



Why So Pro-Obama? Today's College Students Declare 'Yes We Can and, Obama, You Can Help!'

-Latest College Explorer study shows college students feel THEY are most likely force of change in the United States and the world

--Whopping 92% of student body plans to exercise their vote for a candidate in November with Obama clearly nabbing this market's coveted brand loyalty

(NEW YORK, NY) June 25, 2008- As the election draws closer and final candidates set the stage for the race to the ballot box, college students have declared their presidential picks and, overwhelmingly, cast their vote for the candidate most aligned with their own beliefs. These early findings from Alloy Media + Marketing's 2008 Alloy College Explorer report, powered by Harris Interactive, reveal a snapshot of the attitudes and behaviors of the largest - and perhaps most politically influential - class in history.

Coming off last year's survey, which indicated college students' general dismay over the state of our union - with 58% (net) giving fair to poor grades & almost three-quarters (73%) of respondents giving President George W. Bush's performance fair or poor marks - the campaign trail has fueled this young generation's drive to implement positive change. With just 132 days left until election day and nearly 80% of students now registered to vote, according to the survey, this group's voice is growing louder and clearer.

"This year's report finds college students heading back to campus in record numbers, with stronger brand loyalties than we've seen in previous years", stated Samantha Skey, EVP, Strategic Marketing, Alloy Media + Marketing. "Their loyalties are deep and traverse multiple categories. They're discerning citizens and consumers and their desire to invest in brands that reflect their personality is very strong. From their choice of footwear to presidential candidate, today's college students want to be aligned with names that reflect who they are as citizens and consumers."

IT'S A DEMOCRATIC DECISION

While it may come as no surprise by now that Obama is leading the polls among college students and has racked up more friends on Facebook than his Republican opposition, the College Explorer offers a look at the clear winner among multiple key segments of the college audience.



It's Obama who claims the Presidency among college students - winning the popular vote and doubling his support from last year with almost half of the college vote at 43%.

Although Hillary was still in the race when the survey was conducted, her support stayed consistent with '07 figures, retaining just 18% of the vote. What lies ahead for McCain is the question as he is pulling only half of Obama's tally with 21% of votes; just where will Hillary Clinton supporters turn their attention in November?

Also of note, whereas Hillary pulled the female vote in 2007, this year's report shows females heavily leaning toward Obama with 42% of women voters reporting that they plan to support him in November. McCain gives Obama a run for his money - where money is concerned.

Among students who rank highest in discretionary monthly spending (spending an average of more than \$500 each month on discretionary purchases), support for the candidates is in nearly a dead heat at 32% for McCain vs. 35% for Obama.

This voting class plans to exercise their freedoms to the fullest - of those registered to vote, a resounding 92% of students say they intend to show up at the polls to mark their choice for the next presidential leader.

Dana Markow, Ph.D., Vice President, Senior Consultant at Harris Interactive commented, "With close to all students appearing primed to cast their votes and with strong opinion on which candidate they feel should fill the top slot, this passionate generation undoubtedly plans to make their mark with the 2008 presidential election. This could well be history in the making, with the largest college population turnout on record."

Yes "WE" can

While candidate Barack Obama may have attached himself to the phrase, it's college students who have been shouting it all along. Today's college students are clearly affected by the ongoing events shaping our world and are well aware that the impact of decisions made today may affect their future, so they don't plan to sit on the sidelines.

Echoing their position a year ago, students still feel they are the ones that truly have the ability to effect change. When asked which group has the greatest ability to impact positive changes in the world - ranking at the top, a considerable 36% responded that people their age have what it takes. A notable measure, giving the next President-elect an even tougher challenge with influential young citizens, who state a confidence of only 20% for the U.S. Federal Government and, dropping further, just 9% for Fortune 500 companies to impact positive change.

When breaking down students' responses by ethnic demographics, the survey reveals intriguing results. Obama's rise seemingly has empowered young and optimistic black voters - over 50% of African Americans responded that they are the ones with the power to impact positive change, a figure skyrocketing since last year's response at 35%.

YOU TUBE OR YOU LOSE



For the 2008 candidates, the rules of engagement have shifted since last election. You're just as likely now to see your candidate on the social networking circuit as you are the late night TV talk show circuit and the media choices for this generation appear to multiply daily.

In a typical day, 83% of college students are using email and, further, 88% (up from 73% just last year) report engaging with social media, including visiting social networking web sites, video web sites like YouTube, and blogs. By winning a college student's vote, a candidate may also gain the full power of that student's online audience. Over one-third (36%) of students themselves have become media distributors (sharing their content or existing content with friends) - an almost 10% increase since 2007. Further, 15% are media creators, uploading or posting content that they have created. In short, they are **"The Media"**.

Social networking and user-generated web sites also show their growing influence as a source of information with almost one-quarter (16%) of college students stating that they choose to gather information about the 2008 presidential candidates through these platforms and 13% taking advantage of on-campus events, where most of the candidates made a point to connect with their hopeful constituents in the race leading to the White House.

"For a generation increasingly invested in the state of the union, today's college students have a unique ability to propel their opinions, promote their causes and garner support. They are passionate in their conviction that their generation will succeed as change agents and eager to bring their media prowess to bear for the candidate who enables them to change the world", concluded Ms. Skey.

The full Alloy College Explorer report will be available on August 1 for purchase. For more information, you may send your inquiry to Collegexplorer@alloymarketing.com.

Survey Methodology

The 2008 Alloy College Explorer study was conducted online within the United States by Harris Interactive on behalf of Alloy Media + Marketing between April 1 to April 17, 2008 among 1,554 U.S. 18-30 year old college students (2-year, 4-year and graduate students). Results were weighted as needed for age, sex, race/ethnicity, region and school status (full-time, part-time, 4-yr., 2-yr.). Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, Harris Interactive avoids the words "margin of error" as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.



Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Interactive surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the U.S. 18-30 year old college students. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to be invited to participate in the Harris Interactive online research panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

About Alloy Media + Marketing

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