

## City of Syracuse Rec Center Youth Choose Obama in Mock Election

City youth presaged the nation on Monday afternoon, when they selected, by an overwhelming margin, Barack Obama to be the next President of the United States. The crowd on hand at “Election Headquarters” erupted into cheers when Recreation Supervisor Kathleen O’Neil announced that, with 297 total votes (83%), Obama had easily defeated John McCain (13%) to claim the Presidency. McChesney Center’s Mark Bardenett placed a distant 3<sup>rd</sup> with 7 votes (2%).

Eight community centers operated by the Department of Parks and Recreation staged the city-wide mock election on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, during after school programs at each site. All participants were invited to cast one vote, by secret ballot, for President. The election itself was preceded by several weeks of educational activities designed to inform young people about the candidates and the voting process. Parks staff worked with young people to research information on each candidate and create election-themed bulletin boards. Some even staged mock debates, held “mock voter registration drives”, and built elaborate voting booths. The efforts lead to a highly anticipated “election day” where more than 350 young people cast votes!

“Polls” closed at 5pm sharp on Monday, after which all ballot boxes were collected and delivered to the Wilson Park Community Center (Election HQ). Parks staff conducted the final vote tally, while the young people in attendance enjoyed food and games. By 6pm, with 100% of “precincts” (rec centers) reporting, the Parks Department could confidently project that Barack Obama would be the next President of the United States... and that city youth would play a role in such an historic event.

### City Parks Mock Election Results

<u>Center</u>	<u>Obama</u>	<u>McCain</u>	<u>Other</u>
Schiller Park	55%	45%	
Ed Smith	90%	9%	1%
Cannon Street	97%	3%	
Westmoreland	97%	3%	
Northeast C.C.	86%	13%	1%
McChesney	75%	11%	13%
Wilson Park	96%	4%	
Kirk Park	95%	5%	

### Overall

Barack Obama	83%
John McCain	13%
Mark Bardenett	2%
Ralph Nader	1%
Other	1%