



## Donna Brazile

*Political Commentator; Vice Chair of and Chair of the Voting Rights Institute*

Donna Brazile is one of the best known, most influential African American women in modern American political life. She is Chair of the Democratic National Committee's Voting Rights Institute (VRI), an organization established in 2001 to help protect and promote the rights of all Americans to participate in the political process. Brazile is the author of *Cooking with Grease: Stirring the Pots in American Politics*, a memoir about her life in the political arena, and co-author of *What We Do Now*, published by Melville House in 2004.

Brazile, a well-versed Democratic political strategist, made history as the first African American woman to lead a major presidential campaign when she served as Campaign Manager for Gore-Lieberman 2000.

Prior to joining the Gore campaign, Brazile was Chief of Staff and Press Secretary to Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton of the District of Columbia where she helped guide the District's budget and local legislation on Capitol Hill. A veteran of numerous national and statewide campaigns, Brazile worked on several presidential campaigns for Democratic candidates, including Carter-Mondale in 1976 and 1980, Rev. Jesse Jackson's first historic bid for the presidency in 1984, Mondale-Ferraro in 1984, U.S. Representative Dick Gephardt in 1988, Dukakis-Bentsen in 1988, and Clinton-Gore in 1992 and 1996; and Gore-Lieberman 2000.

Brazile is a weekly contributor and political commentator for CNN, a political consultant for ABC News, and a contributor to NPR's Political Corner. She is also a columnist for *Roll Call* Newspaper, *Ms. Magazine*, and the author of a syndicated column.

In addition to working at VRI, Brazile serves as an adjunct professor at Georgetown University. She has served as a senior lecturer at the University of Maryland, resident fellow at Harvard University's Institute of Politics and as the Senator Wyona Lipman Chair at Rutgers University Center for American Women in Politics.

Brazile is the recipient of numerous awards and honors, including *Washingtonian Magazine's* 100 Most Powerful Women in Washington, D.C., *Essence Magazine's* 50 Most Powerful Women in America and the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation's Award for Political Achievement.

Brazile, a native of New Orleans, Louisiana earned her undergraduate degree from Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge in 1981 and was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from Louisiana State University in May 2005. Firmly grounded in her humble Louisiana roots, Brazile is a fierce advocate for the poor and minorities. She currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Louisiana Recovery Authority, the guiding agency charged with addressing the state's recovery after Hurricane Katrina.

She is currently the Founder and Managing Director of Brazile and Associates, a political consulting and grassroots advocacy firm based in the District of Columbia.

## *Speaking Topics*

The War on Abortion: Current Battles of the Reproductive Rights Movement

Truth to Power: A Youth Guide to Civic Engagement What Can Congress Do For You

Cultural Wars: Who's Winning the Public Policy Debate

The Politics of Climate Change

Presidential Politics: What Happened to "We the People?"

Katrina Two Years Later; Has America Forgotten?

The Shifting American Political Landscape