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## 2016 North Omaha Voter: "Oops I should have voted"

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## **Black Votes Matter**

UNO Adjunct Professor, Preston Love Jr.

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Black Lives, Black Poverty and Black Votes Matter

### **2016 North Omaha Voter: “Oops I should have voted”**

When the 2016 election becomes history, after the November election for President, the vote on Nebraska’s death penalty, US congressman and many other important offices, I hope I don’t have to hear residents of my community say to me, “Oops I should have voted”.

To my beloved community I say. “The next four to eight years could be the worse we will faced in decades”. This a potential reality if we do not go to the polls. But to the credit of north Omaha I am feeling the surge of our community, recognizing that we must get out and vote this time, no excuses. In my last column we learned that our community did come out and caucus. Our caucus turnout should have been better but I was encouraged by those who did venture out. Additionally, voter registration at our caucuses was significantly up from previous years as was the very high caucus absentee vote.

Let me share with you a number great initiatives that are emerging in north Omaha to help efforts to get our community out to the polls:

#### **The Black Votes Matter Initiative:**

This effort is made up of many components, voter registration, aggressive early vote promotion, voter education meetings and forums, distribution of voter information, ride to the polls, speaking events throughout the community. Additionally, an effort to put 1000 Black Votes Matter yard signs. Today already there has been 800 signs placed, I am sure you have seen them. We are now considering raising funds to increase the plan for an additional 500 signs. Call Preston love Jr. to get a sign (402-812-3324)

#### **Activate 85:**

This effort has emerged to focus on the 85% of the voter who do not regularly. There have been two community meeting held at Salem Baptist to educate the community and answer their questions. Attendance has increased in the meetings and attended by the Douglas County Election Commission, Brian Kruse, Elected officials, Preston Love Jr, and several candidates running for office. The League of Women Voter has provided voter registration for the meetings. The next meeting will be held at Salem April 7<sup>th</sup> at 6pm. Call Jesse Statham (402-215-3773)

#### **The League of Women Voters of Greater Omaha:**

The League of Women Voters of Greater Omaha in partnership with the North Omaha Voter Project and the Urban League of Nebraska Guild will be offering a voter registration drive at North High School prior to April 22nd for any Juniors and

Seniors who will be 18 by Nov. 8th. (*Any student who will be 18 by the general election will be able to vote in the May 10th primary if they are registered.*) For this registration drive we will have a number of deputy registrars available to facilitate registrations in a common area (lunch room or similar location) for a 2 hour period. This would enable us to register as many students as possible as quickly as possible. Call Carolyn Thiele (402-670-0825)

### **IMA 10K:**

Newly elected IMA president Pastor Tony E. Sanders, Jr. said “we are proud of our clergy and the faith community as they are stepping up and demonstrating great leadership by pushing voter register and engaging our community in the voting process. Not only IMA but Baptist Clergy leadership, COGIC and other denominations are will be in support. It has been long while since a massive and coordinated voter registration effort by our faith community has been launched. The plan includes captains to be assigned in their respective churches to coordinate the individual efforts and we have asked Preston Love Jr to coordinate the overall effort for IMA. Ride to the Polls will be coordinated and vast voter education efforts will be included, For additional information call Preston” IMA 10K plans to seek a relationships with the other major voter efforts and partner with north Omaha Neighborhoods, social groups and professional organizations. Call Preston Love Jr. (402-812-3324)

Applications are available now for you to receive your Ballot at home, call to get the application, voter registration can be done on-line go to: [votedouglascounty.com](http://votedouglascounty.com). Tell ex-felons, they can vote if off paper for two years or more. If you have a desire to volunteer for any of these efforts reach out to them or call me. Let’s celebrate the victories!!

*To review previous Black Votes Matter column articles visit **Omahastar.com**. Or **prestonlovejr.com**. Column began September 11, 2015*