



WORKERS AND STUDENTS UNITED
FOR A **LIVING WAGE**

KEEPING OUR PROMISES

Toward a Living Wage at the University of Virginia in 2012



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THE LIVING WAGE CAMPAIGN
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA
18 FEBRUARY, 2012

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION.....	6
II. HISTORY.....	8
III. DEMANDS.....	15
IV. ECONOMIC DEFINITION OF A LIVING WAGE.....	21
V. ECONOMIC REBUTTALS.....	26
VI. LEGALITY OF A LIVING WAGE.....	34
VII. SOCIAL ARGUMENTS FOR A LIVING WAGE.....	38
VIII. ON ALTERNATIVES TO A LIVING WAGE.....	43
IX. CONCLUDING REMARKS.....	46
X. TESTIMONIES.....	49
XI. ENDORSEMENTS.....	52
XII. APPENDICES.....	70
XIII. NOTES.....	72

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Finally, we thank all of those who have come before us in addressing issues of racial and economic justice at U.Va. Your invaluable insights and guidance helped set the path we are on today. Thank you also to the students involved with the 2005-2006 movement for allowing us to update your original Keeping Our Promises research document in 2010, and now again in 2012.

“To offer instruction of the highest quality to undergraduates from all walks of life, not only by transmitting established knowledge and skills, but by fostering in students the habits of mind and character required to develop a generous receptivity to new ideas, from whatever source; a disposition for applying the most rigorous criticism to all ideas and institutions, whether old or new; an ability to test hypotheses and re-interpret human experience; and a desire to engage in a lifetime of learning.”

– Statement of Purpose and Goals, University of Virginiaⁱ

“There is nothing new about poverty. What is new is that now we have the techniques and the resources to get rid of poverty. The real question is whether we have the will.”

– Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.ⁱⁱ

I. INTRODUCTION

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Workers at the University of Virginia have the right to support their families. Our report introduces the situation of low-income employees at the University of Virginia and presents the ethical, social, legal, and economic arguments for paying a living wage. It is intended for administrators, press, public officials, students, and anyone who wants a thorough and accessible account of the proposed living wage.

Since its founding, the University of Virginia has struggled to confront issues of racial and economic injustice both on Grounds and on a greater scale. The University has made enormous progress toward its ideals: an institution built by slaves can now proudly declare its commitment to ever-increasing diversity within its student body. A formerly all-male school can now boast of having a female president. The majority of University employees earn equitable wages.

Nevertheless, many employees of the University of Virginia, both direct and contracted, do not earn enough money to meet their most basic daily needs.ⁱⁱⁱ We cannot fully accept the progress and achievements of the University of Virginia without confronting the reality that many of the workers who build and maintain this University remain underpaid.

Keeping Our Promises will serve both to dispel myths surrounding living wage issues and to challenge the traditional arguments that the University administration employs to counter calls for economic justice. This document reminds us that a living wage is a pro-business, pro-community, and pro-family wage system. Paying a decent wage serves the long-term best interests of the University.

Over two hundred years ago, when Thomas Jefferson declared that all men are created equal and asserted that each human being deserves access to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, the founder of this institution led the American effort to codify human rights and extend their protections. As inheritors of Mr. Jefferson's legacy, we are responsible for furthering this vision in a manner that supports the long-term health of his University.

If upholding these values requires that we pay a living wage to all direct and contract University employees, then it is our responsibility to do so.

II. HISTORY

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INTELLECTUAL PRECEDENTS OF THE IDEA OF A LIVING WAGE

The living wage is not a new or radical idea. In 1776, for example, Adam Smith in *Wealth of Nations* notes that: “It is but equity, besides, that they who feed, clothe and lodge the whole body of the people, should have such a share of the produce of their own labour as to be themselves tolerably well fed, clothed and lodged.”^{iv} The moral imperative of the living wage is also expounded in Catholic Social Teaching of Pope Leo XIII: “As regards protection of this world’s good, the first task is to save the wretched workers from the brutality of those who make use of human beings as mere instruments for the unrestrained acquisition of wealth.”^v

John Ryan in *Living Wage: Its Ethical and Economic Aspects* (1906) as well as *Distributive Justice: The Right and Wrong of Our Present Distribution of Wealth* (1916) establishes the living wage as the most effective mechanism for maximizing social well-being within a market economy.

He further argues that a living wage for the lowest-paid can have broader positive economic impacts, as wage increases improve overall productivity, bolster demand, and other institutional improvements.^{vi} The studies of subsequent economists have provided support for this argument, including the Card-Kreuger study, whose conclusions were supported by Nobel prize winning economists Krugman, Stiglitz, and many others.^{vii}

More recently, the University’s own current president has written about the intellectual idea and practical necessity of a living wage. By way of a textbook intended to instruct students on the social and economic issues of labor, first published in 1995 and published in its fifth edition in 2011 (during Sullivan’s current role as President of the University of Virginia), President Sullivan writes that “[b]eing paid a living wage for one’s work is a necessary condition for self-actualization,” and that “[h]igh wages may not be sufficient to compensate for an alienating job, but the provision of wages adequate to meet basic needs is a fundamental requirement before a job can be experienced as rewarding and meaningful.”^{viii}

Intellectuals from fields of study as disparate as economics and sociology have spoken and published on the idea of a living wage for centuries. The idea of a living wage is neither new nor wildly progressive. It is clear from scholars as varied as Adam Smith, Pope Leo XIII, John Ryan, and our own University President Teresa Sullivan that issues of wage and labor fairness have never been interpretable by economics alone, and have inherently addressed the spheres of social responsibility and moral equity from the very beginning.

HISTORY OF THE LIVING WAGE CAMPAIGN AT U.VA.

