

# Worker advocate Kyle Allen runs for Hillsboro City Council

A union activist and graduate of the Oregon Labor Candidate School is running for an open seat on the Hillsboro City Council.

Kyle Allen, director of field operations for the Oregon chapter of Working America, is facing a challenge from business consultant and Hillsboro School Board member Monte Akers. They both want to succeed council president Aron Carleson, who is term limited and cannot run for re-election.

Allen, 29, is a native Oregonian raised in a union household in the Portland Public School District. His mother is a mental health nurse for the State of Oregon and is a member of the Oregon Nurses Association. His father recently retired from Union Pacific Railroad as an engineer and is a member of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen.

After graduating from Madison High School, Allen attended Mt. Hood Community College (MHCC). He went on to earn a bachelor's degree in education through Eastern Oregon University's satellite program at MHCC.

While attending school he worked in the nonunion service industry, and part-time at UPS on Swan Island, where he joined the Teamsters Union.

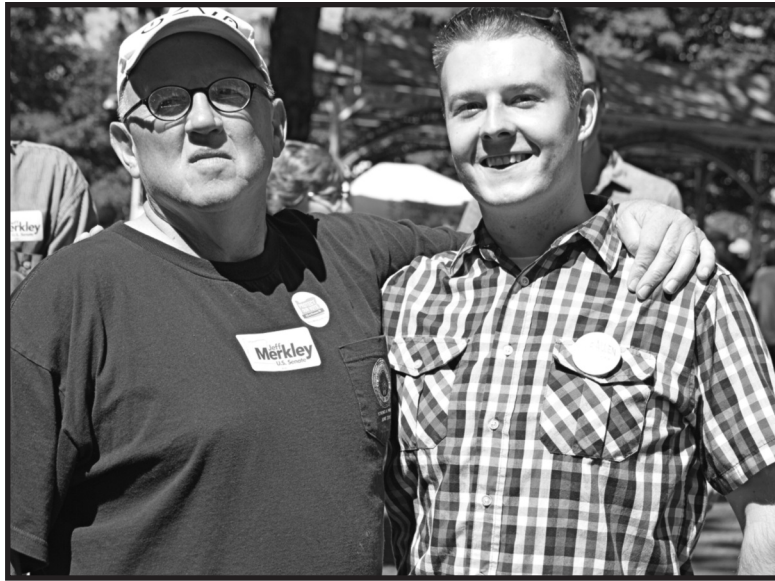
Working America hired him in 2008 to do outreach for the Merkley for Sen-

ate and Obama for President campaigns. At that time he joined the Office and Professional Employees International Union. Working America is a community affiliate of the national AFL-CIO. It was started as a way for people who don't have a union in their workplace but who sympathize with the economic fairness political agenda of the union movement. To date, the Oregon chapter has 197,000 registered members.

After the election Allen did some tutoring. He rejoined Working America in 2012 as its Oregon field director.

He and his wife and two young children have lived in Hillsboro for nearly three years. Allen serves as president of his homeowners' association and is on the Hillsboro Budget Committee. He volunteers in the community for HomePlate (collecting clothing for homeless youth), Family Bridge (providing meals to homeless families), and SMART (Start Making a Reader Today). He's a Democratic Precinct committeeperson and has served as an alternate delegate to the State Central Committee for the Washington County Democrats.

Allen said he became interested in the city council race after inquiring about getting sidewalks put in front of the elementary school that his children



Kyle Allen (right) poses for a photo with Joe Esmonde, political coordinator for IBEW Local 48 at this year's Labor Day picnic at Oaks Park. Allen is running for an open seat on the Hillsboro City Council.

would be attending. School budget cuts eliminated bus service and kids were literally walking in the streets, he said. Two schools in particular — 61-year-old Brookwood Elementary and 46-year-old WL Henry Elementary — were in dire need of sidewalks.

One thing led to another, and he decided to throw his hat in the ring.

Allen attended the Oregon Labor

Candidate School, a union-sponsored program that trains union members to be successful candidates for elected office. He graduated in April and has been campaigning hard ever since.

He has endorsements ranging from the Northwest Oregon Labor Council to the Hillsboro Chamber of Commerce. He also has backing from the Hillsboro Fire Fighters Association,

United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555; Portland Community College (PCC) Federation of Faculty and Academic Professionals, Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum, Metro Council President (and former mayor of Hillsboro) Tom Hughes, and current Hillsboro Mayor Jerry Willey.

The term-limited incumbent Aron Carleson supports Allen, and she has become somewhat of a mentor to his campaign, said Allen, who regularly attends City Council meetings and work sessions.

In late August, a third candidate vying for the open Ward 2 seat withdrew and endorsed Allen. Brenda McCoy cited insufficient fundraising and concern that splitting votes with Allen would result in the election of Akers.

Hillsboro City Council is a volunteer, nonpartisan position. However, Allen is a registered Democrat and Akers is non-affiliated, though he's endorsed mostly by Republicans.

Hillsboro is in Washington County and is Oregon's 5th largest city with 93,340 residents. It is expected to add 25,000 new residents over the next decade, Allen said. The City has more than 700 full-time employees and 250 part-time/temporary employees. Only police and firefighters are represented by a union.

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