

# DSA member Ocasio-Cortez beats incumbent Congressman in New York Democratic Party primary

By Isaac Finn  
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In a major political upset yesterday, Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) member Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez won the Democratic Party primary for New York's 14th Congressional District against incumbent Congressman Joe Crowley.

As of this writing, Ocasio-Cortez had received roughly 58 percent of the votes cast in the primary and will face off against Republican candidate Anthony Pappas in the November election. She is likely to win since the Republican Party has a minor base of support in the district, which includes parts of the boroughs of Queens and the Bronx in New York City. The Republicans only gained 17 percent of the vote in the 2016 elections.

Ocasio-Cortez's victory reflects a significant leftward shift of workers and youth who are hostile to the Democratic Party establishment and seeking a way to oppose inequality and the attack on immigrant workers by the Trump administration. Her own role, and that of the DSA, is to keep this opposition within the confines of the Democratic Party and prevent it from taking an independent form.

Crowley, who was favored to win the primary, had spent \$1.5 million in the election and had held a seat in Congress since 1999. He had run unopposed in every primary since 2004. He also received the full support of the Democratic Party machine, which he heads as chair of the Queens County Democratic Party and vice chair of the House Democratic Conference.

Prior to his defeat, Crowley was widely considered a potential replacement for House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi.

Ocasio-Cortez, who in comparison raised only \$300,709, refused corporate sponsorship for her

campaign and posed her candidacy as one taking on the Democratic Party establishment. While she had previously interned for Democratic Senator Ted Kennedy, she emphasized her role as an organizer for the Bernie Sanders campaign and received endorsements from Brand New Congress, a political action committee (PAC) established by former Sanders campaign staff; Sanders' Our Revolution; and Justice Democrats, as well as the DSA.

The DSA was extremely active in her campaign by canvassing, organizing phone banks, and producing her campaign video.

Among the central demands emphasized in Ocasio-Cortez's campaign was the expansion of Medicare into a universal healthcare system, a Federal Jobs Guarantee, and the abolition of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency. During the primary, Crowley had similarly posed as a defender of immigrants against the Trump administration and a proponent of the expansion of Medicare.

Ocasio-Cortez, who is of Puerto Rican descent, also called for assistance to Puerto Rico, which has remained devastated since Hurricane Maria. The 14th district is home to a large Puerto Rican population.

Ocasio-Cortez emphasized her gender and ethnicity in the race. She is Latina, like much of her district, whereas Crowley is of Irish descent. She was also endorsed by Cynthia Nixon, who is running against Governor Andrew Cuomo in the gubernatorial Democratic primary.

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