

Aurora chooses Alleslev, Van Bynen as next MPs

Incumbent Conservative MP Leona Alleslev and rookie Liberal candidate Tony Van Bynen will be Aurora's next representatives in Ottawa.

In two hotly contested races Monday night, Ms. Alleslev beat Liberal newcomer Leah Taylor Roy to the top spot in the riding of Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill.

With 99.5 per cent of polls reporting at press time, Ms. Alleslev took the riding with 44.7 per cent of the vote, or 23,333 votes cast. She was followed by Ms. Taylor Roy with 42.2 per cent of the vote, or 22,014 ballots. Rounding out the riding were Aaron Brown of the NDP with 3,684 votes, and Tim Flemming of the Green Party with 2,090 votes. Collecting just over 500 votes apiece were People's Party candidate Priya Patil and Libertarian Serge Korovitsyn.

Preliminary figures released by Elections Canada indicate Aurora's south riding had a voter turnout of 62.7 per cent.

Following Ms. Alleslev's floor crossing from the Liberals to the Conservatives last year, Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill was a closely-watched riding nationwide. She said she was "humbled" that voters once again decided to place their trust in her.

"This election was about character, integrity, humility and judgement," she told supporters at her victory celebration. "I believe that I was given the opportunity to continue to serve you as your Member of Parliament hopefully because you feel I embody those characteristics."

In the riding of Newmarket-Aurora, Mr. Van Bynen joins the thinned ranks of the Liberal Party who secured a new minority government.

With 100 per cent of polls reporting at press time, the former Newmarket mayor secured 42.9 per cent of the vote, or 25,957 of ballots cast. Trailing him was former Conservative MP Lois Brown, with 23,097 votes, or 38.2 per cent. She was followed by NDP candidate Yvonne Kelly, who received 10.6 per cent (6,418), Green Party candidate Walter Bauer with 5.7 per cent, Progressive Canadian candidate Dorian Baxter with 898, Andrew McCaughtrie of the People's Party with 578, and Laurie Goble of the Rhinoceros Party with 101 votes.

Elections Canada data indicates a preliminary voter turnout of 65.78 per cent in Aurora's north riding.

"The opportunity of living in Canada is not limited to the chosen few," said Mr. Van Bynen, speaking to supporters after his election victory of moving to Canada from The

Netherlands in the aftermath of the Second World War. ?Through hard work and the kindness of my neighbours, I have had the chance to realize the promise of this country. Your hard work and your kindness has provided me with the opportunity that I will never take for granted.

?It will be the singular honour of my life to serve this community as your Member of Parliament and I will be forever grateful for everything that you have done on my behalf. This campaign was just the beginning and the hard work begins tomorrow.?

By Brock Weir