UA reaction mixed as students see final results

By Natasha Bhuyan
Arizona Daily Wildcat
Wednesday, February 4, 2004
Print this

While more than 220,000 Arizona Democrats went to the polls yesterday to vote for presidential candidates, political activity on campus remained low.

Early yesterday morning, a John Edwards for President table was out on the Mall, but once the rain started falling, all signs of a presidential primary election disappeared.

"I didn't even know today was election day," said Jeff Riggs, a philosophy sophomore.

Lindsay Love, a pre-business freshman, said she couldn't vote, as she is registered in Maricopa County and forgot to request a mail-in ballot.

But last night, a few of the more politically dedicated students gathered in a corner of Old Chicago, 2960 N. Campbell Ave., to watch the elections results come in.

Chris Marino, a political science senior and vice president of Pi Sigma Alpha political science honorary, was one of 15 students from the honorary and the Undergraduate Political Science Association who gathered last night.

"We're a nonpartisan group, so we're just here to watch politics at its best," Marino said.

Although members of PSA and UPSA each supported their own political candidates, they didn't hesitate to give their opinion.

"I'm excited about Kerry's win, since he has the best chance at beating Bush," said Martin Gurch, a political science junior and president of UPSA. "Bush is fiscally irresponsible."
Brad Hibsman, a political science senior and avid Bush supporter, joked, "Well, I'm a Bush supporter who would vote for Kucinich."

Jacquelyn Marum, a journalism senior who simply went to watch, said she wasn't fully invested in one candidate.

"The purpose is to elect the person who will be the strongest against Bush," she said. "I think Kerry is good to get Bush out of office."

Although there was much joking and discussion as the night progressed, students spent most of their time analyzing events and speculating about the future.

Anne Simmons, a political science junior and Dean supporter, said Kerry's win in Arizona didn't surprise her, but she still holds out hope that Dean will prevail in states such as California and New York.

When students learned that Joe Lieberman would withdraw from the presidential race, they were not surprised.

"Honestly, we were actually expecting this a couple of weeks ago," said Aimee Desilet, a political science junior.

Marie Osborn, a psychology senior and member of Wildcats for Joe, said she was disappointed by Lieberman's withdrawal, but working with his campaign was a fulfilling experience.

"It got me involved in politics," she said. "The stuff I learned will last me my lifetime."

Christina Lanier, a senior majoring in linguistics and classics, said it is important that students vote and let their voices be heard.

"You can't complain about a system you don't participate in," she said.

Alicia Cybulski, president of the UA Young Democrats, also had an active role on campus encouraging students to get involved and vote. Although there was disinterest among students, Cybulski believes UAYD had a significant impact on campus.

"Even if we only affected a handful of new voters, those students are going to be voters for life," she said.

Nikki Naff, a volunteer for Dennis Kucinich's campaign, devoted hours to spreading Kucinich's message and is optimistic about the future.

"We had over 800 supporters in Tucson, which is wonderful," she said. "As July approaches, I believe Kucinich's popularity will increase because more lives will be lost in Iraq, and Americans need a leader who promotes a messages of peace."

Write a Letter to the Editor