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2016 Election: Time for New Attitudes, New Agendas and New Actions

Preston Love Jr.

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Black Votes Matter
UNO Adjunct Professor, Preston Love Jr.
Prestonlovejr.com

Black Lives, Black Poverty and Black Votes Matter

2016 Election: Time for New Attitudes, New Agendas and New Actions.

The initial numbers from the 2016 national elections are in and the results are our new realities. Many of us along with the Black Votes Matter initiative have been calling for a strong and forceful vote to provide additional leverage to our advocacy for our community's best interest. Our voting power assists us when arguing our case to the public and private sectors. We need our community's leadership to demand respect and demand economic inclusions measures necessary for us to build an economically healthy and developing community for our youth, our businesses and our culture. Ultimately, our community's welfare needs to come from within, from our own community and leadership. Many factors are at stake for that to happen including favorable, accessible and accountable elected officials. That strategy failed us on November 8th.

North Omaha had preferences November 8th; Hillary Clinton for President, Brad Ashford for US Congress and the final defeat of the death penalty in Nebraska. The problem is that North Omaha voted at a poor rate. We did not vote large enough to make our collective voices heard in this election. Thus our preferences were defeated. For good or bad, our non-voting contributed to the victory of Trump and the defeats of Ashford and restoration of the Nebraska death penalty.

The Numbers:

2008 Douglas County Turnout: 72%
2012 Douglas County Turnout: 66%
2016 Douglas county Turnout: 64%

2008 North Omaha turnout: 62%
2012 North Omaha turnout: 55%
2016 North Omaha turnout: 47%

Nearly 16,000 votes from North Omaha
Early voting 37% (significant increase from 2012, a 7.1K advantage for Dems.
Clinton wins Douglas but loses Congressional District because of heavy vote in Sarpy

I am afraid to imagine what our North Omaha performance would have been without the efforts of many. Black Votes Matter, IMA 10K, a Nebraska Democratic Party Election Day effort and the partnership with the Warren Buffet's Drive2Vote campaign. Collectively we registered thousands, made nearly 20,000 phone calls, knocked on thousands of doors, provided early voting services to scores of voters, including over 40 rides to vote. Special congratulations to Evans Tower who provided north Omaha, its best turnout at 59%. Some of our precincts turn-out

was horrible and in the low 30% range. Going forward we will continue to push for higher North Omaha votes and the need for better awareness of the importance of the Black vote. Maybe the bitter lessons from this election will wake us up.

So North Omaha, brace for a Trump administration. The realities are yet to be seen. But there is a reality that this election may expose, once and for all. North Omaha needs to get our own act together. We don't have time to lick our wounds. Very few of our solutions will come from the federal government and poverty stricken communities are usually isolated from negative economic policy changes at the federal level, we are already poor.

Beginning immediately there needs to be, A New Attitude; Demands for accountability from our leadership and outside forces to develop with the community new avenues for inclusion of wealth into north Omaha. Not grants, gifts etc., but job development, small business development and supporting services. A New Agenda; Unify the factions within the community to develop such avenues and necessary Action Plans. Time is of essence. We must start with demanding commitments from candidates for office in the 2017 City Council and Mayor's race and the 2018 midterm elections.

*To review previous Black Votes Matter column articles visit **Omahastar.com**. Or **prestonlovejr.com**. Preston love can be reached at prestonlovejr@gmail.com*

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