



## BARBARY COAST CONSULTING

TO: The San Francisco Political Community  
FROM: Alex Clemens and the folks at SFUsualSuspects.com  
RE: San Francisco's Best Political Mind Contest – 2008  
DATE: November 19, 2008

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Well, folks – we've waded through the many entries, analyzed all the answers, and compiled a list of winners. The first winners, of course, are the eight non-profits that benefitted from **your** generosity – you all donated \$2355 for the Shih Yu Lang Central YMCA, the Youth Guidance Center Improvement Committee, Jewish Vocational Services, the Bayview Hunters Point Foundation, the Mission Neighborhood Health Center, Urban Ecology, the Mission Learning Center, and the AIDS Emergency Fund. **THANK YOU.**

Before we announce the winners, here's a little background. We knew that this cycle would highlight be a hard-fought and complicated race for the seven Supervisorial seats, with neighborhood issues that would be important in some districts and less so in others, a raft of viable candidates seeking open seats, and overarching, citywide political objectives in play that would transcend districts and attract big money into the races. We felt that accurately predicting outcomes would be remarkably difficult.

But we didn't care. So more than two months before the election, we asked people to predict who would win the races for Supervisor, School Board, and College Board. We asked them to predict the percentage of votes the Supes would get in the first round of RCV voting. We knew it would be a fluid and active and intense election, with many competitive races. Finally, we tried to make sure there was no ballot-box stuffing by asking people to report that they had made a minimum \$5 donation to one of the eight non-profits listed above. We got a pile of entries.

In the end, only four people correctly predicted the winners of all seven Supervisorial contests. And while DoE has not yet certified the election, we can announce our winners, as the number of outstanding votes yet to be counted won't change things enough to alter our results.

Ladies and gentlemen, **Hope Johnson** is your winner. In addition to correctly predicting the result of every Supervisorial race, her aggregate prediction was off by only 32.76 points – or just 4.68% per race. This is staggering accuracy, folks, but wait – it gets even more impressive.

**Two months before the election, Hope Johnson predicted three races (two competitive, one a runaway) within one percent of their final totals.**



- ✓ In District One, Hope predicted that Eric Mar would get 41 percent in the first round of RCV voting – as of this writing, DoE has him at 40.5%.
- ✓ In District Seven, Hope predicted that Sean Elsbernd would receive 73 percent of the vote. He's currently at 72.2%.
- ✓ And in District Eleven, Hope predicted that John Avalos would garner 28 percent of the first round RCV votes – he's currently at 28.2%.

Hope also correctly predicted thirteen of the fifteen races, missing one winner in the School Board race and one winner in the College Board race. With her amazing prescience, Hope Johnson has earned the title of **San Francisco's Best Political Mind in 2008**, a prize of \$500, and lunch with me and my colleague, Burnell Holland, at some restaurant that doesn't completely suck.

**Congratulations, Hope!**

**Jason Fried** is our second-place winner. His aggregate prediction was off by only 40.34 points – or 5.76% per race. Fried also predicted District One within a percentage point of accuracy, and called Carmen Chu's District Four winning percentage of 52.76% within a point as well. But wait – there's more. Jason also won our third prize by outdoing all our other contestants – he correctly predicted fourteen of the fifteen winning candidates, missing only one School Board winner in his final tally. Second prize is \$250, and third prize is \$100, for a grand total of \$350. **Congratulations, Jason!**



Congratulations also to Usual Suspects editor **Burnell Holland** and **Jonathan Foerster**, who went seven for seven in the Supe-picking contest – with Burnell predicting thirteen of the fifteen candidates correctly, and Jonathan correctly predicting twelve. Stellar efforts, both of you. (But no prize money – sorry.)

Four other people picked thirteen of the fifteen eventual winners (and each incorrectly predicted one Supe candidate), and should be commended for their acumen: **Adam Byrnes**, **Chris Daly** (gee, that name sounds familiar...), **Ross Guehring**, and **Tracy LaTray**. Bravo to you all.

Oh, and how did I do? I went eleven for fifteen overall, but I mis-called two Supe races, as I am a blithering idiot. Were I wise, I would retire from Suspects right away, because I'm losing my touch (assuming I ever had a touch in the first place...)

One final note – thank you to **Katherine Higgins**, who made the single largest donation to any non-profit during this contest. We asked for a minimum donation of \$5 to enter our contest, and Katherine exceeded it by an absurd amount. **Thank you**, Ms. Higgins, for your constant generosity, extraordinary voluntarism and permanent focus on serving your community.

Thank you all for participating. We'll announce another contest in the next couple weeks – stay tuned...

