

SEP campaigns at University of South Florida

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On Wednesday, April 4, members of the International Students for Social Equality in Tampa campaigned for the Socialist Equality Party at the University of South Florida, distributing leaflets promoting the April 9 visit of SEP presidential candidate Jerry White.

The Tampa metropolitan area is home to about 2.7 million people, making it the second largest metro area in the state, behind Miami. More than a fifth of the population lives in poverty, and the official unemployment rate is just under 10 percent. The city is located about 100 miles southwest of Sanford, where Trayvon Martin was killed in February.

The campaign was met with an enthusiastic response, and many students took the time to talk to about the 2012 election and the SEP platform.

Jeremy said that, politically speaking, he is “far left” and was surprised to find supporters of a party for the working class on campus. He agreed that little difference exists between the Democrats and the Republicans, and that both groups only serve the interests of the rich.

“I am having a difficult time deciding who to vote for during this election,” he said. “None of the candidates that I’ve seen so far represent my interests.” He told the SEP supporters that he is interested in attending Monday’s meeting.

Kareem told campaigners that he would probably vote for Obama because he felt that he was the lesser of two evils. “I would hate to see someone like Rick Santorum or Mitt Romney as president of the United States.” Matthew, one of the campaigners, said that the idea of a lesser of two evils was a way to dupe workers into voting for the Democratic Party, which is a party of the ruling class. This idea interested Kareem who began asking more questions.

“What exactly is socialism?” Kareem asked. “From

my education, I’ve only learned about socialism in countries like Cuba and China.” To this, Matthew responded that states such as Cuba and China and the former Soviet Union were not socialist. “A truly socialist system should be run and operated by working class people like you and me.”

“What can we do to bring socialism to America?” Kareem asked. “The system that we have now is so huge and daunting. Where do we start?” Matthew answered by explaining the need to build a political leadership. “Our government is afraid of working class people. This is why you see so many education cuts. Educated workers will not sit still in the face of such misuse of power. We must educate and develop ourselves so that we may guide others. As young students, it is our job to help others understand what is happening and how to fight it.”

Kareem told Matthew that he was beginning to understand but wanted to learn more. He expressed interest in attending the public meeting with Jerry White and joining International Students for Social Equality members for future discussion meetings.

SEP supporters also spoke to a graduate student named Tim who said he was pleased that the ISSE was represented at USF. “I’m so happy that you guys are here and doing this. Most people walk around with their eyes closed and don’t realize that they are being bound by the capitalist system.”

Not all of the interactions were positive. One young man yelled obscenities at an ISSE member who was handing out flyers before storming off. However, he returned twenty minutes later to apologize for his angry outburst and shook hands with SEP supporters who invited him to explore their program and ask any questions that would help him understand what made him so upset. “I would like to learn more about what you are doing. I just might see you guys on Monday.”

The details of the public meeting are:

Monday, April 9, 7:30 pm

University of South Florida

Marshall Student Center. Room 2707

4202 East Fowler Avenue, Tampa

For more information on the SEP campaign and to get involved, [click here](#).



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

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