I. The founding and early years of the Living Wage Campaign

In 1971 students, professors and community members assembled in protest on the steps of the Rotunda and for the first time publicly demanded that the University of Virginia pay its workers enough to meet the cost of living. After decades of protests surrounding an issue of the Living Wage, (often organized by U.Va.'s Black Student Alliance) a report published in 1996 examining the working conditions and demographics of employees sparked new debate and concern. The University's Office of Equal Opportunity Programs commissioned a document, titled the Muddy Floor Report, which revealed marked correlations among race, gender, and income for U.Va. employees. The numbers were especially staggering for the University's housekeeping staff: about a third were eligible for food stamps; their starting wage was \$12,756 per year, or a little over \$6.13 per hour (nearly \$3,700 below the federal poverty line); roughly half were African American, and a majority were women.^{ix}

A group of concerned faculty and students founded the Labor Action Group (LAG) in the fall of 1997 and hosted a teach-in entitled "Workers' Rights are Civil Rights" to discuss the issues of labor at UVA; 600 people attended.^x Following the teach-in, in 1998, the Labor Action Group launched the first modern Living Wage Campaign on a college campus. An orange and blue "\$8" button was adopted as the campaign's symbol (\$8.00 being a living wage in 1997). These buttons became ubiquitous on Grounds and in Charlottesville. Jody Williams and Bobby Muller wore \$8 buttons in solidarity during a Nobel Peace Laureate Conference held on Grounds.

LAG also organized other faculty and staff to garner attention and support. This included involvement with "Employee Councils", University-sponsored groups that met to discuss employee issues. Many employees involved voiced support for a living wage and some councils drafted resolutions supporting the campaign. In December 1999 a Hospital cafeteria cashier, Richelle Burress, was suspended from her position for refusing to remove a \$8 button from her uniform. She was re-instated only after the LAG brought significant media and public attention to her suspension.

The \$8.00 Campaign eventually achieved its primary goal of raising the lowest pay band at the University; in October 2000, the University's Board of Visitors increased the starting salary for the lowest paid direct employees from \$6.10 to \$8.19 per hour. The University, however, never acknowledged the influence of the campaign in its decision and never adopted the principles of a living wage. This change applied only to direct employees and excluded the majority of low-wage workers, who worked in areas such as dining for private companies that were contracted by the University. In addition, the raise was not indexed to inflation and ever-increasing local costs of living. In other words, as the economy adjusted to a higher cost of living, U.Va.'s minimum wage remained stagnant, becoming less and less sufficient every year.

During this time, groups in Charlottesville formed parallel campaigns for economic justice and allied with the University's efforts in a variety of ways. Virginia Organizing (formerly known as the Virginia Organizing Project) organized a successful campaign for employees of the West Main St. Courtyard Marriott.^{xi} The City of Charlottesville adopted a living wage ordinance that has expanded to include all direct and contract employees starting in 2000. The Charlottesville public school system began paying its employees a living wage.

The notion of a living wage continued to appeal to a broad base of supporters from diverse constituencies. The widespread support of the student body is particularly noteworthy: Student Council, for instance, passed a unanimous resolution in 2003 urging the University to pay a living wage, strengthened by more than 2,000 signatures of students, faculty and staff.

II. The Madison Hall Sit-in

In 2005, after a student from Georgetown University's successful living wage campaign spoke on Grounds, University of Virginia students reformed a group around the issue of a living wage.

Students held rallies and teach-ins that brought the important questions of justice and poverty in Charlottesville to the forefront again. Through a variety of public tactics the students attracted a great deal of attention, support, and criticism. The campaign published an extensive research report that documented the insecure and unjust economic conditions faced by University workers and provided clear evidence of the University's ability to provide a living wage for all its employees.

After numerous events, protests, programs and meetings, on April 12, 2006, in hopes of forcing an honest dialogue about the University's unfair wage policy, 17 students marched to the office of President John T. Casteen III. When they were denied a dialogue, they sat down and refused to leave. The seventeen students began a sit-in that would last four days, as other supporters rallied outside. An anthropology professor who tried to enter Madison Hall to talk with the students was arrested and later fired.

Twice, Casteen entered Madison Hall after midnight to negotiate with the students who had to be woken up and were naturally disorientated. Casteen later announced that negotiations had stalled and ordered the police to arrest the students and remove them from the building. A police recording of the arrest showed administrators standing by as police refused to answer student questions over their legal situation, began arresting students before their declared deadline, and physically and verbally abused students who had gone limp in nonviolent resistance. The charges against the students were dropped in court after the recording was shown.

The summer after the 2006 sit-in, the University raised wages, even after insisting to the students that it would be impossible. As in 2000, however, the University never acknowledged a responsibility to pay a wage that met the cost of living or was indexed to inflation. After the sit-in, the student movement dissipated. Other faculty, staff, and Charlottesville residents continued to address issues of worker's rights from a variety of perspectives. The Staff Union at U.Va. (S.U.U.Va.), which had been founded in 2002 as part of the Living Wage Movement's growth, grew to include several hundred employees and organized tirelessly for workers until it ultimately folded in 2008. In addition, a group of professors and local leaders established the University and Community Action on Racial Equity (U.C.A.R.E.) in 2007.^{xii}

III. The Recent History of the Living Wage Campaign

With the arrival of President Teresa Sullivan in the fall of 2010, students recognized an opportunity to develop a respectful relationship with the new administration and press University leaders to address the concerns of its workers and student body. Since the spring of 2010, the revitalized student movement has worked to build momentum and spread awareness about living wages with various initiatives. They:

1. Organized a forum in March in which over 60 students engaged with Charlottesville residents to expand their knowledge of a living wage
2. Sponsored a film as part of the Human Rights Film Festival in April
3. Collected student letters addressed to President Sullivan
4. Lobbied City Council to write and adopt a resolution (the text of which can be found in Appendix A) calling on U.Va. and other employers in the region to follow the City's leadership in paying a living wage, which passed unanimously
5. Co-sponsored a panel on a living wage as part of the Class Matters lecture series, promoting dialogue and action around issues of race, class, poverty, and public policy within Charlottesville

Building on efforts of the past, the current Living Wage Campaign at the University of Virginia seeks to reaffirm that all University employees are integral members of the U.Va. community and deserve to be treated as such. It asserts that economic justice is in the best interest of the University and the Charlottesville-Albemarle area. Recalling the values of equality and integrity upon which our institution is founded, the Living Wage Campaign urges the University of Virginia to guarantee an indexed living wage to all direct and contract staff of the University, including the University Medical Center.

