

MIAMI UNIVERSITY
STUDENTS FOR STAFF

*LIVING WAGE PRESENTATION TO THE
CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL ADVISORY COMMITTEE*

THURSDAY MARCH 2ND, 2006
BENJAMIN HARRISON ROOM
SHRIVER CENTER, 9:30-10:00 AM

PRESENTERS:

STEPHANIE LEE
CLASS OF 2008

JOHN TUZCU
CLASS OF 2007

SARA WEISBRODT
ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY (PAGE 12)

TERRI BROSIUS
MASTER 3 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT (PAGE 13)

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MU STUDENTS FOR STAFF
<http://www.orgs.muohio.edu/spj/sfs.htm>

Living Wage Presentation to the Classified Personnel Advisory Committee

Introduction

As far as we know, this is the first time that students and staff have made a collaborative presentation to the Classified Personnel Advisory Committee. This marks a historical moment for the Miami community, insofar as it works towards breaking down barriers between students, staff members and the administration. We expect that our presentation and the ensuing discussion will initiate a rich dialogue and democratic investigation into the ways that we might, as a community, amend the inequities that are built into Miami's wage structure and its budgeting priorities.

The Living Wage movement was adopted by Students For Staff as a rallying cry to raise awareness on campus about the untenable wage policies at Miami University. A Living Wage is a democratic ideal that the below suggestions should help our University to work towards. A Living Wage is not one number but rather a wage structure that corresponds to the realistic needs of the working population. We're not experts, but we believe that we can work together to move towards constructing a living wage that will benefit workers in the near and long-term future.

As we will explore, these options are not unrealistic nor are they isolated. Campus living wage groups are working with administrators all across the United States and these efforts have been successful at numerous universities.

We recognize that committees such as CPAC and the Starting Wages Committee are in place as avenues for change regarding workers wages and grievances. We worry that these institutions have not been as effective as they could be but are however excited to be a part of this process and are passionate about sharing an equal voice on this campus, as we all should.

We are here today to communicate our thoughts and concerns to you in the best interest of the Miami family. There is overwhelming student, staff and faculty support for the sentiments we will be expressing that truly reflect the sense of community that we have here at Miami.

Low-wage workers live in poverty and cannot afford decent housing, nutritional intake, health care or basic necessities for themselves and their families. This is nothing new nor is it a matter of abstract market theory—this is about real people in our community who work 2 and 3 jobs just to get by. We are here on behalf of concerned members of Miami’s community and want OUR community to be a part of the living wage movement sweeping the nation.

What is a living wage?

The lowest possible hourly wage a person can earn and still be able to cover the basic costs of living. As costs of living vary between different locations and increases with time, so does the living wage.

++This effort is about more than setting a wage level that satisfies workers’ basic needs, that allows for a comfortable standard of living. The living wage movement and the concept of a living wage are *symbolic*: they are *alive*, fluctuating, and evolving with the times. This thus calls for adequate indexing and adjustment of wage levels to reflect current standards of living.

++Someone working full-time should be able to afford, housing, food, utilities, transport, healthcare, childcare, pay taxes and other necessary expenses. Many people on this campus cannot.

++Ultimately this is an effort to create a community that is *respectful* to all of its members and their roles and contributions, and we are hoping that the university could come to reflect this extant respect in policies and wages. A living wage is about more than a number; it is about more just and democratic labor practices, that reflect the respect for the quality of jobs done at Miami, and the workers who do them.

As students here at Miami, we have an investment (in both a sentimental and pecuniary sense) to this community, which drives our concerns for the financial inequities we have witnessed on this campus. We are engaging our valuable liberal arts education to think about and devise ways to reach a consensus on issues that are of great import and gravity to us as members of this shared community.

National Perspective

Wages for the lowest paid 10% of workers fell 9.3% between 79 and 99. The number of jobs in which wages were below what a worker would need to support a family of four above the poverty line also grew between 1979 and 1999. In 99 26.8% of the workforce earned poverty-level wages, an increase from 23.7% in 1979---this trend is no exception at Miami.

--Economic Policy Institute

Institutions such as Princeton, Harvard and Georgetown, are just a few among the many prestigious and renowned ivy-league schools to have adopted living wage policies in recent years.

