground, once we identify the opportunities,

Speaker 3 (00:55:36):

You know, you all have laid out a lot of richness in answering that question. And, and we heard some things like I heard say, mention civil disobedience. We, we, we gonna save that for another SNCC panel, cuz that's a whole lot of discussion there, um, for what I find striking and ill. And I'll throw this out to you all. Um, as, as panelists to sort answer this question, think of, uh, we heard Hersha Walker been, you know, woken up from the dead and now he's showing up in, in Georgia. We know that the other side is fired up about critical race theory. Some folks can't even spell critical race there, but they about it. And we're also dealing with apathy, meaning black folks. We, we are a little tired and we looking at Joe being like, bro, we elected you, but what has it really changed our community?

Speaker 3 (00:56:24):



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So there's this question that has been raised. Why are we voting in terms of this next cycle? Whatever it is, why are we voting? Why should we be voting in the mayor race? Why should we be voting if we know it, doesn't actually bring about the structural change that we want. And, and what are the things that would motivate our people and our communities, our cousins, our aunties, our neighbors to actually get fired up, given that what you all have laid out. It seems like it's a uphill battle. So why are we voting? And what are the things that we need to be really focusing in on to get people fired up again?

Speaker 4 (00:56:59):

Um, I think that, so I do think voting is a necessary part of the, to bring about the structural change that we seek, right? That it, it alone, uh, is not gonna get the goods for us, but neither is protesting alone, gonna get the things that we need. Right. It is a part of a larger suite of tactics that combined, um, will get us the things that we need. A, I think B even when we don't vote, we are voting right, right. That our, by virtue of this sort of Republic, uh, that we live in, in the way we choose our leaders, uh, that if we were to let white folks, uh, we were to let senior citizens, if we were to let others make decisions for us, um, that, that is in fact still very much a vote. And I don't know if we would be happy, um, with the outcomes and we have to still live and be governed by and subject to the laws that these people make.

Speaker 4 (00:58:02):

Right. And so just because we don't vote don't mean that we don't have to pay them taxes. It don't mean that the whatever becomes illegal or becomes criminalized or becomes the law doesn't mean that we are above it. Like I didn't vote for you. So I don't have to, uh, abide by your tax hike. That's not exactly how it works. Okay. Right. And so thinking about making sure that we are all involved in all the ways that we can in shaping the public policy, that we are governed by, that we have to live by, I think is really important. And that ain't no passive endeavor. And again, I think that what we are seeing is a maturation, um, because let me be remind people that, and I'm gonna stop here. Joe Biden was in fifth place when he got to South Carolina, right. That it was black people that tell the story, black voters that, that, that gave him a second win, call it the Lazarus campaign.

Speaker 4 (00:59:01):

Oh, right. <laugh>. And so what I'm gonna tell you is that there, I mean, I think that there are tons of black voters in South Carolina that was rocking with the Elizabeth Warren wave, though. There were tons of people that were rocking with the Bernie Sanders wave. There are some, these people who were impressed by people to judge, uh, but folks made a strategic decision, right. They made a calculated decision about what, the things, that pieces that needed to be on the, on the, on the chess board, in order to bring about the kind of America that we need. And I don't think that people were in love. I don't think that people, I think people were relying on assurances that were made. And so even in our demand for accountability now, it's not, people are not threatening to withdraw from the process. I mean, that's a real concern, but what I'm actually hearing is pay me what you owe me. Right. Deliver what you said you was gonna deliver. Um, that that's the conversation that we're having right now. And that's the real concern. Um, they say you can't fix what you haven't faced. And so I want us to face the fact that like, we, some people gonna have to be made to do what they said they was gonna

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Speaker 7 (01:00:15):

Dos.

Speaker 5 (01:00:16):

That's the whole word I <laugh>. Right. I think honestly said it, uh, that, I mean, that's, that's what it is. Um, that's honestly what it is, uh, at the end of the day. Um, and I think we just gotta

Speaker 4 (01:00:32):

Black women gonna vote. They gonna show up, right. They gonna be mad about it. People are gonna hold their nose. People gonna talk trash about you gonna call you everything about a child, a child of God, and still gonna show up in pop right now. Now withdraw is a real concern. And so having those conversations again with people about your, why, yeah. Now what's happening in the white house is important. It's just, it's not always more important than what's going on in your house.

Speaker 7 (01:00:58):

Yeah, absolutely.

Speaker 5 (01:01:00):

Yeah. I think dev earlier around telling the story and telling the owner was you, you Devana, but telling the story and telling the whole tell the truth. Yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 3 (01:01:09):

Well, I, I know that as a, as a collective y'all are dynamic and powerful, and I appreciate the candor that you have brought to this conversation and to this space. And, you know, and as a, as a stand slash fan of you, all three of you, um, you know, we really are in a critical moment. And when we think about, you know, SNCC, and we think about the intergenerational reality of our elders training, our parents who have trained us, who in, in training the next generation, just that interconnectivity. So family, we would love to keep talking all day long because I guarantee you inside Dewan, Dominic have a lot more to give, but we are about to transition and, and sort of hear some closing remarks because we know that at the end of the day, as in say, has said, elections are happening everywhere all the time, 1600 in the state of Georgia, that's a lot of elections.

Speaker 3 (01:02:05):

And so when we start to think about the connectivity of this dialogue, you know, I want to give the floor to each panelist to really give your closing remarks, your thoughts, but also that call to action. Cause I know Portland and others would fuss at me if we did not give a call to action. And before you do your closing remark, shout out to Monique Zach, Jasmine folks who are watching y'all, don't see them, but they're keeping us going, keeping us organized and making sure we do what we need to do in this dialogue. So in, in, in true form, as we started, we're gonna pass the mic. If you will, I'm gonna mix it up a bit. So I'm actually gonna start with you Dominic, and then let the phenomenal women close, close, but Dominic, your closing thoughts. And then we'll go Mr. Whitehead leader Thompson, and then we'll close with

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Speaker 5 (01:02:53):

All right. Thank you. Thank you for that, Jamal. Uh, first one was thank you. Um, Joan NSAID, Jamal, um, for this, this conversation, um, I think conversations like this is needed, uh, for our community, uh, I think really connecting the dots, uh, around intergenerational organizing, true community organizing, um, and the work that we do, um, day in and day out. Um, I, I think for me and, and I'll say it with this, I think, you know, I think about Cortland, um, who is like on me all day, every day, as I'm sure he's on end day and Devana all day, um, every day. Um, but I, I know my first transition from the progressive space, if you will, I was labor unions and political campaigns and candidates. Um, but I made a conscious decision when I switched out to come work for the national association for advancement of color people coming here to the ne a C P.

Speaker 5 (01:03:52):

Um, and one of the first person that opportunity I got to meet was Cortland and a man. And the name by the name of Albert Yates, Dr. Albert Yates and Cortland Cox, um, two giants in the movement in their own way. Um, 80 plus, right Cortland just celebrated his 80th birthday. I think earlier this year, we were all on Dr. Yates celebrated, I think the 81st, maybe a couple weeks ago, but no one knows about it. Um, and, and really working with the both of them and understanding and connecting the dots of all of this stuff is full circle, right? It is full circle in a way. And some of it shouldn't be full circle. Some of the stuff that we are fighting for day in and day, not day in and day out, it doesn't make sense while we are fighting for today in 2021 while we are fighting for voting, we are literally fighting for voting rights.

Speaker 5 (01:04:38):

Literally right now, they are debating. If they're gonna put a vote on the floor next week to pass voting rights, it doest make sense. It does not make sense, but because of the cause of the giant Portland organization, like SN it allows myself wanna say Jamal to really be in this work, to understand this work from a deeper level, to have a real connection, um, in this work. But then also connecting it back to these elections, say said it best organizing and issues. And elections say hand in hand, the work that Djuana doing day in and day out, training young people to do the work. It goes hand in hand in their communities to work that the over 2,600, any ACP units across this country, branches are doing the work day in and day out, day in and day out. So for me, when I think about this, when I think about the work that is ahead of us, not only this November and 2021, the S November and 2022 and 20 20, 23 and 2024, and the list goes on in that it has to be this connection around intergenerational organizing.

