

NETFLIX Reveals It Is The Political Campaign Financier Behind Obama, Hillary And The DNC


By [Isabel Vincent](#)

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Barack Obama and Michelle Obama

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Barack and Michelle Obama are raking in the cash, thanks to the influence of a former campaign supporter.

The couple last week **signed a creative production deal with Netflix** that one entertainment-industry source said could be valued at more than \$50 million.

Obamas ink production deal with Netflix

Ted Sarandos, a major campaign contributor for Obama and the streaming giant's creative-content chief who oversees an \$8 billion budget, helped to broker the deal, the source told The Post.

Sarandos and his wife, Nicole Avant, bundled nearly \$600,000 in contributions to Obama from their friends and associates during the 2012 presidential campaign.

The couple is friends with the Obamas, and Avant served as the US ambassador to the Bahamas from 2009 to 2011, during the former president's first term.

Her father, Clarence, a music exec, bundled a total of nearly \$450,000 for Obama's presidential campaigns.

The multiyear Netflix agreement, in the works since at least March, calls on the Obamas "to produce a diverse mix of content, including the potential for scripted series, unscripted series, docuseries, documentaries and features," which will be broadcast in 190 countries, according to a statement from the streaming service, which has 125 million subscribers around the globe.

The Obamas plan to work on stories that "promote greater empathy and understanding between peoples and help them share their stories with the entire world."

Netflix received hundreds of résumés and story ideas after announcing the partnership, the source said.

Netflix says the couple formed Higher Ground Productions LLC to broker the deal. A firm with that name was incorporated in Delaware in April, public records show.

The contract comes a year after the Obamas inked a joint book deal with Penguin Random House valued in excess of \$65 million. The first of the deal's planned books, Michelle Obama's memoir, "**Becoming**," is due out in November.

Since leaving office, Barack Obama has addressed groups across the country, speaking about grassroots organizing and the problems of the poor.

Ironically, the talks come at a steep price. After a speech at a health-care conference sponsored by Wall Street firm Cantor Fitzgerald in September, Obama reportedly took home \$400,000.

In addition to raking in millions, the former first couple has been involved in fund-raising for the Obama Foundation, which is developing a \$500 million presidential center and library in Chicago.

The foundation took in more than \$13 million in 2016, an exponential increase from just under \$2 million the previous year, federal filings show.

Ted Sarandos
Getty Images

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