

Expectations run high with future Obama presidency

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Staff Reporter

A new chapter in U.S. history was written when Democrat Barack Obama was elected the 44th president, as well as the nation's first African-American president. A race that began in early 2007 with almost 20 candidates ended with Obama garnering 53% of the popular vote and Republican candidate John McCain earning 46% of the popular vote. In addition, Obama earned 364 electoral votes, compared to McCain's 163. A candidate requires at least 270 votes in order to seize the nomination.

In a race that favored the Democrats, Obama managed to snatch several states that were considered "red" in the 2004 election, including Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Indiana, Nevada, North Carolina, Ohio, Virginia and Wyoming. Obama, with his vice-presidential elect Joseph Biden, ran a campaign under the message "Change we can believe in," and managed to draw an enormous amount of diverse voters. Regardless of who voted for whom, this election boasted the largest

voter turnout for the past 40 years, with 64.1% of the population participating. This was also the election that had the second highest youth voter turnout in history, between 49.3 and 54.5 percent.

"Four years ago when George Bush was reelected, it felt like a vote out of fear. Many people interviewed after the election said they voted out of fear of terrorism. This election felt so different. It felt like a vote of hope. Many people interviewed after this election said they voted with hope that a president with a new perspective and a new demeanor might take us in a new, positive direction," Todd Jones, social studies teacher, said.

Obama is already preparing for the months ahead. In addition to making arrangements to move into the White House, Obama is also selecting his administration. On Nov. 6, he chose former Clinton senior adviser Rahm Emanuel as White House Chief of Staff. On Dec. 1, he unveiled his national security team, which includes such choices as former rival Senator Hillary Clinton as Secretary of State

and retaining Robert Gates as Secretary of Defense.

years of his presidency, repairing the damaged

meeting with McCain to discuss working together during his administration.

"I'm sure he will be better than Bush, but it's a wait-and-see kind of thing," Jake Weston, senior, said.

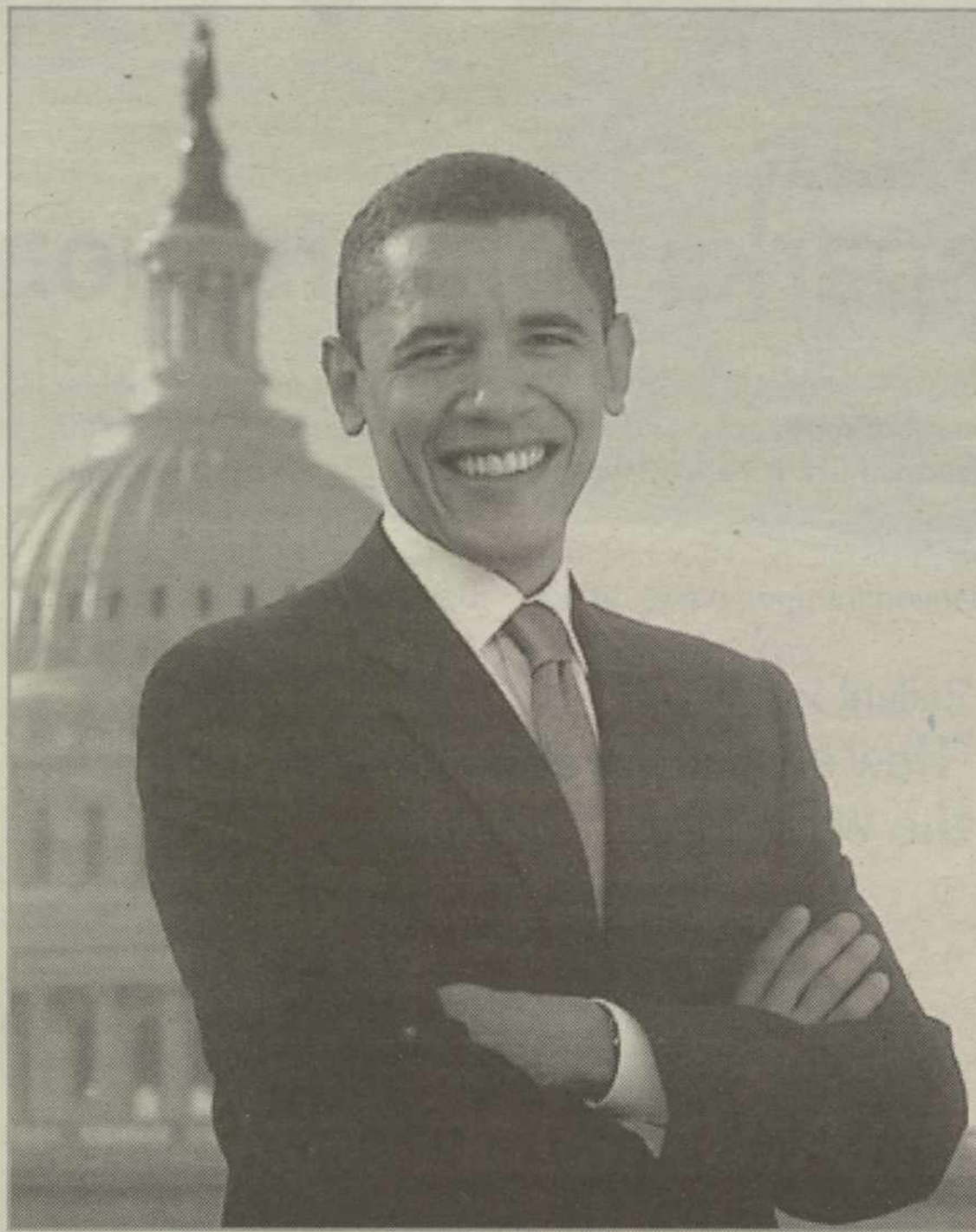
However, some are not too happy about Obama's recent victory.

