Kaine calls for student votes

HE DISCUSSED COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY AND EQUAL PAY.

By Melissa Gomez
Alligator Staff Writer

Side by side, Gainesville Mayor Lauren Poe and Democratic vice presidential candidate Tim Kaine did the Gator Chomp on Sunday afternoon.

Kaine, who spoke to a crowd of about 1,200 on the Reitz Union North Lawn, admitted he just learned how to do the UF tradition backstage. “I was doing it wrong because I was left-handed,” he said.

Kaine came to Gainesville on Sunday as a part of an early-voting rally campaign that’s taking place throughout Florida. He touched on college affordability and making in-state tuition free, equal pay for women in the workforce and raising the minimum wage, all while taking jabs at Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump. Early voting in Gainesville begins today.

“You guys are absolutely rock-solid critical to this election,” he told the crowd, suggesting Florida’s status as a swing state could decide the winner of the election.

Friends Alex Gimbel, 22, and Corey Jones, 23, showed up a few minutes after attendees began filtering in. The pair, who consider themselves “big-time Democrats,” agreed that despite not knowing a lot about Kaine, the event was a way to hear the vice presidential candidate’s thoughts in person.

“Tim Kaine is a human hug,” Gimbel, a UF political science senior, said. “He just seems like a gentle person.”

“He is,” chimed Jones, a UF sustainable development practice graduate student. “He seems like a nice guy.

SEE KAIN, PAGE 4

Organization offers students a ride to early-voting poll

THE SHUTTLE WILL BEGIN RUNNING AT 12:30 P.M. FOR THE NEXT TWO WEEKS.

By Catherine Dickson
Alligator Staff Writer

An organization is helping UF students get to the polls for early voting today.

For Florida’s Future will start shuttling students at 12:30 p.m. to submit early ballots for the 2016 U.S. and local elections. The shuttle, which will run continuously throughout the day, will pick up students at the parking lot near Little Hall and take them to the Alachua County Supervisor of Elections office, located at 515 N. Main St., where students can cast their vote.

Erin Jensen, the organization’s press assistant, said students can fill out an online form so the organization can plan to fill a 12-person van.

“We wanted to offer an opportunity to pick students up where they are and take them right to the polling station,” she said.

Early voting gives college students with unpredictable schedules a chance to cast their ballot before Nov. 8, Jensen said.

Despite the organization’s support of Democratic nominees, Jensen said any student is welcome to ride along.

Sean Turner, 22, said he is looking forward to voting early in this year’s election.

“In the last election, I ended up having to wait quite a while to vote,” the UF psychology and philosophy alumnus said.

He said he’s confident in who he’s voting for and doesn’t need to wait until Election Day to make his decision.

“The more people who vote early, the less chaotic it will be on Election Day,” Turner said.

@ced0624 cdickson@alligator.org

A day of pride: Thousands attend LGBTQ+ celebration in Gainesville

LOCAL

By Carly Breitbart
Alligator Contributing Writer

West University Avenue resembled a moving rainbow Saturday afternoon, with hundreds of people carrying colorful flags as they marched for LGBTQ+ pride.

At the parade’s final resting spot, Bo Diddley Community Plaza, 17-year-old Jasper Suskin wrapped himself in a pink-and-light-blue flag, a symbol of transgender pride.

After five years of attending the Pride Parade and Pride Festival, annual free events held by the Pride Community Center of North Central Florida since the ’90s, Suskin said the positive, inclusive atmosphere keeps him coming back.

“I’m all about equality,” he said, smiling.

About 5,000 people gathered throughout the day on the plaza, listening to live music and watching dance performances until about 9 p.m. At a Kid’s Pride station, children got their faces painted and did cartwheels.

Helen James-Storey, the vice president of the center, said this year’s festival saw the transgender community represented more than ever before.

In years past, she said, people asked her where to find organizations supporting transgender people. She didn’t have many places to send them, she said.

But this year, of the more than 40 tents at the plaza advertising local organizations, several were