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Brandon Johnson elected mayor of Chicago

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Brandon Johnson wins in the Chicago mayor race. Photo: FightBack! News/Olan Mijana

Chicago, IL – On Tuesday, April 4, Brandon Johnson won 51.4% of vote in the Chicago mayoral runoff election. Johnson's victory is also a victory for working and oppressed people, as demonstrated by the range of organizations and individuals who celebrated with Johnson and his family at the Marriott Marquis on election night.

Frank Chapman, executive director of the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, said, "I've been living for this moment since the Great Harold Washington in 1986, yet we didn't wait on history; we, the oppressed and the working class, made history."

Several hours before polls closed, Adeline Bracey with Action Now, who canvassed for Brandon throughout the campaign and has been organizing for 11 years, said, "My family is from a rural town in Mississippi where they threw a smoke bomb in a church to stop Black people from voting. Having lived through that, not just reading about it, it's crucial that I be a part of this movement here on this date." Bracey was referring to the anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on April 4, 1968.

In his victory speech, Johnson also pointed to the historical significance of his mayoral election and the movement that made it happen. "It was right here in Chicago that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. organized for justice, dreaming that one day the civil rights movement and the labor movement would come together. Well Dr. King, the civil rights movement and the labor movement have finally collided and will make your dreams come true!" Johnson declared.

Stacy Davis Gates, president of the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU), of which Johnson is a member, introduced Johnson by explaining the unity and consistency of the

movement that elected him: “It is the people who brought today’s victory to reality.” Davis Gates said before she explained how Brandon Johnson worked with former CTU President Karen Lewis to hold the city accountable for closing 50 schools in 2013.

The 1000-strong crowd at the victory party included other leaders and members of CTU. The leadership and rank and file of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 73 and Healthcare Illinois and Indiana (HCII), Unite Here, and many other unions were also present. Community organizations represented included United Working Families (UWF), the Chicago Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression (CAARPR), Southside Organized for Unity and Liberation (SOUL), Good Kids Mad City, Indivisible Chicago, and many others. United with the progressive unions around Johnson’s campaign, these community organizations formed one of the most diverse coalitions the city has seen in decades.

This victory over Paul Vallas and his supporters in corporations and the pro-police lobby is the second time this year that the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) has been beaten in the electoral arena by progressive movements. The first was on February 28, when pro-accountability candidates were elected to a majority of seats in 14 of the city’s 22 Police District Councils.

Brandon Johnson has pledged throughout his campaign to support these district councilors in their efforts to hold the police accountable. The newly-elected district councilors, and some who ran but didn’t win, supported Johnson because of his promises to invest in the people. In contrast, Vallas stood for policies that would further enrich the capitalists who donated to his campaign and allowed it to outspend the Johnson campaign two to one.

“The people won Chicago,” said 3rd Police District councilor and organizer Anthony D Bryant, who attended the Brandon Johnson victory party along with several other newly elected district councilors.

April 4 also saw victories for other progressive electoral candidates. With Lamont Robinson in the 4th Ward, Desmon Yancy in the 5th, William Hall in the 6th, Ronnie Mosley in the 21st, Angela Clay in the 46th, and Leni Manaa-Hoppenworth in the 48th, the runoff election saw a majority of progressive candidates win their races.

The newly elected progressive alderpersons will join incumbents such as Carlos Ramírez Rosa, Rossana Rodríguez, and Jeanette Taylor in City Hall, giving Brandon Johnson's administration a potentially more favorable city council than the one Harold Washington had.

While recognizing the historical impact of the election, Brandon Johnson and his supporters resolved to continue fighting for the various movements of working and oppressed people.

"With all of you, we've accomplished so much, but in the years to come we have a lot of work to do," Johnson said. "We have a multicultural, multigenerational movement that has captured the imagination not just of the city of Chicago but the entire world." He continued. "Let's take this bold progressive movement across the United States of America!"

After the celebration, Frank Chapman summed up how the movement would carry the momentum from this victory to others in the movements for working and oppressed people.

"It's like they used to say in Mozambique, 'Aluta continua,'" Chapman said. "The struggle continues."

Source: [FightBack! News](#)

