

New congress: Minorities gain but still overwhelmingly white

By Matthew Daly
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Just like college freshmen, newly elected members of the House of Representatives descended on Washington for orientation, a class photo, and a lottery to determine their offices for the next two years.

The new congress includes the first Latina senator, three house members moving across the capitol to the senate, and a few former lawmakers who seized their old jobs back.

While the 115th Congress will include a record number of minority women, congress will remain overwhelmingly white, male, and middle-aged.

At the first day of orientation, Republicans expressed excitement about winning the White House while Democrats struck a conciliatory tone.

Vicente Gonzalez, a Democrat who will represent a South Texas district, said freshmen members of his party will start the new session in January “having a clear view of the reality we’re dealing with and trying to reach across the aisle and finding common ground.”

A look at the new congress:

Minority women

In the senate, Democrats Catherine Cortez Masto of Nevada, Kamala Harris of California, and Tammy Duckworth of Illinois are among a record 21 women, up from 20, out of 100 senators.

Cortez Masto will be the first Latina senator, while Harris and Duckworth will join Hawai'i Democratic senator Mazie Hirono to form the senate's largest ever Asian-American contingent.

Harris, the daughter of immigrants from India and Jamaica, is just the second black woman elected to the senate and the first with South Asian roots.

The house will welcome its first Vietnamese-American and Indian-American women: Democrats Stephanie Murphy of Florida and Pramila Jayapal of Washington state.

Overall, the number of minority women in congress will increase to 33 in the house from 27 and stand at four in the



Photo/Bill Clark/CQ Roll Call, via AP Images



AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite



AP Photo/Susan Walsh

senate.

New senators

Six new senators join the ranks — a seventh will be chosen next month in Louisiana's runoff.

Harris, 52, a former prosecutor, currently serves as California's attorney general.

Duckworth, a two-term house member, is a veteran of the Iraq War, where as an Army pilot, she lost both legs when her helicopter was hit by a grenade. Duckworth, 48, was born in Thailand, to an American father and Thai-Chinese mother.

A former two-term Nevada attorney general, Cortez Masto, 52, also has worked as a prosecutor and chief of staff to former Nevada governor Bob Miller. Her father is of Mexican descent and her mother is of Italian descent.

Republican representative Todd Young of Indiana is a three-term congressman and former Capitol Hill aide. Democratic representative Chris Van Hollen of Maryland will replace Barbara Mikulski, who is retiring after 30 years in the senate. A key lieutenant to House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi, Van Hollen, 57, has focused on budget issues and foreign policy.

New Hampshire's Maggie Hassan, a two-term governor, defeated freshman Republican senator Kelly Ayotte in the nation's closest senate race.

Jackie Chan reflects on 50-year career and honorary Oscar

By Sandy Cohen
AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES — As an action star, Jackie Chan never expected to receive an Oscar.

So he considers receiving an honorary Academy Award from the film academy's Board of Governors his proudest professional achievement.

Chan accepted his Oscar statuette at the eighth annual Governors Awards. Film editor Anne Coates, casting director Lynn Stalmaster, and documentarian Frederick Wiseman also received honorary Academy Awards, which recognize lifetime achievement and contributions to the film industry.

“I never imagined that I'd receive such an award,” Chan said. “I still remember my very first proudest moment was when I received an award for stunt choreography. At that time, I didn't know much about directing, I just knew how to do action and fighting sequences and stunts. Receiving this honorary award has raised my feelings to another level.”

The 62-year-old writer, director, producer, and actor reflected on his career in an e-mail interview with The Associated Press from his home base in Hong Kong. He accepted his award in person in Los Angeles.

AP: What was your most challenging film to make and why?

Chan: *Rumble in the Bronx* had a lot of



LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD. Honoree Jackie Chan poses onstage at the 2016 Governors Awards at the Dolby Ballroom on November 12, 2016, in Los Angeles. As an action star, Chan never expected to receive an Oscar, so he considers receiving an honorary Academy Award from the film academy's Board of Governors his proudest professional achievement. (Photo by Chris Pizzello/Invision/AP)

action choreography, fighting sequences, and dangerous stunts. In *Operation Condor I* filmed in extreme temperatures of over 40 degrees Celsius in the desert. I had a near death accident while doing a stunt in *Armor of God*. In *Rush Hour*, I found the English dialogue most challenging.

AP: How does making movies in Hong Kong differ from Hollywood's approach to film?

