

## Students, Faculty, and Staff Favor Harris in 2024 Mock Election

824 STUDENTS, FACULTY, AND STAFF PARTICIPATED IN THIS SURVEY

**104**

students responded from the Class of 2028 (41.1%)

**150**

students responded from the Class of 2027 (48.4%)

**169**

students responded from the Class of 2026 (57.1%)

**177**

students responded from the Class of 2025 (57.8%)

**112**

faculty members responded (49.8%)

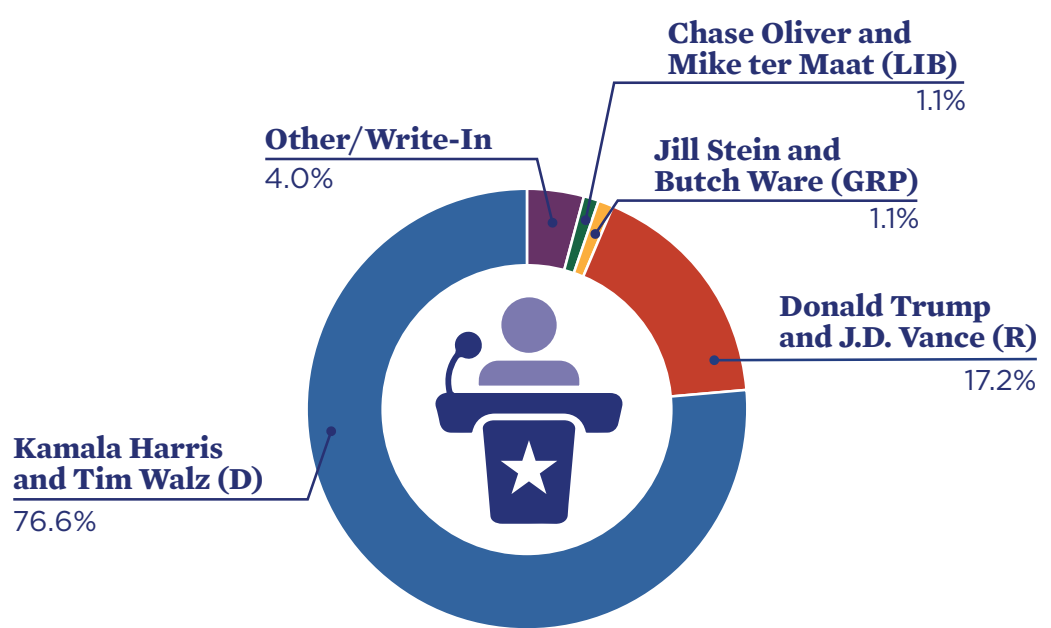
**112**

staff members responded (26.0%)

### 2024 MOCK ELECTION

One of Andover's core values is "Youth From Every Quarter," creating an "intentionally diverse learning community." While this value is reflected in many aspects of the Andover community, according to the 2024 State of the Academy (SOTA), 89.7% of students believe that the Andover community has a political leaning to the left. On October 18, 2024, *The Phillipian* sent out a nine-question-long mock-presidential survey to students, faculty, and staff. Out of the 824 respondents, 76.6% reported that their presidential ticket of choice would be Kamala Harris and Tim Walz (D). This majority continued across all voting combinations of role, region, race, class, and voting eligibility.

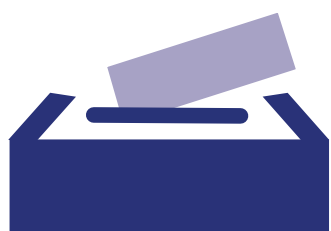
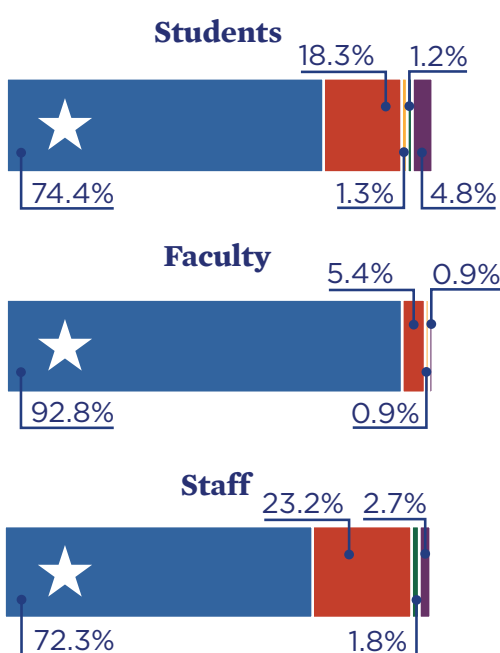
### THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE OF CHOICE



### KEY

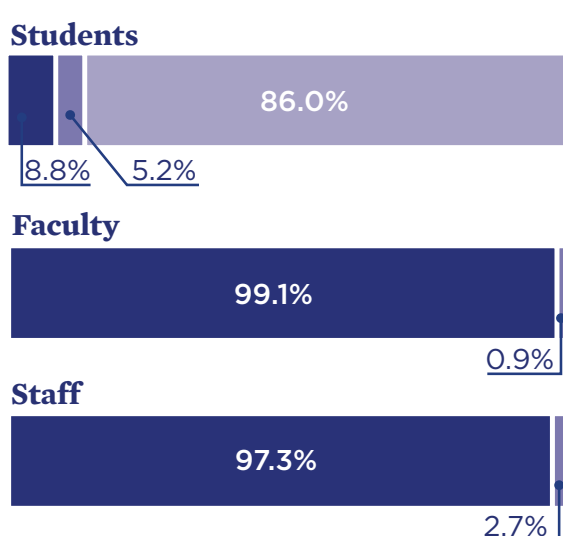
- Harris/Walz (D)
- Trump/Vance (R)
- Stein/Ware (GRP)
- Oliver/ter Maat (LIB)
- Other

### VOTE BY ROLE



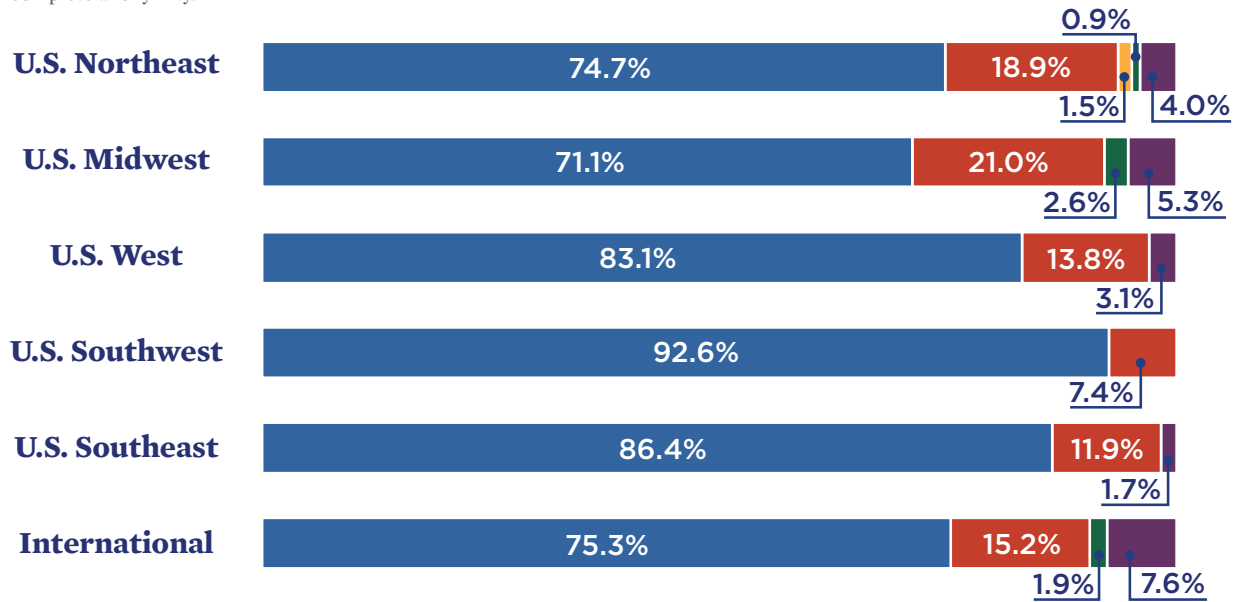
### VOTING ELIGIBILITY BY ROLE

- Yes, I am eligible and registered to vote.
- Yes, I am eligible but NOT registered to vote.
- No, I am not eligible to vote.

