

EQUALITY

MADSA Metro Atlanta Democratic Socialists of America

Post-Election Fight-back Here and Everywhere

Photo: Steve Eberhardt



Immediately following the unexpected announcement that Donald Trump had won 306 votes in the Electoral College, guaranteeing him the presidency, protesters filled the streets of many U.S. cities. Atlanta was no exception. We told the world that we will not give the new administration a honeymoon but will fight back from day one against extreme rightwing racist, anti-woman, anti-immigrant, anti-LGBTQ and anti-worker policies and actions that are sure to come.

On Dec. 19, Dani Atlanta, Daniel Hanley and many others convened by Democracy Spring appealed in vain to the Georgia electors' consciences as they cast their votes at the state capitol. Just the start of our local resistance to the Trump reich.

In fact, support for progressive organizations has surged throughout the country. DSA gained 1,000 new members in the two days following the election! Our growth spurt actually started during the Bernie campaign; national DSA had grown by a third by election eve. MADSA has also grown greatly in membership. See dsausa.org for

posts from the DSA national office on our recent growth and post-election strategy.

Huge demonstrations will take place in Washington, D.C. on inauguration day and the day following – in the teeth of announced massive security measures, as occurred during the inaugurations of George W. Bush. In Atlanta, MADSA has joined a new resistance movement, the Georgia J20 Coalition, which will launch its fight-back with a march and rally in downtown Atlanta on Jan. 20, one of many in cities across the country.

We are also partners with the March for Social Justice and Women, which takes to the streets in Atlanta on Sunday, Jan. 21 in coordination with a national march that day in D.C. led by women's groups. And, of course, we will again proudly join the peace and justice contingent of the annual MLK Day March in downtown Atlanta on Monday, Jan. 16.

See p. 6, "Coming Events."

To join MADSA's Action Working Group, contact Daniel Hanley at hanley.daniel@gmail.com

Standing With Standing Rock

Photos: Reid Freeman Jenkins



Several MADSA and YDS members joined two demonstrations of solidarity with the thousands of Native Americans and their supporters opposing the Dakota Access pipeline that threatens sacred tribal lands and the water supply for a vast area. A spirited crowd of about 125 (mostly young) Atlantans marched through downtown Nov. 4 from 4pm to midnight YDS. Photo at right: The man holding the sign wore a MADSA button from our Pride booth. Next to him: members Mitsy Novitch and Barbara Joye.

On Nov. 15, demonstrators marched from CNN Center to the headquarters of Suntrust Bank, one of many large banks that fund the pipeline – Atlanta’s contribution to a nationwide day of protest. Led by a group of Native Americans and Latino and anti-racism activists, the crowd of about 175 placed flowers

and other offerings on a symbolic altar, spoke out, and sang. When a bank spokesperson finally appeared, they handed him a letter asking the bank’s CEO William Rogers for a meeting. Sponsoring organizations included the National Domestic Workers’ Alliance (NDWA); We Dream in Black (NDWA Atlanta Chapter); Racial Justice Action Center; Solutions Not Punishment Coalition; The Ruckus Society; Trans(forming); and Women on the Rise. ♦



Protesting the School of the Assassins at Ft. Benning – 26th Year

A few MADSA members made our annual November pilgrimage to Ft. Benning in Columbus, GA to protest the School of the Americas, aka School of the Assassins (officially renamed Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation), which has trained Latin American army personnel for decades, including a significant number of death squad leaders, assassins of progressive priests and nuns – including Archbishop Romero of El Salvador – and perpetrators of massacres of civilians.

Fr. Roy Bourgeois (honored by MADSA at last year’s Douglass-Debs dinner), who organized the first action at the gates of the base in 1990, showed up in an ironic Uncle Sam suit. We joined other SOA Watch veterans and members of a caravan from Cleveland’s Interreligious Task Force for Justice who also protested the cruel imprisonment of undocumented immigrants at the nearby Stewart Detention Center. We were a token group of a few dozen, because the main SOA Watch convergence had been moved to the border between Nogales



TX and Nogales MX earlier this fall (attended by MADSA member Adrian Bernal). Member Barbara Joye was quoted in the Columbus paper. ♦

Photos: Reid Freeman Jenkins

Atlanta Pride 2017 Festival Highlights

The MADSA Pride festival booth was even more popular this year, with a steady stream of visitors all weekend (Oct. 8-9). The button maker never cooled off; we gave away about 2,000 buttons saying “Black Lives Matter,” “Metro Atlanta DSA,” and “LGBTQ Liberation, not Rainbow Capitalism.” A young student

dropped by to say he is starting a Young Democratic Socialists chapter at his high school! Over 120 people signed up for our email list and took literature.

