

Actor Kal Penn Holds Roundtable at FSU on Obama's Behalf

The Florida State University (FSU)'s Student Government Association and the College Democrats welcomed actor, Kal Penn, and former director of the Obama campaign in Florida, Steve Schale, to FSU as a part of the President's *100 Roundtables with Young Americans* initiative. They held two roundtable discussions on Thursday, April 21, at the University. The first was held at 11:15 a.m. in the Dunlap Student Success Center, and the second took place from 1 until 2:30 p.m. in the FSU Alumni Association.

Kalpen Modi (also known as the actor Kal Penn) is currently the Associate Director of the Office of Public Engagement for the Obama Administration. Before his work at the White House, Modi achieved fame through his roles as Kumar in the Harold & Kumar film series, and Dr. Lawrence Kutner on the prime-time drama, *House*.

"The president in March challenged his staff to hold a hundred roundtables across the country," said Schale. "Students in Tallahassee took the initiative and applied, and this is the third stop for Kal in Florida; he was at University of Florida and FAMU. Kal was an intern for Sen. Obama during the campaign, and after the campaign he went to go work with Obama. He works with youth around the country and we're fortunate to have him coming to Florida."

Modi met with 14 politically-interested Florida State students and alumni in the Dunlap Student Success Center from 11:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. for the first roundtable titled "100 Youth Strategies for Winning the Future." The purpose of the roundtable was to discuss issues that Modi explained were "designed as an opportunity for the president to

have open dialog.” He has pledged to complete 100 roundtables at colleges and universities around the country before the end of May.

Students led the conversation, while Modi listened attentively and attempted to answer their questions. With a great resource like FSU’s Career Center down the hall from where the roundtable took place, Modi discussed that polls revealed the top issue which concerns both democrats and republicans is job creation. The conversation also focused on issues facing the DREAM Act and student voting rights.

Modi encouraged “the young make their voices heard... through participation with a non-partisan group” in order to improve local-level communication. He described some of the challenges facing young people today, and that unfortunately there is no single advocacy group in Washington D.C. that represents young Americans. Modi ended the meeting by stressing students not underestimate the power they have and advised students that “if [they] push strategically, [they] can get things done.”

More information about the President and Modi’s *100 Roundtables with Young Americans* initiative is available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/YoungAmericans>.