

Barack Obama II

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Barack Obama II born August, 4, 1961 is the junior United States Senator from Illinois and presidential nominee of the Democratic Party in the 2008 general election. Obama is the first African American to be nominated by a major political party for president.[1] A graduate of Columbia University and Harvard Law School, where he served as president of the Harvard Law Review, Obama worked as a community organizer and practiced as a civil rights attorney before serving in the Illinois Senate from 1997 to 2004. He taught constitutional law at the University of Chicago Law School from 1992 to 2004. Following an unsuccessful bid for a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives in 2000, he announced his campaign for the U.S. Senate in January 2003. After a primary victory in March 2004, Obama delivered the keynote address at the Democratic National Convention in July 2004. He was elected to the Senate in November 2004 with 70% of the vote. As a member of the Democratic minority in the 109th Congress, he helped create legislation to control conventional weapons and to promote greater public accountability in the use of federal funds. He also made official trips to Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. During the 110th Congress, he helped create legislation regarding lobbying and electoral fraud, climate change, nuclear terrorism, and care for returned U.S. military personnel. After announcing his presidential campaign in February 2007, Obama emphasized withdrawing American troops from Iraq, energy independence, decreasing the influence of lobbyists, and promoting universal health care as top national priorities.

Early life and career

Barack Obama was born on August 4, 1961, in Honolulu, Hawaii, to Barack Obama, Sr., a black Kenyan of Nyang'oma Kogelo, Siaya District, Kenya, and Ann Dunham, a White American from Wichita, Kansas. His parents met while attending the University of Hawaii at Manoa, where his father was a foreign student. They separated when he was two years old and later divorced. Obama's father returned to Kenya and saw his son only once more before dying in an



automobile accident in 1982. After her divorce, Dunham married Lolo Soetoro, and the family moved to Soetoro's home country of Indonesia in 1967, where Obama attended local schools in Jakarta until he was ten years old. He then returned to Honolulu to live with his maternal grandparents while attending Punahou School from the fifth grade in 1971 until his graduation from high school in 1979. Obama's mother returned to Hawaii in 1972 for several years and then back to Indonesia for her fieldwork. She died of ovarian cancer in 1995. As an adult Obama admitted that during high school he used marijuana, cocaine, and alcohol, which he described at the 2008 Civil Forum on the Presidency as his greatest moral failure. Following high school, Obama moved to Los Angeles, where he studied at Occidental College for two years. He then transferred to Columbia University in New York City, where he majored in political science with a specialization in international relations. Obama graduated with a B.A. from Columbia in 1983, then worked for a year at the Business International Corporation[12] and then at the New York Public Interest Research Group. After four years in New York City, Obama moved to Chicago to work as a community organizer for three years from June 1985 to May 1988 as director of the Developing Communities Project (DCP), a church-based community organization originally comprising eight Catholic parishes in Greater Roseland (Roseland, West Pullman, and Riverdale) on Chicago's far South Side.[13][15] Dur-

ing his three years as the DCP's director, its staff grew from one to thirteen and its annual budget grew from \$70,000 to \$400,000, with accomplishments including helping set up a job training program, a college preparatory tutoring program, and a tenants' rights organization in Altgeld Gardens.[16] Obama also worked as a consultant and instructor for the Gamaliel Foundation, a community organizing institute. Obama entered Harvard Law School in late 1988. At the end of his first year, he was selected, based on his grades and a writing competition, as an editor of the Harvard Law Review. In February 1990, in his second year, he was elected president of the Law Review, a full-time volunteer position functioning as editor-in-chief and supervising the Law Review's staff of eighty editors. Obama's election as the first black president of the Law Review was widely reported and followed by several long, detailed profiles. During his summers, he returned to Chicago where he worked as a summer associate at the law firms of Sidley & Austin in 1989 and Hopkins & Sutter in 1990.[21] After graduating with a Juris Doctor (J.D.) magna cum laude from Harvard in 1991, he returned to Chicago. The publicity from his election as the first black president of the Harvard Law Review led to a publishing contract and advance for a book about race relations. In an effort to recruit him to their faculty, the University of Chicago Law School provided Obama with a fellowship and an office to work on his book. He originally planned to finish the book in one year, but it took much longer as the book evolved into a personal memoir. In order to work without interruptions, Obama and his wife, Michelle, traveled to Bali where he wrote for several months. The manuscript was finally published in mid-1995 as *Dreams from My Father*. Obama directed Illinois' Project Vote from April to October 1992, a voter registration drive with a staff of ten and seven hundred volunteers; it achieved its goal of registering 150,000 of 400,000 unregistered African-Americans in the state, and led to Crain's Chicago Business naming Obama to its 1993 list of "40 under Forty" powers to be.

