
The 45th president

Donald Trump shocked the political establishment Tuesday, triumphing over not just Hillary Clinton but large parts of his own party's hierarchy to become the 45th president in one of the biggest upsets in U.S. political history.

Speaking to cheering supporters at a Midtown Manhattan hotel flanked by members of his family, Trump, who had repeatedly denounced his rival during the campaign as "corrupt" and "crooked," struck a conciliatory note. Clinton had called to congratulate him, he said, and he had congratulated her for the campaign she waged.

"Hillary has worked very long and very hard for a long period of time," he said. "We owe her a major debt of gratitude for her service.

"Now it's time for America to bind the wounds of division," he added. "I say it is time for us to come together as one united people.

"No dream is too big, no challenge is too great," he declared. "America will no longer settle for anything less than the best. We must reclaim our country's best and dream big and bold and daring."

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— Donald Trump

Less than an hour earlier, and a few blocks away, Clinton's campaign manager, John Podesta, had told a dispirited crowd at the Javits Center that the former secretary of State would wait until at least the morning before making a formal decision on conceding.

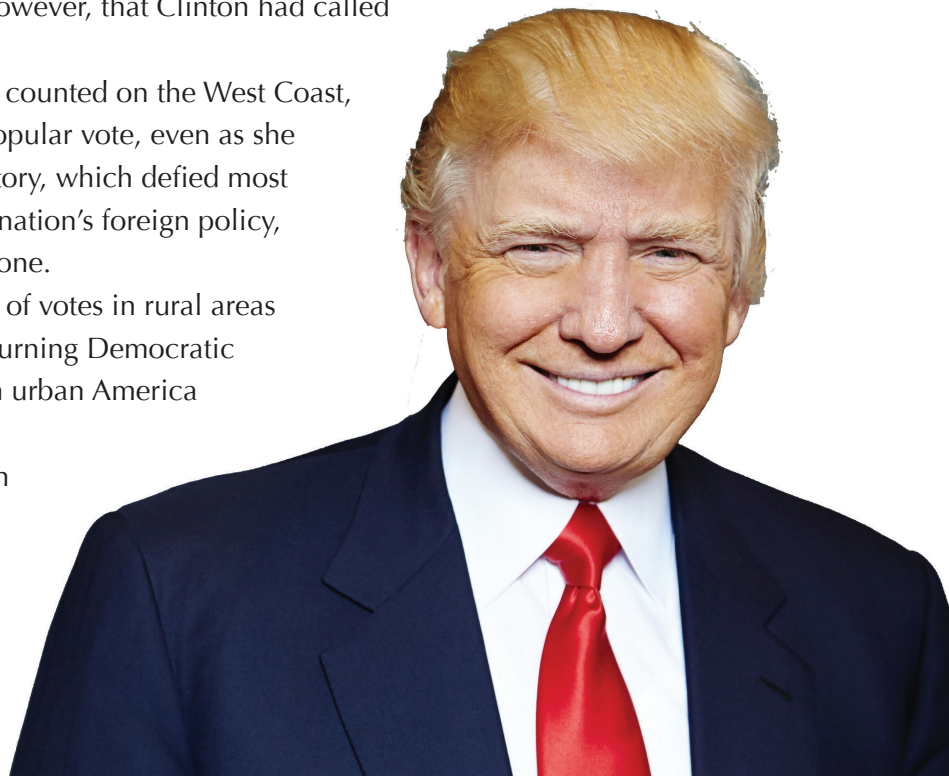
Trump won. Tell us how you're feeling? »

The campaign subsequently confirmed, however, that Clinton had called Trump to concede.

Democrats noted that once all ballots are counted on the West Coast, Clinton might well end up winning the popular vote, even as she lost the electoral college. But Trump's victory, which defied most preelection polls and the opinions of the nation's foreign policy, financial and cultural elites, was a broad one.

He won because of a massive outpouring of votes in rural areas and small towns across the country, overturning Democratic calculations that the party's dominance in urban America would seal a Clinton victory.

With Republicans also beating the odds in close Senate races, the party stood on the verge of having a united government in their hands once again for the first time in a decade.



Amid unusually high turnout in several keenly contested states, Clinton received strong support from minority voters, especially Latinos, and did much better among college-educated white voters than any previous Democratic nominee.

In several states, including such battlegrounds as Florida and Nevada, an outpouring of early voting by Democrats broke records and prompted Clinton strategists to prematurely predict victory.

Trump countered on election day, piling up huge majorities among the non-college-educated, blue-collar whites who have long been the mainstay of his support.

Clinton's backing lagged behind the levels achieved by President Obama four years ago in several key areas. In some major cities, African American voters did not turn out as heavily for her as they had for Obama. The deficits were even more pronounced in blue-collar white regions such as northeastern Pennsylvania. There Clinton's weakness offset her strength in the state's suburbs, leading to an excruciatingly close race that saw-sawed through the evening.

But the central story of the night was not Clinton's weakness so much as Trump's strength and the ardent support he inspired among voters who stood with him despite a campaign full of tribulations, many self-inflicted. While Clinton won Virginia, Colorado and Nevada, states that Democrats pointed to as examples of the growing racial and ethnic diversity that would cement their majority, Trump's appeal to an older, less cosmopolitan America brought him victories in Ohio and Florida, and buoyed him in the final fights for the industrial states.

As financial markets absorbed the possibility that Trump might win the presidency, futures dropped, as did the Mexican peso. Markets had risen significantly in recent days as most polls showed Clinton's position strengthening.

The voting came at the close of a tumultuous campaign in which Clinton sought not only to become the first woman elected president but also to win a third term for her party in the White House — a difficult task last accomplished by President George H.W. Bush more than a generation ago.

The campaign repeatedly upset expectations: Clinton, despite her quest to break a glass ceiling that has persisted throughout American history, was cast as the candidate of the status quo. Trump, despite his vast wealth and political connections, successfully took the role of outsider, expressing the grievances and anger of much of the nation's white working class.

After a campaign as divisive as any in modern American history, dawn broke Tuesday to the sight of long lines of voters waiting patiently outside polling places, as if people feeling long ignored as the candidates squabbled had stepped in to protect the nation's tradition of peaceful transitions.

Nationally, there were few reported difficulties beyond the usual snafus in a smattering of districts.

The generally smooth election day provided a counterpoint to a campaign that repeatedly brought to the surface deep division along lines of race, gender and class.

Time and again, the campaign swayed under the weight of the candidates' weaknesses, with much of the worst damage to both being self-inflicted.

For Clinton, the most prominent drama centered on her use of a private email server to handle sensitive information during her tenure as secretary of State. The issue dogged her from the campaign's opening days until its end, erupting once again less than two weeks before the election when FBI Director James B. Comey announced his agents were looking at a fresh batch of emails to ascertain their relevance.