Speaker 5 (01:05:40):

It has to be this connection around where folks are in real time. It has to be this connection. As I said earlier, civic engagement is in our DNA. It has to be that con all of that stuff connects. It has to be the connection that it's okay. If you are not the trusted messenger for that community, it is okay. If you are the trusted messenger for that community, it is okay. If they organize different than how you organize. As long as it's strategic, we have one common goal is coordinated and we can move the needle. We can move the needle for progress, and we can move the needle for success for our community and truly build black political power. So my call to action, as simple

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as this right now, literally, we got elections in Virginia, but I won't even say go to Virginia. My call to action is get involved.

Speaker 5 (01:06:20):

Now get involved today. If you're already involved, go tell your friends, tell your family, go tell the neighbors. I hate this word, relational organizing, because we've been doing this since the beginning of time in terms of black folks and organizing, but involved in this moment in real time, right now voting rights are at state. The filibuster is at state police accountability. We couldn't pass that back in, in, in the summer with the George Floyd ACT's at state. It is literally at state democracy is at state. So get involved, get involved with your ne a C P locally get involved. Those jobs that NHS talked about, get involved, get involved right now with woke book, find some young people right now who are ready to do the work with D across these country, across these states and do the work a C p.org. Follow us on all of our platforms. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, go to a acp.org. And all of our information is there. But the right now get involved. That's the call of action because democracy not only for this country, but for the soul of this country, which is black folk is literally at state.

Speaker 6 (01:07:30):

And Dominique just said everything that needed to be said, uh, you know, that, that, that pastor reached up inside on the inside of him. I would just remind people of something very specific as that narrative matters. The March on Washington in 1963, it was the March on Washington for jobs and justice. So when you ask me about what we're doing right now, this is about economic justice. It is about changing the opportunities. It is about addressing the disparities, right? And so we have to just decide, what are we fighting for? What are we trying to build? And what are we willing to sacrifice? That's the three questions you gotta ask yourself, what do we wanna fight for? What are we gonna build? And what are we willing to sacrifice? If you figure out the answers to those things, it will align you to the purpose and to the people that you need to be aligned with, whether that's Walt vote, whether it's all of us, right? The NAACP, we all work together. And so please my call to you is to answer those three questions. What is it worth fighting for? What are you trying to build? What are you willing to sacrifice? And let's get to work together. Thank you all so much. I'm honor to have shared space, um, with each one of you today. And I'm so thankful for the work of the, in of SNCC and the work that they continue to do to lift up on the next generation.

Speaker 4 (01:08:48):

I am in a long unbroken chain of freedom fighters, and I'm so honored, um, to learn and to teach and to make sure, um, that again, the, the, the, the, the America, the world, uh, that our ancestors fought for, uh, is something that we haven't given up on. Um, and that, you know, I'm here and around the past the Baton, I think that there's so many opportunities, uh, for us to lead in this moment, um, for us to build upon the foundation that our SNCC veterans, um, have laid for us, um, as we are sort of building a house, uh, that will, uh, house our ambitions, our hopes, our dreams for ourselves, for our families, for our communities. Um, and yeah, I think, uh, I subscribe to the gospel choir theory of organizing, um, the, you know, the reason they can hold a note for so long and so powerfully is that each individual vocalist is doing what they can when they can, they're doing their part.

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Speaker 4 (01:10:00):

Um, and so, you know, I encourage everybody under the sound of my voice to find your movement home, to find the people, um, who share your values, who want to fight, uh, on the same issues that you want to fight for, and let's get to it so that when they're personal or professional obligations and one individual needs to jump drop out, uh, that their, the work continues, um, that we need each other. Um, I'm so happy to be, again, a part of this multi-generational, um, uh, uh, uh, effort, uh, to, to free folks, um, and to restore sort of faith and justice and humanity, um, and to this country. And so, yes, that is my call to action, to find your political home, to find your movement home and get to work, um, that, uh, there have definitely been times in my life where I have had more time, uh, than treasure and, uh, and, and the inverse as well. And so it, whether it's your time, your talent, or your treasure, whatever you have to contribute to making sure that we all get free. I ask that you do that take care.

Speaker 3 (01:11:16):

And as we think about it, we are done great conversation, blessings and love to SN 60th, keep leading, because we still need you. But to say, DaJuana Dominic, you all keep leading because we know that if we are in your hands, we are in good hands. Thank you all. And God bless.