



Students who set up camp at the Howard Thurman Center to watch election night coverage react to the results.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY KALIMAN ZABARSKY

“I Saw a Lot of Smiles Today”

On a historic election night, students come together

ELECTION NIGHT BROUGHT students out en masse to the George Sherman Union to watch the results and celebrate their part in a moment of history. BU’s Howard Thurman Center, the campus’s cultural gathering spot, hosted a festive election-night party. “I saw a lot of smiles today,” says Raul Fernandez (COM’00), assistant director of the center. “People were jumping up and down, screaming, tears everywhere — you name it,” he says.

“The racial and ethnic diversity we saw was amazing,” Fernandez continues. “We had black, white, Asian, and Latino students watching together, cheering together, and believing together.”

And the day after the election, the sense of momentousness hadn’t faded. Elizabeth Mehren, a College of Communication professor of journalism and a former

national correspondent with the *Los Angeles Times*, had two classes to teach that day, and for both, “I threw away my syllabus, because this is just such a moment of history,” she says.

“We studied the victory and the concession speeches,” Mehren says. “The students talked about the inclusiveness of Obama’s speech, that he wrapped in so many different sections of America, including the disabled. There was a lot of discussion of the crowd, that it was so diverse, that that level of diversity is the new normal. They talked about his use of language, the way he invoked Lincoln.

“On McCain’s speech,” she recalls, “they said if he had talked like that throughout the campaign, he would be president. I covered the 2000 election. I was on the *Straight Talk Express*. That was the John McCain I knew.”

