

# Stewart Alexander

## Candidate for President

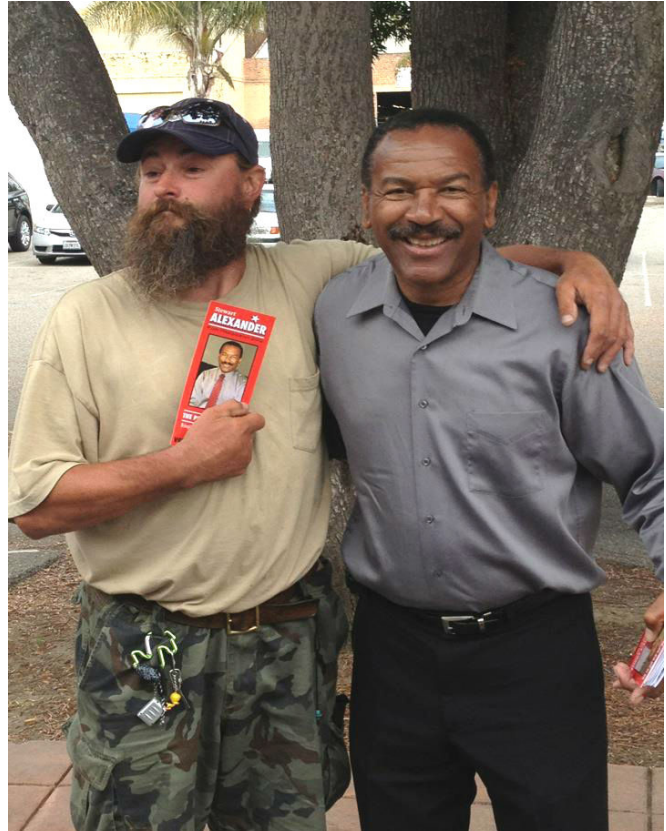
### *What motivated you to run for office?*

First, I became a candidate for president of the U.S. because I believe in socialism and I have been a victim of capitalism for my entire life. What we as socialists are striving to achieve, the capitalists only seek to shun; a democratic socialist society based upon respect and goodwill toward other members within our society. As a presidential candidate, I shared my beliefs, which are the belief of other socialists that working people should control their own lives, their neighborhoods; their leaders should represent the people who elect them into office rather than the corporations that buy their office; and working people should manage and protect the resources of the earth, be responsible for the production and distribution of those resources to benefit the needs of our national and international community. This belief, as a socialist, distinguishes me from the candidates that represent the interests of the super rich and the candidates who believe that capitalism can be reformed.

Second, I entered the presidential contest because I considered myself well qualified to represent working people during these critical times. I understand what is on the line, it is our future well being as a nation, our freedoms, and we are running out of time to correct the course. I was not under any grand illusion that I would be elected president; however, as a presidential candidate, I had the opportunity to share a message with millions of working people that there is a better way that will provide opportunities for all members of society. My message was not about reforming capitalism, but a total transformation of society from capitalism to socialism and the development of new social structures.

### *What was your campaign budget?*

Today, it is impossible for third party candidates and minor parties to compete with the big-money parties and in the 21st century, elections in the United States are bought and paid for by the financial titans on Wall Street; this guarantees that no contenders will be able to fairly compete. I was optimistic that my campaign would raise between \$25,000 to \$50,000; however, the Alexander/Mendoza campaign came far short of that goal. Unfortunately, the bar has been raised to manage a successful presidential campaign in the



U.S., the bar is now set at a half billion dollars to enter and \$1 billion for the top two. The candidates representing the two big-money parties will raise \$50,000 for two dinners at a campaign fundraiser.

### *Did you run openly as a socialist?*

My presidential campaign was openly socialist; assured that my message was clear. I openly presented the platform of the Socialist Party USA because I believe it is a guide and a road map for working people to understand how socialism can work in today's society.

