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# Asian Americans Solidly Behind Obama, Poll Reveals

By Kevin Canessa Jr.

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Asian Americans are solidly behind Sen. Barack Obama, both around the country and especially in New Jersey and New York, a poll conducted by Rutgers University Prof. Jane Junn and the Eagleton Institute reveals. Junn announced the results of the polling Tuesday at the Eagleton Institute's New Brunswick, N.J., offices on the campus of Rutgers University.

According to the poll of Asian Americans, Obama leads Sen. John McCain 37 to 18 percent in New Jersey and is ahead 42 to 20 percent in New York, trends that are mirrored nationally, Junn says.

The New Jersey/New York polling data is a supplement to the National Asian American Survey, the very first large-scale survey taken of Asian Americans. More than 4,000 Asian Americans were sampled between Aug. 18 and Sept. 26, Junn says.

Nationally, 34 percent of Asian Americans polled say they haven't yet made up their minds as to whom they'll vote for Nov. 4.



Perhaps the most striking figure of all polling data is

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that nearly 50 percent of those polled say they consider themselves neither a Democrat nor a Republican.

"The large number of undecided voters and their low levels of party identification signal a big opportunity for parties and candidates looking for electoral support," Junn says.

The extensive poll required a massive undertaking by Junn and her colleagues. In addition to the Eagleton Institute, pollsters from the University of California Riverside, the University of Southern California and the University of California--Berkeley were also used. Each person was polled on the telephone--and because many newer Asian-American immigrants don't yet speak English, Junn was able to conduct the surveys in eight languages: English, Cantonese, Mandarin, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Tagalog and Vietnamese.

Junn says having pollsters who spoke the different languages made the survey process easier. "When people are spoken to in their native tongue, it makes them more apt to want to participate," the political-science professor says. "It was still an incredible amount of work to pull things together."

In pulling things together, the poll revealed that Asian Americans, like most other Americans, are most concerned about one thing: the economy.

Of those polled, 74 percent in New Jersey and 62 percent in New York said the economy was the issue they were most concerned about. The poll was similar across the country as well.

And while the data spells good news for Obama, it's not all positive.

Those who voted for Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton in the primaries were asked whom they were voting for in the general election. While many said Obama--46 percent in New Jersey and 50 percent in New York--an average of 15 percent of those polled said they'd be voting for McCain come November. The rest were still undecided.

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