



Staten Island experts grade first Obama-Romney debate

Staten Island Advance By **Staten Island Advance**

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The Advance asked two of Staten Island's leading political lights and two esteemed members of the borough's academic community to watch Wednesday night's critical debate in the race for the White House.

Pals state Sen. Diane Savino (D) and Assemblywoman Nicole Malliotakis (R) caught the 90-minute showdown together in Ms. Savino's Fort Wadsworth home.

Also tuning in were Richard Flanagan, an author and professor of political science at the College of Staten Island, and Lori Weintrob, a Wagner College history professor and chair of the history department.



AP photo

President Barack Obama and former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney wave at the start of the presidential debate at the University of Denver Wednesday.

They grade each candidate and share their analyses here. --- Judy L. Randall

STATE SEN. DIANE SAVINO (D)

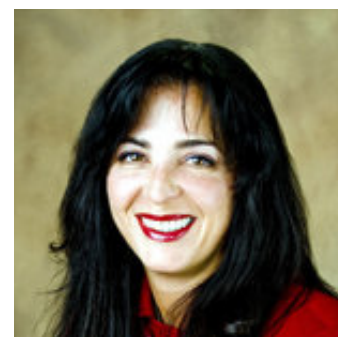
B for President Barack Obama (D):

Reason: He was a little stiff in his presentation.

Best moment: When he spoke about the strength of the American people in spite of any adversity.

Worst moment: He allowed Romney to mistakenly say several times that he cut \$716 billion from Medicare.

B for Mitt Romney (R):



Reason: He did better than everyone expected.

Best moment: His critique of time wasted on Obamacare when the president should have been focused on jobs.

Worst moment: When he said he'd cut programs if it wasn't worth borrowing money from China to fund them.

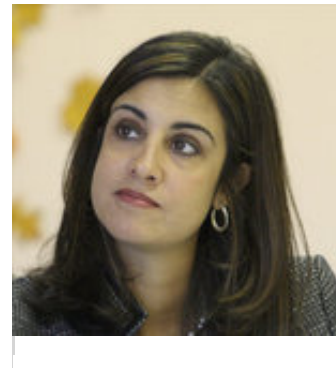
ASSEMBLYWOMAN NICOLE MALLIOTAKIS (R)

C for Obama:

Reason: On the defensive talking about what should be done, but he's had four years.

Best moment: Saying he's fond of the term "Obamacare," making light of one of his administration's worse moments.

Worst moment: He seemed flustered responding to Gov. Romney's points on the economy and health care.



A for Romney:

Reason: Knowledgeable, passionate and to the point.

Best Moment: Calling out the president for wasting two years on Obamacare instead of fighting for jobs.

Worst Moment: A bit too eager and overly agitated when responding to the president's misrepresentations.

PROF. RICHARD FLANAGAN, COLLEGE OF STATEN ISLAND

B for OBAMA:

Reason: Played defense at first; confidence grew as debate proceeded.

Best Moment: The story of how his grandmother was able to maintain her independence because of Social Security and Medicare.

Worst Moment: Early in the debate, his examples of the nation's economic revival



fell flat.

B- for ROMNEY:

Reason: Crisp presentation, but a bit bullying.

Best Moment: When he talked about the burdens that fall on small business because of taxes.

Worst Moment: When he interrupted (moderator) Jim Lehrer to spit out additional factoids about his budget and tax plans.

PROF. LORI WEINTROB, WAGNER COLLEGE

B+ for OBAMA:

Reason: Made personal connections, but weakness was repetition.

Best Moment: When he promised a return to Clinton-era job growth because "middle-class families need money."

Worst Moment: He wasn't able to defend spending \$90 billion on green energy, rather than education.



B+ for OBAMA:

B+ for ROMNEY:

Reason: Strong posture and rhetoric, but spoke over moderator.

Best Moment: When he argued middle-class Americans are crushed by high prices on gas, food, health care.

Worst Moment: Lacked specifics on middle-class taxes, allowing Obama to say, "His big bold plan is never mind."

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