

# [***Michelle Obama Gets Boost From Gen Z, Millennials***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6C0C-2GB1-JBR6-9005-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Highlight:** A new CNBC and Generation Lab survey showed that former first lady Michelle Obama has a substantial amount of support.

**Body**

[*Gen Z*](https://www.newsweek.com/employers-say-gen-z-toxic-workplace-1882557?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) and [*millennials*](https://www.newsweek.com/millennials-rapidly-getting-richer-wealth-1898323?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) might not be fans of President [*Joe Biden*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/joe-biden?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) or former President [*Donald Trump*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/donald-trump?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships), but former first lady [*Michelle Obama*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/michelle-obama?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) has their support, a new survey showed.

The younger generations have a lackluster amount of support for the two presidents and 2024 foes, but a new CNBC and Generation Lab survey showed that Obama has substantial backing.

Among roughly 1,000 Americans ages 18 to 34, 42 percent said Obama would be best for the economy, compared to 37 percent for Trump and 25 percent for Biden.

"Young people long have desired their leaders to share their own values, but this has become intensified today," University of Waterloo professor and millennial expert Markus Moos told *Newsweek*. "Young people know there are pragmatic limitations on what leaders can deliver but they want them to be honest about it, and not to stop trying because of entrenched interest groups. Young people probably see many of these values reflected in Michelle Obama."

As first lady, Obama—a lawyer with a long record of public service—advocated to end [*childhood obesity*](https://www.newsweek.com/fruit-juice-linked-weight-gain-kids-1861085?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) through her Let's Move initiative to provide more nutritious foods in schools and enable more active lifestyles for children. She also is an outspoken advocate for education across the country and especially for girls and women.

It's not surprising Obama has retained such support among young people, said Jane Hall, a professor at American University's School of Communication and the author of ***Politics*** *and the Media: Intersections and New Directions*.

"She is seen by my college students and other young people as 'not a politician' at a time when young people are very cynical about the motives of anybody running for office," Hall told *Newsweek.*

Many Gen Z and millennials recall Obama's work regarding nutrition, physical fitness and encouraging education from when they were children or teenagers. Obama has also been able to keep up a "cool" image.

"She has said repeatedly that she doesn't want to run for office, but her celebrity and good will towards her still could certainly be helpful to Biden and the [*Democrats*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/democrats?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) with young people as a surrogate in outreach to them," Hall said.

Jayne Charneski, a consumer culture consultant and generation expert, said Obama also represents a form of nostalgia for Gen Z and millennials, as she represents an entirely different time period in their lives.

"Obama's message was one of hope," Charneski told *Newsweek.* "That simple message is quite different from the messages politicians are promoting today. Ditto Michelle's message. 'When they go low, we go high.' This type of positive, optimistic ethos was drilled into millennials from their parents, brands, advertising, and resonated with them deeply."

Biden and Trump have often struggled to gain traction among young voters. While young people have historically favored the Democratic candidate, Biden is having issues catering to this group in part due to his support for Israel in its conflict with [*Hamas*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/hamas?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships).

"Sure, great, but please tell Joe what we really want is for him to stop the genocide in Palestine, and he's not buying my vote with any amount of loan forgiveness," one public comment on Biden's most recent student debt forgiveness proposal reads.

Biden has pushed millions of dollars in [*student loan forgiveness*](https://www.newsweek.com/vault/student-loans/student-loan-forgiveness/?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) programs, but it's not clear which policies will hold the most weight in young voters' minds in November.

"Even if students benefited and recognized Biden's support for it, they may not be sufficiently persuaded to vote for him as opposed to another candidate or to even vote at all," Robert Shapiro, a professor of government and international affairs at Columbia University, previously told *Newsweek.*

[*Link to Image*](https://d.newsweek.com/en/full/2390487/michelle-obama.jpg)

**Graphic**

Michelle Obama

Jean Catuffe/GC Images

Former President of the United States Barak Obama and former First Lady Michelle Obama attend opening night on day one of the 2023 US Open at Arthur Ashe Stadium at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center on August 28, 2023 in the Flushing neighborhood of the Queens borough of New York City. Michelle Obama has considerable support among Gen Z and millennial voters.

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