



Democratic Socialists of America

Greater Detroit Newsletter



November 2012

Volume 13, Issue 5

Detroit DSA's 2012 Electoral Work

By David Green

Since its inception, Detroit Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) has pursued an “inside-outside” strategy in our political work. “Outside” refers to movement politics—anti-eviction vigils, living wage campaigns, anti-sweatshop campaigns, and DSA educational forums—in which we try to educate and agitate around an alternative vision to neoliberalism. “Inside” refers to electoral politics in which DSA leverages its meager resources to assist progressive candidates in races where our work can make a difference. 2012 has been no exception to this formula. In our “outside” work, we have participated in First Fridays demonstrations for jobs and several successful anti-eviction vigils. In our “inside” work, we participated in four winning primary campaigns and are now active in Syed Taj’s general election campaign for the open 11th district Congressional seat.

Our first electoral priority was to insure that Representative John Conyers, Jr. was re-elected to Congress from a new district which was created by the Republicans after the 2010 Census. He faced a primary challenge for the first time in years as many Democrats felt that he was vulnerable due to his age and the new Congressional district. On Memorial Day, we held a fundraiser for Congressman Conyers’ primary campaign in which we raised over \$8200 from 85 donors. We also canvassed for Congressman Conyers in Melvindale in July. He went on to win his primary election by a 3:1 margin over his second place rival and is expected

to cruise through the general election.

Our second electoral priority was to retake the state legislature from the Republicans. With control over all three branches of state government, the Republicans have enacted a series of reactionary policies over the last year and a half, including the Emergency Manager Law, cutbacks in housing assistance to the poor, and restrictions on teachers’ collective bargaining rights. Winning a Democratic majority in the state house is essential for preventing further attacks on working people and the poor. In pursuit of this goal, DSA endorsed three candidates for the state legislature—Jon Switalski (D-Warren), Sarah Roberts (D-St. Clair Shores/Eastpointe), and Rose Mary Robinson (D-Detroit). We canvassed for all three candidates in July and August. Our efforts caught the attention of Representative Switalski’s opponent in Warren who directed “robo calls” to undecided voters in the district accusing Switalski of being a socialist himself. This red-baiting was completely ineffective. Switalski won the primary by a 60:40 margin. Sarah Roberts won her primary by a 3:1 margin. With our help, Rose Mary Robinson won her primary by a margin of 400 votes. She was the only white candidate in a ten person field in an overwhelmingly African American district. Since Democrats outnumber Republicans by a large margin in each of these districts, all three of our endorsed candidates should win handily in the general election.

Democratic Socialists of America Greater Detroit

Officers

Chair: David Green
Vice Chair: Catherine Hoffman
Secretary: Selma Goode
Treasurer: David Ivers
Executive Board:
Reg McGhee, Dave Elsila,
Phil Schloop, Lon Herman,
Ken Jenkins

Contact Information

Mailing Address

28292 Harwich Drive
Farmington Hill, MI 48334

Phone Number: 248-761-4203

E-mail: dsagreen@aol.com

Other ways to stay connected to us!

www.detroitdsa.com/

www.facebook.com/detroitdsa

twitter.com/detroitdsa

Agenda for the DSA General Membership Meeting on November 17, 2012

Join us for Detroit DSA's general membership meeting on November 17th. Our speaker will be a representative from the United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW) who will discuss the recent outbreak of strikes by Wal-Mart Associates across the country. We will also open nominations for our local's biannual election of officers and executive board members to be held at our January meeting.

1. Treasury Report
2. Committee Reports: Michigan Universal Health Care Access Network (MichUHCAN), Southeast Michigan Jobs with Justice (JWJ), Detroit Area Peace with Justice Network (DAPJN), Michigan Alliance to Strengthen Social Security and Medicare (MASSM)
3. Report on Douglass-Debs Dinner
4. Grassroots Economic Training for Understanding and Power (GET UP) Project
5. Nominations for Detroit DSA Local's Officers and Executive Board
6. Speaker: Representative from UFCW on Strikes at Wal-Mart

Calendar of Events

NOVEMBER

Saturday, November 3rd—Canvassing and Phone Banking for 11th District Congressional Candidate Dr. Syed Taj—We will meet at Taj campaign headquarters (located at 24293 Novi Road—in a strip mall at the intersection of Novi and Ten Mile Roads) at 9:30 AM to receive our assignments. We will work from 10 AM until 1 PM.

Saturday, November 10th—Frederick Douglass-Eugene V. Debs Dinner at UAW Local 600 (10550 Dix Avenue in Dearborn) at 6 PM.