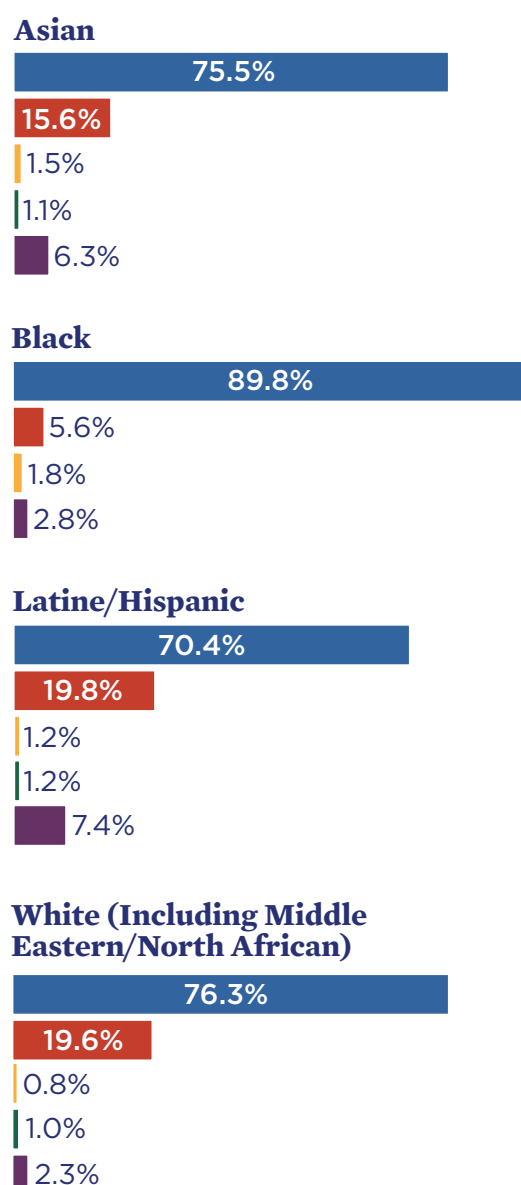


### VOTE BY REGION

Editor's Note: Correlated statistics from respondents in U.S. Discontiguous regions have been removed to protect their complete anonymity.

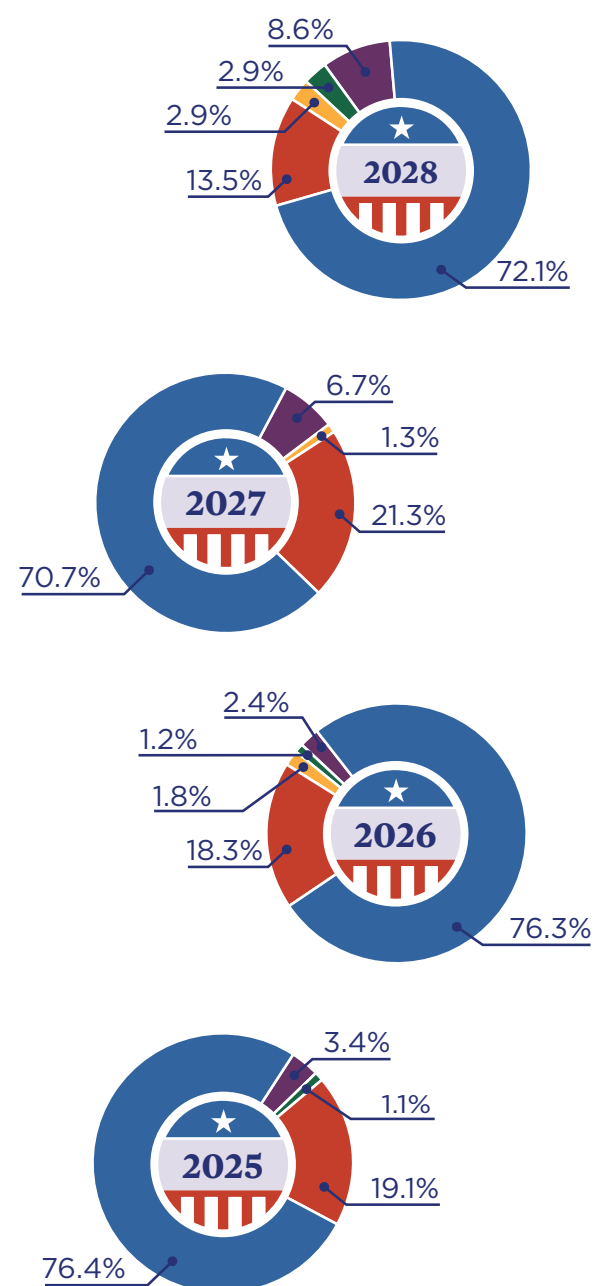


### VOTE BY RACE



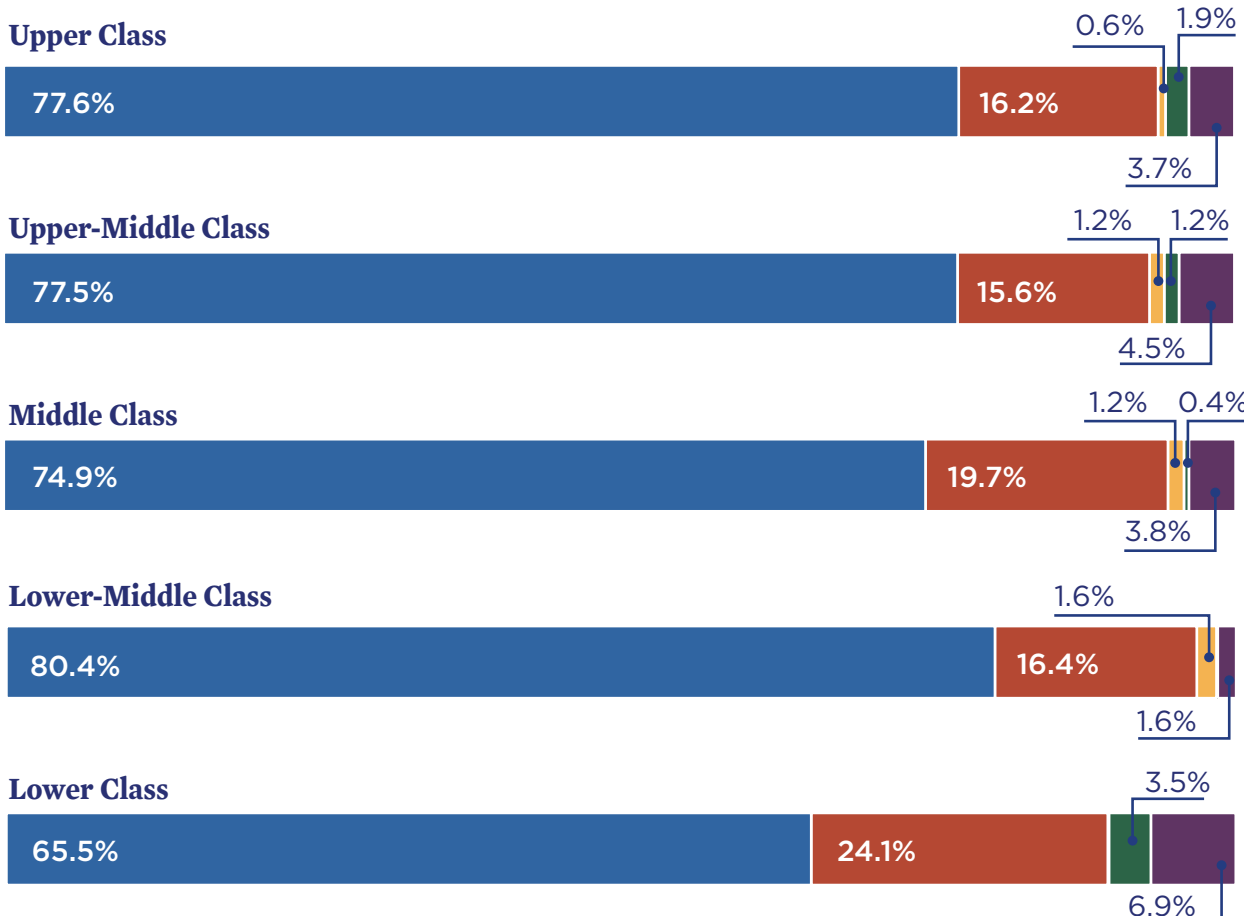
Editor's Note: Correlated statistics from some respondents have been removed to protect their complete anonymity.

### VOTE BY CLASS



# 2024 MOCK ELECTION

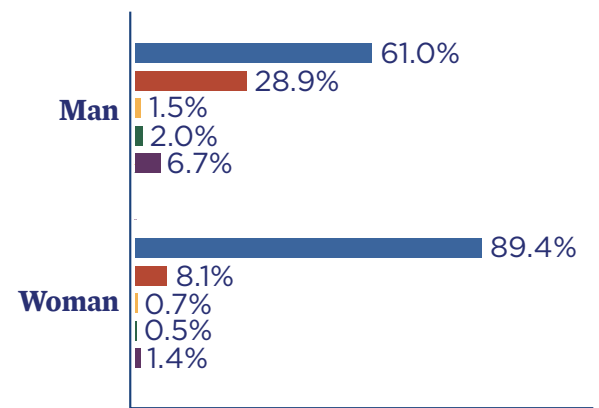
## ELECTION BY SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS



## KEY

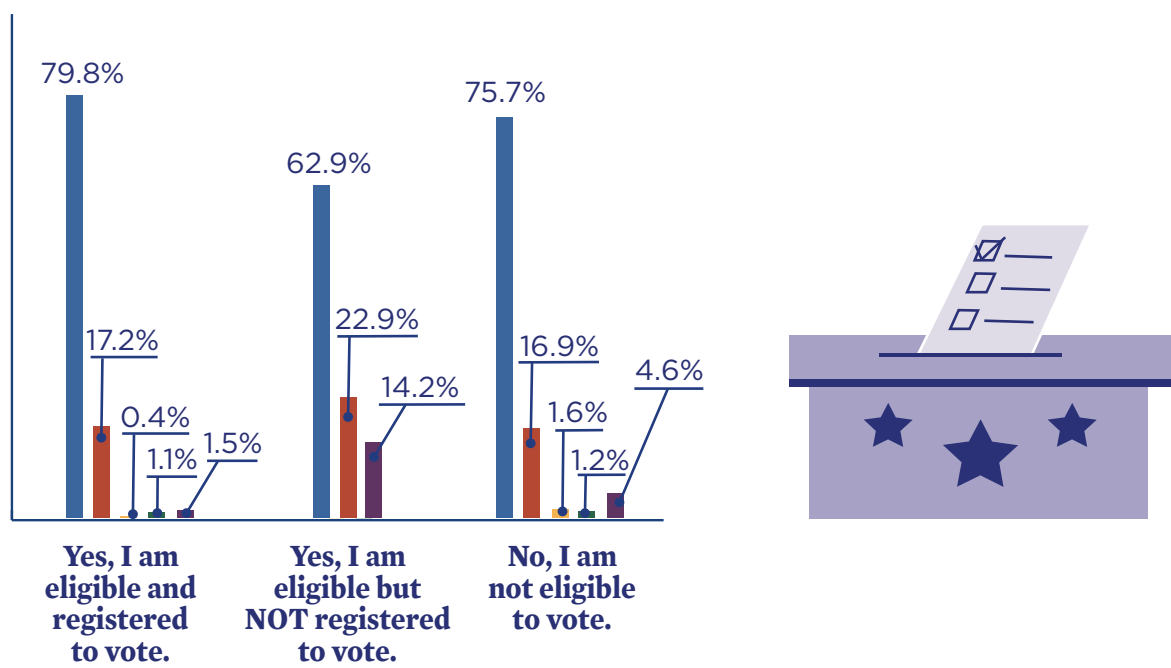
- Harris/Walz (D)
- Trump/Vance (R)
- Stein/Ware (GRP)
- Oliver/ter Maat (LIB)
- Other

## ELECTION BY GENDER



Editor's Note: Correlated statistics from respondents identifying as other gender identities have been removed to protect their complete anonymity.

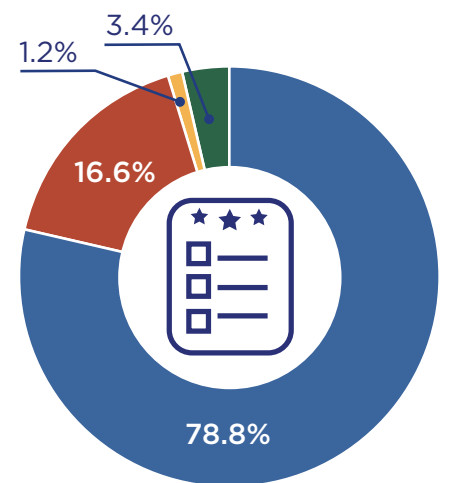
## ELECTION BY VOTING ELIGIBILITY



## PAST MOCK ELECTION SURVEYS

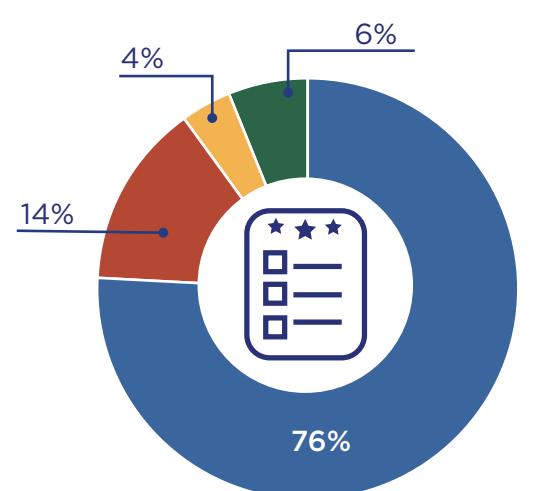
### 2020

- Biden/Harris (D)
- Trump/Pence (R)
- Hawkins/Walker (GRP)
- Jorgensen/Cohen (LIB)