"I think Obama was too overplayed. In school, he became a fad, like wearing leggings under skirts. 'Vote for Obama!' 'Get a Che Guavara styled T-shirt!' Frankly, it's sickening to see," Katherine Dudley, junior, said.

There are some downsides to Obama's new life. Not even in office yet, Obama holds the record for receiving the most death threats for a president elect, mostly due to individuals who are not accepting of his policies or his race. He will also have to give up sending messages on his BlackBerry, due to security issues.

Obama will enter office on Jan. 20. Tickets to the Inauguration are difficult to secure but some WLHS staff and students plan to watch the historic swearing in ceremony.

"Right now we face some of the biggest economic and international security challenges we've faced in some time. I sense that many voters hope that President Obama will steer us through it effectively," Jones said.



Barack Obama, president-elect, will be sworn into the White House on Jan. 20. Obama was elected in November and will become America's first African-American president.

Photo courtesy of PublicRoutes.com

Obama's administration hopes to differ drastically from what the country has experienced during the past eight years. Several of his main agendas include withdrawing troops from Iraq within the first two

economy, formulating a long-term economic agenda, and rekindling the spirit of volunteering in the United States, specifically that of young people. Obama has included those who disagree with him, such as his recent

Scholarship opportunities change with economic fall

Scholarships

continued from page 2

A Corvallis couple, Peter and Rosalie Johnson, started a scholarship fund in 1998, and over the years committed more than \$700,000 to benefit more than 100 students in the School of Chemical, Biological, and Environmental Engineering at OSU. Their latest pledge of \$2.4 million, donated on Oct. 19, will provide support for 16 students annually.

The OSU fundraising campaign has set a goal of \$625 million and has already raised \$450 million in an effort to offer more financial aid. But it isn't the only college trying to offer more money to students.

Columbia University will be extending the amount of financial aid awarded to lower and middle income students. Undergraduates from families with incomes as high as \$60,000 a year won't have to pay for tuition, room and board beginning next fall. It will be further expanding the aid to families earning up to \$100,000.

Since early December, several elite universities and colleges have either expanded aid for middle and upper income students or replaced loans with grants for most students.

In some cases attending a private college could cost less than a public university. According to the *New York Times*, presidents of many expensive private colleges are wondering how much more tuition pressure families can bear.

For smaller, more affordable classes, more students than ever are considering attending community college. There are 17 community colleges in Oregon. According to the Clackamas Community College website, the 35,008 attended students attended last year with 15,338 part-time students and 1,592 full-time students.

At Portland Community College the tuition is \$70 per credit with some additional fees. According to the PCC website, 86,164 students attended with 23,011 who were full time students in 2006-2007. Both PCC and CCC offer various scholarships as well as financial aid and grants.

"There is always worry over what will happen to your money when you enter college, like how are you going to pay for a car, books, classes, tuition, room and board. One of the main things that could help would be a scholarship but for a lot of students, they are all by themselves," Nathaniel Fast, junior, said.

SAT, ACT provide students with options

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In addition to earning good grades and rounding out their resume with extra curricular activities, students have other things to deal with when preparing for college, such as standardized testing. These tests were introduced in the United States in the 20th Century and have grown in popularity, becoming a requirement for most colleges and universities. Two of the most well known tests are the SAT Reasoning Test and the ACT.

The SAT is an aptitude test composed of three sections. One of these is a 70 minute critical reading section with questions based on sentence completion and passage-based reading. Another section asks math questions, giving test takers 70 minutes to answer multiple choice and student-produced response questions. The newest section of the test is dedicated to writing. Test takers have 60 minutes to answer multiple choice questions regarding grammar and write a short essay.

"Taking a SAT prep class was helpful," Alyssa Musalo, senior, said. She also recommends consulting books to help prepare for

the test. Workshops, practice tests and tutors are some of the other options available.

With the addition of the writing section, the total points available for the SAT is 2,400, though some schools don't base admission decisions on writing scores at this time. Scores can typically be viewed online less than three weeks after the test is taken.

In addition to the Reasoning Test, the SAT has optional subject tests in English, history, math, science and reading. While many colleges don't require these tests, admissions officers will often consider them if submitted. There are schools that request their applicants take two of these tests.

"Some of your select schools will require you to do Math Level Two and your choice," Tom Swearingen, guidance counselor, said. Other schools let applicants choose which two to take. He said that students interested in studying engineering in college would be wise to take the Physics subject test.

The ACT is an achievement test composed of four sections and an optional fifth section. One section is English, and test

takers are given 45 minutes to answer 75 questions.

Based on her PSAT experience, Mackenzie Laughlin, sophomore, isn't too worried about time limits.

"I got most of it done," she said. Her only concern is the math section. On the ACT, test takers are allowed an hour to answer 60 math questions. There are 40 questions in the 35-minute science section, and 40 in the 35-minute reading section as well. The optional section is the writing section, which adds 30 minutes to the time of the test. The ACT is scored differently than the SAT, with a maximum score of 36.

Deciding which test to take is important. While both are accepted at most colleges, certain areas of the country have preferences.

"In the Midwest, the South, and the mountain states, they prefer the ACT. The West coast and East coast like the SAT," Swearingen said.

This doesn't mean that a school in the South wouldn't accept an applicant because they took the SAT, though. Swearingen stresses that it is important to know the preference of the schools an applicant is interested in attending, or there is always an option of taking both.