Beginning in 1992, Obama taught constitutional law at the University of Chicago

Law School for twelve years, being first classified as a Lecturer from 1992 to 1996, and then as a Senior Lecturer from 1996 to 2004. He also, in 1993, joined Davis, Miner, Barnhill & Galland, a twelve attorney law firm specializing in civil rights litigation and neighborhood economic development, where he was an associate for three years from 1993 to 1996, then of counsel from 1996 to 2004, with his law license becoming inactive in 2002. Obama was a founding member of the board of directors of Public Allies in 1992, resigning before his wife, Michelle, became the founding executive director of Public Allies Chicago in early 1993. He served from 1993 to 2002 on the board of directors of the Woods Fund of Chicago, which in 1985 had been the first foundation to fund Obama's DCP, and also from 1994 to 2002 on the board of directors of The Joyce Foundation. Obama served on the board of directors of the Chicago Annenberg Challenge from 1995–2002, as founding president and chairman of the board of directors from 1995–1999. He also served on the board of directors of the Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, the Center for Neighborhood Technology, and the Lugenia Burns Hope Center.

2008 presidential campaign

On February 10, 2007 Obama announced his candidacy for President of the United States in front of the Old State Capitol building in Springfield, Illinois. Throughout the campaign Obama has emphasized the issues of ending the Iraq War, increasing energy independence, and providing universal health care, at one point identifying these as his top three priorities. Obama's campaign raised \$58 million during the first half of 2007, of which "small" donations of less than \$200 accounted for \$16.4 million. The \$58 million set the record for fundraising by a presidential campaign in the first six months of the calendar year before the election. In January 2008, his campaign set another fundraising record with \$36.8 million, the most ever raised in one month by a presidential candidate in the Democratic primaries. On June 19, Obama became the first major-party presidential candidate to turn down public financing in the general election since the system was created in 1976, reversing his earlier intention to accept it. On August 23, 2008, Obama selected Delaware Sen. Joe Biden as his vice presidential running mate.

John McCain

John Sidney McCain III (born August 29, 1936) is the senior United States Senator from Arizona and presidential nominee of the Republican Party in the 2008 presidential election. McCain graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1958. He became a naval aviator, flying ground-attack aircraft from aircraft carriers. During the Vietnam War, he nearly lost his life in the 1967 USS *Forrestal* fire. Later that year while on a bombing mission over North Vietnam, he was shot down, badly injured, and captured as a prisoner of war by the North Vietnamese. He was held from 1967 to 1973, experiencing episodes of torture and refusing an out-of-sequence early repatriation offer; his war wounds left him with lifelong physical limitations. He retired from the Navy as a captain in 1981, moved to Arizona, and entered politics. Elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1982, he served two terms, and was then elected to the U.S. Senate in 1986, winning re-election easily in 1992, 1998, and 2004. While generally adhering to conservative principles, McCain at times has had a media reputation as a "maverick" for disagreeing with his party on several key issues. After being investigated and largely exonerated in a political influence scandal of the 1980s as a member of the "Keating Five," he made campaign finance reform one of his signature concerns, which eventually led to the passage of the McCain-Feingold Act in 2002. He is also known for his work towards restoring diplomatic relations with Vietnam in the 1990s, and for his belief that the war in Iraq should be fought to a successful conclusion in the 2000s. McCain has chaired the Senate Commerce Committee, has opposed pork barrel spending, and played a key role in alleviating a crisis over judicial nominations. McCain lost his bid for the Republican nomination in the 2000 presidential election to George W. Bush. He ran

again for the Republican presidential nomination in 2008, and gained enough delegates to become the party's presumptive nominee in March 2008. McCain was formally nominated at the 2008 Republican National Convention in September 2008, together with his chosen running mate from Alaska, Governor Sarah Palin.

