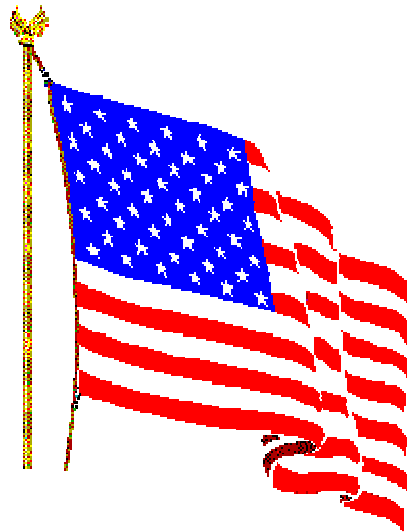


ELECTION NIGHT

PROGRAM OF THE YEAR

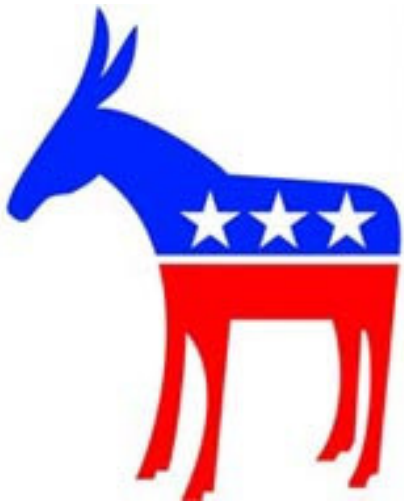
2004-2005

PUTNAM HALL



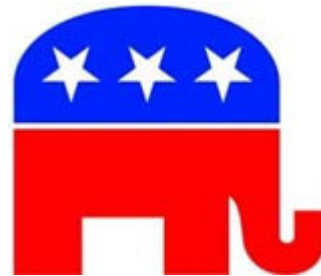
In the past year, Putnam has been blessed with an even larger diverse and unique group of people with different backgrounds, lifestyles, and beliefs than the year before. Even though perceived as an upper class residence hall, due to the amount of returners, Putnam is home to a large number of freshmen

and transfer students. Finding a common ground and unity in manifold in residence halls is what makes them so special and that's what we try to emphasize in various programs. Some of the differences range from clothing styles, ethnicity, hobbies, and even politics. Though Kansas remains a dominantly conservative state, that doesn't fully represent the residents of Putnam. So what better idea than to have a soiree in light of the presidential elections?



DEMOCRAT

VS.



REPUBLICANS

GOOD INTENTIONS

In any social and educational program, some of the goals to be met include addressing an important issue of life lesson, to learn something new, and course, to have a lot of fun. Election night had absolutely no problem

encompassing these goals. On November 2nd, the program was held in the Putnam lobby with a projector screen showing live news coverage on a big screen beginning at 7pm. Winston Wells, president of Putnam and co-organizer of the event had a quite simple and attainable purpose for this program which was as follows: Bringing residents of different political views to the same dwelling to watch a historical election while providing a friendly atmosphere and the same time. Also, just about every program in a hall is complete with food and drink to keep everyone full of energy and ready for conversation. Most importantly, this also exemplified an educational program in that it enlightened residents about current political issues and the democratic process.

“The election night was a great community builder in that it was very positive and brought a lot of people close together of different beliefs to discuss their views on politics. I had a good time.” Abby Riblett- Republican Putnam resident

During the semester leading up to the 2004 Presidential Election, many residents throughout the Strong Complex were engaging in political debates and discussions. Kristin Kaiser and Winston Wells had intentions of making this

program a way to inform residents of the political events while being able to continue the conversations as the votes were being tabulated. The organizers realized that many of the residents were not sure where they stood on different issues; therefore they decided to add an educational component in the program, which will be discussed later. On a night that many differing political views could have split the conference into sides, Kristen and Winston felt that this event would rather unite the complex with respect and passion about the nation and politics and general. Fortunately, it did just that.



"It was nice to see so many people who were concerned with what direction our country is going."

Don Lemm- Republican Putnam resident

Carry on the tradition

Something to consider when implementing a program is if it is practical and applicable to other residence hall or community settings. Election night could definitely be used in other halls for politics has always been a topic of heated debate and any college student no matter what residence hall, gender, ethnicity or background would be willing to take part in it. Although elections are every four years, this type of program could definitely be adapted for any major political event whether it be a national election or a city council election in which students have input. To make the program larger scale, various universities could rent auditorium space for the projection of the returns. Other campuses could also add various educational aspects in relation to the needs of their individual students.

