

# JOE BIDEN

## *Vice President Biden garners votes at UNC Asheville's Justice Center*

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Vice President Joe Biden called for western North Carolina voters to take a democratic stand on education policies and job market growth in the upcoming 2012 general election at a UNC Asheville campaign event.

"If we win North Carolina, we win," Biden said in his speech.

Biden brought the Democratic campaign to North Carolina on Oct. 2, the eve of the first presidential debate, stopping at UNCA's Justice Center to rally the western part of the state.

North Carolina is one of nine swing states in the upcoming election, according to political tracking experts, making it a battleground for both political parties as they attempt to generate enough interest to win the state's 15 electoral votes.

"It is not an exaggeration to suggest that the country faces the starkest choice for president in my memory," Biden said.

Biden said the differences in the social policies of the two parties have never been greater, and if allowed to win, the Republican party's platform would have a profound impact, especially in regard to women and minority groups.

"There is no American to whom this selection matters more, than to all you voters on the fence," Biden said.

Biden was joined in Asheville by fellow Democrats North Carolina Lt. Gov. Walter Dalton, who is running for governor in upcoming state election, and 11th Congressional District Representative Heath Shuler.

Together, the Democrats hoped to rally support for their party and turn North Carolina, a state with a long history of voting Republican, blue in the Nov. 6 presidential election.

During his visit to campus, the vice president focused on issues concerning

young and first time voters, as well as the importance of strengthening our nation's education system and highlighting Obama's plans to make college education more affordable for our middle class.

"Children tend to become that which we expect of them. We expect a lot of them," Biden said.

Cutting teachers in our primary and secondary education system needs to be halted, Biden said.

"For Romney and Ryan, public education acts literally as an after thought," Biden said. "Romney and Ryan plan massive cuts to education, \$4.9 million."

Furthermore, Biden said the Republican Party planned to take away tax cuts for families with students away at school, making higher-level education harder on the middle class and increasing the debt of graduating seniors.

"Me, Michelle and Barack know none of us would be where we are today; none of us would be standing before any of you had it not been for loans," Biden said.

Biden said though student loan debt has reached an all-time high, the Obama administration has plans to make current debt more manageable by introducing the Student Loan Forgiveness Act, which would make payments on students loans exceed no more than 10 percent of a person's disposable income per year.

Additionally, Biden said Democrats have spent the last four years trying to prevent excessive debt among college students by increasing federal aid to those in need.

"We increased the number of students on college on Pell Grants from six million to nine million," Biden said.

Biden said the Republican Party's plans for cuts to education would fur-

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