Early life and military career, 1936–1981 Formative years and education

John McCain was born in 1936 at Coco Solo Naval Air Station in the Panama Canal Zone, Panama, to naval officer John S. McCain, Jr. (1911–1981) and Roberta (Wright) McCain (b. 1912). At that time, the Panama Canal was under American control. McCain has Scots-Irish, Anglo-Irish and English ancestry. His father and his paternal grandfather both became four-star United States Navy admirals. His family, including his older sister Sandy and younger brother Joe, followed his father to various naval postings in the United States and the Pacific. In 1951, his family settled in Northern Virginia, and McCain attended Episcopal High School, a private preparatory boarding school in Alexandria. In high school, he excelled at wrestling and graduated in 1954. Following in the footsteps of his father and grandfather, McCain entered the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis. McCain came into conflict with higher-ranking personnel, he did not always obey the rules, and that contributed to a low class rank (894 of 899) despite a strong intelligence. He did well in academic subjects that interested him, such as literature and history, but studied only enough to pass subjects he struggled with, such as mathematics. McCain graduated in 1958.

Naval training, first marriage, and Vietnam assignment

McCain's pre-combat duty began when he was commissioned an ensign, and started two and a half years of training at Pensacola



as a naval aviator. While there, he earned a reputation as a partying man. He completed flight school in 1960, and became a naval pilot of ground-attack aircraft, assigned to A-1 Skyraider squadrons aboard the aircraft carriers USS *Intrepid* and USS *Enterprise*[16] in the Caribbean and Mediterranean Seas. The planes he was flying crashed twice and once collided with power lines, but he received no major injuries. On July 3, 1965, McCain married Carol Shepp, a model originally from Philadelphia. McCain adopted her two young children Douglas and Andrew. He and Carol then had a daughter named Sidney.

Commanding officer, liaison to Senate, and second marriage

McCain's return from duty to the United States reunited him with his family. His wife Carol had suffered her own crippling ordeal during his captivity, due to an automobile accident in December 1969. Her husband became a celebrity of sorts, as a returned POW. McCain underwent treatment for his injuries, including months of grueling physical therapy, and attended the National War College at Fort McNair in Washington, D.C. during 1973–1974. Having been rehabilitated, by late 1974, McCain had his flight status reinstated, and in 1976 he became commanding officer of a training

squadron stationed in Florida. During this period in Florida, McCain had extramarital affairs, and the McCains' marriage began to falter. In April 1979, McCain met Cindy Lou Hensley, a teacher from Phoenix, Arizona, whose father had founded a large beer distributorship. They began dating, and he urged his wife Carol to grant him a divorce, which she did in February 1980, with the uncontested divorce taking effect in April 1980. McCain and Hensley were married on May 17, 1980, with Senators William Cohen and Gary Hart attending as groomsmen. McCain's children did not attend, and several years would pass before they reconciled.

2008 presidential campaign

John McCain formally announced his intention to run for President of the United States on April 25, 2007 in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. McCain had fundraising problems in the first half of 2007, due in part to his support for the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2007, which was unpopular among the Republican base electorate. On February 5, McCain won both the majority of states and delegates in the Super Tuesday Republican primaries, giving him a commanding lead toward the Republican nomination. Romney departed from the race on February 7. McCain's wins in the March 4 primaries clinched a majority of the delegates, and he became the presumptive Republican nominee. If he wins the presidency, John McCain's birth (in Panama) would be the first presidential birth outside the current 50 states. Also, if inaugurated in 2009 at age 72 years and 144 days, he would be the oldest U.S. president upon ascension to the presidency, [and the second-oldest president to be inaugurated. McCain has been treated for a type of skin cancer called melanoma, and an operation in 2000 for that condition left a noticeable mark on the left side of his face. McCain accepted public financing for the general election campaign, and the restrictions that go with it