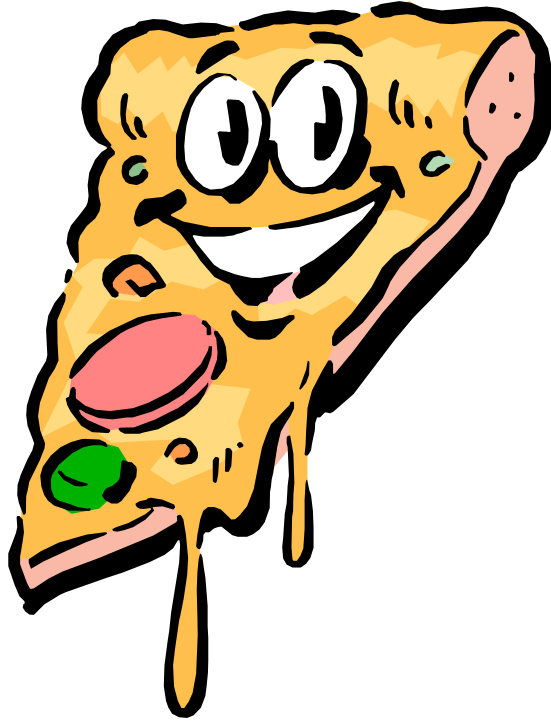
RED, WHITE, BLUE, and PIZZA too!

Being the national election, it was of course going to be a long and draining process, and with anything physically or mentally draining, you always need energy, or in this case, a lot of junk food. It was an amazing facsimile of the Super Bowl in that it consisted of large amounts of people munching on goodies such as chips, cookies, pretzels, puppy chow, and soda, sharing differing opinions as they cheered for their favorite team. But that was just to get them started. Later on in the evening, a leaning tower of pizza boxes were delivered to sustain those late night political talkers as the coverage of the election lasted into the morning hours. Pizza, pop, pals, and politics lit up the

lobby of Putnam Hall. It didn't take much time until all that was left on the tables were crumbs of chips and crumpled up napkins.

***"I thought it was well organized and I enjoyed listening to everyone's discussions and opposing views. As for the pizza and snacks, it was mmm, mmm good!" Sean Jefferson-
Republican Putnam resident***





A bit of humor with a spice of trivia

In any program, you will always experience high and low moments of the evening. At one of the low moments of the night, or perhaps when the large amounts of grease and carbonation has settled in everyone's stomach, viewers decided to lighten up the evening by switching channels to the Daily Show with Jon Stewart on Comedy Central, providing some comic relief and easing the tension in the air that had been building since the beginning. Just to review, The Daily Show is a fake news program with large amounts of satire and parodist comments. Waves of uproar and laughter echoed through the halls as certain jokes were made, some consisting of the phrases "elephant ears", "a horses face", and "the vocabulary of a second grader."

“It was fun to watch the election results with the diverse group of people. It made me realize how conservative Kansas really is. I also enjoyed the Daily Show with Jon Stewart to add some humor to the evening.” Chris Rude-Putnam Resident and Colorado native

Although the primary focus of the program was to watch the election returns, throughout the night, Kristin Kaiser led the group in educational games. At commercial breaks, Kristin would ask the residents trivia about past presidents and politicians. The person with the correct answer received the award of a Derby Dining Center Bakery gift certificate of \$1.

“The presidential trivia rocked my face off; I dominated in it.” Dustin Stafford-Republican Putnam Resident.

A second activity was called the “Political Scale.” This activity allowed residents to choose a side on a given issue. Participants were able to see if they were more liberal on some issues while conservative on others, being either left or right-winged. You would either slide to the left, right, or stay neutral. Some of

the questions asked included, "Do you agree or disagree with gay marriages, Do you agree or disagree with abortion, and if you do or do not support the war on Iraq. This was an excellent example proving how diverse our hall is, as all participants were standing in a large range of spots on scale.

"It was cool to see people from dissimilar beliefs all down there together not killing each other. I won a gift certificate to the bakery from the quiz, so that's always a plus." Paul Davis-Independent Putnam Resident

Streamer of red, white and blue draped the entire lobby for a patriotic feel and for decoration. Another bit of humor was added by the life size sketches of George W. Bush and John Kerry to color in as votes were collected for each individual. An avid supporter of Bush, Ryan Spencer received much satisfaction in being in charge of coloring in his votes, ignoring the over emphasized ears and nose that had been drawn.

WE ARE FAMILY



Another important aspect of a hall program is to make the residents feel welcome and comfortable in what they are participating in. Election Night did just this in that it magically formed a bond between the opposing sides.

