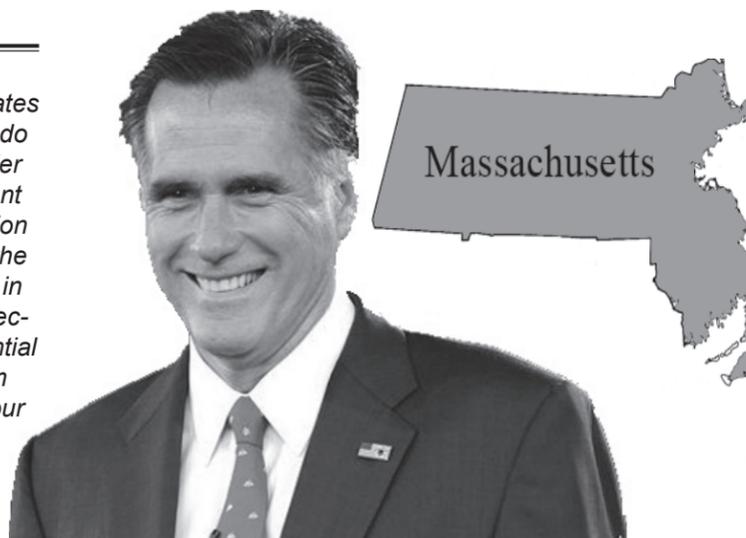




## ELECTION 2012: MEET THE CANDIDATES



Every four years, voters in the United States have to make an important decision: who do they want to elect as their next commander in chief? Four years ago in 2008, President Barack Obama won the presidential election with the promise of hope and change for the betterment of the American people. Now, in 2012, President Obama is running for a second term in office, but Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney is challenging him for the position. Meet the candidates for our country's future leader here.



### BARACK OBAMA "FORWARD"

ELLEN LI  
News Editor

The islands of Hawaii are famous for their lush lands as the "Paradise of the Pacific," as well as being the birthplace of President Barack Obama.

Obama was born in the Aloha State on Aug. 4, 1961. His father was from Kenya and his mother was from Kansas, and they met while attending the University of Hawaii. However, his parents divorced when he was a toddler; following the divorce, Obama's mother left Hawaii and took him to Indonesia.

Obama returned to Hawaii when he was ten, and his grandparents raised him until his high school graduation in 1979. He first enrolled into Occidental College, but later transferred to Columbia University in 1981. After graduating from Columbia in 1983, Obama furthered his education by attending Harvard Law School, where he became the first African-American president of the Harvard Law Review.

Upon graduation, he practiced as a civil rights lawyer and taught constitutional law at the University of Chicago. He met his wife, Michelle Robinson, when he was employed as a summer associate at the Chicago law firm of Sidley Austin in June 1989.

Obama was very active in his com-

munity, and he was first elected to the Illinois State Senate in 1996, where he began his political career. While in the state's senate, he served as the chairman of the Public Health and Welfare Committee, and in 2004, he delivered the keynote address at the Democratic National Convention.

Several months later, Obama was elected to the US Senate. Four months into his senate career, *Time* magazine named him one of the world's most influential people.

Obama declared his intentions of running for presidency in 2007, and he was officially nominated by the Democratic Party as their candidate. He chose US Senator Joe Biden of Delaware to be his running mate, and the pair was elected into the White House in 2008.

Now, four years later, Obama is seeking re-election as commander in chief with his slogan, "Forward." According to an interview with ABC News, Obama stated that "whoever wins the Republican primary is going to be a standard bearer for a vision of the country that I don't think reflects who we are" and that he will fight to ensure that the country will continue on a path that he believes will restore the American dream.

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MOOR graphic by SHARON XU

### MITT ROMNEY "BELIEVE IN AMERICA"

DIANA LI  
News Editor

Representing the Republican Party is former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney, who is not new to the political playing field. The Republican nominee was elected governor of Massachusetts in 2003, where he passed landmark healthcare legislation, cut state spending, raised fees and modified the tax code to reduce a budget deficit of over a million dollars.

Born in Michigan, Romney was raised by his parents George and Lenore Romney. His father was a successful businessman and a distinguished politician who won the Republican gubernatorial nomination in 1962 and was elected governor of Michigan. Romney attended Cranbrook School before receiving his undergraduate degree from Brigham Young University. He later attended Harvard Law School and Harvard Business School, receiving both a law degree and a Master of Business Administration degree in 1975; from there, he began his career in business.

Romney worked for consulting firm Bain & Company before he founded the investment firm Bain Capital in 1984.

In 2002, after 25 years in the private sector, Romney ran for and was elected

as the governor of Massachusetts. During his campaign, he emphasized his experience in the private sector, which he felt could help alleviate the financial difficulties experienced by the middle class. After serving one term as governor, Romney declined a second term and began his campaign for presidency.

Romney officially started his presidential campaign on June 2, 2011 in New Hampshire. In January 2012, he won the New Hampshire Republican primary, garnering more than 39 percent of votes and ousting his Republican opponents. Upon officially accepting the Republican nomination, Romney and President Barack Obama began their race for the 2012 presidency.

Throughout his political and business ordeals, the Republican candidate had the support of his wife and high school sweetheart, Ann Romney, whom he married in 1969; they have five sons and eighteen grandchildren.

The future of America lies in the hands of the voters. However, no matter which candidate wins the election, there is plenty of room for change and hope for the future of the United States of America.

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MOOR graphic by SHARON XU

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