The trend toward living wage policies at academic institutions is part of a national movement, one in which Miami does not want to be left behind. In seeking to become a more nationally recognized and esteemed institution, Miami could succeed by adopting similar policies. What better way to live up to our “public ivy” reputation than by aligning ourselves more closely with some of the most well-recognized and respected institutions in our nation by following suit and recognizing this national movement on our own campus?

Furthermore, these private institutions have significantly smaller student bodies (Georgetown, for example, only has 6,522 undergraduates, while Miami has 15,059), meaning a more dramatic budget change. Additionally, all schools experience budget problems (Georgetown, for example, was in a budget crisis when they instituted their living wage policy. They still found a way to raise the necessary funds). So, this is not impossible, nor is it a distinction between public and private institutions (as many public universities, such as UVA, are also struggling to institute living wage policies). This is a question of priority and values: if the school really values this as a priority, we can accomplish it.

Miami Perspective

Looking at the 2000 census data, the per capita income of Oxford is \$12,165, 43% of the population and 13.4% of families are below the poverty line.

Some of the university’s current policies don’t effectively reflect the values we esteem as a community. Wage practices as they exist now are not conducive to a strong sense of work ethic and morale. One example of this is that adjustment of entry-level wages causes great disparities between new staff and loyal workers who are invaluable parts of the MU community. Shouldn’t workers’ wages reflect the respect and value we hold for their loyal and devoted work for the university?

EXAMPLES FROM AFSCME BARGAINING UNIT:

1. Two building and grounds assistants:
one, hired in '77, is a SR bldg/grounds asst,
the other, hired in '86,
both making \$15.71/hr
2. Two food service asst’s:
one hired in '97, is making 12.25/hr
the other, hired in '93, is making 10.55

WAGE COMPRESION IS ALSO AMONG THE SATSS EMPLOYEES

++The University has provided some roads for staff members to take personal initiative towards improving their wages through the job enrichment program, for example, they can take classes and earn raises. Though this may be a step, it is a small one. The community wants Miami to reach out just as so many other institutions have been doing over the last decade. In reality, most people don't have time to take part in these programs.

++Those who most need higher wages are often the ones who have the least access to the current system's means of doing so (i.e. those working multiple jobs don't have the time or energy for job enrichment, and similar pursuits)

++Other benefits, such as tuition vouchers, are beneficial but only peripheral steps towards reaching a more equitable community. Miami should go further then just ameliorating worker complaints but rather implement a concrete, reliable living wage policy through a careful reprioritization of the budget. This will not only allow Miami to catch up to the pace of neighboring institutions but also improve the morale and sense of inclusion into the Miami community.

Relevant Research

++"Miami's overall [wage] structure positioning appears to be approximately 18% to 19% below market" –Mercer Market Analysis Report (February, 1996)

++According to Fact Finder data which projects minimum wages through 2005, wages across all bands remain an average of 17% below market value.

++A single-income family with two children living in Butler Co. in 1997 had an annual spending total of \$27, 276. Anne Bailey (1997) asserts that this family, in order to live comfortably, should be making at least \$32,000 a year, an hourly wage of \$16.

These data and any other research references may be found at Students for Staff's website: <http://www.orgs.muohio.edu/spj/sfs.htm>

Closing Statement by the Students For Staff

As students at this university and members of this community, we trust, and hope, that our administration and related committees, such as CPAC, would share our concern for the inequities reported amongst our staff, and would strive to improve the situation for fellow members of the Miami family.

We believe that CPAC has the potential to enrich democracy on Miami's campus, insofar as its goals reflect a desire to commence an open dialogue regarding staff concerns. In keeping with one of CPAC's stated goals – "creating an atmosphere of mutual respect, equality, and voice between... staff members... and the University" – as well as in keeping with CPAC's charge of "advising the president, vice presidents, and Human Resources on matters of interest and concern to classified staff members in the context of the whole university community," we kindly request that the electronic links to video-taped staff testimonials [found at the top of the handout] be distributed in an email to *all* Miami staff, faculty, students, administrators and alumni, and representatives of Students For Staff (Stephanie Lee <leesj@muohio.edu> or John Tuzcu <tuzcujo@muohio.edu>). In addition, Students For Staff would like for our administration to provide an official and public response to the staff editorial in the Miami Student, dated 12.5.05, in which our administration was publicly called upon to "both explain its position concerning the lowest paid workers and finally begin to work toward a wage system that demonstrates this respect."

