“Occupy Boston” protesters set up tent city

Kate Randall
5 October 2011

“Occupy Boston” protesters have set up a tent city in response to the Wall Street protests in New York. About 200 people have been camping out overnight in Dewey Square, opposite South Station and the Federal Reserve building in Boston’s financial district.

Many more people are joining the protest during the daytime and on the weekends, and the group is holding assemblies in the morning and the evening to discuss the occupation. “Occupy Boston” reached an agreement with the Conservancy Trust, which owns the private land where the action is taking place, to set up the camp.

Last Friday, 24 protesters not directly connected to “Occupy Boston” were arrested when they sat in at Bank of America’s Boston office to protest the bank’s foreclosure policies. On Tuesday, criminal charges against them were reduced to misdemeanors.

Steph and Chrissy, both from Worcester County, heard reports about the arrests and have been participating in the protest for several days. They spoke to the WSWS about what motivated them to join the action.

Steph, a student at Framingham State, said, “We heard about the arrests and decided to come down. My mom works at a food pantry and she has seen so many more people needing attention these days.”

Chrissy, from Emanuel College, said, “I agree with a lot of what people here are saying. There is a lot of negative being said about what’s going on, that it’s not that effective. But I think it’s an important first step.”

Steph added, “It’s all about the 99 percent at the bottom. The wealth distribution is unfair. We need a true democracy. We only get to vote for the people who vote for those who get in power.”

Commenting on the bailout of the banks, Steph said, “If it hadn’t happened, maybe we would be even worse off. But I think the whole notion of ‘too big to fail’ is definitely a problem.

“For young people, student loans are a big issue. I had to move home because I couldn’t afford to live at school. It’s just not right.

“I followed what happened in Egypt. I thought it was awesome that we could watch it on TV as it was taking place. I was in the dining hall at school when it was announced that Mubarak was out, and I was just freaking out. But now I think the military has taken power there.”

Lydia Ramos, from Leominster, Massachusetts, came to the protest with her daughter, Maia. She told us, “I spent years being angry by myself, hoping something would change. I got excited when I heard about this.

“I’m a full-time single mom and until recently a full-time student. I’m originally from the area, but I

© World Socialist Web Site

recently relocated back here from North Carolina for a paralegal job. And then I got laid off. Now I'm focusing on school, as a University of Phoenix student, and my kids.

"My big objective? I think money makes the world go round, and if you don't have any money then none of us have any say. Nothing is going to happen unless we stick together."

Mark Provost is an economics journalist who contributes to online news sites. When he heard about the Wall Street protest he wanted to go there, but then found out about "Occupy Boston" and decided to travel here from his home in Manchester, New Hampshire.

"It's all about jobs and wages," he said. "When one out of ten people can't get a job then the other nine cannot get decent wages. There has been a massive spike in unemployment along with a rise in productivity."

Commenting on Obama's jobs plan, he said, "I guess it's better than nothing, but it won't solve the problem. It won't even be as big as the stimulus plan and, as you say, the funding for it will come out of the social programs, that and cutting payroll taxes.

"There is a yawning gap between popular opinion, the opinion of the people, and the anti-democratic policies of the government—and they are becoming more so. At this protest we are not going to compromise the democratic process. We are leaderless, but we are dedicated."

To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact

© World Socialist Web Site