



April 6, 2015

PARTNERSHIPS FOR INDEPENDENT POWER

On Saturday, March 14th, 500 independents from 35 states joined leaders concerned with political reform, community action and cultural change at our 8th National Conference of Independents.

News Flash: CSPAN will broadcast Part I of their coverage of the National Conference on Monday, April 6th at 9:30 pm / ET.

Part II will air on Tuesday, April 7 at 10:40 pm / ET.



Jackie Salit

Convened and hosted by IndependentVoting.org President Jackie Salit under the theme *Partnerships for Independent Power*, the day-long conference featured cutting edge dialogues on the state of American politics, the growth of the independent movement and strategies for impact.

The conference opened with "Our America" - a musical and visual tribute to the fight for democracy, produced by Sarah Lyons with music selected by Caroline Donnola and David Belmont. [View it here.](#)

Salit set the stage for the day in her opening address stating, " *The reason the parties are so aggressive is they know that the American people are on to them. They know that...the dysfunction of the American political system is something that the American people are deeply*

concerned about, and they are trying to take steps to push back against that..." [View her address by clicking the picture above](#) .

The day was highlighted by two panel discussions, "Can Democracy Transform Social Crisis" and "Can We Make Political Reform Popular With the American People?" Both addressed the need to make profound structural changes at a moment when society is demonstrating an inability to move forward.

[View a slideshow of photos taken at the conference here.](#) And check out these first hand accounts:

- Maryland activist and conference attendee Greg Dorsey wrote [Independent-Minded Leaders Focus on Fixing American Politics at National Conference](#).
- Utah League of Independent Voters founder Randy Miller, spoke about his conference experience on the KVNU radio program, "For the People." [Listen here](#). Scroll down to Hour 1 of the 3/27/15 show.

Organizing from the Bottom Up

Cathy Stewart, a leader of the national independent movement and founder of the Politics for the People Book Club, moderated an afternoon segment called "Organizing from the Bottom Up."



Organizing from the Bottom Up

Five grassroots activists reported on the challenges of organizing from the bottom up including: **Cheryl White** from Harlem who serves as a backbone to the national polling operation out of IndependentVoting.org's New York headquarters; **Kem Todd**, Independent Voters of Oregon Board member; **Natesha Oliver** a founder of Missouri Independents Stand Together (MIST); **Mariah Hunt**, student leader from North Carolina Independents; and **Rick Robol, Esq.**, leader of Independent Ohio and of IndependentVoting.org's Election Reform Committee. [Watch the video](#).

Latest Developments

Independents Go to Appeals Court

"Lawyers seeking election reforms told an appellate panel on Tuesday that New Jersey's primary system is akin to the state forcing citizens to choose between two churches to practice religion. An absurd

notion, attorney Chad Peace acknowledged in a Philadelphia courtroom."

So wrote the *Morristown Green* in reporting on the lawsuit brought by independents and independent voter groups challenging NJ's primary system which excludes 47% of the state not enrolled in a political party.

[Read more here](#)

Victory in South Carolina: Court Upholds Open Primaries



Party." [Read more](#)



INDIE CRUSADERS: From left: Plaintiff Rebecca Feldman; attorneys Samuel Gregory, Harry Kresky and Chad Peace; and plaintiff Mark Balsam; at U.S. Third Circuit Appellate Court.

The Court of Appeals in Richmond dismissed a lawsuit brought by the Greenville Republican Party which sought to close the state's primary system.

"The Court of Appeals recognized that this issue - whether the GOP stands for open or closed primaries - is an issue that only the Republican Party as a whole can address," said IndependentVoting.org general counsel Harry Kresky. "The Court wouldn't allow a faction of the party - in this case the Greenville County Republican organization - to substitute its wishes for the position of the state

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Sunday, April 19, 7pm EST: Join Cathy Stewart – founder of **Politics for the People** Book Club – and Pulitzer Prize winning author Eric Foner, for a discussion of *Gateway to Freedom: The Hidden History of the Underground Railroad*. [Click here to register](#).



Sunday, April 26, 7pm ET Spokesperson Training Call with Director of Communications, Sarah Lyons. Advance your skills as a spokesperson for the concerns of independents. Whether it's composing a letter to the editor, speaking to an organization, or appearing on radio or TV, join a conference call and get tips and support from Sarah. [Register here](#).

Tuesday, May 19, 8pm ET: IndependentVoting.org's national conference call, hosted by Jackie Salit. Learn more about the latest developments in our movement. [Click here to register](#).



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