### 2016

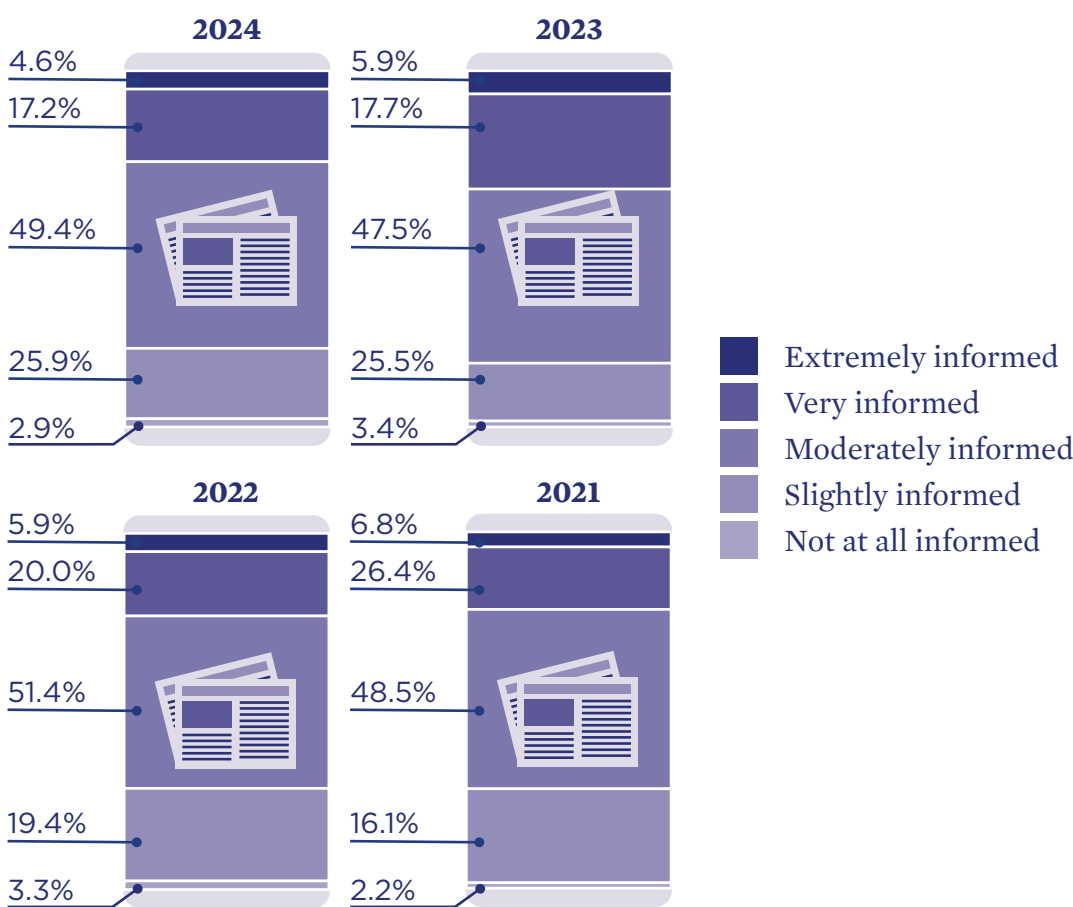
- Clinton/Kaine (D)
- Trump/Pence (R)
- Stein/Baraka (GRP)
- Johnson/Weld (LIB)



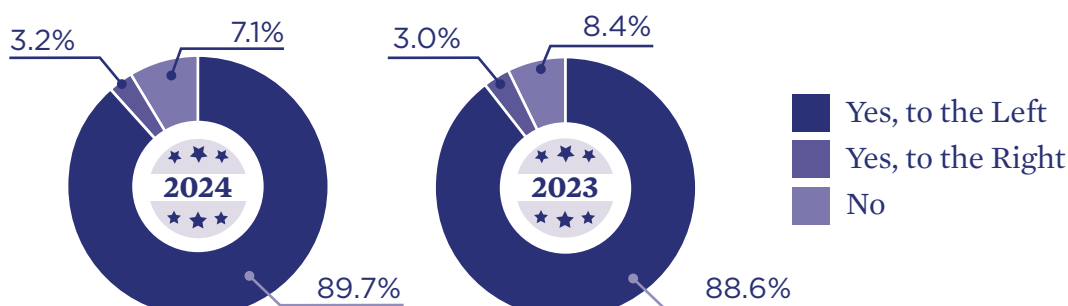
Editor's Note: These graphs use data from *The Phillipian's* 2020 and 2016 mock election surveys. The data from the 2020 survey only represents the student body, excluding faculty and staff.

## PAST SOTAS

How informed do you believe you are about politics and/or current events?



Do you think the Andover community has a political leaning?



Editor's Note: These graphs use data from *The Phillipian's* 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024 State of The Academy surveys.



## First-Look Analysis: The Phillipian's Mock Presidential Election

### STAFF REPORT

In a survey conducted by *The Phillipian* about the upcoming presidential race, Kamala Harris received a majority of support from respondents. Of Andover's 1,165 students, 600 — 51.5 percent of

the student body — responded and completed the survey. Along with student respondents, 112 faculty members and 112 staff members participated in the survey. Of all responses, 76.6 percent were in support of Harris compared to 17.2 percent in support of Donald Trump. Third-party candidates, Jill Stein for the

Green party and Chase Oliver for the Libertarian party, received 1.1 percent of the votes. 4 percent of respondents selected “Other.”

*The Phillipian* conducted a similar survey for the presidential race during the 2020 elections. The results of this survey showed that 78.8 percent of students supported

Biden, slightly more than the current number in support of Harris. Comparing the two surveys also shows a marginal increase in the percentage of Trump supporters, growing from 16.6 percent in 2020 to 17.2 percent in 2024. The 2020 survey saw a student participation percentage of 65.1 percent, nearly 15 per-

cent higher than this year's. The total student body count varied minimally between these two testing years, with a student body count of 1,181 in 2020 — only 16 more students than the current number.

## Reflection on Staying Informed at Andover

### STAFF REPORT

According to the 2024 State of the Academy (SOTA), 37.3 percent of students get the majority of their news from the “New York Times” while 22.6 percent look to social media. Additionally, the data revealed that nearly 50 percent of students felt moderately informed on politics and/or current events, while a third of students felt slightly or not at all informed. With the upcoming presidential election, *The Phillipian* examined the different ways in which students stay educated on political issues.

As a hub for information and resources on campus, The Oliver Wendell Holmes Library (OWHL) offers various resources that can help students acquire information, including the OWHL catalog and the librarians themselves. According to Derek Curtis, Programming and Digital Content Producer at the OWHL, students have free digital subscriptions to “The New York Times,” “Financial Times,” “The Chronicle of Higher Education,” and “The Economist.” Deputy Head of School Merrilee Mardon expanded on how students should value the resources the OWHL provides to them daily, in addition to special events.

“We want students to be curious about politics and to have ways to explore their questions. And we have phenomenal resources in the OWHL — the newspaper subscriptions are an excellent and easy to access way to stay

on top of world events from a range of perspectives. And our librarians themselves are excellent resources, as are the [library] guides they have developed. What I am trying to say is that we are a school that is designed to help students learn — extra programming is great, but I hope we don't lose sight of the extraordinary resources we have every day,” wrote Mardon in an email to *The Phillipian*.

This fall, the Dean of Studies Office organized the Presidential Election Speaker Series to address a range of issues relevant to the election, some of which were offered as optional learning opportunities. Sophie Holten '25 noted how, though the school provides ample opportunities for discourse, the responsibility lies within students to educate themselves in a bipartisan way.

“The school provides a lot of opportunities to speak to adults on campus about certain opinions and ideas that are circulating in society and politics in general, but I feel like, as students and citizens or just anyone in general, it's up to you and your own personal responsibility to stay well informed. I say that [you do not need to] necessarily have your own opinion, but to look at both sides of the story, and in the case of the upcoming election, both parties and their opinions,” said Holten.

Similarly, Curtis acknowledged Andover students' busy schedules but urged them to seek longer form news and be critical of information found on social media.