In 2011, the Campaign organized teach-ins, marches, rallies, and peaceful protests; it confirmed the support of Mayor Norris and City Council members and it motivated the Charlottesville City Council to pass a resolution supporting a living wage at U.Va.; campaign supporters marched on the Board of Visitors meeting to demonstrate for a living wage; representatives of the Campaign met extensively, a number of times over the year, with

administrators, including Pat Lampkin, Susan Carkeek, President Sullivan, and many others.

Members of the Living Wage Campaign met with President Sullivan at the end of January 2011, at which point she promised to meet with the Campaign again after the close of the General Assembly Session at the end of February. Following the January meeting, the Campaign organized a community-wide march during the Board of Visitors meeting on February 25th, 2011 in order to put pressure on the BOV and President Sullivan to take the demands of the campaign seriously by demonstrating growing support on Grounds. The Campaign continued to hope to work with President Sullivan and other administrators, and coordinated the march in the spirit of collaboration and mutual respect. This event was extremely successful, drawing local media and hundreds of community members to process around the Rotunda.

Following the January meeting with President Sullivan, the Campaign tried on four different occasions to contact President Sullivan and schedule a meeting: email communications on February 15, February 28, and two face-to-face meetings with her staff in March. Yet, after all these attempts, her office did not follow through on repeated promises for a follow-up meeting. On March 22nd, the Campaign submitted a letter to the President's office requesting a meeting by Friday, April 1st at the very latest. On March 25th, members of the campaign met with Patricia Lampkin and Susan Carkeek, requesting a statement of worker protection for involvement with the Campaign, an audit clause written into new and renewed contracts for all subcontracted work, and a public statement from the administration in support of the goals of the Living Wage Campaign.

Members of the Campaign met with President Sullivan on April 19th, and during this meeting, it was made clear that the administration was unwilling to meet any of the Campaign's three goals. The administration would not grant either an audit clause in contracts or a statement of support for the Living Wage Campaign, and the statement of worker protection issued by the administration reaffirmed their existing position, rather than address the Campaign's concerns with the security of workers specifically involved with the Living Wage Campaign. In response to the President's non-commitment to the issue of a living wage, the Campaign organized a Community Day of Action on the following day, during which the results of the previous day's meeting with President Sullivan were announced. The Day of Action concluded in a rally and a march around Madison Hall, garnering widespread support from the University and the Charlottesville communities.

Organizations that spoke in support of the campaign include: the UVA and Charlottesville chapters of the NAACP, the Black Student Alliance, the Latino Student Alliance, the University Democrats, Minority Squared, ONE, Queer and Allied Activism, the Virginia Organizing Project, and Amnesty International.

IV. Reflections on fourteen years of history

The current Living Wage Campaign at the University of Virginia is part of a history of fighting for just wages at the University of Virginia for well over a decade. The Campaign is also part of a broader movement that includes successful living wage campaigns at universities and municipalities around the nation, including the city of Charlottesville. Many campaigns at other institutions were inspired by the U.Va. campaign that began in 1998, the first of its kind, and went on to win living wages for their communities. At least 17 out of the top 25 universities in the United States, a group that U.Va. likes to consider its peer institutions, pay their employees a living wage. Even in the face of austerity cuts, all major universities in London have begun to pay their employees a living wage as a result of student-led campaigns. Furthermore, the U.Va. Living Wage Campaign is part of an even longer history in this country of the struggle for dignity and fair treatment both by and for working people—a struggle that continues to garner global attention with the recent social justice movements throughout the United States. We are excited to be part of this surge of energy, and we hope to direct it, for our part, towards making U.Va. a better, more just institution of which we can all be proud.

The Living Wage Campaign at U.Va. has yet to achieve its goals, or even convince the administration to prioritize worker compensation. The administration's recent gestures toward worker well-being have resulted only in compromised or partial solutions: the salary increase of November 2011, for example, was offset by a greater contribution to retirement plans, which actually cut take-home pay for many workers.

Throughout its history, but particularly during the past two years, the Living Wage Campaign has pursued a strategy of respectful and supportive engagement with the administration. The end result has been that the Campaign has developed its arguments, has built a broad base of support, has shown itself open to reasonable dialogue, and has proved that such dialogue will not work. What gains have been earned for workers have come piecemeal and with much collective struggle in the face of the University's obstructions and persistent refusal to acknowledge either the endemic plight of its workers or the organizers and proponents of a living wage, including the Campaign. *The conclusion that the Campaign has drawn from its own history and from other living wage campaigns is that meaningful material gains are not won without dramatic pressure on administrations from students.*

III. DEMANDS

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The University of Virginia Living Wage Campaign Demands a Living Wage in 2012.

Since March 2011, the Living Wage Campaign at the University of Virginia has repeatedly provided detailed documentation to University administrators highlighting the dire need for a living wage for all University employees. As of today, these demands have not been met. Therefore, the Living Wage Campaign at U.Va. re-released a set of core demands, with the requirement that the University take *immediate steps* to rectify the unjust and dishonorable treatment of many University employees. Since the University has failed to explicitly address these concerns by the announced deadline of Friday, February 17, 2012, the campaign begins direct action on February 18th, 2012 to publicize the unjust wages and employment practices currently in place at our University.

A. CURRENT DEMANDS:

1. Every UVA employee must be guaranteed a LIVING WAGE under university policy. This wage can be no less than \$13.00 and must be adjusted on an annual basis to comply with the Economic Policy Institute's regionally-sourced-cost-of-living and inflation calculations. The implementation of a living wage must not come at the reduction of any other benefits, including health care. This base wage must be extended not only to direct university employees but also to contract and subcontract employees; the campaign holds that outsourcing core functions does not relieve the University of its obligation to treat employees fairly. UVA must therefore consolidate and make publicly available all data from contractors regarding labor conditions, a right it already reserves in a number of contracts. Contractors who do not meet these requirements will not be eligible.

