

The 2017 aurora mayoral race



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This essay is about the Illinois Mayoral Race 2017, particularly the race on Aurora. This was a hotly contested race among the candidates in the different counties and cities in the country. Most candidates were running independent, but the two political parties – Democrats and Republican – were also represented. The specific office that I am studying is the post of the mayor in Aurora, Illinois. The term of the mayor will start on May 01, 2017 and will end on May 01, 2021. The mayoral race is a contest between candidates of distinct ethnic origins – African American, Filipino, and Hispanic. This is considered the first in Aurora history (Crosby).

Richard Irvin and Rick Guzman won in the primary and were expected to face each other in April 4 election. During the primary, Irvin was the frontrunner with 32.3 percent of the vote, whereas Guzman got 28.8 percent. The primary was contested by nine candidates, after its long-time mayor Tom Weisner had stepped down (Lourgos). In the April 4 election, Irvin was again the frontrunner, followed by Guzman. The other candidates had lagged behind but had their programs of government and proposals to present to the people.

Officially, there were 4 candidates for the Aurora mayoral race in the April 4 election. The other two, aside from Guzman and Irvin, were Chapa LaVia and Alderman Mike Saville. Chapa LaVia was supported by Illinois Speaker Michael Madigan, whereas Alderman Saville had 32 years in public service to his credit. Irvin had his third running for the post, which showed his great determination to become mayor. Irvin has combat experience, having spent some time in Iraq as a member of the Army, and his supporters considered him a visionary (Lord). Guzman represented the Democrats, whereas Irvin

was non-partisan, as per results of the primary. The other two candidates were also running as independent, but they had their own program of action and considerable number of supporters as well.

At first, there was no clear frontrunner – each candidate was trying to gain the sympathy and support of the people with their own programs of government, suggestions and proposals, and policies that have been proven effective in the past that might work in the coming years. Each man or woman can be a clear choice by Aurora voters, but who would know unless April 4 comes and the judgment of the people will be laid open. Some would say, it's either Irvin or Guzman, but anybody can change the turn of tide of the election.

Issues during the campaign ranged from political to personal. This includes the candidates' relationship with President Trump, pensions, jobs and ordinary and traditional issues in politics. In an election, like that of Illinois, you get all sorts of issues and attacks thrown by the candidates. Sometimes, they get “dirty” but others would want it clean. The Illinois mayoral election was a healthy sign of democracy in practice. The issues focused on community-oriented policing, business policies, and public-private partnership. Guzman would prefer collaboration for the good of Aurora. Irvin, who was running for the third time, focused his election campaign on the city's Economic Development Commission and the importance of forming an economic plan for each ward. In the context of policing, he suggested to hire 10 or 11 more to add to the current strength of Aurora police department.

Guzman has never run for any position in the past, but he was an assistant chief of staff of the former Mayor Tom Weisner. He has vast experience on administrative matters, and he is believed to carry on the legacy of Mayor Weisner. During the early period of the campaign, it was reported that there was a lot at stake and the frontrunner could not yet be determined. Then, as time was running out it was becoming clearer who would get the post of the mayor. It was Guzman or Irvin, but the ball is still rolling. Guzman's campaign slogan was "Aurora First" which was to stimulate the hiring of local contractors and would end the use of "joint purchasing contracts" in preference for local businesses (Lord). Guzman also proposed a policy on "community-oriented policing" and said that there should be more police officers on the street to ensure safety of the citizens (Lourgos).

Irvin and Guzman had almost similar programs about community policing. Both espoused the belief that law enforcement should be accompanied with community support. This means that the community should be consulted on matters related to policing, or there should be close collaboration between the two in order to ensure safety of the community and clear enforcement of laws. The primary aim is the welfare of the people.

The elections were heavily covered by local and national media, such as TV, radio, newspapers, and the internet. There were some complaints that some reporters and journalists covering the campaign were favoring some candidates, which stemmed from the media's more focus on a particular candidate while not reporting about the other candidate. This report also reflected on other cities and media's coverage of the campaign.

Complaints against inappropriate or biased reporting by the media during

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elections are not uncommon. Reporters and journalists are voters and are human – they will side with whoever they think should win in the election. Nevertheless, most reporters and journalists are not like that as they take aside vested interests in the name of journalism values they have vowed to uphold.

As the April 4 election was gearing up, campaign slogans that included attacks and a little gimmickry were heating up for the real race. Irvin was rumored to win, but Guzman would not concede – there's a lot at stake and the people of Aurora were divided, albeit with many favoring this and that candidate. Finally, they got Irvin (or Irvin got them), which means Alderman Irvin won the April 4 election and is now the mayor of Aurora, Illinois's second largest city.

Irvin is the city's first black mayor, an Army veteran, and a member of the bar, having served as prosecutor. He was also a member of the City Council in 2007. Irvin's program is for close collaboration and relationship among the different ethnic groups in the city. He noted the different ethnic groups that need to be united – white, black, Latino, Asian. As the elected mayor, he says he will represent each one of them and he has to take no side, rather he would work for a one and responsible race for the people of Aurora.

On my part, I think I would be one of the hundreds of volunteers in the Illinois's mayoral race. But I focused on the elections in Aurora. I am quite acquainted with the place and some of the people and candidates there, and my aim was to help in the conduct of fair and honest election.

Poll workers undergo training before the election. I really loved this kind of activity. Some poll workers are paid, but I worked as a volunteer. As an IT literate myself, it was not difficult to be a part of the election activity, in which I instructed voters what to do. Also, I had to get acquainted with the electronic voting equipment and the paper work. As a volunteer, I watched people vote and ensure that every voter would get a chance to vote, and that votes for every candidate would be counted. Being an election volunteer is an exciting job for me; in fact, I don't consider it a job, simply because I enjoy assisting voters and everyone asking for help and those who would be disenfranchised.

My role was to make the results of the election untainted, meaning it should be the result of a clean and honest election. Since it is now past tense as Mayor Irvin came out the winner and has been officially declared, I would be one of the official witnesses to his election if there is any protest regarding the conduct of the election.

As the results of the election were coming in and it was becoming clearer that Mayor Irvin was leading, I helped guard the official ballots by ensuring that the official results would not be tampered. Nevertheless, the election was conducted electronically and technology was used to provide clean results. The official results were out and all candidates and stakeholders could attest the fact that Irvin truly won in the election. If honest and poll workers were not there to help in the count, there would not have been an official victory for Mayor Irvin. All successful candidates should thank poll workers and volunteers.

Holding of elections shows we are in a democratic country. The election campaign represents how we as voters are well-informed and mature enough to choose whom we are going to support and will eventually vote during the election. The election is known as the main support, or the backbone, of our democracy and without an election, there is no democracy. The recent mayoral race is one of the most democratic elections in the history of Illinois. It has always been a lively show of democratic ideals for the state of Illinois and has always been that way in its history. Aurora sees the dawn of a new collaboration between the different ethnic groups present in the city. Mayor Irvin wants to represent each and every minority group as he has always dreamed of a united Aurora, not mindful of the colors or races interacting with one another.

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