“Given how heavily scheduled Andover stu-

dents are, one way of engaging in politics is to not use social media for quick hits of politics but to maybe give yourself a bit of time each day to read a newspaper or to engage in some longer form journalism in which you get a deeper understanding of a given topic or a deeper understanding of someone's perspective on a given topic. A lot of politics is very meme-driven and very quick content-driven,” said Curtis.

According to SOTA data, 89.7 percent of students believe that Andover has a left-leaning tendency. Valentina Spilere '26 reflected on the negative effects that a noticeable student body political leaning could have on open discourse. She elaborated that this leads to a lack of knowledge about other perspectives.

“I definitely have felt that most of the school is very left-centric, and that sometimes expressing opinions

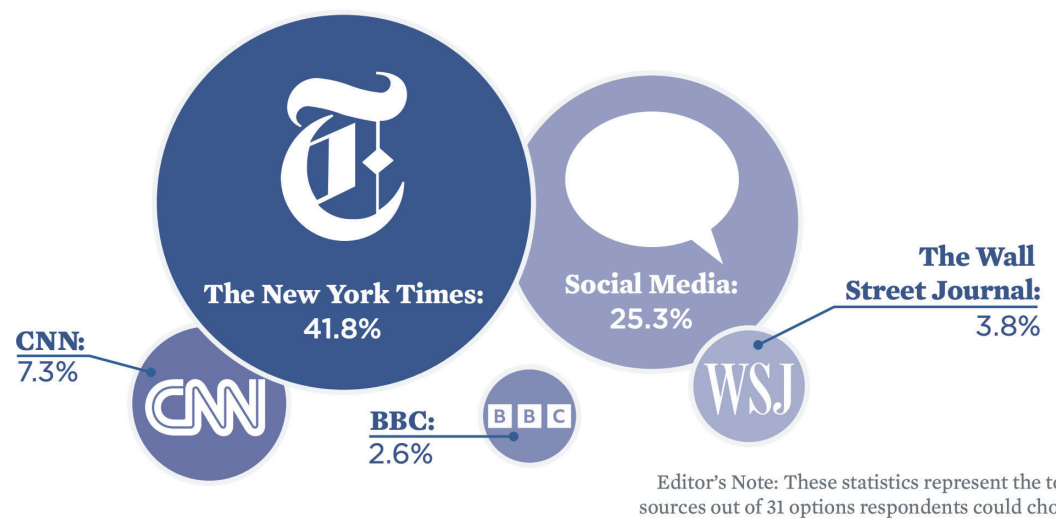
outside of that is very complex or very badly seen socially, even though it might just be an opinion or a question about something. If you don't tend to lean on the left, you're seen as a maybe not very proper person. As most of my friends are left-leaning, I am getting a lot of information about the things happening on the left-centric parties more than the right ones. I think it's something that cannot be fixed; it's a societal issue,” said Spilere.

Patrick Xu '27, while aware of the library's resources, wished that there was more consistent programming. He expressed hope for an active educational series throughout the school year, not just during moments of political importance.

“It's great that [the school's] doing some things leading up to the election, but for the most part, the news information only comes when it's most critical, like last year

with Israel-Palestine, they had a talk in the [Cochran] Chapel. For the most part, I wish they provided more information consistently... I think the library has in the past provided some forums and some discussions, but similar to the school as a whole, it would be nice to have more direct information given to us,” said Xu.

Mardon concluded, “Sometimes, I think we can be hard on ourselves as a community. I'm still new here, and I'm still learning. As I learn more about our curriculum and the more interactions I've had with our students, I feel confident in our students and in the skills our educational program emphasizes. We can always do better, and we'll always try to do better, and I hope all members of our community can appreciate what a gift it is to live in this community where it is so easy to access information, attend an event with an interesting speaker, meet somebody with



Editor's Note: These statistics represent the top 5 news sources out of 31 options respondents could choose from.

J. XIAO/THE PHILLIPIAN

Data from SOTA 2024 displayed the top five news sources students rely on for staying informed.

## Update on Discourse About Israel and Palestine at Andover

### STAFF REPORT

Over a year since Hamas's October 7 attack on Israel, many Andover students say they are still seeking more education on conflicts in the Middle East.

Since Frank Tipton's “Israel-Palestine 101” presentation in December 2023, there have not been any all-school events about the issue. According to the 2024 State of the Academy, released last May, 76.1 percent of students do not believe the school has provided adequate education on Israel and Palestine.

Head of School Raynard Kington described how the school has been focusing more specifically on offering programming for and supporting student organizations connected to the Middle East.

“Our goals have been to honor our inclusive community and to recognize diverse views regarding conflicts in the Middle East and across the globe. After Frank Tipton's visit, we chose to focus on the needs of students most affected by the conflict. We partnered effectively with leadership in the Muslim Student Association, the Jewish Student Union, and Southwest Asian and North African Society to identify and serve students. Related to initiatives with these groups and across the campus community, we have worked collaboratively to hold conversations across differences. These efforts are never perfect. We always do our best in these difficult moments. In the case of the Middle East crisis, we learned how important it is to forge effective partnerships between students and the administration,” wrote Kington in an email issued through the Office of Communication.

Most recently, the College Counseling Office worked with the Jewish Student

Union (JSU) to support Jewish students in the college admissions process. This opportunity was previously mentioned by Kington in an article published in *The Phillipian* in May 2024, though it was described to be for a larger audience. In a recent email to *The Phillipian*, Kington explained the shift in the opportunity for Seniors to discuss protests on college campuses and the impact this might have on college admissions.

“The initial plan was that College Counseling would host an informational session for all Seniors. Instead the focus shifted to working directly with those students who expressed interest in this programming. At the request of a member of the Jewish Student Union, the College Counseling team organized a session in early October to discuss the college search process in general, and specifically, how Jewish students might think about their options. They covered a range of topics, from campus culture and diversity to school size and support for students. The idea was to give our students a framework for evaluating schools of interest to them,” wrote Kington.

JSU President Ella Kowal '25 stressed that education is important for students who are closely connected to the issue, but equally important for those who are less educated about the topic to combat misinformation and disinformation.

“I found [students feeling uninformed] to be a really big issue because you have students who don't know enough about the conflict but still are concluding what should happen in the conflict even though they clearly don't have enough information, and that's dangerous. The school should talk about the dangers of following what you see on social media and what you're hearing around you about having appropriate informa-

tion,” said Kowal.

Kowal continued, “When we are talking about education, it should be looking to those people who are uninformed about the conflict. The education shouldn't try to target those students who already feel very closely connected, as obviously they are going to have a particular family background that is difficult to change and affect.”

Sami Tokat '26, Co-President of the Muslim Student Association (MSA) and the Southwest Asian and North African Society (SWANA), shared positive trends he observed in student conversations around Israel-Palestine this year. He noticed discourse has become less focused on taking a stance and more focused on constructive, open conversation.

“I've heard [about] it most in conversations relating to the election. For example, in different common rooms, I think almost every common room of every dorm had the presidential debate [on TV]. There were certain times where the topic of the conflict in Israel and Palestine was brought up... Students are less focused on whichever sort of side you fall on, whichever branch, but rather how we should go about taking the next steps, how as a country, as a community, we should look at the conflict of Israel-Palestine, and bring our own individual humanities into it... [But as] an academic institution, [we're] going to have to struggle to talk about these topics later on, that we are implicated in having platforms and discussions. There definitely could be more effort to try to organize and take in the student opinions on what we should do to have these discussions,” said Tokat.

According to Kington, the administration has directed its efforts this year to provide platforms for learning about the presidential election in

response to requests from the Andover community. Kington mentioned a potential return to conversations about the Middle East in the future.