Saturday, November 17th—DSA general membership meeting from 10 AM until noon at the Royal Oak Senior/Community Center (3500 Marais Avenue—near the intersection of Thirteen Mile and Crooks Roads)

DECEMBER

Sunday, December 2nd—Central United Methodist Church Peace and Justice Banquet at 6 PM at Detroit Marriott in the Renaissance Center

DIGGING OUT OF A HOLE

By Kenneth Jenkins

Mitt Romney has been asking the question-“Are you better off now than you were 4 years ago?” Collectively as a nation, I say yes and here’s why:

- Four years ago, we were losing 800,000 jobs a month. Now, there have been 4 million private sector jobs added, and at present, there have been 29 consecutive months of job creation.
- Four years ago, the stock market had reached a low of 6500. Today, the market is back up to 13000. How does your 401K and your pension fund look now as compared to then?
- Four years ago, GM and Chrysler were on the brink of bankruptcy. Mitt Romney’s response was “Let Detroit go bankrupt.” Now, GM and Chrysler are thriving and increasing their workforce.

I understand that things are not perfect, but it takes time to dig out of a hole as large as the one we were in four years ago. With Mr. Romney and the failed economic advisors he has chosen from the Bush administration at the helm, we will once again be heading back down into that hole.

**As printed in the August 26, 2012 edition of the Detroit Free Press*

**As printed in the August 16, 2012 edition of the Macomb Daily*

BALLOT PROPOSALS FOR NOVEMBER 6, 2012

By Gillian Talwar

Voters will face a number of ballot proposals on the November ballot. One of the most important is the **Referendum on the Emergency Manager Act (PA 4)**. Voters will be asked to affirm the Act so remember to **VOTE NO** to stop this undemocratic and anti-union statute. Spread the word as polling suggests that voters will support the Act.

Also on the ballot is the **Home Health Care Constitutional Amendment**. This places features of the Michigan Quality Community Care Council in the state constitution and provides home health care providers with limited collective bargaining. It is promoted primarily by SEIU and opposed by the Mackinac Center. That line up would indicate a recommendation to **VOTE YES** on this one.

The third proposal on the ballot is the **Renewable Energy (25 by 25) Constitutional Amendment**. This mandates that 25% of the state’s electricity must come from renewable resources by 2025. Supporting the proposal is a broad coalition of environmental groups and a large number of unions. Opposing are Michigan Chamber of Commerce, Employers’ trade associations and a few unions, notably Carpenters, Builders, Utility Workers and Electrical Workers. **VOTE YES** to help the environment and create renewable energy jobs.

Perhaps the most important of the ballot proposals is **“PROTECT OUR JOBS”**. This is a constitutional amendment to add the right to collective bargaining

for public and private sector employees to the state Constitution. It is supported by a broad coalition of unions (including Mich AFL-CIO, AFT Mich, MEA), We are the People, Progress Michigan, and the Michigan Democratic Party. Actively opposing are the Michigan Chamber of Commerce, Governor Snyder and AG Shuette. **VOTE YES** to protect collective bargaining rights and undo many of the savage attacks on public sector employees perpetrated by the Republican State Legislature.

Next is the **International Bridge Amendment**. This is a constitutional amendment to require statewide voter approval of any new public bridge or tunnel to Canada. It is promoted by Matty Moroun and designed to protect Moroun’s interests and prevent the New International Trade Crossing. We should side with the Governor and the Detroit Regional Chamber on this one and **VOTE NO** to stop Moroun’s self-serving and socially destructive plan.

Also funded and promoted by Matty Moroun is the **Taxation Amendment**, a constitutional amendment requiring a two-thirds majority of both chambers of the Legislature to raise tax rates or increase the tax base. **VOTE NO** on this horrible idea which would make it impossible to undo Snyder’s business tax cuts and prevent a future Democratic legislature from adopting a progressive budget. Again, spread the word as polling shows strong voter support.

Announcing Detroit Democratic Socialists of America's



2012

Douglass-Debs Dinner



Saturday, November 10th · Cocktails at 6 · Dinner at 7

At United Auto Workers Local 600 10550 Dix Avenue, Dearborn, MI

Tickets \$40

Douglass-Debs Award Recipients

Steve Babson - People Before Banks Coalition

Marjorie Mitchell - Executive Director, Michigan Universal Health Care Access Network

Honorary Co-Chairs

Chris Michalakos - President, Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO

Tony Trupiano - Host of First Shift on WDTW

RSVP before November 1st by
contacting David Green at 248-761-4203
or dsagreen@aol.com



Keynote Speaker John Nichols
Correspondent for The Nation



dsausa.org
detroitdsa.com