As always, the parade contingent was lively and greeted with cheers. Daniel’s bullhorn lifted our spirits; the crowd response was especially strong when he led us in chanting “Black lives matter! Black gay lives matter! Black trans lives matter! Black lesbian lives matter!” and “What does solidarity look like? This is what solidarity looks like!” As the democratic socialist contingent marched past the Peachtree-Pine shelter, currently under attack by the Atlanta City government, the group paused briefly for a statement of solidarity with the Atlanta Task Force for the Homeless: “Housing is a human right! Not just for the rich and white!” Multiple residents of the shelter raised fists in agreement. Member Dave Hayward, director of the Atlanta LGBTQ oral history project “Touching Up Our Roots,” was a grand marshal. ♦

To join MADSA’s LGBTQ Issues Working Group, contact Travis Reid at travis.reid@yahoo.com.

Photos: Reid Freeman Jenkins



Speaking Out Against Shelter Shutdown

MADSA joined Black Lives Matter Atlanta, Justice for All Coalition, Solutions Not Punishment Coalition (SNaPCo), Women on the Rise, Racial Justice Action Center, Lawyers United for a New Atlanta and other community organizations who rallied at Atlanta City Hall Oct. 3 to oppose legislation proposed by Council members Kwanaa Hall and Alex Wan that would permit the City to move towards acquiring the Peachtree-Pine homeless shelter for the purpose of building a massive police facility. The rally and educational speak-out was followed by people packing the City Council chamber for their meeting at which the ordinance was to be voted on.

During the time allotted for public comments, among many moving speakers opposing the closing of the shelter (no one gave a public comment supporting the closing) was Fight for \$15 activist Dawn O’Neal. She told Council President Ceasar Mitchell that at one time while she was his daughter’s substitute teacher she was actually homeless and earning only \$8.50 an hour. After the public comment period, many audience members broke out into vocal protest, chanting “Vote! Vote!” and one person was arrested. See the Atlanta Progressive News report for details. The ordinance passed, with Council member Felicia Moore the only dissenting vote. Meanwhile, the Task Force’s lawsuit disputing the ownership of the property is still going through the court system. ♦



Photo: Marshall Rancier

Atlantans Fight for \$15 on Day of Disruption

In coordination with “National Day of Disruption” actions throughout the country, Atlantans demonstrated on Nov. 29 for a living wage of \$15/hr and a union for low-income workers employed in jobs such as fast food, home care, and airport services. The day started with a 6 a.m. “strike line and pray-in” by clergy that State Sen. Vincent Fort (who attended all the Atlanta actions) called “very successful.” A spirited group of about 50 led by Atlanta Raise Up, the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Teamster Local 728 and others demonstrated at the Atlanta airport at mid-day but were aggressively dispersed by police after only eight minutes. Some 100 regrouped on Ponce



De Leon Ave. that evening, energized by drummers from the Carver High School band, and marched to a nearby McDonalds. Fifteen people were arrested for sitting down at the entrance, including a legal observer and one man carrying an IWW flag who said he had been obeying police orders to stay on the sidewalk. MADSA members Eduard Loring of the Open Door and food service worker Dani Atlanta were among those arrested. Reuters reported “scores” arrested at similar actions in other cities. Atlanta Raise up posted: “We occupied space and let Atlanta and the world know that #PovertyWagesDontFly #FightFor15.” ♦

To join MADSA's Labor Working Group, contact Adam Cardo at acardo1120@gmail.com

Tabling for Social Justice

MADSA, WRFG, Atlanta Jobs with Justice, Rise Up, ATL Raise Up and other friends reached out to hundreds of festival goers at the Many Rivers to Cross: a Festival of Music, Arts and Social Justice Festival's “Social Justice Village” in Fairburn during the first weekend in October. ♦



Photo: Daniel Hanley

11th Douglass-Debs Dinner

Our annual Douglass-Debs awards dinner hosted a record crowd of community friends and DSA members, at the Loft at Castleberry Hill. Fellowship, good food and inspiring speeches helped us overcome our post-election blues! We heard from keynote speaker Larry Cohen, past president of the Communications Workers of America and a senior advisor to Sen. Bernie Sanders, and we honored Peopletown Revitalization Corporation

Photos: Reid Freeman Jenkins



Jamida Orange Larry Cohen

President Columbus Ward and Atlanta rapper and progressive activist “Killer” Mike Render. (Unfortunately, Killer Mike’s plane was delayed so he could not accept the award in person, but Jamida Orange eloquently accepted it in his place.) Proceeds from the dinner will fund our year’s activities, support for our coalition partners and many other good causes. ♦

Connecting at the MADSA Holiday Party

Some 75 DSA members and friends enjoyed refreshments and fellowship at our “Holiday Party and Post-Election Connection” Dec. 16 in the First Existentialist Congregation sanctuary. MADSA Chair Milt Tambor reviewed our recent membership growth and introduced contact people for our working groups (see photo, below), inspiring many to sign up to participate

We heard from Neil Sardana of Atlanta Jobs with Justice about that important coalition. Dougie “the Abolitionist” Hanson gave a rousing call for resistance (and to tune in to his Saturday radio program, “Voices of Dissent,” on WIGO). Adam Cardo promoted the Jacobin Reading Group. Milt announced a Jan. 7 fundraiser for Sen. Vincent Fort’s mayoral race. We especially enjoyed getting to know new members and friends, building the community that we will surely need in the coming months and years. ♦



Photo: Reid Freeman Jenkins

(L to R) Labor – Adam Cardo and – not shown – Eric Robertson; Action – Daniel Hanley; LGBTQ Issues – Travis Reid and – not shown – Barbara Segal; Social Media – Barbara Joye; and Political Education – Ray Miklethun. A new group on women’s issues is also in formation. For more info on working groups, come to our Jan. 15 Socialist Dialogue – see Coming Events, page 6.