2. All working members of the UVA community have the right to job security. In implementing the living wage policy, *no jobs or wages will be eliminated or diminished*. The University must commit to providing full-time jobs when possible, and part-time or temporary work only when necessary. What the University calls an entry-level wage should be just that: a wage for entry-level employees *only*. Entry-level wages must not be permanent wages and there must be clear and feasible channels for advancement. A strong community is built by those who share sustained personal investment in it, a goal which can only be achieved by ensuring workers have access to full time and appropriately compensated employment.

3. All UVA workers must be guaranteed safe, just, and humane working conditions. This includes clearly publicized avenues for reporting wage violations and/or unsafe working conditions. UVA must protect workers' rights to organize, to speak out about poor working conditions or low wages, and to file grievances without fear of retaliation. The University

must also acknowledge the disproportionate number of women and people of color at the bottom of the wage scale. UVA must take concrete steps to address these disparities through the equitable promotion of people of color and women.

4. The University must allow and facilitate the creation of a Living Wage Oversight Board, an employee organization with oversight responsibilities for ensuring the University's ongoing commitment to providing a living wage for all employees. This task force will also serve as a resource for workers to report grievances and labor violations without fear of reprisal or retaliation.

B. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF A LIVING WAGE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

The intention of this document is to demonstrate how a living wage agreement could be implemented at the University of Virginia. This is a policy that would have positive effects for the hundreds of UVA employees, both direct and contracted, who currently work for considerably less than a living wage.

1. What is the current living wage in Charlottesville, VA?

A. Wages. Beginning in fall of 2012, the living wage will be at least \$13.00 per hour, based on figures provided by the Economic Policy Institute (EPI). On a yearly basis, the living wage must be re-calculated to comply with current EPI figures, which take into account annual inflation and cost-of-living measures specific to the Charlottesville area. Calculations for individual employees will be based on EPI figures for a two-earner, two-dependent family. Because EPI figures include the cost of health benefits in their per-hour calculation, the University or contractors may factor in their yearly contribution toward employee health care in reaching the living wage number. However, other benefits provided by the University or contractor, including leave and education benefits, may not be included in the base wage calculation. This calculation will be made annually on September 1.

B. Health insurance. The University will continue to provide a comprehensive benefits package to all direct employees. Currently, for direct employees at the bottom of the pay scale, the University states that it pays an equivalent of between \$6.42 and \$9.54 of total benefits, including between \$1.93 and \$5.06 per hour worth of health insurance benefits, or approximately 89% of total health insurance costs for employees with premium packages covering family members as well. *These benefits must not be reduced.* In addition, contracted employees must receive a comprehensive health benefits package, equivalent to direct employees as defined above, for the time period that they are working in service to the University of Virginia. Alternately, contractors and subcontractors may opt out of the

benefits package as described in section 1C. The University provides this information at www.virginia.edu/wages/.

C. Contract Employee Benefits. Contract Employers (defined as employers under contract with the University, or under contract or subcontract with a contractor under contract with the University) may choose to not provide comprehensive health insurance or additional benefits as defined in Sections 1B. and 1C. If a contract employer does not provide comprehensive health insurance, then the employer must pay a minimum of \$2.00 over the living wage standard defined in Section 1A to contract employees. If a contract employer chooses not to provide Additional Benefits, the employer must pay a minimum of \$.40 above the living wage standard to contract employees. If a contract employer chooses to provide neither comprehensive health insurance or Additional Benefits, then the contract employer must pay \$2.40 above the living wage standard to contract employees.

2. Who is eligible for the living wage, comprehensive health insurance, and additional benefits?

All employees of the University of Virginia, including employees of the University of Virginia Health System, shall be eligible for the living wage. This policy is not intended to apply to student-workers or to graduate student teaching assistants. “Employees” are defined as the following:

A. Direct employees of UVA or the UVA Health System

B. Any employee of a UVA contractor or sub-contractor who works 10 or more hours per week on University grounds. A “contractor” is defined as a company which provides the University with labor services and has contracts with UVA with an aggregate value of \$30,000 or greater in any twelve-month period. The ultimate authority to determine whether a type of work falls under the definition of “labor services” will reside in the hands of the UVA Living Wage Implementation Task Force, as described below.

C. A contracted employee is a worker whose employer works under contract with the University, or a worker whose employer works under subcontract or sub-subcontract with a contractor under contract with the University or its affiliates. A worker is a contract employee of the University only for the hours labored in service to the University of Virginia or its affiliates.

3. Implementing the living wage at UVA

A. In implementing a living wage policy at UVA, the University will *not* eliminate jobs or hours as a result of these policy changes. That is, the University may not compensate for additional labor expenditures related to the implementation of a living wage by reducing hours worked, by understaffing, or by demanding increased productivity from fewer workers. In effect, the University must commit to higher expenditures for an equivalent

amount of labor in order to be in compliance with the living wage agreement.

B. According to the terms of the agreement, all contractors (as defined above) will be required to abide by the terms of the living wage agreement. Contractors must sign a one-page letter of assent, which is to be included in their contracts. The letter of assent will guarantee the living wage standard, comprehensive health insurance, and additional benefits as outlined in Sections 1A, 1B, and 1C. The letter of assent will also require that if a contractor enters into a subcontract with any employer, the subcontractor must also sign a letter of assent guaranteeing the standards outlined in Sections 1A, 1B and 1C.

C. University procurement services will ensure that contractors abide by the agreement. This includes aggregating and making public information about wages, hours, and benefits for individual contractors on a yearly basis. Both University procurement services and The Living Wage Oversight Board will maintain copies of all contractors' and subcontractors' letters of assent.

4. Establishing a Living Wage Oversight Board

A. In order to provide oversight of the implementation of a living wage policy, UVA will establish a Living Wage Oversight Board. This board will be given formal rights for:

- i. Ensuring compliance with the living wage agreement.
- ii. Clarifying unresolved issues related to the implementation of living wage policies.
- iii. Resolving grievances related to non-compliance with the living wage agreement.
- iv. Making suggestions for future modifications to the agreement.

