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BIRTH OF A GRASSROOTS CAMPAIGN MOVEMENT Obama Supporters Clean Up New Haven

New Haven, March 1, 2008... On Saturday, March 1 at 2:00 pm, supporters of Barack Obama will gather on the College St. side of the New Haven Green to kick off the first *Obama New Haven Sweep*. Street cleaning tops the agenda for this community service event, marking the beginning of a new breed of political campaign, one that brings volunteers together to improve their neighborhoods.

The *Obama New Haven Sweep* is the first local event hosted by Obama Works, a grassroots organization taking shape in Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. Obama Works volunteers hope to harness the immense energy created by Senator Obama's presidential bid to put his message of change into practice in their communities. According to organizer Amirah Naim, the group is "working to transcend our differences and transform our country."

Obama Works is hosting several *Sweeps* on March 1. The largest, in Philadelphia, saw over 100 volunteers sign up within only 24 hours. There will also be a March 1 *Sweep* in Lancaster, PA, and NYU students are planning a *Sweep* in the near future. As Obama Works grows, the group will continue to develop and organize a variety of public service projects and offer tools to help volunteers hold events in their own hometowns, all across the nation.

How did this public service movement start?

Two Yale undergraduates, David Manners-Weber and Justin Kosslyn, campaigned as volunteers for Obama in New Hampshire and began to brainstorm new approaches to campaigning. They published an article in the Yale Daily News that posed the question: What if a grassroots campaign were able to take on visible public service projects? What would it say about that movement—and the candidate who inspired it?

These questions intrigued Princeton graduate student Arvind Murugan, who wrote about the article on a few group listservs. His words resonated with several Philadelphia area residents - strangers - who started working together online. During the next two weeks, through emails and impromptu meetings, a grassroots movement dubbed Obama Works was born and the first *Sweeps* were organized.

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Editors, please note...

Link to January 23, 2008 Yale Daily News article by Manners-Weber & Kosslyn (Obama's campaign can reshape communities): <http://www.yaledailynews.com/articles/view/23077>