

Trump's America

By: [Adina Genn](#) November 11, 2016

In the moments approaching President-Elect Donald Trump's victory, half the nation, eager for sweeping change, cheered. The other half, heart-broken that they hadn't just elected the nation's first woman president, began a path to soldier on. Meanwhile, stocks plummeted across the world. The Canadian immigration website crashed, overwhelmed by traffic from those exploring citizenship. In the middle of the night, a veil of uncertainty hung over the nation's future.

Trump will enjoy a Republican majority in both houses of Congress. In the Senate, Republicans maintain a two-seat majority. New York Democrat Charles Schumer will serve as its minority leader.

Locally, the financial impact of Trump's victory has raised hopes but also concerns about the impact of such wide-ranging policies on economic trade, immigration, healthcare, the military and more.

On the morning after, local leaders showed that Long Island's resilient optimism is alive and well and that they are ready to roll up their sleeves and get to work, pushing forward, whether their candidate won or lost.

"The votes are in and the winner of this presidential race is infrastructure," said Marc Herbst, executive director of the Long Island Contractors Association. "It was the only topic both sides agreed on."

Still, the novelty of each candidate – a woman, and a businessman – captivated Long Islanders.

"Growing up always questioning why women could not have the same jobs, hold the same offices and have the same opportunities, having a viable qualified woman on the ballot of a major political party to become the POTUS is very exciting for me," said Carolyn Mazzenga, partner-in-charge of Marcum, in Melville. "It also is exciting to see that someone with no political experience at all can also rise to become the candidate of a major political party. Both of these are what makes this country so great."

Clearly, voters wanted change:

"I think the American people were fed up with our federal government, the regulation, the gridlock, the taxes. Donald Trump is not really a Republican; they voted against Republicans and Democrats because they want to see the change that was promised years ago," said Louis DiLorenzo, managing member of Bond Schoeneck & King, with offices in Garden City. "Of course, filling the existing vacancy, or any others that occur, on the Supreme Court, as a Republican-controlled Senate will permit confirmation, should have a significant impact on the business environment."

Having a New Yorker in the White House who knows Long Island well seems to hold a certain appeal.

"I think it's difficult to think that Mr. Trump, who grew up 20 miles from our marketplace and his core business is directly related to commercial real estate, would not be helpful to our industry," said David Chinitz, president of Melville-based Commercial Industrial Brokers Society of Long Island, and president of Park Place Realty Group in Melville. "It's exciting to think he may be able to accomplish something in Washington."

As markets began to rebound Wednesday, optimism seemed to be on the comeback.

Brad Blumenfeld, vice president of Syosset-based Blumenfeld Development Group, said, “The markets will be skittish in the short term as people get their heads around the risks and opportunities presented by the change of leadership.

“In the long term, given the uncertainty and economic malaise in the world – I would think we will continue to be in a low-interest-rate environment, which should help stabilize and give the economy room to grow,” he added



An immediate market turnaround is likely not in the cards.

“The markets are currently weak and somewhat volatile, and I don’t think that ends today,” said Craig Ferrantino, president of Melville-based Craig James Financial Services. “What I do believe is that the promised infrastructure spending combined with re-worked trade deals will be very bullish for the U.S. economy a year or two from now. In addition, I feel that interest rates will start to head up as workers come back to the labor force and the inflation will still be kept in check by increased worker productivity.

“As for investments, infrastructure companies, classic manufacturing companies and basic raw materials may have growth in excess of the overall market due to the new president’s priorities,” he added. “This is a very positive sign for the Long Island economy as expanding companies will seek to hire the type of educated and skilled workers that Long Island workers have as part of our history.”

“Donald Trump’s victory appears to have helped the Republicans keep control of the New York State senate, which is good news for Long Island,” said Kevin Law, president and CEO of the Long Island Association, the region’s largest business group. “His commitment to investing in infrastructure is critical to Long Island’s future as we are America’s oldest suburb, which means our infrastructure is also the oldest, and that needs significant attention.”

Hanging in the balance is what will happen to the 22 million people now receiving health insurance under the Affordable Care Act. Long Island will figure into the conversation.

“Representatives from Northwell Health work closely with elected officials on both sides of the political aisle, so we expect that collaboration will continue as we gain a better understanding of what the future holds for the Affordable Care Act, and the health care policies that will be fashioned in both Washington, D.C. and Albany,” said Terry Lynam, senior vice president and chief public relations officer of Northwell Health, headquartered in New Hyde Park, which has 21 hospitals and more than 500 outpatient practices.

Many were eager to simply put the election behind them.

“With a really raucous election season behind us, it’s time to thank the candidates who were unsuccessful and challenge those who came out on top to keep their promises,” said Jeffrey Reynolds, president and CEO of Mineola-based Family & Children’s Association, which provides addiction treatment and behavioral health services and educational opportunities. “Most importantly, it’s time for us to put aside the partisan politics and come together to create a future for Long Island, our state and our country that’s safer, healthier, more inclusive and more prosperous.”

“The issue now for this president-elect – the nation as a whole, and the region – is how best to put this incredible political schism behind us and move on,” said Peter Cosentino, a principal of Commack-based Cosentino Realty Group. “What we know is that this race has divided friends, families and communities here and across the country.”



Hillary Clinton, during her concession speech in New York Wednesday. // AP Photo
Despite Trump’s campaign position on NAFTA, there was hope as president his policy might differ.

“I am hopeful that President-Elect Trump will look more closely at the benefits the NAFTA agreement has afforded U.S. companies selling their products and services in Canada,” said John Costanzo, president of Purolator International, a freight shipping and logistics company in Jericho. “U.S. businesses exported \$280 billion worth of goods to Canada in 2015, and terminating NAFTA without first understanding how it has benefited these companies and their employees would not only hurt those businesses but can lead to the loss of jobs.”

Others expressed hope that Trump’s promise to bring jobs would ring true on Long Island. “Given Donald Trump’s focus on business, there may be increased potential for entrepreneurship and self-employment, growing areas for people with disabilities, through initiatives such as the Small Business Administration and Community Reinvestment Act,” said John Kemp, president and CEO of Albertson-based The Viscardi Center, which provides education and workplace readiness programs for individuals with severe physical disabilities.

“Perhaps more than the presidential race, Sen. Schumer’s climb to power in Washington will continue to reap strategic benefits for Long Island,” said Michal Polimeni, executive board member of Hauppauge-based Association for a Better Long Island. “...This election sustains Schumer’s political momentum and his ability to leverage his senior position in the Senate on behalf of this all important part of the state.”

Not everyone saw a silver lining, especially with regard to immigration.

“This is the darkest of days for our community. A demagogue who has consistently vilified our families has won the nation’s highest office,” said Javier Valdés, co-executive director of Make the Road New York, which works with Latino residents, and has offices in Brentwood. “Today is a time when we find support and strength in one another. Tomorrow, we begin the hard work of advancing our movement of resistance to the anti-immigrant and anti-working family platform that Mr. Trump has put forth. And we rededicate ourselves to the long march to defeat hate and exclusion – in New York, Washington and across America.”

David Kilmnick, LGBT Network CEO, said, “The country elected a President that preyed on fear and divisiveness. His campaign appealed to the worst elements of racism, sexism, homophobia, xenophobia, bigotry and misogyny. The fear people are experiencing post-election can sometimes immobilize ones ability to respond.”

“That, however, is not an option and we must be visible and vigilant to protect the progress and gains we have made,” he added.