

## **Collenette gets Grit nod for Ottawa Centre**

Former Chretien aide wants to get riding 'back into Liberal hands'

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With her supporters chanting her name, Penny Collenette yesterday accepted the Liberal nomination for Ottawa Centre and told the crowd she had "the mojo" to win back the riding for the party in the next federal election.

"We're not only about fairness, we're also about energy and we got the mojo," the prominent Liberal said moments after defeating Scott Bradley, a 38-year-old senior business executive, in the two-way race.

"We want to get this riding back into Liberal hands," Ms. Collenette said before sending a message to her opponents. "I do not want to be one of the other candidates in this riding."



CREDIT: Pat McGrath, the Ottawa Citizen

'It is my job (to be) the chutzpah, the moxie, the mojo, to be the MP in this riding,' Liberal candidate Penny Collenette told an audience last night.

Liberal Mac Harb held Ottawa Centre for 15 years until 2004, when he decided not to seek re-election. Former NDP leader Ed Broadbent returned to politics to take the seat.

When Mr. Broadbent chose not to run again in 2006, Paul Dewar kept the riding for the NDP.

Ms. Collenette, a lawyer and longtime Liberal who served as director of appointments under former prime minister Jean Chretien, teaches law and corporate governance and ethics at the University of Ottawa. The 27-year resident of Ottawa has also been a community activist and fundraiser.

In February 2002, Maclean's magazine named her as among the 50 most influential Canadians.

Her husband, David, was former Transport minister in the Chretien government.

"I think she's extremely confident, a well-rounded candidate," said Jim Watson, MPP for Ottawa West-Nepean, who endorsed Ms. Collenette.

Organizers said 733 members voted, but declined to give the winning margin, citing party policy.

In her opening speech at the Continuing Education Centre on Albert Street last night, Ms. Collenette stressed that Ottawa should tackle poverty and child care.

"The Conservative government has shown they cannot meet these challenges," she said.

The preservation of Ottawa's waterways is forefront on her platform, in a city surrounded by the Rideau Canal, Ottawa River and Dow's Lake, Ms. Collenette said.

She promised a strong push toward a sustainable environment through improvements to public transit.

Ms. Collenette's opponent said he will throw his support behind her to ensure a Liberal victory.

"It is my job (to be) the chutzpah, the moxie, the mojo, to be the MP in this riding," Ms. Collenette said.

Ms. Collenette will face Conservative Brian McGarry, Mr. Dewar and Green party candidate David Chernushenko in the next federal election.