We kindly request that the videos and official responses be disseminated with an urgency that reflects the urgency of this situation for our campus, preferably by the 16th of March, 2006. That there is growing unease in our community regarding the lack of ethical attention paid to the inequities in Miami's wage structure cannot be denied, and we will continue to bring this up as a prominent aspect of discussion until these issues are acknowledged and addressed by our administration.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION TO STUDENTS FOR STAFF PRESENTATION
TO CPAC ON MARCH 2, 2006

Students For Staff website:

<http://www.orgs.muohio.edu/spj/sfs.htm>

Staff Testimonials:

http://www.orgs.muohio.edu/spj/Rader_Paulette_Miami_University_11_29_05.mov

http://www.orgs.muohio.edu/spj/Brosius_Terri_Miami_University_11_29_05.mov

http://www.orgs.muohio.edu/spj/Weisbrodt_Sara_Miami_University_11_29_05.mov

If the links above did not work, please go to the Students for Staff Website listed above.

CPAC's Stated Goals

<http://www.orgs.muohio.edu/cpac/CPAC/goals.htm>

1. Improve CPAC's image with classified staff throughout campus.
2. Assist and encourage classified staff to get more involved in the University, their department, and the community.
3. Work with Administration to achieve goals through mutual agreement and obtain the ear of the Administration to listen to classified staff concerns.

Miami University Literature from the Pamphlet "First in 2009"

2nd page: "Miami graduates know their alma mater is a very special place. What makes it so special is the beautiful campus, rural setting, the personal commitment to students, the warm and caring faculty, the friendly and humane atmosphere, and the traditions embodying honest Midwestern values. These ingredients combine to give the university a spirit, or soul, that all Miami students sense and increasingly come to value in the years following graduation. It is this soul that alumni want to protect, because they understand that it is timeless and wonderful." –James C. Garland, as quoted in First in 2009: the Spirit of a Remarkable University

Last page: "First and Forever: Miami is a unique institution. No other college or university has its history, its mission, or above all, its spirit. First in 2009 will preserve Miami's most valuable and distinctive qualities, carrying them forward for future generations to explore, experience, and enjoy."

The following is an excerpt from Dr. Anne W. Bailey’s 1997 report entitled: A living wage for former welfare recipients entering employment: the case of Butler County, Ohio.

Table 2. Approximate monthly living costs for a three-person family (mother and two preschool children) in Butler County, Ohio, 1997.

Category	
Food	\$349
Housing	\$545
Health care	\$235
Transportation	\$188
Child care (two preschool children all day)	\$750
Clothing/miscellaneous	\$206
Annual Total	\$27,276

This budget is based on the following assumptions:

- All food is prepared at home. Food cost is based on the low-cost USDA food plan for a family of three—one adult and two young children.
- Housing is the cost of renting a two-bedroom apartment, based on HUD Fair Market Rent, Butler, Ohio. Cost includes all utilities except telephone service, which is included in clothing/miscellaneous.
- Health care includes out-of-pocket expenses and 30% of a health insurance premium (70% paid by employer). Costs are based on a U.S. Government Accounting Office study, for a metropolitan region, Midwest.
- Transportation costs were for owning and operating a car. \$0.32 per mile, Midwest metropolitan region. Costs include use of car for commuting to work and for household purposes.
- Child care costs are based on average costs for Butler County, Ohio for two preschool children, all day, five days per week, 50 weeks per year.
- Clothing/miscellaneous includes all other necessary expenditures, including clothing, telephone service (basic), household furnishings, and cleaning and home maintenance supplies, 1997, Midwest region.

Table 2 shows the total monthly costs for this family are \$2,273, or \$27, 276 per year, very close in total costs to the metropolitan Minnesota costs in 1997. These living costs would require approximately \$32, 000 annual gross earnings, or \$16.00 per hour, full-time employment.

