

INSIDE MICHIGAN POLITICS

IMP's 2013 Election Winners and Losers

Duggan Unites Democrats and Republicans, Unions Take it on the Chin Again

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Now that the dust has settled, **Inside Michigan Politics** is offering our take on who triumphed and who was trounced in the 2013 election.

Winners

1. **Mike Duggan, the Great Uniter.** It's not every day that former Gov. **Jennifer Granholm** and current Gov. **Rick Snyder** agree on anything, but that's the power of Detroit's new mayor. Even Michigan GOP Regional Press Secretary **Luke Londo** took to social media to praise Duggan, underscoring the fact that many Republicans and Democrats alike are comfortable with the former Detroit Medical Center CEO, who's said he'll work with the Snyder administration through Motown's bankruptcy. In fact, MSNBC on Tuesday mislabeled Duggan as a Republican, causing some liberal Democrats to snark that the network had gotten it right.
2. **Gay Rights as a Wedge Issue.** Royal Oak voters solidly upheld a nondiscrimination ordinance, becoming the 30th municipality in Michigan to have a measure on the books. This would seem to be a no-brainer in a reliably Democratic city, but arguments that it would lead to "sex crimes" and an at-times disorganized "yes" campaign made this one interesting. Even more interesting is that savvy Dems now believe that gay rights is an official wedge issue in their favor, quite a turnaround from the 2004 election when Michigan passed its gay-marriage ban. If a federal judge next year doesn't legalize gay marriage here, a 2016 ballot measure is a foregone conclusion.
3. **Establishment Republicans.** Two gaffe-prone Tea Partiers lost in suburban Detroit – an area key to the GOP's hopes for the gubernatorial and U.S. Senate races in 2014. The Tea Party's energy is still appreciated, but Republicans don't need or want extremists as the face of their party. So few tears were shed when recalled Troy Mayor **Janice Daniels**, known for colorful remarks about gays and lesbians, on Tuesday lost her City Council

bid. That goes for bombastic Sterling Heights City Councilman **Paul Smith**, who's had several run-ins with the police, and lost his re-election bid by a wide margin.

Losers

1. **Unions.** Two of the biggest unions, the UAW and AFSCME, put their muscle behind **Benny Napoleon** in the Detroit mayoral race, despite all indications that **Mike Duggan** would cruise to victory. It's reminiscent of their quixotic support of **Virg Bernero** in 2010, who unions helped win the Democratic primary, only to see him crushed by 18 points in the general election. This latest defeat, less than a year after Right to Work, is one more indication that union power ain't what it used to be.
2. **Dave Bing.** He was the last, best hope of the business community to save Detroit, but critics said his lack of government experience proved he wasn't up to the job. With Detroit's bankruptcy, it's clear that Bing wasn't. And since Emergency Manager Kevyn Orr was appointed, it's been more like "Dave Who?" Bing was a non-issue in the Detroit mayoral race, reflecting the non-existent imprint he's left in the state's largest city.
3. **Anti-Pot Advocates.** There were three measures on the ballot to decriminalize small amounts of marijuana. Lansing, Ferndale and even conservative Jackson passed them with flying colors. An alliance has been forged between the libertarian wing of the GOP and liberals in the Democratic Party. Look for a statewide initiative, like ones that passed last year in Washington and Colorado, to be in Michigan's future.