

Penn State Freshmen Eager to Vote

It's a Tuesday night in East Halls, the freshman dormitories at Penn State. While some students do homework, others are fixated as Michelle Obama delivers her speech at Democratic National Convention. This small dorm scene represents the current state of America: life exists while dominated by politics.

This passion for Michelle Obama's speech reflects the relative opinion of the Penn State freshman that were available for interview, there is evident support for our current president Barack Obama.

"I plan to support Obama in the upcoming election because quite frankly, he supports us college students," says Devon Wescott, 19, a registered voter and a current marketing major at Penn State. When asked why she doesn't support Romney, Wescott responded, "There were too many allegations against Romney as a congressman that arose during this campaign."

It seems that several other students share the same opinion as Wescott. Rachel Riefberg, 18, recently registered to vote in Penn State's HUB-Robeson Center. Riefberg admits she does not know a lot about politics, and is therefore voting for Obama based upon her parents' political influences. "I feel I do not know enough about it personally so I believe what they believe," said Riefberg.

As 18-year-old first semester college students, all of the students interviewed seemed to draw a blank on the same question: "What have [they] liked or disliked about this election?" It is clear, and not surprising that most college students have no idea what the four major issues that most people talk about. Several mentioned our economy without going into detail, Riefberg acknowledged women's rights, and Wescott added, "I

think something about health care.” None of the students interviewed mentioned foreign affairs or the future choice of Supreme Court justices. There seems to lack of education when it comes to the true knowledge behind this election.

Although a majority of the freshman walking around East Halls seemed more interested in this week’s football matchup versus Virginia than our upcoming election, many agreed that they are willing to make an effort to learn more about what the presidential campaign entails. Wescott continued to say, “I just want to see change in our country. I know a lot of people are currently upset about what Obama has and hasn’t done thus far, but I believe that he’s willing to make huge differences in the upcoming years.”

Spencer Emma, 18, plans on visiting the polls in November as well. Emma was highly motivated by Michelle Obama’s speech three nights ago as well. “My parents always supported Obama, but I didn’t know much about the election besides who was running. Michelle Obama’s speech at the Democratic National Convention really swayed me toward the Democratic vote.”

Many others freshman students agreed with Wescott by saying they want to see change. However, many applauded Barack Obama’s efforts because they believe he is moving our country in the right direction. Rachel Riefberg said, “I plan on voting for Barack Obama this upcoming election because I personally feel he has done a good job leading our country throughout the past four years.”

On November 6th, many students will head to the polls for the first time in their young lives. While some highly educated, some voting based upon parental influence, and others clueless, this small inset of Penn State freshman represent an entire nation that

seeks change. Riefberg added, “Hopefully whoever is chosen as our president continues to move our country in a positive direction for the future.”