The Oversight Board will consist of at least the following individuals: one appointed University administrator; three professors elected by the Faculty Senate; three direct, non-administrative employees of the University, and two students (a graduate student elected by the GSAS Council, and an undergraduate elected by Student Council). Appointments and elections to the board will be annual.

B. The three direct, non-administrative employees participating in this task force must be fairly compensated for this commitment, including scheduled and compensated time within the work week to do the work of this committee, as well as modification of job description to include support of this committee's activities as a routine responsibility.

C. As it may become necessary in the future to modify the existing living wage agreement, the Board will be responsible for amendments to the current living wage policy. Such amendments to the agreement must be approved by a two-thirds majority of Board members.

5. Monitoring UVA's compliance and resolving grievances regarding the living wage agreement

A. UVA will aggregate and make publicly available data on a yearly basis detailing employees' wages and benefits packages, including numbers of employees, pay grades, and hours worked in the year.

B. UVA will also make publicly available employee and wage data regarding all contracts which fall under the purview of the living wage agreement. The Living Wage Oversight Board will be responsible for evaluating UVA's compliance with the agreement, based on the information provided yearly by the University.

C. Any UVA worker (as defined above) has formal rights to grievance for non-compliance with the living wage agreement. Workers will be required to fill out a simple form describing their grievance, and the forms shall be widely available in a variety of languages.

D. In the event of any instance of non-compliance with the living wage agreement, UVA shall compensate the employee(s) for all back pay owed, monetary equivalent of any benefits denied, and interest accrued during the period of non-compliance. A history of more than three separate violations from any contractor will result in immediate termination of the contract in question.

6. Making University employees (direct and contracted) aware of their rights under the the living wage agreement.

A. Direct and contract employees: at the initiation of any new job, the employee must receive from the university or contractor an information packet in the language of their choice documenting:

- i. The living wage they should be paid
- ii. The benefits they are due
- iii. The grievance procedures to which they have access, including both the Living Wage Oversight Board, the University's Equal Opportunity Programs (EOP) office and any other associated University labor grievance procedures.
- iv. The names and contact information for the Oversight Board.
- v. For construction sites and other places of temporary employment, a poster outlining the information contained in section 6A will be placed in rest-break areas for employees.

B. All employees must also be notified in writing on a yearly basis of their right to free speech regarding labor issues and grievances without fear of retaliation from the University.

Note: Portions of this implementation report have been supplied from other university Living Wage campaigns, including that of Harvard University.

IV. ECONOMIC DEFINITION OF A LIVING WAGE

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I. HIGH COST OF LIVING IN CHARLOTTESVILLE

The large student population contributes to the high costs of living in Charlottesville: approximately 70% of U.Va. students, or 14,341 students, live off grounds, occupying 6,064 rental units or about 53% of the rental stock (leaving 5,300 rental units for everyone else). Students often get help from parents and split rental costs with other students, thereby helping to drive up the cost of renting.^{xiii}

A Joint Task Force in Affordable Housing – convened by the City of Charlottesville, Albemarle County, and the University of Virginia – recommended in a 2009 report that the University pay all employees, and strongly encourage contractors to pay, a living wage, and to develop criteria for establishing a living wage.^{xiv} A 2011 report by the University and Community Action for Racial Equality (UCARE) makes the following claim: “It is hard to imagine any other action that the University administration could take that would send a more powerful message that U.Va. values its workers and its relationship with the community, were the University to pay a living wage to all who work on grounds, whether contracted workers or not.”^{xv}

II. WHAT IS A LIVING WAGE?

“It is important to note that a basic family budget is indeed ‘basic.’ It comprises only the amounts a family needs to spend to feed, shelter, and clothe itself, get to work and school, and subsist in 21st century America. Hence, it includes no savings, no restaurant meals, no funds for emergencies—not even renters’ insurance to protect against fire, flood or theft.” - Economic Policy Institute.

A living wage is calculated to reflect the basic needs of an average family: a family of four with two full-time working adults and two dependent children. The calculations account for a family’s basic expenses in seven categories: housing, food, transportation, health care, childcare, taxes and a miscellaneous category that covers necessities like utilities and clothing.

An analysis based on calculations made by the Economic Policy Institute (EPI), a nonpartisan think tank based in Washington, DC, shows that in Charlottesville a family needs at least \$5946 (in both wages and benefits) per month to meet these needs in 2012. This means that both working adults need to earn a minimum of **\$17.15** per hour, 40 hours per week, 52 weeks per year, indexed to inflation on a yearly basis. This figure assumes basic employee benefits, such as health insurance.

Statistics for housing costs are taken from the 2011 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's "Fair Market Rents" (FMRs). FMRs include rent and the cost of electricity, gas, and water but not other utilities such as telephone or internet service. The FMRs also separate different sizes of apartments: for families with one or two children, the FMR for a two-bedroom apartment is used; for families with three children, the FMR for a three bedroom apartment is used. For each category of apartment the Charlottesville FMR uses a rent value representing the 40th percentile of rents in the city of Charlottesville and surrounding counties; for example: 60% of the two bedroom apartments in the Charlottesville metropolitan area have rents higher than the value used for the two bedroom FMR.

Costs for food are taken from the 2011 Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion's report "Official USDA Food Plans: Cost of Food at Home at Four Levels." The numbers used for the Living Wage calculation are at the level of the "Low-Cost Plan," which assumes that nearly all food is prepared at home and historically corresponds to the second lowest quartile for food cost.

The EPI has previously used tax information sourced from Citizens for Tax Justice. This figure includes federal income tax and state income tax, along with Social Security and Medicare payroll taxes. Federal and state tax credits for children are taken into consideration in this calculation. The EPI has not released the tax information for their newer family budget calculation, so we have scaled the numbers from the 2008 EPI values.

