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# Jackson, Mills top big field in City Council preliminary



Tito Jackson celebrated the preliminary election results for Boston City Council District 7 with his supporters at Slade's in Roxbury. (Yoon S. Byun/ Globe staff)

By John M. Guilfoil  
Globe Staff / February 16, 2011

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Despite a low turnout in District 7 yesterday, Tito Jackson showed why he is the candidate to beat in the race to replace Chuck Turner on the City Council.

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edged out Danielle Renee Williams by 13 votes, 271 to 258.

"I think the results are indicative of the response from the community to

Though bitter wind chills and a general lack of awareness kept most voters away from the polls, Jackson distanced himself from the field of six candidates in the preliminary race to represent Roxbury and parts of the Fenway, the South End, and Dorchester.

Jackson, 35, a Grove Hall native, dominated the race. According to unofficial results posted on the city's website, with all 31 precincts reporting, he came in first with 1,943 votes, or 67.3 percent.

Jackson will face off March 15 against the second-place candidate, Cornell Mills, who

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Tito's message," Joe Ferris, a Jackson spokesman, said late last night. "He's been talking about jobs and the potential of District 7 for the last eight weeks."

Jackson emerged as the front-runner well before yesterday's preliminary. He won major labor endorsements and raised \$40,000 in campaign funds, compared to his nearest rival's \$3,500. Turner, who still carries some weight, endorsed him immediately after Turner's October conviction on federal corruption charges.

Turner was sentenced last month to three years in prison for accepting a \$1,000 bribe. He could not be reached for comment on the race last night.

Jackson most recently was political director for Governor Deval Patrick's reelection campaign and is running on a platform of jobs, education, safety, and affordable housing. Jackson ran unsuccessfully in 2009.

Mills, 36, is the son of former state senator Dianne Wilkerson, who was ensnared in the same federal corruption probe as Turner. The real estate firm owner also worked as a civilian homicide investigator for the Suffolk district attorney's office.

However, the Globe reported in 2005 that Mills was hired despite having been arrested four times on charges that included assaulting a police officer and possession of marijuana. At the time, Suffolk District Attorney Daniel F. Conley defended the hiring, saying Mills was never convicted of anything.

"Thank you to everyone," read a message on Mills's campaign Facebook page. "It's not over! Vote March 15th."

Mills did not return calls seeking comment last night.

Grass-roots efforts by Jackson supporters showed yesterday. Outside the Higginson/Lewis K-8 School in Roxbury yesterday, a typically busy polling location, Jackson supporters stood tall in the cold.

LaDarrell Hagans of Roxbury stood beside fellow Jackson supporter Marie Marshall, a lifelong Fields Corner resident. Her mittens and his bare hands held a large campaign sign as the duo greeted voters and waved to cars.

They both said early yesterday that they were encouraged by the number of voters who expressed support for their candidate.

"It helps, especially to be out here on a cold day like this, when people wave or give you a thumbs-up or honk as they drive by," Marshall said.

In the South End, Bill Shaevel, a lawyer from Jamaica Plain, stood by the door of the Frederick Douglass Apartments on Tremont Street, dressed in a wool trench coat, passing out fliers for Jackson.

"In a low-turnout race like this, you have to identify your voters and get them out," Shaevel said, adding that Councilor Matt O'Malley used a similar strategy during his bid for the Sixth District seat.

But many did not journey to the polls. Of the 40,985 registered voters in District 7, only 2,886, or 7 percent, cast ballots.

Grace Jarmman, a resident of Grove Hall, said she voted in the last gubernatorial race and knew there was an election yesterday, but she did not know it was to replace Turner.

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"I've been seeing Tito Jackson's name all over the place," Jarmman said. "I know the major times you're supposed to vote. I always vote. But these little elections that are off the normal calendar always throw me off."

At the Municipal Building on Columbia Road in Dorchester, candidates and their supporters seemed to outnumber the early voters, their signs clustered outside the Uphams Corner polling station.

Lee Kindell, a Harbor Point resident working for the Mills campaign, had been passing out fliers in below-freezing temperatures since the poll opened at 7 a.m.

Kindell said he was braving the cold to support Mills, because he was "the most outstanding and straightforward candidate."

Natalie Carithers, 56, a radio personality, and perennial candidates Althea Garrison and Roy Owens, rounded out the field.

Ferris said that, despite the overwhelming results, the Jackson campaign will fight to the final election.

"We feel really good, but it's a new election," Ferris said. "We're taking nothing for granted."

*John R. Ellement and Yoon S. Byun of the Globe staff and Globe correspondents Matt Rocheleau and Cara Bayles contributed to this report. John M. Guilfoil can be reached at [jguilfoil@globe.com](mailto:jguilfoil@globe.com). ■*

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