

SEP wins support in Wisconsin ballot status fight

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A team of Socialist Equality Party supporters campaigned with vice-presidential candidate Phyllis Scherrer at the Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC) in West Allis, Wisconsin. This was the first day of classes and the students were eager to discuss the campaign.

The SEP supporters passed out leaflets headlined “Wisconsin election officials reverse decision and recommend SEP candidates be placed on the ballot.” They explained that despite this reversal the Government Accountability Board (GAB) was still requiring Scherrer and White to acquire two new electors in the newly redrawn 3rd and 5th congressional districts.

Socialist Equality Party campaigners pointed out that independent candidates for president and vice president must list presidential electors from each congressional district and two at-large electors on their nomination papers.

However, the Democrats and Republicans are not required to nominate a slate of electors from each district and two at large electors until the first Tuesday in October of each year that there is a presidential election. That means Democrats and Republicans do not have to list presidential electors from each congressional district in their nomination papers.

The Socialist Equality Party found generous support among workers, youth and college students, and successfully obtained the necessary replacement electors for the 3rd and 5th districts.

One student, Morgan, dismissed all politicians as liars and cheats. There was a brief explanation by the candidate about the difference between capitalist politics, where the odds are stacked heavily in favor of the wealthy, and socialist politics for equality and the consideration of human needs, and not profits.

After the discussion Morgan exclaimed, “So, you want to discuss the real issues, that there are no jobs, and things are run for the rich? In other words, you want people to think about why these things are happening?”

Another student, Benjamin, is a welder who was hired at P & H, owned by Joy Global, a producer of heavy mining equipment in West Milwaukee. He was excited to be paid \$15 per hour. “I worked there for a week and they said that they had ‘over-hired’ and were letting me go. I applied for other jobs and was told that I was too qualified. How can I be too qualified? Wouldn’t that make them want to hire me?”

An SEP campaigner explained that \$15 per hour was more than many companies wanted to pay a young worker. The word “overqualified” was used as code for companies wanting to justify paying workers minimum wage. He also explained the global character of capitalism and the way that companies seek out the lowest wages and cheapest resources all over the world to make profits.

Benjamin found unemployment very frustrating since he was very passionate about being a welder, but could not find work. When asked about being an elector he replied, “Yes. I want to help the campaign in any way that I can. I am going back to school to get my associates’ degree.”

An older worker at MATC, Douglas, said, “I’m finished with all of that. Politics. Voting. It is all a sham. The government says they are going overseas to fight dictators, and we have them here. They are really fighting for oil like in Iraq. I was never fooled when they said there were ‘weapons of mass destruction’ in Iraq. I was in Iraq. They used them all in the Iran-Iraq war and the US sold them to them. Now they say the same thing about Syria. No way!”

Douglas agreed to get a copy of the program and after discussion about the attempts to keep the SEP off of the ballot said that he would be happy to be an elector.

Lachelle, a student at MATC, was extremely excited about the SEP campaign. “I was just telling friends that we needed a woman to run the country!”

The candidate explained that it was her socialist program that was progressive, not her gender. “England had Thatcher in the 1980s, and Germany has Merkel today. Their being women does not determine their policies. Their class outlook does. Our campaign appeal is to the working class, to women and men of every color and country.”

Lachelle and other students became excited and wanted to discuss the success of the campaign. “Don’t say, ‘If we win the election.’ Say, ‘When we win the election’,” she said. “This is an exciting opportunity to fight for what we need!” Lachelle was outraged by the attempt to keep an alternative campaign off of the ballot. She agreed to read over the election materials and sign up as an elector.



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