Information on transportation habits come from the National Household Travel Survey. Only travel for work and non-social purposes (errands, school, church, etc.) has been included. The cost of that transportation is calculated via the Internal Revenue Service cents-per-mile estimate, which is the standard rate that employers use to reimburse employees for travel.

Childcare costs are taken from the Children's Defense Fund's 2000 report "The High Cost of Child Care Puts Quality Care Out of Reach for Many Families," and were updated to 2008 values using the Consumer Price Index child care and nursery care index. The costs used for the living wage calculation correspond to sending a four-year-old and an eight-year-old to center-based child-care.

The EPI's calculation of health care costs assumes that all costs are being paid by the employee; for that reason we have subtracted the value of the University's benefits from the EPI's calculation of a living wage.

Table 1: Annual Estimated “Basic Needs” Budget for the Charlottesville Metropolitan Area and Corresponding Living Wage

Monthly Expenses To Family	Two Adults, Two Children	One Adult, One Child	One Adult, Two Children
Housing	\$931	\$931	\$931
Food	\$731	\$359	\$529
Child Care	\$1344	\$866	\$1344
Transportation	\$679	\$504	\$504
Health Care*	\$1272	\$873	\$1207
Other Necessities	\$419	\$325	\$368
Taxes	\$760	\$545	\$690
Total	\$6136	\$4403	\$5573
Annual Total	\$73632	\$52836	\$66876
LIVING WAGE	\$17.70	\$25.40	\$32.15
University Benefits Package	\$4.67	\$4.01	\$4.52
<i>[living wage minus healthcare/provided benefits → living wage at U.Va.]</i>	\$13.03	\$21.39	\$27.63

Table 2: The University's Compensation Package

As of November 2011	Starting Pay and Value of Benefits
Hourly Salary	\$10.65
Health Care Benefit	3.90
Back up Child and Elder Care	0.43
Supplemental Benefit Credit	0.216
Health Care Credit	0.12
Sub Total Value of Benefits	4.67
Hourly Rate of Total Compensation	\$15.32

Note that in the above chart, the calculations include only those benefits that offset an employee's cost of living.

In 2010, the University had 12,189 direct employees and hundreds more contract workers hired through private companies (such as the dining hall staff employed through Aramark).^{xvi} According to University administrators in 2010, 326 direct employees were then paid less than the EPI's living wage in the academic division of the University, and about 523 direct employees were paid less than a living wage in the hospital division.^{xvii}

Because the University does not keep records of its contractors' employees, the Living Wage Campaign cannot accurately estimate how many contract workers are paid less than a living wage. We approximate that this number is in the hundreds.

The University publicly states that its minimum entry-level wage, as of October 2010, is \$10.65/hr (before a mandatory 5% Virginia Retirement System contribution).^{xviii} At this rate, a dual income family of four will fall \$9776 short of meeting its basic needs annually.

But U.V.a's claim is not entirely accurate, as it ignores the wages paid to contract workers, which the University does not monitor. Also, this claim fails to account for the fact that part-time, temporary, and contract workers receive fewer benefits than direct U.Va. employees.

Contract workers are paid as little as \$7.25 per hour, which is the federal minimum wage (and some, like workers under the age of 21, could be paid even less; see the U.S. Fair Labor Standards Act).

V. ECONOMIC REBUTTALS

V. ECONOMIC REBUTTALS

The University administration refuses to accept responsibility for the wages its contractors pay,^{xix} yet the University clearly directs the contract hiring rates by setting its own policies of lowest-bid contracting with no wage-floor. These policies result in low employee pay.^{xx}

The Living Wage Campaign calls upon the University to instate a living wage for both direct *and* contract employees, requiring each contract firm to compensate its employees at the same basic rate as the University. The Living Wage Campaign points to the City of Charlottesville as an example of a public entity that requires all contracted work carried out on its behalf to be compensated at or above the minimum rate it has set for its own direct employees.

The Living Wage Campaign asserts that the University has the responsibility to pay at least \$13/hour (adjusted on an annual basis based on the Economic Policy Institute's calculations) along with benefits. Anything less is harmful to our employees' families, our University's mission, our students' education and the dignity of everyone in the University of Virginia community. For an employee at the bottom pay band at the University, an increase in wages of less than two dollars could be the determining factor in being able to pay the bills. This increase could potentially provide the income necessary for rent, health care, childcare, or even food for each month.

I. THE UNIVERSITY CAN AFFORD TO PAY A LIVING WAGE.

For the University to pay all direct employees a wage of \$13 an hour, the Budget Office would have to reallocate between 4.2 to 5.8 million dollars; this would be less than a quarter of a percent of U.Va.'s \$2.487 billion annual budget. In 2010, the campaign petitioned for an \$11.44/hr living wage and asked University administration for an estimate on how many direct employees were paid wages below that figure. The campaign learned that 326 direct employees are paid less than \$11.44 in the academic division of the University, and about 523 direct employees are paid less than \$11.44 in the hospital division.^{xxi} The Campaign is unable to obtain information from the administration regarding the number of current direct employees earning below \$13/hour, forcing us to estimate; this only reinforces the persistent problem of the University's lack of transparency concerning its finances.

It is important, furthermore, to recognize that University administrators are being disingenuous when suggesting that progress has been made because only 26^{xxii} employees currently make the minimum, entry-level wage of \$10.65/hr. There are many employees who make more than this entry-level minimum but who still do not make a living wage, because these entry-level wages are so small and non-sustaining. It is, in fact, disingenuous to tout the reduction of entry-level wage employees from 61 to 26 as indicative of fair labor

practices when such a statistic only accounts for direct employees; administrators are passing over in silence the contract employees who makes as little as the federal minimum wage of \$7.25/hr, with no benefits. The administration will not even dignify these workers with a public acknowledgement of their differentiated compensation, nor will the University make its contract system transparent.

