

FOUR PILLARS FOR BUILDING A STRONG SOCIALIST CHAPTER



1

CAMPAIGN WORK – direct action, protest, electoral; issue, labor solidarity, etc.

- A specific goal and a specific target that can give you what you want
 - For example, supporting workers demanding a boss negotiate with them a fair union contract, or that a mayor or city council or college administration declare sanctuary for immigrants
- Often we work in coalition (especially now)
 - The more voices and organizations pushing, the more likely you are to win
 - We don't think we have all the answers, as some other socialist groups do. We know it will take a broad and democratic movement and we have much to learn from each other
 - Coalitions are also important for self defense. Right now we recommend building community wide “rapid response” networks where if any one community is threatened, everyone else response to protect them
- Also a way to build bridges towards a more intersectional consciousness among groups in the progressive movement who need to be moving together
 - Ex: Approaching mainstream women's groups with argument that immigrant women can't report domestic violence when they are afraid of police, therefore they should support immigrant Sanctuary
- Coalitions are a way to build **necessary** bridges between:
 - Our Revolution/other Bernie base groups
 - Communities of color
 - Labor
- Note on electoral work: we are not building a national third party like the Greens, but neither are we working entirely inside the Democratic Party
 - We are recruiting people to an independent organization which may intervene in elections in ways that make sense (independent candidate, progressive Dem, etc.) based on context
 - We know there is no way to cut corners on building a true movement – it takes going door to door and building something real
 - Electoral work is not the only kind of campaigns we do

2

POLITICAL EDUCATION

- Internal – monthly reading circles, discussion before meetings, speakers, books, articles, etc.



- Good to use as way to reflect on the power dynamics people experience in the campaign work they do and what they learn from it
- External - internal or outside speakers, popular education workshops
- Ideally on topics related to the campaigns you run
- Need to make sure some, ideally all, is accessible to people of all education levels

3

BASE BUILDING

- Knocking on doors should be something every DSA group does on a regular basis
- Often related to campaign projects (whether electoral, community, union, etc.) are the best way to bring people in
- Recruiting people to build a broad base of members, from outside “the socialist bubble”
- House parties and inviting friends to learn about DSA
- Critically important to always be building, it helps you grow and also allow you to listen to the concerns of working class people in your community, so your frame of reference is not just other socialists but in fact the people
- Depends on a structure that anyone can participate in at different levels

4

SOCIAL(ISM) – putting “social” back in

- Community building – songs at meetings, social gatherings
- Celebrate what we can – any victory, birthdays, etc. – because this is a long haul
- Counter neoliberal capitalism which divides us, isolates us, and takes away the social interactions at the heart of human nature