### *What kind of help did you get? Who were the key supporters of your campaign?*

The campaign received help from working people and people who are committed and believe in socialism. First, I want to thank my wife, Vicki Alexander, who believed in the campaign and sacrificed our time together for four years, and my mother who believed in our mission and was the key player to assure that the Alexander/Mendoza campaign qualified for write-in votes for California. Mimi Soltysik and Lynn Lomibao made everything

come together during the campaign. The two of them worked tirelessly to coordinate all the activities of the campaign. I will never be able to thank them enough.

My vice-presidential running mate, Alex Mendoza committed time and energy to the campaign, sharing time with his family and running a full-time business. Billy Wharton and Veronica Nowakowski worked as the campaign strategist to make sure that our campaign message was maximizing its potential, with the greatest impact nationally. Angela Sarlay worked as the campaign treasurer and freely contributed her time and effort while raising a family and working two jobs. Greg Pason made sure that the campaign stayed connected within the national organization of the SPUSA and coordinated our efforts nationally. Zac Goldstein helped the campaign reach millions through social media, and Justin Kahm helped to coordinate information and helped our write-in efforts in Montana.

Others who proved to be invaluable to the campaign were John Strinka. Strinka coordinated our write-in efforts in Indiana and made our campaign visit to Indiana and Ohio a tremendous success. Maggie Phair, Art Kazar, John Quinn Brisben and others, helped fund our campaign through multiple financial contributions. Ruthann Amarteifio helped with communications on Facebook and also donated airtime on *Blog Talk* radio. Scott Tucker stood by the campaign and helped the campaign reach working people beyond the U.S. borders. Many others shared their homes, their food, their time and their transportation to make our visits across the nation possible.

### **What was your campaign strategy?**

Knowing that raising campaign funds would be the most challenging, the campaign staff decided early on to utilize social media. It paid off. Through the Internet and Facebook, the campaign was invited to speak at high school and college campuses. Facebook, Twitter, independent media and the Internet helped the Alexander/Mendoza campaign to reach tens of millions of working people throughout the U.S. and internationally. We tackled working-class issues through TV, radio, Facebook, the Internet, print media and mobile phones. The campaign committee understood that door-to-door work is expensive; fortunately, the Internet and networking helped us save millions of campaign dollars.

### **What was the most effective approach?**

The campaign staff understood the benefit of social media, and we understood that we needed to reach people on issues that working people share daily with their family and friends: jobs, education, health care, housing, energy -- and the needs of the communities in which we live. The Alexander/Mendoza campaign presented solutions from a socialist perspective.

### **What was your messaging and which messages were most effective?**

During these difficult times, as during the Great Depression, millions of working people are now open to socialist ideas. The Alexander/Mendoza campaign was always clear when delivering the message that we are committed to the transformation of capitalism through the creation of a democratic socialist society. Our campaign made it clear to all that capitalism is a complete failure and will never work for working people.

People are struggling nationwide. Therefore, messages about jobs and earnings were most effective. This message reached all age groups, including seniors, high school students, college students, and working families. More than half the nation is struggling to make ends meet. Therefore, addressing economics was key to our campaign. With the youth, we discussed education. With working families and seniors, we discussed health care and household earnings. The Alexander/Mendoza campaign presented socialist solutions that were well-received by all groups.

### **What were some of the challenges to your position?**

As a presidential candidate, you can expect that there will be challenges. However, the challenges were few. When someone challenged me regarding homeless issues, I could respond that I was homeless in Los Angeles for months. When I was challenged regarding poverty issues, I could say that I lived in poverty as a child. When I was challenged on labor issues, I spoke to them based upon my experience as a retail clerk, as a truck driver, and as a general contractor. I have worn suits and I have worn blue-collar shirts. I have been a warehouseman, and I have worked on assembly lines. I have worked as a political lobbyist and knocked on tens of thousands of doors addressing issues that concern working people. I could always draw on my life experiences as a working person to address any challenge to my position.

**Describe the political climate in California.**

California is predominately Democrat. However, during this election, we found more working people were open to socialist ideas. Whether Democrats or Republicans, working people are beginning to realize that there is little difference between the two political parties -- and that, by voting Democrat or Republic, they are limiting themselves to choosing between the twin parties of evil.