“This fall we pivoted to focus on the election, as requested by students, faculty, and staff. The great thing is that we can be nimble in our approach, depending on students' needs — and that civil discourse helps us navigate a range of both election-specific and geopolitical issues. I look forward to continuing this practice of engaging diverse viewpoints when we return to Middle East-specific programs,” wrote Kington.

Rabbi Joshua Greenberg, the Jewish Chaplain, said that the school offers multiple interfaith opportunities, such as the recent chaplaincy-sponsored pumpkin carving. Greenberg shared how those events along with faculty training help the school community tackle global issues better.

“Everyone's thinking about issues domestically: faculty, students, adults, minors, everybody in between. Strategies to not shy away from discourse, dialogue, and even debate are things that we've been thinking about as a faculty and as a school community. We certainly were well-equipped last year to address those issues [as a faculty], but within the last several months, we've received even more resources, even more material, even more perspectives, and training on how to facilitate such conversations,” said Greenberg.

Reflecting on the Andover administration's actions in response to the Israel-Palestine conflict, Keran Song '26 said that efforts to educate students on the subject have been minimal and ineffective, using speakers that come in to discuss these topics with students as an example. Song explained that the lack of education on the subject has led to

indifference among members of the Andover community.

“They've done, overall, a terrible job. As in, last year there was some discourse going on. There was [a] speaker one Wednesday evening that came into the [Cochran] Chapel, and a bunch of people went, even though it was optional, showing that we are willing to learn more about it. But he presented things we could find out with a quick Google search, and not the facts that there are disputes over or any emotional connection that people may have. And then this year, with the [new] civil discourse policy, there's been zero communication from [Andover] or speakers that the school brings in about the conflict. And because faculty are supposed to stay neutral because of the new policy, we're just getting less and less input. Therefore people either don't have an opinion or are starting to lean into indifference, which is the worst-case scenario that can happen in a community like this,” said Song.

Song continued, “Rather than asking these speakers that come in to take a neutral stance and water down what they usually talk about in other panels or speeches or talks that they give at other schools or other environments, the school should educate us on their backgrounds and biases that they could have on certain controversial topics and then let the speakers show what they actually feel or think about a certain topic so that we can ask students after the talk, share a discussion together about the biases that the school delivered us on and what the stances that the speaker presented was during the talk.”



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## Editorial

# Beyond the Ballot

In four days, the world will watch as the United States of America elects its 47th president.

Jagged silhouettes of 50 states bloom in shades of red, blue, and purple upon our screens, the nation collectively holding its breath. As the electoral college counts for each candidate's climb toward the fated 270 mark, minutes slip past like sand in an hourglass, both excruciatingly slow and infinitely accelerating. Before we know it, the result will arrive: a single verdict that will hold the weight of a thousand promises, a name that will seem to cement our future into place before it even unravels.

Amidst the sense of finality so often associated with the result of the election, we must take a step back to process our emotions, and, similarly, give others the space to do the same. For almost all of us, this is the first presidential election we will have experienced in high school. In the coming days, some of us will be devastated, others of us will be elated. And yet others might be discomfited, uncertain, apathetic. From classrooms to dorm common rooms, remember that there are opinions and views around us that differ from our own. It is not our place to dictate nor define what others may be feeling in response. Never will it be more crucial than in the following days to exercise compassion and respect. In grief, in celebration, in feelings of being untethered and unsure of what may await: every one of us deserves the time and space

to think, to feel, and to process our reactions free of outside judgment.

Andover may be a school, but for many of us, it is more than that: it is also a second home. The virtues of respect, inclusion, and empathy that we uphold are what allow us to cultivate a safe haven where we feel empowered to grow, to develop, to transform into the people we seek to become. In times such as election season, where controversial subject matters can lead us to be impulsive and act rashly on heightened emotions, we can and must hold fast to our community values. We must remember to see one another as humans before politics and to recognize that the election holds different significance for each of us.

*This editorial represents the views of The Phillipian, vol. CXLVII.*

# Your Voice, Your Power: Why Registering to Vote for the Presidential Election is a Game Changer

AGLAIA HONG



L. RUSTUM / THE PHILLIPIAN

In the United States, the process to become an active citizen starts incredibly early — at 16 years old, you can pre-register to vote. When you turn 18, you get full access to one of the most important responsibilities that exists in a democracy: voting. For those of us eligible to vote at Andover, it's time to get to work. Go register to vote, as it is the beginning of your direct participation in shaping the future of the nation.

You may be asking yourself what difference your vote makes, but you're falling into the trap of self-doubt. The truth is whether or not you vote, a candidate will get elected, and your voice could be part of deciding who that person is. Every single election is a determination of who could represent your interests, values, and future dreams. If you don't know who to vote for in the presidential election, this does not mean you cannot use your voice. In fact, this fall and coming winter, there will be

many opportunities to use your voice and vote for a candidate of your choice. Proactively researching each candidate's policies and campaigns is also incredibly important to ensure we're not inadvertently working against our

own beliefs. Those who work for us in government are not just abstract entities of power but active decision-makers in matters capable of influencing your life. Leaders produce and shape the policies through which they navigate our world, in-

cluding regulations on climate change, healthcare, and civil rights, among other national issues. The beauty of democracy lies in the fact that these politicians are meant to be responsive to the people: they advocate for our needs,

laws and policies that impact your everyday life. Think of voting in terms of choosing the pen that writes the next chapter of your story, the person who will tell the world what matters to you. By not voting, you are effectively allowing others to make your choices.

You are simply



MIA WALKER / THE PHILLIPIAN

giving up your part in this democratic process and, with it, any possibility of a say in which way the country turns. That is far from that notion, which would be as simple as checking off a box or fulfilling a civic duty. That would

involve owning up to yours, your parents', your friends', and everyone's future in this country and ensuring that your voice is heard. Your voice is not merely a cry in an ocean of people, and your people should never be left unheard — especially those who can't vote because of age. Volunteering at a small table in front of an Asian supermarket as I urged people to register to vote, desperately holding out the clipboard when I would have given anything to be in their place opened my eyes to the opportunities lost simply because people don't care enough. If you're eligible to vote in this upcoming election, do it. Not just for yourself, but for the people who can't.

When you go into that booth to vote or mail in your absentee ballot, you are one of the millions who are all choosing together the course this nation will take. This is not a moment to still be on the sidelines. Whether the issues that matter most to you are social justice, environmental conservation, or the economy, find out where the candidates stand to make an informed choice. Our democracy works best when everyone participates — including you. Let your vote reflect your values, your hopes, and the change you want to see in the world.

*Aglaia Hong is a Lower from Katy, Tex. Contact the author at ahong27@andover.edu.*

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CORRECTIONS:



