

7-29-2017

## Our Future leaders

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Black Votes Matter  
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Black Lives, Black Poverty and Black Votes Matter

### **Our Future leaders**

**In January of 2015**, I wrote “As you know the North Omaha Voter Participation Project (Voter Project) has been in the forefront of North Omaha’s voter participation for now nine (9) years, founded by Preston Love Jr. Recently Preston has written two very thought provoking articles relative to the voting problems in North Omaha (see the titles below). The Voter Project along with others, saw the upcoming release of the film 'Selma' as a great opportunity to highlight the history of voting rights and the importance of voting. Since one of our Voter Project goals is to engage young people and build strong future voters and leaders, this film seemed like a perfect opportunity to begin that work through a special showing just for youth. “. We provided a free movie, popcorn, drink and a after movie panel discussion for 900 north Omaha youth.

**In June of 2015**, I released my first book, *Economic Cataracts, 2015*, A Chronicle of efforts to remove the obstacles of Urban Community Engagement and Economic Inclusion. One of those obstacles was and is lack of civic education at all levels, especially for our youth. My book has sold successfully in 26 states and 2 foreign countries. Additionally, I have carried the message of the need for civic education throughout Omaha middle and High School system. I have spoken to thousands, including 2000 students at Burke high alone.

**In September, 2015**, I founded the Black Votes Matter initiative, an effort to focus on the lack of black votes and to further the civic and community education and engagement message.

**In December of 2015**, we provided the Selma movie to UNO students and the public for the same rationale, to increase youth (and adult) knowledge and perspective of one of the key events in the civil rights movement.

**In June of 2016**, Black Votes Matter became an organization with a full and aggressive agenda

**In May of 2017**, I was asked to present my book to the Jefferson Educational Society, a prestigious think tank in Erie Pa. While there I met a number of African American leaders who introduced me to a most impressive undertaking, a “Walk in Black History Tour”. That tour has been successfully occurring for the last 25 years. While in Erie I was invited to Join the tour and possibly duplicate the tour from Omaha. I agreed. This June I joined the Tour and returned home on fire for what it could mean for our youth, our future leaders.

**July of 2018**, Planning has begun for our tour. With the objective to assist in the development of our future leaders and voters. June 18<sup>th</sup> 2018 Black Votes Matter will be taking a bus of 40 youth (High School) and chaperones from Omaha to Memphis, to Birmingham, to Tuskegee, to Montgomery, to Selma and across the Edmund Pettus Bridge and to Atlanta. A week-long walk in black history. The process will be announced in August, there will be no cost to the

participants. This tour will have a lasting impact on our youth and will pay dividends for our community.

*To review previous Black Votes Matter column articles, visit **Omahastar.com**. Or **prestonlovejr.com**. Preston love can be reached at [prestonlovejr@gmail.com](mailto:prestonlovejr@gmail.com)*

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