II. TABULATION FOR FUNDING REALLOCATION: LIVING WAGE FOR DIRECT EMPLOYEES

- Estimated number of direct employees making less than a Living Wage: 850-1200
- Difference between current minimum yearly wage (\$10.65/Hour) and current Living Wage (\$13/Hour), per employee: \$4888 per employee.
- Thus, 850 to 1200 employees multiplied by \$4888 per employee to bring wages to goal of \$13/Hour: \$4,154,800-\$5865600
- Percentage of University's yearly \$2.487 billion operating budget: less than a quarter of one percent

Because the University states that it is not privy to the salary information of vendors^{xxiii} – that is, because the University does not ask what its contractors pay their employees – the Living Wage Campaign cannot easily estimate how much funding would have to be reallocated in order to guarantee a living wage for contract employees. Despite this obstacle, the Living Wage Campaign estimates that the cost of contracts to the University will not increase significantly. In an extensive study of twenty cities, Andrew Elmore found that contract costs increased by less than 0.1% of the overall local budget in the years after a living wage law was adopted. Since contractors still have to compete for contracts, they find ways other than paying low wages to make their bids competitive.^{xxiv} In addition, contractors benefit from the lower turnover rates and higher productivity that higher wages and benefits provide. Economist Candace Howes found that worker turnover decreased by 57% in San Francisco following the implementation of a living wage.^{xxv}

III. EXTERNALITIES

By paying workers so little that they cannot make ends meet, the University creates a series of harmful externalities. The administration does not make the costs of labor disappear; instead, it simply externalizes the difference between the University's wages and the actual cost of living onto taxpayers and the broader Charlottesville community. Our community bears the burden of uncompensated emergency room visits, soup kitchens and food stamps, subsidized housing, higher crime rates, underperforming students in schools, and even homeless shelters. By refusing its responsibility to pay decent wages to its employees, the University effectively extracts profit from our community. Instead of only considering what it would cost to implement a living wage, the University should strive to be a responsible corporate citizen by considering how much it extracts from the Charlottesville community

by *not* paying a living wage. Furthermore, studies by the Economic Policy Institute have shown that for every \$1.00 increase in wages for underpaid workers, affected households will generate \$3,500 more in spending, thereby developing the economy of our low-income neighborhoods and the community at large.^{xxvi}

The University's claim that it cannot afford to pay its most economically vulnerable employees a decent wage seems even more troubling when we consider that University of Virginia administrators make up five of the top ten highest-earning state government employees.^{xxvii} Although high salaries are a useful tool for recruiting skilled administrators and professors, this does not immediately justify such expenses. Economic calculations must also be weighed against moral considerations; as a community, we must judge what investments make a university objectively better. We assert that paying workers decent wages would make our University a much better place, with respect to its broader social goals. In its mission statement and in its classrooms, the University states its commitment to ethics and to the public good.^{xxviii}

The purpose of the University is not to earn a profit, but to educate students so that they can become virtuous citizens. Therefore, the Living Wage Campaign asserts that this simple, low- cost policy would more effectively improve our University than other, more expensive, investments will. A living wage asserts that we can afford, and we *must* afford, to pay wages that reflect basic respect for human dignity.

Elizabeth^{xxix} has been working for the University for almost thirty years. Yet she is still being paid an entry-level wage. Management has moved her several times from full-time positions at the hospital, to part-time work in an administrative building, back to a full-time position cleaning an academic building. Instead of designing strategies to keep Elizabeth's wages artificially low, the administration should strive to provide Elizabeth with the respect she deserves. Elizabeth told the Living Wage Campaign that "even a small raise could help me support my sister and mother. My kids are grown now but they can only be asked to do so much for us. I always expect a raise is coming, but it never comes."^{xxx}

IV. ON THE 2012 BONUS AND THE 2011 STRATEGIC SALARY INCREASES

In 2010, the state of Virginia announced that because of a surplus, state employees would receive a one-time bonus of 3%. While University administrators have used the example of the bonus to show that it takes care of its lowest paid employees, the 3% bonus – which, in fact, derives from external funds and was not the initiative of the University – actually shows the enormous disparities between low-wage workers and highly-paid U.Va. administrators. Former Executive Vice President Arthur Garson received a \$21,204 bonus in 2010, which is enough to purchase a new car, and exceeds the entire annual income of entry-level direct employees working at \$10.65/hour. By contrast, a low-wage U.Va. worker only received a \$632 bonus, which is not enough to pay for a single month's rent. By way of comparison, Dr. Garson's salary was \$706,800 a year, about \$340 an hour, while President Teresa

Sullivan’s salary was and remains \$485,000 a year, about \$233 an hour, not including her extensive benefits package.

On November 21, 2011, the University announced what were dubbed “strategic salaries increases” or “adjustments,” despite the University’s own admission of “ongoing budget cuts.”^{xxxix} U.Va.’s press release explained that “The Board of Visitors approved a \$3 million allocation in June, to address salary issues in order to *retain the highest-performing* University staff and faculty”^{xxxix} (emphasis added). The release ends with the assertion that “the University continues to focus on helping its lowest-paid employees, who have felt a disproportionate impact from the state salary freezes.”^{xxxix} Yet the 2011 salary increase, with its very name, belies this assertion and reveals the University’s clear commitment to strategy over equity, to a corporate model of careerism and prestige over social justice and the most rudimentary needs of all U.Va. employees, from low-paid contract employees to the hard-working faculty who did not qualify as “high performers.” The University’s real strategy is all too apparent: nurture those at the very top at the expense of those who do the majority of the work, particularly those lowest-paid employees who maintain the University’s very functioning.

V. ON “ENTRY-LEVEL” WAGES

U.Va.’s spokesperson, Carol Wood, defended U.Va.’s low wages in a March 2010 article in Charlottesville’s *Daily Progress*. She stated, “When people come in at that entry level, our hope is that they are going to advance beyond that... There is a program where they can go through courses and add to their base salary. They can move to other jobs as they come open.”^{xxxix}

Susan, a U.Va. worker interviewed by the Living Wage Campaign, is evidence that Ms. Wood’s claim does not hold true. Susan has been working at the University for twenty-three years, but she still works for an entry-level wage. She is beloved by the student community whom she has served diligently maintaining their academic buildings. She says: “It’s not like I don’t want to move up the income ladder, but there’s just no way to really do it. There’s a class that you can take if you get nominated for it, to get you an extra few cents an hour, but that’s it, that’s nothing. I have to work overtime to keep up with my bills... I’ve seen the University change, but one thing that hasn’t changed is the people up top keep making all the money while we [workers] don’t see anything.”