The following are passages from the administration’s open letter to the faculty when living wage issues were brought up in 2003.

“Although they may have exaggerated the numbers in the passion of debate, there is little doubt that the students are basically correct: some university employees struggle greatly to make ends meet, and one reason for their struggle is because they do not earn a high enough income. The debate, therefore, is not over the existence of a problem, at Miami and elsewhere, but rather over the solution to the problem. To many students and their supporters, the solution seems straightforward: the university should simply do the right thing by raising its starting wages so that all employees earn at least a living wage...

“But it is the hallmark of maturity to realize that difficult problems do not have simple answers. And of all the problems that the human race has faced throughout the centuries, few have been more challenging than the unjustness of economic inequality. Wars have been fought and great civilizations have fallen because of this issue. It is one of the great worldwide challenges of our time, and the living wage movement is the embodiment of that challenge on college campuses. Our role as educators is to help our students dig beneath the surface of this complex issue and to understand its philosophical, economic and social implications, so that their humane desires to improve the lives of the less fortunate can be channeled into constructive directions.

So why can’t Miami just pay everybody a living wage?”

- Open Letter to Miami Faculty 10/7/03 by President James C. Garland, Provost
Ronald A. Crutcher and Vice President for Finance and Business Services
Richard M. Norman

Living Wage Campaigns compiled by ACORN Living Wage Resource Center

City and County Campaigns

Little Rock AR	Monroe MI
Grand Rapids MI	San Diego CA
Pine Bluff AR	St. Louis County MN
Hazel Park MI	San Mateo CA
Phoenix AZ	Oxford MS
Kalamazoo MI	Santa Barbara CA
Monterrey Co. CA	Asheville NC
Madison Heights MI	Santa Monica CA
San Anselmo CA	Charlotte NC
	Sonoma Co/SantaRosa CA

Wilmington NC
Ventura County CA
Portsmouth NH
Boulder CO
Camden County NJ
Grand Junction CO
Albuquerque NM
Bridgeport CT
Reno NV
Willimantic CT
Albany NY
Broward County FL
Binghamton NY
Coral Gables FL
Elmira NY
Gainesville FL
Ithaca NY
Jacksonville FL
Rockland County NY
Miami FL
Syracuse NY
South Miami FL
Troy NY
Tampa FL
Utica NY
Athens GA

Columbus OH
Atlanta GA
Kent OH
Davenport IA
Eugene OR
Iowa City IA
Medford OR
Champagne-Urbana IL
Allegheny County PA
Indianapolis IN
Providence RI
Lafayette IN
Knoxville TN
South Bend IN
Memphis TN
Manhattan KS
Nashville TN
Wichita KS
Austin TX
Lexington KY
Charlottesville VA
Baton Rouge LA
Richmond VA
Bangor ME
Spokane WA
Allen Park MI

Colleges and Universities

Agnes Scott College, GA
Rhodes College
American University/Washington
College of Law (Washington, D.C.)
Stanford University
Brown University
Swarthmore College, PA
Bucknell University
University of California - San Diego
College of William and Mary
University of Connecticut
Cornell University
Duke University
**University of Illinois Urbana-
Champaign**

University of Illinois Chicago
Earlham College, IN
University of Minnesota
Fairfield University, CT
University of Northern Illinois
Harvard University
University of Pittsburgh
Johns Hopkins University
University of Tennessee
Kent State, Ohio
University of Virginia
Northwestern University
University Pittsburgh
Princeton University
Valdosta State University, GA

Statewide Campaigns/Interest

California
Massachusetts
Connecticut
Minnesota (Implementation)
Hawaii
Montana
Illinois
New Hampshire
Iowa
New Mexico
Kansas

New York
Kentucky
North Carolina
Louisiana
Washington
Maine
West Virginia
Maryland
Florida

Requests and Proposals

1. Reprioritization of University funds through a reallocation of money.
2. Student fees.
3. Adequate indexing of wages to reflect cost of living.
4. Worker-elected representative body.
5. Earmarked donations from Miami alumni.
6. Reestablish step-raise system.
7. Redistribute end-of-year surplus to workers in need.
8. Give staff that do not use tuition waiver the option to trade it in for wage increase.