Chan: I find Hollywood's approach to

Continued on page 16

CONGRESSWOMEN OF COLOR. While the 115th Congress will include a record number of minority women, congress remains overwhelmingly white, male, and middle-aged. In the senate, Democrats Kamala Harris of California (right), Tammy Duckworth (middle) of Illinois, and Catherine Cortez Masto of Nevada (not pictured) are among a record 21 women, up from 20, out of 100 senators. Harris and Duckworth join Hawai'i Democratic senator Mazie Hirono (left) to form the senate's largest ever Asian-American contingent.

Women ascend in senate, decline in house

A total of 104 women will serve in the next congress, the same as in the current congress and 19.4 percent of the total number of lawmakers. Twenty-one women will serve in the senate while 83 women will serve in the house, a drop of one from the current 84.

In addition to Hillary Clinton's defeat in the presidential race, women saw setbacks in congress. Maryland's 10-member congressional delegation reverted to all-male, while Pennsylvania voters rejected Democrat Katie McGinty's bid to become the first woman in the state elected to the senate.

Democrat Lisa Blunt Rochester will be Delaware's first woman and first African American in congress. Only Mississippi and Vermont have never sent a woman to either chamber of congress.

African Americans gain

A record 48 African Americans will serve in congress, including 46 in the house, an overall increase of two. Eighteen black women serve in congress, including Republican representative Mia Love of

Utah. Love is one of three black Republicans, along with South Carolina senator Tim Scott and Texas representative Will Hurd.

Hispanics, Asian Americans gain

A record 39 Hispanics will serve in congress, including 35 in the house. Seven Hispanic freshmen were elected to the house, all Democrats. Ruben Kihuen will be the first Latino to represent Nevada in the house, while New York's Adriano Espaillat will be the first Dominican American.

Fifteen Asian Americans will serve in congress, including 12 in the house. That's up from 10 in the current congress.

Welcome back

Three former house Democrats won their old seats back: Colleen Hanabusa of Hawai'i, Brad Schneider of Illinois, and Carol Shea-Porter of New Hampshire.

Attending her first day of orientation, Hanabusa said her experience will help her as Democrats try to wield influence in the minority.

“Like everything else, it's whether we're going to be able to maintain relationships more than anything,” she said.

FBI: Hate crimes against Muslims up by 67 percent in 2015

By Christina A. Cassidy
The Associated Press

ATLANTA — Reported hate crimes against Muslims rose in 2015 to their highest number since the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, according to Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) statistics.

Overall, the total number of hate crimes against all groups reported by law enforcement agencies to the FBI increased from 5,479 in 2014 to 5,850 last year. That remains far lower than the numbers seen in the early 2000s, but the FBI release comes amid numerous reports of attacks nationwide based on race and religion following the presidential election.

The most recent reporting covers calendar year 2015, which included the terror attacks in Paris and San Bernardino, California, as well as Republican Donald Trump's call for a ban on all Muslims entering the U.S. All of those, however, did not occur until the final two months of the year.

Critics say Trump's pledge has contributed to anti-Muslim sentiment.

“We've seen how words from public figures like Donald Trump translate into violence,” said Mark Potok with the Southern Poverty Law Center, which tracks hate groups in the U.S.

Last year, there were 257 reported incidents of anti-Muslim bias compared to 154 the year before, an increase of 67 percent. The number of reported hate

crimes against Muslims peaked at 481 in 2001.

Ibrahim Hooper, spokesman for the Council on American-Islamic Relations, said he was not surprised to see the large increase in 2015 and said he expects the trend to continue.

“We saw a spike in anti-Muslim incidents nationwide beginning toward the end of 2015. That spike has continued until today and even accelerated after the election of President-elect Trump,” Hooper said.

There have been reports of racist and anti-religious incidents around the country since the November 8 election.

Two students at a vocational school in York County, Pennsylvania, held a Donald Trump sign in a hallway as someone shouted “white power,” an incident captured on video and widely shared on Facebook.

In Silver Spring, Maryland, a banner advertising a Spanish-language service at an Episcopal church was slashed and the words “Trump nation. Whites only.” were written on the back.

Authorities on two California State University campuses, in San Diego and San Jose, were investigating reports that two women wearing headscarves were attacked. At San Diego State University, authorities said a Muslim woman had her car keys and vehicle stolen by two men who targeted her while she wore a *hijab* and made comments about Donald Trump's

Continued on page 11