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Chicago's LGBT community solidly behind Obama

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It comes as to no surprise that on Election Day, Chicago neighborhoods with high numbers of LGBT residents not only cast their ballots for President-elect Barack Obama, but they also voted for a number of politicians who are allies of the local gay and lesbian community.

Some of the highest voter turnouts, according to numbers from the Chicago Board of Election Commissioners' Web site, were in wards with high numbers of LGBT residents. The highest voter turnout was in the 42nd ward, with 36,224 votes cast. Other LGBT-heavy areas, such as the 44th and 47th wards, also had a high voter turnout, with roughly 30,000 people casting their ballots in each ward.

Not surprisingly, gay-heavy wards tended to vote for LGBT allies on Election Day. Among those allies was U.S. Rep. Jan Schakowsky, who received the majority of the vote in her district, which includes North Side wards she represents, such as the 44th, 46th, 48th and 49th. Schakowsky, who has proven to be a strong LGBT ally over the years, easily defeated opponents Michael Benjamin Younan and Morris Shanfield.

Newcomer Heather Steans, who won long-time LGBT ally and former state senator Carol Ronen's open seat in the North Side's 7th District, received a large amount of support in wards with high numbers of LGBT constituents. Steans, who had the backing of Democratic Party heavyweights such as Schakowsky and Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan, defeated Green Party candidate Tom Durkin by a landslide. She received an average of about 80 percent of the vote in gay-heavy wards such as the 46th and 48th.

Other LGBT allies fared quite well on the North Side, such as State Sen. John Cullerton (6th District) and State Rep. Sara Feigenholtz (12th District) . Both had Green Party opponents, but received a bulk of the vote. In large LGBT areas such as the 46th ward, which encompasses neighborhoods such as Uptown, Feigenholtz received roughly 86 percent of the vote.

State Rep. Harry Osterman, who is a vocal ally, also received on average 85 percent of the vote in wards with large LGBT populations, such as the 48th and 49th wards. Osterman ran against Green candidate John Beacham.

Cook County State's Attorney-elect Anita Alvarez made history on Election Night by becoming the first Hispanic woman in Cook County to win such a high office. Alvarez, who campaigned hard in the LGBT community, received a large amount of support in areas populated by the community. Alvarez, who ran against anti-gay Republican candidate Tony Peraica and Green Party candidate Tom O'Brien, received about 69 percent of the vote in the 44th ward, roughly 75 percent in the 46th and three-quarters of the vote in the 48th ward. In the 49th ward, home to the diverse Rogers Park neighborhood, which has a growing LGBT population, Alvarez took home 80 percent of the vote.

It was not surprising that an overwhelming majority of Chicagoans cast their ballot for President-elect Barack Obama. Obama took the majority of every single ward in Chicago, including gay-heavy areas such as the 44th ward (with nearly 80 percent of the vote) , the 46th and 48th wards (roughly 84 percent) and the 49th ward (almost 89 percent) . Obama received the lowest percentage of Chicago votes on the far Northwest Side in the 41st Ward, which is home to the city's only Republican alderman. There, Obama received only 55 percent of the vote.