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June 18, 2015

**Michael Jacoby Brown**  
training & coaching

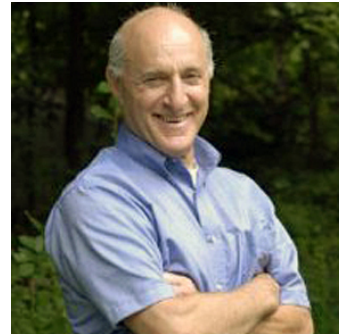
*Helping organizations achieve their goals  
through recruiting and motivating others*

**Organizer's Edge** ▶

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**From Michael Jacoby Brown**

**Walter Davis, Organizing in a Red State:  
Introduction:**



Walter Davis, a long time organizer in the South and Canada, and now the



Executive Director of the [Tennessee Health Care Coalition](#), has some lessons on organizing in a "red state." The lessons -- which include not writing off people, developing relationships with legislators, and doing research about legislators -- are relevant to *organizers everywhere*.

**Walter:**

We have a situation in Tennessee, not just a so-called red state but a deep crimson one. We organized for Medicaid expansion under the

Affordable Care Act putting pressure on the Governor. When the Governor came up with his own version, called Insure Tennessee, we came behind it to get the State Legislature to adopt it in a special legislative session. The state would receive billions of dollars to cover Tennesseans who were falling through the cracks in an unnecessary Gap. (People in Gap are those excluded from the ACA in those states that did not expand Medicaid

as funded by ACA. People in gap make too little to pay insurance premiums without subsidies and don't qualify for ACA because of income.)

Governor Haslam had just won a major victory in the recent election. His support, however, did not compel legislators, the Speaker of the House and the Lt Governor to actively come behind the bill. In fact, it appeared they did what they could to undermine him.

Organizers often repeat the organizing maxim: "No permanent friends, no permanent enemies." But do we really believe it? Or do we assume that just because someone belongs to a certain political party that we can't work with them? [See more...](#)

We want to hear from you, your reactions, ideas, what is at the edge YOUR "envelope." Just go to...

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**Michael Jacoby Brown Story**

### **Who else you will hear from.....**

We are just starting, but so far you can expect to hear what the following people are thinking:

Jessica Tang: Boston Teachers Union, AFT

George Luse of the Mass Teachers Assn,

Scott Reed with the PICO Network, ,

Cathy Howell, in Oregon and El Salvador, formerly with the AFL-CIO,

Caesar McDowell of the Interaction Institute for Social Justice,

Diana Bell of Community and Labor United,

David Hernandez of the California Education Assn,

Linda Honold, of Wisconsin Voices

Attica Scott, now an elected official in Louisville, KY, formerly with Jobs with Justice,

Quinn Rallings in Alabama with the PICO Network,

Bob Van Meter with the Local Initiative Support Corporation in Boston,

Walter Davis, in Tennessee, of the National Organizers Alliance,

Deb Askenase, of Community Organizing 2.0,

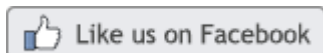
Deb Fastino, of the Coalition for Social Justice in New Bedford, MA,

Rebecca Gutman, with SEIU-1199,  
Tim Dean, of SEIU-1199,  
Claudia Horwitz, of Stone Circles in North Carolina,  
Mary Ochs, long time organizer in Los Angeles  
and others, hopefully, including YOU

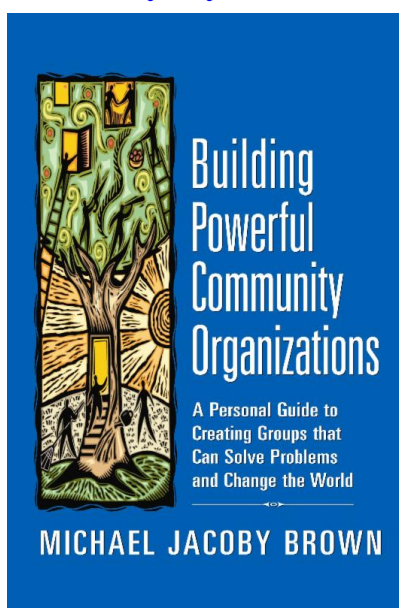
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