

## Election night sees 'Dawn of a new day' for Newmarket-Aurora



It's the 'Dawn' of a new day for Newmarket-Aurora MPP-elect Dawn Gallagher Murphy, who couldn't resist the pun as she celebrated victory on Thursday night.

Ms. Gallagher Murphy, an Aurora resident, secured the win in June 2's municipal election against challengers Dr. Sylvain Roy of the Liberal Party, Denis Heng of the NDP, and Carolina Rodriguez of the Green Party.

She succeeds outgoing Health Minister and Deputy Premier Christine Elliott, for whom Ms. Gallagher Murphy served as office manager for the last four years.

'Tonight, families chose to elect a representative who knows our community and will champion the causes that mean the most to us,' the MPP-elect told supporters at her campaign office shortly after the numbers became clear. 'I am deeply honoured to have been given this opportunity to serve you at Queen's Park. As I have said throughout the campaign, the Ontario PCs will get it done. I will get it done.'

'When I first got into politics I did so to make a difference in our community. I started as Christine Elliott's Office Manager but I always knew that eventually I wanted to run to represent the very community that has given me so much. Newmarket-Aurora is my home. It is where I work, it is where I raise my family [and] I am determined to make things better for others today and for generations to come.'

Over the course of the campaign, Ms. Gallagher Murphy said she met with 'literally thousands of families' and worked hard 'to earn your trust and your vote.' It was an experience she said was 'unlike anything else' and the 'toughest job interview she has ever had.'

'[It's one] you can't actually understand until you're out there knocking on doors and talking to the people you hope to represent,' she continued. 'Thank you for your support and for trusting me with this incredible and unique responsibility.'

As MPP, Ms. Gallagher Murphy said she wanted to build on the 'strong foundation' built by Ms. Elliott and vowed to work with community members and non-profits to 'make sure that Newmarket-Aurora is the best place to live and work.'

'I will focus on the expansion of our local Southlake Regional Health Centre so we can look forward to a two-site hospital system that will serve our ever-growing community. We're going to make sure that families have access to high quality care that we need right here closer to home. I will continue to work with our local businesses to rebuild our community, to rebuild our economy and see our local economy prosper. If they prosper our entire community will prosper. I am looking forward to seeing the new

elementary school being built in Aurora. We will watch that school be built brick by brick and take pride in knowing our children have a bright future.

'For the past few years, I have been supporting the important work in our community and the fight against discrimination. Diversity is part of what makes our community so special and I will continue to build a more equitable Newmarket-Aurora. No matter where you were from or what language you speak, I will be there for you.'

Following her speech, Ms. Gallagher Murphy said the win still seemed 'so surreal' and 'overwhelming.' Helping to secure the win, she added, was the message put forward by the Progressive Conservatives on 'building Ontario.'

'When I was knocking at the doors and I [told] them, 'Our message is all about critical infrastructure, economic recovery, about keeping costs down, about our healthcare system, a plan to stay open which meant [looking at] our healthcare system and building it right here. I always brought everything back to right here in our riding and people could see how much I knew and understood our community, what has been happening in our community, and that resonated with people. How do I feel? I am ecstatic that people voted for me because they heard how much love and passion I have for my community and I am going to be the one to get it done in the future.'

But, while 44.9 per cent of the vote was enough to secure the win in Newmarket-Aurora, there is still work to do to bridge divides in an increasingly fractured political environment.

'To me, what is important is listening to people and I think that is what I have been doing over this election: really listening to people, hearing what their concerns were,' said Ms. Gallagher Murphy. 'I didn't have answers for everything but there were some people where I said, 'I take that to heart. Let me look into it,' and those are the things I will do.'

'To me, what our residents want is an MPP who will sit down and listen to them, understand what their concerns are, and then let me take it from there because I am a person who will get it done. I have always told people I can't commit to everything but what I can do is ensure I look into things and see what's feasible.'

By Brock Weir  
Editor  
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter