

EQUALITY

MADSA Metro Atlanta Democratic Socialists of America

May Day is International Workers Day!

We joined Atlanta Jobs With Justice (AtJwJ) and the North Georgia Labor Council AFL/CIO in Rev. James Orange Park on April 30 to commemorate Workers' Memorial Day, honoring workers killed or injured on the job, and build for the next day's May Day rally and action at City Hall.

MADSA's Ian Fletcher, people's historian (below left), recalled for us the origins of May Day/International Workers' Day, and MADSA members and friends brought to life heroes and heroines of U.S. labor history: Dorothy Bolden (Pat Sauls); Cesar Chavez (Adrian Bernal); Eugene Victor Debs (Walter Reeves); Big Bill Haywood (Michael Lavender); Joe Hill (Georgia Slim, a.k.a Cullen Brown, of the band I Want Whiskey); Mother Jones (Heather Gray); Albert Parsons (David Christian); Lucy Parsons (Jaira Burke) and A. Phillip Randolph (Edward Young). Barbara Joye coordinated the history program.

The next day, May 1, a MADSA contingent (photo, right) enthusiastically joined many other organizations at the rally, led by AtJwJ and the Georgia Latino Alliance for Human Rights, calling for a minimum of \$15/hr for Atlanta city workers, sanctuary for immigrants, a community benefits agreement for the Turner Field neighborhoods, and other demands for dignity and human rights. After the rally we swarmed into the City Council meeting, where dozens of us spoke out in the "public comment" section of the agenda. ♦



Photos: Reid Freeman Jenkins



Khalid Kamau Wins So. Fulton City Council Seat in Landslide!

From a DSA press release.

MADSA member khalid kamau won a council seat in the new City of South Fulton, with 67 percent of the runoff vote, after finishing first in a five-way primary race. In addition to national DSA, he was endorsed by Our Revolution, Teamsters Local 728, and Street Groomers. Fourteen DSA members now hold public office nationally, in city, county and state governments.

Khalid is a co-founder of Atlanta Black Lives Matter and has organized for the Amalgamated Transit Union. He helped develop a neighborhood watch program and negotiated on behalf of his community in development projects. Khalid is also active in environmental justice and LGBTQ rights advocacy.



Photo courtesy kamau khalid

“Khalid’s campaign and victory prove that teamwork and a people-centered platform can prevail against all odds,” said Erin Parks, MADSA member, Our Revolution activist and kamau campaign volunteer. “His win is a harbinger of things to come in the Metro Atlanta progressive movement.” See also the Atlanta Progressive News story. <http://atlantaprogressivenews.com/2017/05/06/democratic-socialist-kamau-elected-to-south-fulton-city-council/> ♦

Talking Socialism at Agnes Scott

By Milt Tambor



When I received an email invitation from Gus Cochran inviting me to speak to his April 17 political science class on democratic socialism at Agnes Scott, I jumped at the opportunity. Talking up democratic socialism and the work of DSA would be an experience I could only relish. In my conversation with Gus I learned that the Sanders campaign had prompted him to offer a first-time class on democratic socialism entitled the “Politics of Social Democracy.” Gus had begun teaching at Agnes Scott in the 70’s and helped bring Michael Harrington to speak at the campus in the early 80’s.

The students raised interesting questions: “How does democratic socialism differ from social democracy? How can millennials talk to their parents about democratic socialism? How does the Democratic Socialists of America as an organization relate to the Democratic Party?” A high point of the morning came after class when several students expressed interest in starting a Young Democratic Socialists chapter on their campus. ♦

(MADSA members also tabled at North Georgia University and joined the Georgia Tech Progressive Alliance’s rally against the “Campus Carry” bill. DSA’s national office employs a YDS organizer to help campus groups form chapters of our youth section. See http://www.ydsusa.org/start_a_chapter –Editor)

Rep. Renitta Shannon at April Meeting

At our general membership meeting April 1, progressive State Rep. Renitta Shannon (renitta.shannon@hsouse.ga.gov) provided a no-fooling rundown of the mostly toxic bills passed by the Ga. General Assembly. Her clear presentation of the bizarre ways some bills were pushed through and their implications was a wake-up call.

Here is a superficial summary of just one example: At the last minute, language from two failed bills was added to HB452 to 1) make many forms of protest while committing a felony “domestic terrorism” and 2) set up a public registry of formerly incarcerated undocumented immigrants who have served their time and still live in Georgia, potentially setting them up as targets for hate crimes. (This bill has since been signed by Gov. Deal.)

We also heard reports on current MADSA and allied activities, and formed an important committee to plan our major fundraiser, the 2017 Douglass-Debs awards dinner, a very popular annual progressive community event. To volunteer contact mltambor@gmail.com. ♦



Photo: Reid Freeman Jenkins

In the Streets for Tax Day, Science, Medicare for All

MADSA members turned out for many recent actions: Josh Tuccio brought the DSA flag to the Tax Day rally and march April 15, demanding that President Trump release his tax returns.



Photo: Steve Eberhardt

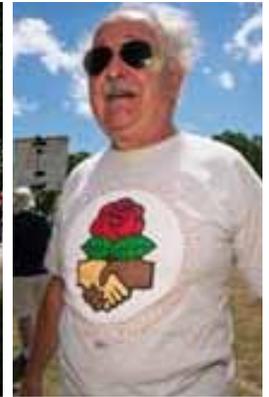


Photo: Steve Eberhardt

April 8, about 150 people rallied in front of Grady Hospital to show their support for this cost-effective and common-sense measure. Dr. Henry Kahn, a MADSA member and Physicians for a National Health Program activist, addressed the crowd (photo, below). For more info see healthcare-now.org and pnhp.org. ♦

Daniel Hanley, Barbara Segal, and Bob Wolheuter, (photo upper right) among others, marched for science with thousands of other Atlantans, April 22.

The Republicans' efforts to replace the Affordable Care Act – itself a compromise measure based on Republican Governor Mitt Romney's Massachusetts health insurance program – with something much worse gives progressives a chance to renew our decades-long call for a "single payer" system, also known as "Improved Medicare for All." Bernie Sanders championed single payer during his campaign, and says he will soon propose legislation to that effect. On



Photo: Reid Freeman Jenkins

New Working Group on Elections

Erin Parks has stepped forward to lead a new MADSA working group on electoral activism, with the goal of educating our members about opportunities for supporting progressive candidates in the metro area and statewide. Sign up at the June meeting or contact her at parks.erin.a@gmail.com.

6th Annual "Gentrification and Equity" Bus and Study Tour

On March 25, MADSA co-sponsored our 6th annual bus and study tour of inner-city African American neighborhoods resisting displacement by gentrification and stadium development, together with the Peoplestown Revitalization Corporation, the Housing Justice League, and #ATLisREADY. DSA members, housing justice activists, Georgia Tech students and community leaders visited four neighborhoods that are threatened by corporate interests supported by City Hall.

Columbus Ward, president of the Peoplestown organization, who was honored at MADSA's Douglass-Debs awards dinner in November, led the tour, with Tim Franzen of the Housing Justice League and MADSA member and Ga. Tech Prof. Emeritus of Planning Larry Keating (standing, third from left). Avery Jackson of #ATLisREADY, Ga. State U. Prof. of sociology Deirdre Oakley, and housing justice organizer Allison Johnson also briefed us on the history and current issues affecting the communities. The highlight again was our visit to



Photo: Reid Freeman Jenkins

the threatened Peoplestown homes of GSU law professor Tanya Washington and Bertha and Robert Darden, and the home of Ms. Mattie Jackson – who after a courageous campaign with community support was told last year that she will not be displaced, and celebrated her 95th birthday during our visit! ♦

Solidarity With Neighbors Resisting Displacement; MADSA Member Arrested



Photo courtesy of APN; Cambias is seated center, in plaid shirt.

Following our April membership meeting, many of us joined the Turner Field Community Benefits Coalition and the Housing Justice League as they rallied and marched to Turner Field demanding that Georgia State University (GSU) sign a community benefits agreement (CBA) so that residents of adjacent inner city neighborhoods will be assured of “development without displacement.” The Coalition, representing long-established communities neighboring the stadium and in danger

of displacement, has presented the CBA to the university and the developer for months in vain. Many marchers set up tents to camp out in front of Turner Field.

Ten days later, MADSA and United Students Against Sweatshops member Patricio Cambias was among five people, including four GSU students, arrested for sitting in at the GSU president’s office to demand a meeting to discuss the CBA. For details see the Atlanta Progressive News story. ♦

Support Tent City

Turner Field neighbors fighting displacement and supporters from the Housing Justice League and GSU student groups have been camped out at the stadium entrance at 755 Hank Aaron Drive for some days now despite rain and cold, demanding that the Turner Field developer and GSU sign a Community Benefits Agreement (#TentCityATL). MADSA is a member and/or supporter of all these coalitions and groups. See “#TentCityATL and the Fight Against Displacement” in Wussymag.

You can help with your dollars and/or Sign up for a 4-hour shift here:

<https://www.youcaring.com/thehousingjusticeleague-791131> to help the residents occupy the site.

IBM Workers Resist CEO’s Collaboration With Trump

MADSA member and 10-year IBM employee Daniel Hanley has spearheaded a petition campaign to demand that IBM CEO Ginni Rometty distance herself and the corporation from the Trump administration (and improve certain employee benefits and working conditions). Rometty joined the president’s economic council after sending him a letter congratulating him on his election victory and offering to help carry out his programs. This contradicts the corporation’s declared values of diversity and tolerance, according to the IBM workers who delivered their petition to their Atlanta headquarters March 27 and to the New York City headquarters on March 28, with the names of more than 1,000 of their fellow employees. As of this writing, there has been no response.

Hanley, joined by others at all levels of the company, urged that IBM workers support “democracy in the workplace, and resist any collaboration between our CEO and Trump that results in civil liberties violations impacting Muslims, immigrants, people of color, trans people, and other marginalized groups.” In Atlanta, Asma Elhuni of the Council on American-Islamic Relations and Jovan Julien of Project



Photo: Reid Freeman Jenkins

South spoke for some of the groups potentially affected by IBM’s actions, and 10 MADSA members attended the event. (Note: IBM notoriously provided equipment to the German Nazis that helped them create a registry of Jews to be targeted by the Holocaust. Trump during his campaign called for a registry of Muslims in America.) For videos of the petition delivery events, see ibmpetition.org on Facebook. ♦

Putting Democracy to Work: “Shift Change” Film, Healthcare Demo

Our May Socialist Dialogue focused on cooperatives, democratically-operated worker-owned enterprises that would most likely be supported by public funds in a democratic socialist economy. We showed the film “Shift Change,” featuring the very successful Mondragon complex of manufacturing and other cooperatives in Spain’s Basque country, as well as Cleveland’s Evergreen Cooperatives and the Bay Area’s Arizmendi bakeries. Heather Gray, former communications director for the Federation of Southern Cooperatives, informed us of the history and importance of black farmers’ cooperatives in the South. Scott Douglas facilitated.

At the same time that day, some of our members attended a rally organized by the Georgia Alliance for Social Justice and other groups to protest the Obamacare “repeal and replace” legislation that was hurriedly passed by the House of Representatives on May 4. We strongly support the resistance to this and similar bills that would harm millions if signed into law, and regret the scheduling conflict. ♦

EQUALITY

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:

Barbara Joye

barbara@freejoye.com

For information about **Metro Atlanta DSA:**

dsa-atlanta.org

mltambor@yahoo.com

770-313-4628.

For information about the

Democratic Socialists of America: dsausa.org

Equality is edited by Barbara Joye. Production Barbara Segal.

Labor donated

Coming Events

1-6 pm, May 14 – Black Mamas’ Bail-Out Day Homecoming Celebration, Howell Park, 986 Ralph David Abernathy Blvd. Donate: bit.ly/freeblackmamasfund. Initiated by Southerners on New Ground (MADSA is one of many partners and sponsors). For more info contact Amina Abdul-Jalil at: blackmamabailoutday@gmail.com

7 p.m., May 19 – “Eat, Drink and Be Marxist” at the Georgia Beer Garden, 420 Edgewood Ave. (proprietor: member Johnnie Martinez), our very popular social event every 3rd Friday. (Marxism not required.)

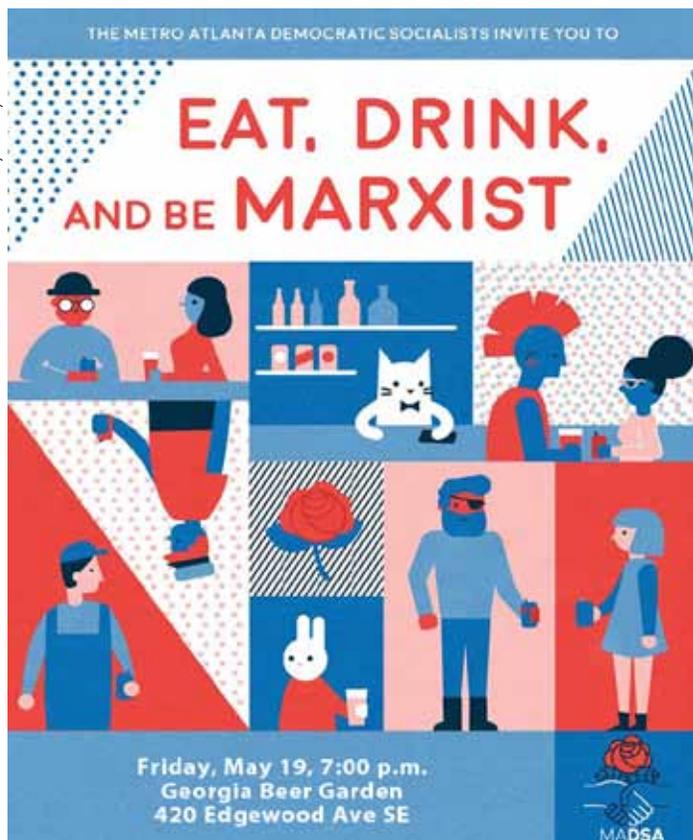
4 p.m., May 21 – “Mother’s Day for Peace,” Women’s Action for New Directions, at Gaines Auditorium, Presser Hall, Agnes Scott College (MADSA is a sponsor). For ticket prices and speakers go to: <http://gawand.org/md4p2017/>

11 a.m., June 3 – General meeting, Toco Hills Avis G. Williams library, 1282 McConnell Dr., Decatur. Agenda: 1) Reports from newly elected City of South Fulton City Council member khalid kamau and Our Revolution activist Erin Parks; 2) DSA National Convention delegate election. DSA members vote! Delegates can vote at the convention and receive a small subsidy to help cover costs. To run, contact Milt Tambor at mltambor@yahoo.com.

2 p.m., July 16 – Democratic Socialist Dialogue: An Age of Unrest, location TBA. A century ago this year, the U.S. entered WWI and Russia plunged into revolution. Using a popular education format to maximize participation, we will explore the people’s history of this turbulent time in the U.S. and around the world from the 1890s to the 1910s.

Aug. 3-6 – DSA National Convention, U. of Illinois, Chicago. Every two years DSA members gather to set priorities for staff and membership; elect the National Political Committee; connect with comrades from across the country; and participate in a wide variety of workshops and discussions. It’s always a great experience – and this year our numbers have swelled with new members and chapters who will meet for the first time! (Any member may attend.) ♦

Poster by Bixby Grimmert



Out and About



Clockwise, from left: May Day rally; Tent City; Hanley March for Science poster; May Day Speak Out, Atlanta City Hall; Southerners On New Ground, Black Mama Bailout launch.



THE REAL PURPOSE OF SOCIALISM IS PRECISELY TO ADVANCE BEYOND THE PREDATORY PHASE OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT.

-- ALBERT EINSTEIN



DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISTS of AMERICA



Follow us on Twitter!

@MetroATLDSA, <https://twitter.com/metroatlds>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MetroATLDSA/>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/demsocialists_atl/

MADSA website: <http://www.dsa-atlanta.org>

National DSA website: dsausa.org