

YDSA helps kick Will Lehman volunteers from public event at Wayne State University in Detroit

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This article is based on a Twitter thread published Monday, shortly after the events described.

On Monday at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan, Young Democratic Socialists of America (YDSA) campus President Harrison Cole orchestrated the police removal of a table set up by members of the International Youth and Students for Social Equality and volunteers for rank-and-file autoworker Will Lehman's campaign for UAW president. Cole approached our table and said to another YDSA leader, "I'll get them removed."

First, Cole blocked our table to prevent passersby from seeing the sign "Will Lehman: Socialist for UAW President." When many students continued to stop, he became frustrated and made the statement about removing us. He left, and two minutes later administration officials showed up with police.

Cole explicitly said he was doing this because he opposed Lehman's campaign. "I don't like Lehman, I support [UAWD candidate Shawn] Fain." When we explained to police that we have a First Amendment right to campaign in public, the police simply said they were instructed to ask us to leave campus.

Cole was a delegate to the national YDSA convention and a candidate for national leadership in the "Marxist Unity" group. He carries out this struggle for "unity" by working with the administration and/or the campus police to violate the free speech rights of a rank-and-file autoworker's campaign for UAW president!

The DSA calls the SEP sectarian, but by its actions the DSA is the true sectarian, working with the state to suppress the rights of socialist workers looking for a broader audience. This shows that the DSA, like the UAW, fears competing with Lehman in the

marketplace of ideas.

On Monday, we spoke to many young people, as well as to a few DSA members. One YDSA member said of the organization, "Yes, they are just Democrats." A former YDSA member said, "I quit the DSA because all they do is back Democratic candidates." A student of Lebanese descent said she opposed DSA's support for Israel.

Our team even spoke to multiple members of the Wayne State YDSA's own chapter leadership who expressed frustration over the DSA's promotion of Democrats like Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Rashida Tlaib. A major element is their anger over the DSA's support for imperialist war against Russia.

After the police told us to leave the campus, we stood on a nearby sidewalk and signed up even more people than at the table we had previously occupied before. It was a very successful campaign for Will Lehman's campaign among Detroit youth!

Update: Cole has since published a statement on Twitter confirming the WSWS's account of what took place, acknowledging he "approached the registration tent run by the Dean of Students' Office" to have the volunteers removed.



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact