

## **Roy Adams gets nod in NDP nomination; Tough battle seen in Hamilton West after Christopherson exit**

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The NDP last night chose McMaster professor Roy Adams as the party's best bet to hold onto Hamilton West in the next provincial election.

Adams won a third-ballot victory with 106 of 179 ballots to defeat community activist Evelyn Myrie and labour leader and public trustee Wayne Marston. Gay activist and broadcaster Lyla Miklos fell off the ballot after the first vote.

Myrie had got 73 votes in the final ballot. Marston was eliminated on the second vote.

"Let's get moving," Adams told Hamilton West party members in his acceptance speech.

"Momentum is on our side. The challenge is to keep it going.

"Let's get out there and kick some Liberal and Tory butt."

Adams' victory completes the nominations in Hamilton West.

The Conservatives have already nominated Doug Brown, a commissioner with the Education Relations Commission, while the Liberals have nominated realtor Judy Marsales. An election call is expected in the spring.

The riding will be a hard-fought one since NDP MPP David Christopherson announced he would not be seeking re-election. Liberals will be pouring a lot of resources into the riding. Local Liberals believe they have a good chance at winning the seat now that popular Christopherson is gone.

But the NDP, who only have nine seats at Queen's Park, need to hold onto Hamilton West. The importance of retaining the seat was clear with NDP Leader Howard Hampton's appearance at last night's meeting.

All three parties are talking confidently about their chances in the next election, both in Hamilton West and across the province.

Hampton laid out the party's platform in a campaign-style speech that will probably be repeated in various forms across Ontario in the coming months.

He said the NDP will increase funding for public education, health care and housing while ensuring hydro remains in public hands.

Hampton said the NDP will hike income taxes for people earning over \$100,000. The money will be put into public education.

"The NDP is going to raise these issues from one end of the province to the other," Hampton told a standing-room only crowd at the First Unitarian Church on Dundurn Street South.

"Essential services people need every day like hydro, water and education should not be turned over to the private sector."

Hampton said he doesn't think Christopherson's exit will hurt the party's chances of keeping the riding.

He said the NDP is moving up in the polls and has doubled its membership.

But the Liberals say Hamilton West was a "David Christopherson seat" rather than an "NDP seat."

Dominic Agostino, MPP for Hamilton East and chair of the Liberals' election organization committee, said he's confident Marsales will take the riding. He said Ontarians are ready for a change, Marsales has a high profile and will be getting a lot of help from experienced federal organizers.

"She's got a great organization," Agostino said. "She's a great candidate."

The Conservatives also have high hopes for the riding. Brad Clark, Stoney Creek MPP and minister of labour, said his party will surprise a lot of people in Hamilton.

Clark said the electorate is warming up to Premier Ernie Eves, who he said is more trusted than Liberal Leader Dalton McGuinty.

"I feel confident there are going to be a couple of surprises in Hamilton," Clark said. "People are, for the most part, pleased with the overall performance of the government."