**What are some issues specific to your community that you could relate to?**

The conditions in my neighborhood are common in many communities across America. I see vacant homes in my neighborhood because families cannot afford to pay their mortgage or rent. I see homeless people every day as I travel to work. I see families struggling to pay for food and the high cost of gasoline. As a presidential candidate, I was able to fully relate to the people that shared my concerns. They knew I could relate to their hardships; they knew I had walked in their shoes.

**What kind of coverage did you get with local, national or international media outlets?**

Scott Tucker wrote an excellent article on the campaign for *TruthDig.com*, and there was an article about the campaign on the *TheRoot.com*. Both gave the campaign wide exposure. *TheExaminer.com*, an online publication, provided ongoing updates on the campaign. Fox News and Fox Business News provided coverage prior to the



SPUSA National Convention. However, there was little interest from the corporate media until a few weeks prior to the General Election. Several media outlets in Europe also showed a special interest in

the campaign.

**What were some of the greatest challenges or obstacles, and how did you overcome them?**

The greatest challenge to the campaign was the lack of funding. The campaign was managed on small donations that were received from working families. For every dollar that we received, President Obama and Mitt Romney received \$250,000 each. However, I've always believed that you can accomplish anything with enough money, time or effort. The Alexander/Mendoza campaign effectively maximized the latter two; we collectively donated time and effort.

**Anything surprising happen during your campaign?**

The greatest surprise during the campaign was during the state convention of the Peace and Freedom Party. I had been a member of the Peace and Freedom Party since 1998 and learned about socialism from the members in this California-based socialist organization. I had done voter registration to help PFP maintain California ballot status; I had run for statewide office on the party's ballot line; I worked on building membership within the party; and I represented the party as a strong supporter for 14 years.

The Peace and Freedom Party had four individuals seeking their ballot line for the 2012 General Election: three socialists, one reformist, and one comedian, Roseanne Barr. The PFP delegates chose to have a comedian as their presidential nominee. If we wish to collectively build the socialist movement, we must choose our representatives well. We need Socialists who understand that only socialism will provide for the future needs of working people, and that the challenges of working people will not be resolved by reforms or comic relief.

**What are some things you would have liked to do, if you had more time and resources?**

It was my desire to visit more schools and colleges throughout the nation. With better organization on a national level and more Socialists supporting the campaign in other states, the campaign should have been on a minimum of 10 state ballots and had write-in status in a dozen more states. However, the greatest future resource for building the Socialist movement is the reality that capitalism is in free-fall and will not survive. The system is built upon a lie that is only being sustained by multiple lies. The Alexander/Mendoza





campaign was not about winning a presidential campaign; it was about building the SPUSA membership, sharing the principles and platform of the SPUSA, and informing the public what socialism has to offer working people.

***How do you think the results of your campaign reflected the political consciousness of people in your community specifically and the American public in general?***

The results of the Alexander/Mendoza campaign can be measured by the way our message was received. The campaign was very well-received and had a strong impact on the social consciousness of the nation. The campaign caused many to pause and think -- and rethink -- socialism and capitalism. In many ways, public perception was in our favor. We were able to reach the young, the old, and people of all ethnic backgrounds. We were able to do this by instilling a sense of hope through the understanding of their challenges and needs. The SPUSA needs to build upon our successes and take a greater leadership role in the Socialist movement. The Time is NOW!

***Do you plan to run for office again? If so, for what position? If not, why?***

I do not intend to run for public office in the future. I have worked as a political activist for most of my life, and my wife has supported my activism throughout our entire marriage. It is time for me to give a little back and spend more time with the

one I love. I will always be a part of the Socialist movement, and I will always be there for working people -- but not as a candidate for public office.

***Any final thoughts, observations, anecdotes?***

I believe the U.S. political system is completely corrupt. We must continue to lead. However, it will not be in Congress or the White House. As Socialists, we must lead in the streets, in town halls, and in our neighborhoods. The Occupy movement is the face of a revolution that is crossing the nation. I believe we will win because capitalism is destined to fail. We only need to continue our work together, to continue supporting each other, and to continue building toward a Socialist future.