

Gingrich, Huntsman Daughters Court GOP Women

Daughters stump for parents to undecided crowd

By [Reilly Moore](#) January 5, 2012



Most Republican presidential candidates have turned their attention to New Hampshire this week, but their daughters are looking forward to South Carolina.

Jackie Gingrich Cushman, daughter of former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, and Libby and Mary Ann Huntsman, two of former Utah Gov. Jon Huntsman's three daughters, spoke to the Capital City Republican Women's Club Thursday night to encourage members to take a closer look at their fathers.

Cushman, like her father, tried to stay positive about all the candidates but one: Mitt Romney.

Although she began her mention of Romney by calling him a great businessman, she went on to suggest that he would fail in the White House.

"If we had a pretty good system that I thought we should just manage a little more, I think he'd be a great president," Cushman said of Romney. "But I think we're at a very different point in our nation's history."

Cushman also followed her father's lead when discussing negative advertising.

"If you look at the results of the Iowa Caucus, it was a direct result of negative advertising," Cushman said.

"There was over 5 million spent in Iowa just against my father," she said. "On a per vote basis, when you look at the numbers, that's about the same as spending \$5 billion nationally. So when people say 'Can Newt Gingrich survive a billion dollars from the Obama campaign?,' the answer is absolutely yes."

The Huntsman daughters, who stopped in after an appearance on Pub Politics Live, said they hoped voters would take a "first look" at their father.

"He is the modern candidate," Libby Huntsman said. "Something's just a little different about him and I think our country is just aching for a new type of candidate with a new kind of resume."

After the meeting, none of the members of the Capital City club said they planned to vote for Huntsman, but many of the undecideds said Gingrich could still earn their vote.

"I would honestly say Newt is my favorite at the moment, but Santorum impressed me," said voter Ara Adams of Hopkins. "[Gingrich] is the old fashioned politicians that knows how to get things done."

Adams said she thought Gingrich or Santorum could beat out Romney for the Republican nomination, but that in order to keep her support, Gingrich would have to keep his promise to run a clean campaign.

"For me, it's going to be how well Newt does with the pressure that's on him," Adams said. "He talks about maintaining a positive campaign and I hope he continues to do that. If he goes on the attack and he goes into that kind of politics, that will effect my decision to vote for him."

Among the crowd, allegiances seemed divided between Gingrich, Santorum and Romney with all eyes on New Hampshire to see which candidates escaped with the most momentum.

"I'd love to be the die-hard supporter no matter what, but I have to take electability into account," said club member Sharon Kennedy, who plans to vote for either Romney or Santorum.

"I think [Romney] has the upper hand," Kennedy said. "It just depends on how much last-minute momentum Santorum can get."