

# Cuyahoga County Democrats elect Congresswoman Fudge protege Shontel Brown as the first Black and

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Sunday, 27 August 2017 05:10 - Last Updated Tuesday, 29 August 2017 19:26

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Pictured are Cuyahoga County Councilwoman Shontel Brown (wearing red suit jacket), who is the newly elected chairperson of the Cuyahoga County Democratic Party, Brown political mentor Congresswoman Marcia L. Fudge (D-11) (wearing blue-green suit jacket), and Ohio State Senator Sandra Williams (wearing black suit jacket)

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website stats reveal some 26 million hits since 2012. Tel: (216) 659-0473. Email: editor@clevelandurbannews.com. Kathy Wray Coleman, editor-in-chief, and who trained for 17 years at the Call and Post Newspaper in Cleveland, Ohio. We interviewed former president Barack Obama one-on-one when he was campaigning for president. As to the Obama interview,

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**CLEVELAND URBAN NEWS.COM- EUCLID, Ohio-** Executive committee members of the Cuyahoga County Democratic Party elected Cuyhoga County Councilwoman Shontel Brown of Warrensville Heights its first Black and first woman chairperson at a meeting at Euclid High School on Saturday morning, the outcome of which was a show of power of the political machine of 11th Congressional District Congresswoman Marcia fudge, also a Warrensville Heights Democrat like Brown, and Brown's political mentor.

Other key elected officials supporting Brown in her successful bid to lead the powerful county Democratic party include Cleveland City Council President Kevin Kelley, and Cuyahoga County Executive Armond Budish, a Fudge ally.

Brown, 42, and a Black female leader in her own right, replaces former county Democratic Party

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chairman Stuart Garson, a well-to-due White attorney who quit the unpaid post Aug 4 before the completion of his current term as chairman, which officially ended next June.

Brown beat Newburgh Heights Mayor Trevor Elkins, who is White, in the second round of voting after failing to meet the 51 percent threshold needed to win in round one where she got 47.7 percent to Elkin's 34.2 percent with state Sen Sandra Williams, who is Black and a Cleveland Democrat, getting 18.6 percent and then purportedly urging some of her supporters to back Brown in round two.

Fudge's largely Black 11th congressional district includes parts of the city of Cleveland and several of its eastern suburbs and she is one of two Blacks in congress from Ohio, the other of whom is Congresswoman Joyce Beatty of Columbus.

A former state representative elected to the Ohio Senate in 2014, Williams has connections to the Ohio Democratic Party and was a key player as the then president of the Ohio Legislative Black Caucus regarding the controversial remapping of the state's congressional districts that took effect in 2012.

The Ohio General Assembly redraws congressional districts every 10 years based upon population changes per the U.S. Census.

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The new legislative redistricting map reduced Ohio from 18 to 16 congressional seats via congressional seat elections in 2012, and due to population reductions.

As a by-product of the congressional redistricting changes and the loss of two congressional seats in Ohio, then congressman Dennis Kucinich of Cleveland lost his congressional seat in 2012 to longtime 9th District Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur after they were forced to run against each other.

A Toledo Democrat and the longest serving woman in congress, Kaptur's 9th congressional district now extends to Cleveland, a largely Black major American city led by three-term Black Democratic mayor Frank Jackson, a Fudge ally.

Kaptur was preferred by some consequential Democrats over the outspoken Kucinich, a former Cleveland boy mayor who ran unsuccessfully for president in 2004 and 2008 and a socialist-type Democrat against war at any cost who was sometimes critical of the Obama administration, and his own Democratic party. And Kucinich ran a clean congressional race against Kaptur, partly because he and Kaptur had been congressional friends, and because Kaptur keeps her nose clean.

State Sen Williams backed the official 2012 redistricting map supported by then Ohio

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Democratic Party chairman Chris Redfern, whose successor is now state party chairman David Pepper, and to the purported dissatisfaction of Fudge, some influential Democrats in general, and a cadre of greater Cleveland Black leaders, including George Forbes, the former longtime president of the Cleveland NAACP and a former longtime Cleveland City Council president.

Williams is obviously a sophisticated political player within the party who has support, and who should not be taken lightly, sources said yesterday.

Also an attorney, Forbes had been conferring with then Republican state House Speaker William Batchelder relative to the map, which, per his recommendation to Batchelder, would have given Kucinich a better chance of winning, and required an ultimate vote of the Republican-dominated Ohio General Assembly, as do all of the every-10-years redistricting maps of congressional districts in Ohio.

Batchelder is also a former Ohio 9th District Court of Appeals judge and the husband of Judge Alice Batchelder, a federal judge on the United States Court of Appeals of the Sixth Circuit in Cincinnati.

The new map, and proposed redistricting maps leading to the new map, favor Republican congressional candidates, Democrats complained, although they had little leverage up against Republicans who run Ohio, essentially, and of whom hold all of the state non-judicial offices, including the governorship held by term-limited John Kasich, attorney general, secretary of state

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and auditor.

But the new map also brought Ohio a second Black congressperson behind U.S. Rep. Fudge in U.S. Rep. Beatty, a redistricting win that Fudge, Forbes, and the Cleveland NAACP, among others, support.

Beatty is a former state representative and the wife of former state representative Otto Beatty Jr, also of Columbus, and a Democrat like his wife.

Like the previous redistricting proposals, the new map, with Forbes and Black leaders and Black elected officials as watch dogs, also protects Fudge's majority Black congressional territory per the voting provision the Civil Rights Act of 1965 that precludes a deliberate diluting or gerrymandering of the Black vote in largely Black congressional districts, her 11th congressional district of which now also includes a largely Black pocket of voters of the city of Akron, and staggering parts of Akron's Summit County.

Cuyahoga County is the state's second largest county behind Franklin County, which includes the city of Columbus, Ohio's largest city, with Cleveland in second place.

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It is a roughly 29 percent Black county and a Democratic stronghold that helped former president Barack Obama win the pivotal state of Ohio in the general election in 2008, and when the first Black president of the United States of America won a second four-year term in 2012.

The county Dems continue to recover from a long term public corruption and FBI probe that brought some 61 guilty pleas or convictions since 2008, mainly White businessmen associated with the county Democratic party, and including two former Democratic common pleas judges that served federal prison sentences, and former Cuyahoga Country Commissioner Jimmy Dimora, a former county party chairperson serving a 28-year federal prison sentence for racketeering and public corruption.

Dimora's sidekick and once a powerful county Democratic party operative, former county auditor Frank Russo took a plea deal for a 22-year prison sentence for his public -corruption- in-office illegalities.

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