

Omarosa, others support, pitch Trump locally

BY TODD LUCK
THE CHRONICLE

Prominent Donald Trump supporters visited the Forsyth County Republican Party Headquarters hoping to get minorities and women to get on the "Trump Train" on Friday, August 5.



Speakers included former Apprentice contestant Omarosa Manigault, who is now African-American outreach director for the Trump Campaign.

"I just want to say one thing to Hillary Clinton and the Democrats: 'You're fired!'" she said to cheers from the standing-room-only crowd.

While there were many women in the audience, it was overwhelmingly white. It still didn't stop speakers from making their spiels to black voters. Trump spokesperson Katrina Pierson said she was honored to be a black woman supporting Trump. She said she expects black communities to support Trump because they've been failed by "liberal policies."

"We have black children trapped in inner city

schools with a failed public education system," she said. "These children are required to speak Spanish before they can graduate from high school, but cannot be taught to read and speak proper English."

Pierson has garnered a lot of attention lately after she blamed Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton "changing the rules of engagement" in Iraq for the death of Army Capt. Humayun Khan. Khan died in 2004 when George Bush was president, a mistake she later admitted. Trump has been in a war of words with Khan's parents after their appearance at the Democratic National Convention. Pierson didn't address the controversy, but said she was honored to take "daggers" for Trump as part of her job.

YouTube stars and Trump super fans from Fayetteville, Lynette "Diamond" Hardaway and Rochelle "Silk" Richardson, also expressed their pride in being black women for Trump, repeating that African-Americans need to come off the "Democratic plantation." Hardaway said that immigrants need to come in the country legally and speak English.

"When you come to this country, you come correct and you assimilate to our ways," she said. "You can't assimilate, and you stay out. That's coming

from a black woman that said that, so the white people won't get upset."

Trump's daughter-in-law Lara Trump and Eric Trump Foundation vice-president Lynne Patton also spoke, saying that Trump was a good man and emphasizing his business history, including properties he's turned around and workers he's hired.

Earl Phillip, former Trump campaign N.C. director, also toured the state with the speakers last week. He is now deputy chair for the National Diversity Coalition for Trump, which is trying to get diverse voters to support Trump. Phillip and the others visited Republican Party offices around the state. They also held events in Charlotte at the Trump National Golf Club and an African-American church that endorsed Trump.

Appealing to minorities and women is an uphill battle for the Trump campaign. An NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll last week found that Democratic Presidential Candidate Hillary Clinton has 91 percent support among registered African-American voters while Trump only had one percent. Among women, Clinton had 46 percent support while Trump had 34 percent.

Though speakers repeatedly said Trump is not bigoted or intolerant,



Reality star Omarosa Manigault signs a Trump sign for Sam Solomon, who is running for the Soil and Water board, in front of the Forsyth County Republican Party Headquarters on Friday, August 5.

the perception among many minorities is different. Trump has become well known for his controversial campaign statements about illegal immigrants from Mexico being rapists and drug dealers, and restricting Muslims from coming into the country. Before he ever ran, in 2011, he demanded that Obama show his birth certificate to prove he wasn't secretly born in Kenya. Many view the debunked "birther" conspiracy theory that Obama was born in Africa instead of his home state of Hawaii as a racist attack on the first black president. Phillip said he wants black voters to look at Trump's policies instead of his past controversies.

Reggie Reid was among the attendees and thought the event was "excellent." He's African-American but prefers to be called a "human being" instead. Reid, who volunteers with the local GOP, said he supported Senator

Ted Cruz in the primary, but was supporting Trump now. He believes Trump has vision and leadership abilities that Obama lacks and will champion Republican values.

"We need more freedom and more opportunity and less government," said Reid.

Local GOP Chair Mark

Baker said he's glad to see the Trump campaign doing outreach. He said locally Republicans are united behind their nominee. He said the party is getting many calls from people eager for Trump signs which the local GOP will be giving out.

Trump makes GOP Convention whiter, some say

BY TATYANA HOPKINS
HOWARD UNIVERSITY
NEWS SERVICE

CLEVELAND — Republican National Conventions are routinely mostly white. This year's, however, was remarkably so, particularly according to African-American Republicans, some who complained to the media and their party.

If anything, this year, the party bash was most notable for prominent black Republicans who did not show up.

Missing was a long list of Black Republican stalwarts — former Secretary of State Colin Powell, former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, South Carolina Sen. Tim Scott, Utah U.S. Rep. Mia Love, former Oklahoma U.S. Rep. J.C. Watts, former Education Secretary Rod Paige, former Secretary of Housing and Urban Affairs Alphonso Jackson and a long list of black state and municipal office holders.

Many were turned off by Trump and statements he has made about Mexicans, Muslims and others that even members of his party called racist.

One bit of news that caused the convention some embarrassment was the lack of black delegates to the convention.

Telly Lovelace, the Republican Party's national director for African-American Initiatives and Media, sent an email to reporters outlining the diversity of delegates at the party's convention.

The total number of African-American delegates was 18 out of 2,472 delegates. That figure represents less than 1 percent of total delegates.

In 2004, by comparison, the number black delegates at the convention was 7 percent, according to the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, a Washington public policy organization that produces

research on black electoral politics.

In an interview at the convention, Lovelace said that unofficially those numbers have changed, but he didn't have any new figures.

"We'll be releasing the official numbers soon," said Lovelace, who noted that he is the only African-American at the RNC headquarters.

Despite the statistics that show black voters are turned off by Trump and the absence of so many prominent black Republicans, Lovelace said the party's black engagement is better than it was in 2014.

"We need to build a relationship with the [black] community," he said, which he was hired to do.

Lovelace was previously the managing director of IR Media LLC, an African-American owned Washington-based communications firm founded by Jarvis Stewart, former chief of staff to former U.S. Rep. Harold Ford Jr.

His job is to make the Republican Party seem like a viable option to African-American voters. His hiring followed an exodus of black staffers in the party's African-American outreach where the entire black outreach staff at the RNC left their positions between October and April.

Lovelace said the well-publicized friction between the Republican Party and the Trump campaign is improving.

The RNC will continue to hire black staffers, implement a program that will allow the RNC and state Republican chapters to engage with historically black colleges and universities and will reach out to the black community using a wide range of media on issues important to them, he said.

"We're taking a step in the right direction," he said.

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