

AMERICA VOTES FOR CHANGE

56 million people vote to elect the first black president in the history of the US

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Sen. Barack Obama, soon to be the 44th president of the United States, delivered a victory speech just before midnight in his home state of Illinois, Tuesday, Nov. 4.

"If there is anyone out there who still doubts that America is a place where all things are possible; who still wonders if the dream of our founders is alive in our time; who still questions the power of our democracy," Obama said to approximately 125,000 supporters from Grant Park in Chicago. "Tonight is your answer."

Obama pulled ahead of Sen. John McCain in all but one bellwether state, North Dakota.

"It's the answer spoken by young and old, rich and poor, Democrat and Republican, black, white, Latino, Asian, Native American, gay, straight, disabled and not disabled," Obama said. "Americans who sent a message to the world that we have never been a collection of red states and blue states: We are, and always will be, the United States of America."

In a landslide victory, Obama earned 338 electoral votes to McCain's 156 as of press time; Obama earned 54,087,116 votes to McCain's 49,650,156 as of 1:15 a.m.

In Ohio, a battleground state, Obama won 50 percent of the popular vote; McCain won 49 percent.

"It's been a long time coming, but tonight, because of what we did on this day, in this election, at this defining moment, change has come to America," Obama said.

Though it was originally believed that McCain had won Hamilton County, Obama eked out a victory, with 52 percent of the county's popular vote to McCain's 47 percent.

Obama's victory speech addressed the future of Obama's presidency and the hardships it will face.

"The road ahead will be long," Obama said. "Our climb will be steep. We may not get there in one year or even one term, but America – I have never been more hopeful than I am tonight that we will get there. I promise you – we as a people will get there."

About an hour earlier, McCain supporters were still chanting "John McCain, John McCain," as he gave his concession speech outside the Arizona Biltmore Hotel in Phoenix in front of a crowd of supporters, shortly after most major media outlets called the election in Obama's favor.

"In a contest as long and difficult as this campaign has been, this success alone commands my respect for [Obama's] ability and perseverance," McCain said. "But he managed to do so by inspiring the hopes of so many millions of Americans who had once wrongly believed that they had little stake or little influence in the election of an American president is something I deeply admire and commend him for achieving."

Much of McCain's speech focused on the overcoming of the discrimination and bigotry that he said were once roadblocks, and the pride the black community should have in Obama's victory.

"It's natural tonight to feel some disappointment," McCain said, wrapping up his speech. "Though we fell short, the failure is mine, not yours."