Administrative Secretary (F1)

Started at Miami University in February, 2001
Brought 26 years of experience to the University

Starting Rate of Pay: \$9.92/hour Current Rate of Pay: \$11.80/hour.
Ten & one-half month position (1,860 hours)
Increase in Wages since 2001 = \$1.88

NET WAGES for 2005: \$19,429.41

NET MONTHLY INCOME: \$ 1,386.00

Monthly Expenditures

Mortgage	\$ 370.00
Auto	\$ 255.00
Auto & Home Insurance	\$ 125.00
Utilities	\$ 425.00

Heat: **60 degrees or lower** during the winter – 75% increase in January

Electric: **VERY** conservative on usage.

Sewage, Water, Telephone & Trash Service

LUXURY: Direct TV – Basic (just increased in price) \$ 50.00

Medical (Prescriptions, co-pays & non-covered) \$ 75.00 *

TOTAL BASIC LIVING EXPENSES **\$ 1,300.00**

REMAINDER to “Live On” - \$ 86.00

(To be used for gas to come to work, groceries, car maintenance and any unexpected expenses. With this kind of “flexible” income there are no vacations, new clothes or any of the other items that many others enjoy in life. I do not spend nor have extra money for alcohol or cigarettes either.)

* **MEDICAL:** As a result of **financial hardship**, I receive full financial assistance with insulin pump supplies. Without this help, I would not be able to maintain the prescribed plan of care.

WOULD YOU CALL THIS “Living” ?

Additional Comments

Job Enrichment – Limited opportunities due to working TWO PART-TIME JOBS in addition to my Miami University job.

Job Audit – I am in the process of requesting a review of my current job duties compared to other higher level/paying jobs with similar responsibilities to assure my position is categorized correctly.

Having a Life – When burdened by multiple job responsibilities, you have no life. All you do is work to try and keep your head above water. Every person deserves time to enjoy life and step back from the stress, but when you are fighting to stay alive, you cannot. The added stress also complicates life when you are dealing with a chronic disease (diabetes) that can be jeopardized by the added stress and you do not have time to take care of yourself. Thus it creates potential for increased medical costs to our health plan plus is detrimental to the employee’s attendance record.

Terri Brosius

Master Administrative Assistant

I started working in the Martin Dining Hall in February 1988 at \$6.10 an hour.

I was divorced with three teenage children with no child support. That alone should tell you that I had to pinch pennies. My children started working at 15/16 to help out financially since I was barely earning enough to provide them food and a roof over their head.

When my rent here in Oxford kept getting raised and my income wasn't, I decided I needed to move out of Oxford. I didn't earn enough money to buy a home, so I went for an alternative route: I bought a mobile home in Seven Mile.

In the pamphlet "First in 2009" on page 2 the statement here that drew my attention is "THE PERSONAL COMMITMENT TO STUDENTS: (see page 7 for full paragraph)

I have seen this personal commitment within each job I have held here. To me, this PERSONAL COMMITMENT has always been by classified staff from my first job at Martin Dining Hall, to the Registrars' office, the Graduate School and now in my current job in the Advancement of Research and Scholarship.

The pamphlet has NOTHING in it regarding the employees that give that "PERSONAL COMMITMENT" everyday in their jobs. How many classified employees complete their duties with the PERSONAL COMMITMENT that is so cherished by Miami. To me that is all of us!

To me, by helping others, represents the MIAMI FAMILY.

To me when I first started here, the Miami Tradition was part of the "Miami Family". Around 1995, I felt that the Miami Family was diminishing. To me, the "Miami Family" represents the SPIRIT of Miami University.

The "Spirit of Miami" is listed on the last page of the First in 2009 pamphlet. (see page 7 for full paragraph) Spirit is an emotion, a feeling, and the PERSONAL COMMITMENT we all give, not just to the students, but to everyone, because we were/are a "Miami Family."

I want to know how can the goals of “First in 2009” preserve Miami’s most valuable and distinctive qualities of “PERSONAL COMMITMENT AND SPIRT” when the employees are not part of the goals in “First in 2009”?

Why can’t Miami University give their “Family” what they need most: a living wage and stop the wage compression?