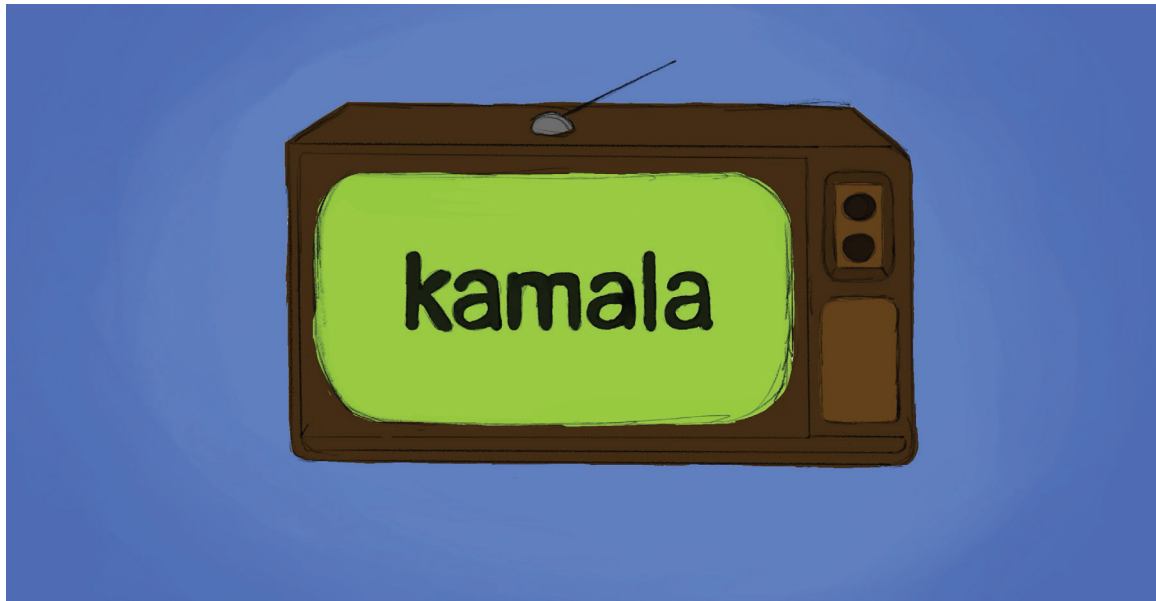
# How Kamala Harris Has Used Social Media to Gain the Attention of Gen Z Voters

ANYA BUDZINSKI



COURTESY OF PANET

From the outset of her 2024 presidential campaign, Kamala Harris has made efforts to appeal to young voters. More so than ever, Generation Z (Gen Z) will have an important presence in the upcoming 2024 election with an estimated 41 million eligible voters. Harris has acknowledged the surge in young registered voters by using strategies unusual for a presidential candidate. Through both her personal TikTok account and her team's viral Kamala HQ account, the Harris campaign has posted content showcasing Gen Z trends and catering to young voters. Historically, young voters have been the least likely to vote among the United States population. In 2020, voters between ages 18 and 29 made up only 11 percent of the total electorate. The Harris campaign saw these past low numbers and identified an opportunity to gain support for a Harris presidency through the use of social media. The social media efforts have helped Harris's campaign to gain the attention of the younger generation and inform them. As a member of Gen Z, I have found myself viewing



GEMMA PARK / THE PHILLIPIAN

dozens of Harris related videos and posts each day, and this has made me more aware and up to date on her campaign.

Kamala HQ has racked up nearly five million followers in just a few months. Kamala HQ uploads around a dozen videos each day featuring popular songs and Gen Z trends, pairing them with elements of her campaign. These videos present clips from Harris's rallies, her policies, videos in opposition to Donald Trump, as well as clips from her supporters. Many of these videos receive viral attention with over a million views and hundreds of thousands of likes, contributing to Harris's dominant social media presence for young voters.

Shortly after Harris announced her campaign, Charli xcx, a Gen Z pop icon, tweeted three words shaping the Harris campaign's social media focus. "Kamala IS brat" immediately exploded on social media platforms, including Instagram, TikTok, and X. Charli xcx's tweet built on the trend, "brat summer," and the release of Char-

li xcx's newest album titled "brat." The term "brat" is uniquely Gen Z — it's a vibe, an aesthetic, and a movement in the native tongue of the youngest block of voters. The "brat" album cover features a chartreuse background with black letters in all lowercase. Following Charli xcx's tweet, Kamala HQ quickly adopted the "brat summer" trend, changing their profile picture to lime green with black letters to match the "brat" album cover. The "brat" album showcases themes of womanhood and woman empowerment, exploring ideas of female friendship, jealousy as well as joy which are all common things in womanhood. These themes and ideas are very prevalent in the Harris campaign and help her be more appealing to female voters. By utilizing this "brat summer" trend, Harris immediately grabbed the attention of younger voters who had not taken much of an interest in politics before the social media phenomenon. Kamala HQ account gained millions of followers practically overnight as a result of the trend,

drawing huge amounts of attention to Harris' campaign.

In addition to her own campaign efforts, Harris has also received endorsements from some of the biggest Gen Z celebrities. Following the presidential debate on September 10, Taylor Swift took to Instagram to show her support for Harris, writing, "I'm voting for @kamalaharris because she fights for the rights and causes I believe need a warrior to champion them." Following this endorsement, Google Trends reported an increase in voter registration searches, as well as over 330,000 people being directed to "vote.gov" from the post. Harris has also gained the support of superstar Beyoncé, who endorsed Harris by appearing at her Houston rally on October 25, delivering a speech in support of Harris. In her speech Beyoncé spoke "as a mother," highlighting the ways Harris will benefit and build a better future for our nation. Though these endorsements are not enough to win the presidential race alone, they certainly help with engagement

in younger voters. The star power of Charli xcx, Taylor Swift, and Beyoncé have certainly shined a fresh light on the presidential election and enlivened Gen Z citizens. Many hope these celebrity endorsements and social media campaigns translate to a greater turnout at the polls on election day, just four days away.

Harris and her campaign team made strides in the election through social media and celebrity endorsements to attract the support of young voters. The Kamala HQ social media and its use of predominantly Gen Z platforms have spread awareness and education regarding important 2024 presidential campaign issues. The content of the videos have shown off many of the positive plans Harris has to make America a better place for all. This has made me and many others of Gen Z more aware of her policies and more supportive of her campaign now that we can see what she will bring to our country as president. For example, a plan that Harris has that has caught my attention through social media is her plan to legalize abortion nationwide. As someone who is very passionate about women's rights, this is very meaningful to me. Harris has gained the attention of young voters, who previously have had low political engagement. Harris and her campaign are counting on these young voters to bring their "brat" vibe to the polls on November 5 and make history by electing America's first female president.

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## The 2024 Election Cycle: A Finale to the Extraordinary

IAN KIM



COURTESY OF PANET

As election day closes in, calling this cycle extraordinary would be an understatement. American elections are some of the most closely watched and largely scaled resource allocation exercises in the world, and their ability to alter international diplomacy for a four-year span gravitates millions of viewers, including myself. The U.S. elections can naturally favor the candidate who can reach more voters via rallies, ads, and events. This is why the elections usually rely on millions of dollars of donations to sustain their campaigns, especially for Kamala Harris, who has to compete with a continued campaign as large as Donald Trump's. As a result, the usual American election comes with much attention and heated political rhetoric. This election cycle has been extraordinary, and so have the views, voices, and supporters.

Never have the electoral candidates been this different in their plans for the country and never have the demographics of their support been this polarized. On one hand, focusing on consistent demographics is important. Trump has continued to strengthen his campaign with his main demographic: white men without college degrees. Harris has similarly sought to appeal to liberals who previously supported Biden. On the other hand, though, Trump has managed to rally support from Latine voters on immigration, as many of them are now in support and contribute to the rise of Latine conservatism. Harris has also captivated young voters who

just graduated college with her liberal policies on climate change and abortion. The main talking points of this election have been the economy, reproductive rights, immigration, and democracy. Currently, people compare Trump as being more capable of handling the economy and immigration, while Harris leads in abortion rights and preservation of democracy. Voters say that Trump leads Harris on economic capabilities 93 to 68, immigration 82 to 39 leaning towards Trump, while Harris leads on abortion 67 to 35 and leads in preserving democracy. These numbers show the percentage rate of approval among likely voters. With narrowing polls and conflicted audiences, the ultimate decision seems to come down to the public view on each candidate's capabilities in juxtaposition with their weaknesses.