A Profound Thank-You to Eduard and Murphy and the Open Door Community

Dozens of friends and comrades of Eduard Loring and Murphy Davis filled the fellowship hall at Wheat St. Baptist Church Dec. 13 for a “profound thank-you” luncheon to give the founders of the Open Door Community a send-off as they prepare to close the ODC and move to Baltimore in January. They provided MADSA with a home and meeting place for five years (Ed is a MADSA member), and distinguished themselves at the forefront of services and advocacy for Atlanta’s poor and homeless and with their prison ministry that included accompanying death row inmates and opposing the death penalty. They fought for decades for affordable housing, healthcare for all, and many other human rights issues. See *Raising Our Voices, Breaking the Chain* by Terry Easton, about the occupation of the Imperial Hotel. Eduard and Murphy will be sorely missed. ♦



Photos: Reid Freeman Jenkins

Several members of DSA participated in this urgent call to action coinciding with the annual Peach Drop. This beacon of hope and solidarity was intended to illuminate the work of the Georgia #Not1MoreDeportation Coalition, which is currently preparing for the January 20 **People’s Inauguration March and Rally.**



From the 11 Alive news report:

11 Alive first told you about one group, Metro Atlanta Democratic Socialists of America, who blazingly projected the words, “F – – – Trump” on the side of the Crowne Plaza Midtown Hotel during rush hour back in November. But they didn’t take credit for the Peach Drop protest.

At the time, Metro Atlanta DSA Chairman Milton Tambor was unapologetic.

“Sometimes, you’ve got to do something shocking and startling. Sometimes, it makes people uncomfortable,” he said. ♦



MADSA member Lorraine Fontana, above, with a poster she drew based on an image by Culture Strike, and one in a series of her Black Lives Matter paintings.



Coming events:

Radical Memory: Celebration of a Past in Atlanta / Radical Hope: Anticipation of the Future in Baltimore

Saturday, January 14, 11-5 p.m. at the Open Door Community. Food, stories and old friends from far and wide.

Socialist Dialogue:

"The Movement for Black Lives in Atlanta"

2pm, Sunday, Jan. 15, 2017 at the Decatur Recreation Center, 231 Sycamore St., Decatur. MADSA's Socialist Dialogue series presents panelists from Rise Up Georgia, ATL is Ready and Street Groomers, followed by a general discussion. Background reading: "What About Racism?" by Keeanga-Yamattha Taylor (chapter 8, *ABCs of Socialism*). Free and open to all.

To join MADSA's Education Working Group, contact Ray Miklethun at miklethun@gmail.com

MLK Day March

1:15 pm, Monday, Jan. 16, meet at Peachtree and Baker Streets. March with the MADSA banner in the Labor contingent.

People's Inauguration March and Rally

11 am, Friday, Jan. 20, Troy Davis Park. March to Atlanta City Hall and rally for the liberation and safety of our communities with the Georgia J20 Coalition, a solidarity-building partnership of local grassroots organizations and networks, faith-based organizations, and labor unions, led by impacted communities. Demand that the city of Atlanta uphold its obligation and commitment to being a welcoming city to its diversity of residents, visitors and businesses and respect the human rights of all. For more info: <https://www.facebook.com/events/369467400086579/> or call 770-457-5232. (MADSA is a coalition member.)

Atlanta March for Social Justice & Women

1 pm, Saturday, Jan. 21, Center for Civil and Human Rights, 100 Ivan Allen Jr. Blvd. NW, Atlanta 30313. Members of underrepresented communities, women, and their allies will march to the Ga. State

Capitol to: 1) display solidarity with and among underrepresented communities, women, and their allies; 2) promote social justice and equality for all members of our community; 3) stand together against intolerance; and 4) use our strength to create a lasting impact and mobilize thousands of people to public activism. Coordinates with the Women's March on Washington in D.C. For more info: <https://www.facebook.com/atlantamarchwomen> (MADSA is a partner.)

MADSA General Membership Meeting

Time and place to be announced soon. See your email or the calendar at dsa-atlanta.org. Our popular membership meetings, held every other month, will resume in February. We feature a speaker and reports by members and partners on current activism in the Atlanta area. **Everyone welcome!**

STAY IN THE LOOP See our blogs and much more at dsa-atlanta.org and dsausa.org.

To join MADSA's Social Media Working Group, contact Barbara Joye at Barbara@freejoye.com

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MADSA Metro Atlanta Democratic Socialists of America

Metro Atlanta DSA encourages our members to contribute to this newsletter. Let us know what's going on in your community—your struggles, inspirations, successes. Appeal for support, share pictures, ask questions, or editorialize.

Send submissions to:

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