“As a first time voter and a freshmen in the hall, it was a great experience that was very enjoyable.” Bethany Smith-Liberal Putnam Resident

“It seemed like there was some tension in the air. The pro-Bush people were more towards the front and pro-Kerry were in the back. I was impressed with the amount of people who showed up and that they stayed a long time to watch the coverage. It is something I am passionate about so I enjoyed being excited about it with other people. It was a cool bonding experience.” Josh Hersh-Putnam Republican resident

Prior to the program, residents were often seen debating back and forth about the political issues; however, following the program the residents seemed to understand other perspectives because they were given the opportunity to discuss and process the results with those who both agreed and disagreed with their own point of view. Although many of the attendees were passionate about politics prior to the program, this even allowed them to see the span of opinions within one political party. The zeal of politics will likely continue with these students, but they are now more willing to discuss rather than strictly debate.

“Although the opinions were as different as black and white, the sense of community made the experience very enjoyable.” Patrick Simpson-Putnam Independent Resident Assistant

ALMOST A FULL HOUSE

It was obvious that the program was being enjoyed when the residents asked for it to be extended another two and a half hours, due to the election results not being finalized. As the night wore on, the cartoons political figures were filling up as the polls continued to rise and race neck-n-neck. Although the results weren't in yet, several cheers and groans were given as several people had hit the point of exhaustion being that it was midnight and people had class

the next day. The amount of people present for the program was very pleasing for about 140 attended and a few wanderers and curious residents would stroll in and out while grabbing a hand full of chips or a slice of pizza. Though publicized as a Putnam event, with the familiarity and unique bond that Strong Complex has residents of all three halls in the complex decided to join in on the festivities. It was rather simple to get the word out in that everyone was already aware of the presidential election, all we had to do was encourage residents to step out of their rooms and watch it as one big happy family. With only 5 people organizing the event, everything turned out very successful and approximately \$125 was spent on 15 dozen pizzas, sodas, snacks, and decorations. There were several other viewing areas across campus that only represented one political party that a few residents chose to go to, but I am sure that the atmosphere wasn't as tense and exciting as it was in the Putnam Lobby.

DRUMROLL PLEASE

Although the program was a benefit for all residents in that it provided an unbiased setting with a lot of memories and good conversations, I would have to say that it went in favor of the Republicans with the results of the election. Fortunately, Putnam residents were mature enough to not let the results get to their heads and have a brawl out in the parking lot, but instead maintained their long lasting friendships. There was still conversation and debate continuing well into the week and acknowledgment of new information that residents had gathered from the Election Night. The great thing about this program is that it

focused on an event that effects everyone in their daily lives, and made people realize some of the important topics and values in our nation. Overall, this was a highly successful program that deserves some recognition, for it gave everyone a chance to learn about and experience the greatness of the Democratic process firsthand.

“Program planners Winston Wells and Kristen Kaiser On Election Night, brought together two sides of a very controversial, very close, very historical race. With educational activities such as "Crossing the Line," election coverage until 2 AM, and trivia, Election Night was an incredible success. It was a joy as an Advisor to not only see a program be so successful, but also to watch the interactions and discussions between residents on such important, pivotal issues to students and youth. Programs are the most successful when the residents enjoy themselves, build community, and learn something as well. At Election Night, residents had a great time, built community (and took part in the community building of a nation) and learned about themselves, the candidates, and their fellow residents. I "vote yes" to recognize this incredible program!” Amanda Mesirov-Liberal Assistant Residence Life Coordinator



YEY or NAY!

April 2005

OTY Committee:

Ideally, a program should educate residents while providing an environment for them to build community, grow, and focus on a topic that is of interest to them and has relevance to their lives as students and citizens. The Election Night program in Putnam Hall, put on by Winston Wells and Kristen Kaiser, did just that.

It would be hard for anyone in the nation to deny that the November 2004 election was a common topic of conversation in the months leading up to Election Day. Students discussed topics in the dining centers, gathered to watch debates in residence hall rooms, and posted flyers and slogans promoting the election of their favored candidate on their walls and on their doors. Seeing the huge impact the election was having on the residents, and sensing that community could be built through watching the election together, Winston Wells and Kristen Kaiser decided to put on a complex-wide program to watch the election coverage, engage in educational activities, and—as with any good program—eat pizza.

The students of Strong Complex, and even some off-campus students, participated in activities like presidential trivia, “Take a Stand”—which was a visual representation of where students stood on issues—and discussion of the live election coverage. Throughout the night, as we watched the country being divided into “red” or “blue” states, we watched the residents of Strong come together. Although there was disagreement about political issues, by the end of the night, everyone agreed that the program had been a success.

College is a time to experience life; it is also a time to look back upon and remember what experiences life brought to you. Because of this program, residents will remember where they were on this historic election night—in the lobby of Putnam Hall, eating pizza at 1 AM, talking with friends, and watching the world change.

Sincerely,

Amanda Mesirov
Putnam ARLC