Harris offers a more pragmatic vision for her term, vowing to restore reproductive freedoms by reinstating Roe v. Wade, increasing taxes for businesses and big corporations, and increasing the Child Tax Credit for starting families. She aligns with a lot of the democratic party's views, proposing plans that will require an expansion of governmental control and regulation. She plans to continue many ideals of Bidenomics (defined by providing relief from Covid-19 and increasing infrastructure funding with tax increases for the rich) to provide lower-and-middle-class Americans with inflation relief. Harris also proposes a bipartisan immigration bill to give her and the justice system more speed and flexibility to deport migrants. She has attempted to distance herself from more progressive ideals in order to accommodate the swing voters that are key to getting her to the White House. Her logic and calmness compared to her opponents have attracted Republicans tired of Trump's temper and often extreme rhetoric.

On the opposite side of the spectrum, Trump provides bold and brash promises that would appeal to conservative swings and Democrats. Some Democrats were already frustrated by Biden's prag-

matic approach to politics which is steady but difficult in gaining public appeal. This ties into why Biden didn't perform as well in the polls compared to his counterpart, precisely because he got the job done but couldn't tell the public. Trump, though, seemed like a candidate that wasn't afraid to promise those big changes. He has planned to both increase a big corporate tax cut but also carry out the "biggest deportation project in the history of this country" with the help of the military. Additionally, Trump plans to withdraw the U.S. from any international climate agreements, promising that his proposals will decrease inflation.

These widely different views for the country have each been championed by innumerable big voices and rich forces. Over 1 billion dollars have been raised by Harris for President and Trump for President in their campaigns, a record-breaking amount never seen in the history of all presidential bids. Thanks to this, both campaigns have been able to host lots of rallies to gather support. Barack and Michelle Obama, Taylor Swift, Eminem, and former Republicans, have endorsed Harris to create a strong public opinion of inclusion and support. In fact, never in the history of this country has support from the previous president's cabinet been so low, and Democrats are using this as a direct attack to prove Trump's difficult personality and immoral beliefs. Elon Musk has probably been the most controversial and strong supporter of Trump, using huge amounts of his time and resources hoping to help the former president reclaim the presidency. He regularly participates in Trump's key rallies in swing states and offers money to people signing pro-conservative petitions. Perhaps this election was the most publicly engaging, with so many celebrities and news media channels being politically active. Although influential endorsements don't always lead to an increase in support, these endorsements have the potential to help the public understand the diverse perspectives of multiple people, allowing them to fully par-



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ticipate in the democratic process with more knowledge to support a candidate.

Graphing the polling averages of all of the polls collected since the day after Biden's drop-out, Harris leads Trump narrowly by 1.2 points as of October 31. It is significant to note that this is well within the margin of error of +/- 4 points. This is the closest the polls have been in modern history. Comparatively, in 2020, Biden enjoyed a 9.4 points lead over Trump throughout the entire cycle. The accuracy of these polls should also be questioned, noting that Trump won the Electoral College while trailing in the polls against Democrat Hillary Clinton in 2016. Similarly to 2016, the polls are so close that narrow leads can be rendered inconsequential. The current state of the Electoral College seems to give Harris 226 safe candidates that will pledge to her, with Trump projected to receive 219 electoral college votes without contest. The battleground states in this cycle are Arizona, Nevada, Georgia, North Carolina, Wisconsin, Michigan, and, most importantly, Pennsylvania. There is no clear leader in these states and the delegates will not know how they have to pledge until the people have voted. The biggest prize this year is Pennsylvania, with 19 delegates up for grabs. Remembering that the winning candidate has to win 270, Harris has a better chance of clinching the nomination in this incredibly tight race. Out of the seven battlegrounds,

Harris doesn't necessarily have more popularity but rather has more flexibility. Even if Trump wins all four southern states of Nevada, Arizona, Georgia, and North Carolina, he would have no other option but to break the blue wall, which consists of the Northern top states excluding Montana, North Dakota, and Idaho that are traditionally known to be a democratic sweep, and win in either Wisconsin, Michigan, or Pennsylvania. Harris, on the other hand, can win just by securing the blue wall, and can replace any of her losses in the Rust Belt with one or two wins in the Sun Belt.

This election provided America with two binary extremes: one pragmatic progressive and one populist conservative. With political rhetoric getting sharper, America is still divided on its views of the future of the country, and the candidates are in their final sprint in pursuit of the White House. This election gave voters an immense amount of information on the candidates, with high-profile endorsements coming in from both sides. Financial ability has become crucial to convincing voters. As of now, the Harris campaign has more flexible paths to victory, but the election is historically close in the exceedingly divided country. With only a few days left, here's to the extraordinary.

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**Sebastian Lemberger '25**

The writings of the philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel give the impression of history as an entity that looms over the world, possessing some sort of capacity for “reason” that compels things to happen the way they do. In moments like the upcoming election, I feel like this entity of “history” is breathing down our necks. There is so much at stake in the upcoming election for climate change, the economy, and even basic democracy that we cannot afford to misstep. Where I would disagree with Hegel is that, in his mind, all events in history have rationality behind them. If there could be some way to rationalize the destruction of America’s political institutions under a second Trump presidency, I’d love to hear it.

**Samson Gong '26**

I’m really dreading a repeat of 2016. As someone whose family has had a really slow immigration experience, despite having been here for half my life, protecting immigration and immigrants is definitely my top concern. Otherwise, I don’t feel that either candidate represents the issues I care about very well. I find it difficult to trust polls and I’m wary of overconfidence around the results, but I’m still hopeful for a positive result in terms of immigration policy.

**Liam Gray '27**

My opinion about politics and the election is that the election seems unfair. From what I have heard from different media, I found that a lot of people who don’t want to vote for one president will just vote for the other without any knowledge of who they really are and what they stand for. To me, some votes don’t really reflect an honest opinion about the candidates running for president.

**Russell Robinson '25**

The election’s shaping up to be a lot closer than I’d like. Though I appreciate a lot of President Biden’s actions and policies, I was considering supporting a third-party candidate while he was still running because I wasn’t especially passionate about more of the same. On the other hand, I feel that there’s a lot more energy around Vice President Harris, so I’m more excited about supporting her candidacy. Sadly, I think that third-party votes in this election are almost throwaways. Nonetheless, characters like Jill Stein worry me, especially because of their impact on the 2016 election.

**Inti Stephenson '25**

I feel pretty confident about the election’s outcome at this point, and there are a lot of opportunities for the Harris campaign to grow. What I’m concerned about is what might happen if Trump loses again. I’m confident that Kamala will win, but if that happens there’s a high chance of political violence. Unfortunately, it’s very likely we’ll see something similar to January 6 happen again after the election.

**Cyrus Law '27**

With countless predictions disagreeing over who will win the upcoming election, it’s hard to say who will win. However, as an apolitical observer, I think recent developments have been in favor of the Republican Party. Even though current polls have shown Kamala Harris to be slightly more popular, Trump seems to be closing the gap. Of course, polls may not accurately portray the thoughts and feelings of voters, but given Biden’s withdrawal from the race and the failed assassination attempts on Trump, the Democratic Party has not been painted in a particularly positive light.

**Keren Song '26**

Because this country is so polarized, I feel that every time I try to speak on American elections, someone reminds me just how little authority I have on this issue. It’s ironic because I’m an immigrant and I’m young, which means I’m going to live here for a long time, and so the policies that are made now will probably affect me more than many of the voters and politicians leading the country. If I don’t have any authority around elections, who does? The stakes are really high, but I also have high hopes for the election. Though I feel certain people are trying to convince voters to vote against their issues, I have faith in the spread of information because of social media.

**Allegra Lee '27**

I don’t know how the presidential election will turn out, and I honestly feel like I don’t need to. I could gather all the evidence I wanted to make a solid prediction: the poll numbers, the state maps, the donations given, and the endorsements made towards which party. But I’m a person who believes anything can change anytime. Maybe that’s in the spirit of an optimist, but I don’t want to let numbers limit what is possible. If I say supporting a candidate isn’t worth the fight because of some random poll, I’m just letting them lose.