

Michelle Obama, Jill Biden Rally Their Supporters at FAMU

Contributed by Veronica Raymond -- Black College Wire
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Students urged to bring five additional voters to polls

"Arrive with five."

That suggestion came from former SGA president Monique Gillum, an Obama campaign worker, at last week's voter registration rally on the FAMU campus.

"We need to get out there and get registered -- arrive with five," she urged the Rattlers.

Gillum was referring to each voter bringing five more voters to the polls with them on election day.

Michelle Obama and Jill Biden led the rally on Sept. 27, along with FAMU officials and student government leaders.

FAMU president James Ammons electrified the crowd with Rattler pride and SGA president Mellori Lumpkin continued with a speech stressing the importance of community service. Jill Biden praised the democratic candidates before introducing Michelle Obama.

Obama heartily greeted the Rattlers before she launched into the importance of the elections in Tallahassee. Obama said even though 100 percent of students living on campus were registered, 600,000 thousand African-Americans were not, and the responsibility for getting people to register to vote was collective.

"We're on a college campus that is a model of voter registration but we're going to need a lot more work than that," Obama said.

Engaging the crowd, Obama spoke about her trust in Barack Obama to be the next leader of the country.

"I believe my husband will be an extraordinary president, I believe that in my soul," she said.

She explained that the Obama-Biden's potency lies in their working class background.

"Barack Obama and Joe Biden get it because they've been there," Obama said.

Identifying with college students, Obama divulged she and her husband were only recently able to pay off their college loans because of the success of Obama's two memoirs. Jeremy Margin, 22, an electrical engineer student from Orlando, agreed that Obama was able to reach her audience effectively.

"I really think Michelle can identify with us, she has gained common ground with the average American and she talks to us- not at us," Obama said.

A member of the Obama campaign in Tallahassee, Ashley Wright, 22, said that the wives of the candidates sometimes adds a bit more to the campaign.

"They are the fuel of the whole thing at times, they keep it together and push their husbands," Wright said. Rattlers weren't the only college students in attendance; Tallahassee Community College and Florida State University were sprinkled throughout the crowd.

Amanda Lorenz, 20, an actuarial science student from FSU, said the lure of Michelle Obama was too great to resist.

"I was so excited to hear from her, I'm a big fan of Barack Obama."

Obama promised a special treat for students who register the most votes, "I will call your parents, grandparents, anyone in your life and tell them what a good student you are."

{moshaloscan}Veronica Raymond writes for The Famuan, the Florida A&M University student newspaper, which originally published a version of this article.