Unfortunately, what the University calls entry-level pay often turns out to be permanent pay. When there are employees who remain at entry-level pay for decades, it is clear the University must change its practices. The University has touted training and educational programs it offers, however there are good reasons to doubt the efficacy of these programs at bettering conditions for the University’s lowest-paid employees (see the corresponding section in Chapter VIII, “Alternatives to a Living Wage”).

VI. ON BENEFITS

The Living Wage Campaign applauds the University for the benefits it provides its direct employees, including health benefits. But for a family to make ends meet in Charlottesville, workers must be paid a cash wage of *at least* \$13/hr, with benefits accruing on top of this. The EPI's calculation of health care costs assumes that all costs are being paid by the employee, and for that reason we have subtracted the value of the University's benefits (as calculated by the University) from the EPI's calculation of a living wage.

The University asserts that its benefits are more generous than those offered by the city, and that this compensates for the wage difference between the two entities. But most of the additional fringe benefits that the University offers do not help meet workers' basic needs; they do not help pay for rent, food, and heating, for example. Indeed, many of the benefits – such as dental insurance – are programs that employees have to buy into in order to enjoy, and many employees do not make enough to do so in the first place. Many low wage employees say that they would prefer higher cash wages instead of additional benefits, so that they can meet their most essential, basic needs.

VII. ON UNEMPLOYMENT AND TUITION

Economists have conducted dozens of studies showing that minimum wage increases and living wage ordinances – in cities from Baltimore to Miami to Santa Fe – *do not* significantly affect unemployment. The best known of these studies remains the Card-Krueger experiment which has gained international attention.^{xxxv} Such findings originally surprised many in the economics community, but these conclusions have now been corroborated by national level studies. The Dube-Lester-Reich study looked at food service employment in every pair of counties straddling a state border corresponding to a minimum wage differential and found that the differential had no significant effect.^{xxxvi} Another comprehensive study by the Center for American Progress compared employment statistics from fifteen major cities that had instituted living wages with a control group of comparable cities and again found no significant effect.^{xxxvii}

These economic studies focus primarily on living wage increases for entire municipalities or larger jurisdictions, wherein hundreds or thousands of economic actors make a variety of choices after a wage increase is mandated from the outside; they convincingly show that living wages do not negatively affect the economies of the given areas. Moreover, the University of Virginia is a different case, one that only reinforces the economic viability of the living wage: the University is but *one* economic actor, which already mandates higher minimum wages for itself.

The University is not a multinational corporation whose sole purpose it to make profit; rather, as the recipient of public funding for the purpose of education, it bears a degree of

responsibility to the public good. The University demonstrated this admirably in the 2008 recession. After enacting budget cuts worth many millions of dollars, the University administration stood up for its workforce and its community by refusing to lay off a single employee: it absorbed the new financial strain. By exercising this same power, the University can and should stand up for its community again by paying a living wage while *choosing* to not reduce employment as a way of offsetting costs.

Neither should U.Va. raise the tuition of its students, violating its obligation to provide an affordable public education. Reducing employment and raising tuition to offset costs are tactics that belong on Wall Street; that sort of profit-chasing has no place in higher education, and it has no purchase on the spirit of public service that U.Va. still reveres. The University has already demonstrated its ability to absorb the costs of caring for its employees. However, if the costs must be offset, alternatives exist to slashing employment or hiking tuition. Although U.Va. has suffered reductions to some of its funding sources, including the cumulative 32% reduction to its state general fund appropriations since 2007,^{xxxviii} it nonetheless enjoys increased revenue from other sources, including gifts from annual philanthropic giving and from the University's affiliate foundations;^{xxxix} such revenue sources must be pursued as alternatives to layoffs and tuition hikes. Moreover, before passing on additional burdens to either students or its lowest paid employees, the University should consider sharing any financial strain with some of its highest paid employees, including administrators.

VIII. ON SUBSTITUTION

A variety of studies by economists have shown little to no significant substitution of so-called “higher-skill” employees into the workforce as a result of living wage ordinances.^{xl}

Most low-wage workers already have skills far beyond cleaning floors and serving food, so the University has little incentive to replace them with other workers. The high cost of turnover provides a disincentive for substitution; economists have found that employers prefer to give existing employees additional training rather than hire new ones.

Furthermore, there is the possibility that increasing wages at the University will have a positive effect on the wages of many of those in the Charlottesville community that *do not* work on Grounds. Head of U.Va. Human Resources Susan Carkeek told the Living Wage Campaign that because the University is by far the largest employer in the area, the University's hiring policies have significant effects on the labor market. The University has over 20,000 employees in a city with a population of just over 40,000 inhabitants. The greater area, according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis, contains 118,398 people. By investing in a living wage, it is possible for the University to affect positive change in the greater labor market and to aid in the development of low-income neighborhoods.

IX. ON THE BUDGET CRUNCH

A recurring excuse for paying workers less than a living wage has been that the University is in the midst of a budget crunch and that there is not enough money. Upon closer examination, the budget does not reflect inability to pay a living wage, but a lack of will. The marginal cost of implementing a living wage would be roughly one quarter of one percent (0.25%) of the annual budget. It is less than the interest earned on the endowment in 7 days.^{xli} The 2012 budget even contains larger appropriations to boost high performing faculty salaries to retain talent, painfully highlighting that administration priorities are not aligned with lowest-paid workers' interests, and sharply contrasting with administration rhetoric of "helping the lowest-paid employees."^{xlii}

Although the administration commends itself for recently increasing the minimum hiring rate by 5%, the "raise" accompanied a simultaneous increase in pay withholdings; by UVA Human Resources' own analysis^{xliii} the "raise" is actually a decrease in nominal net pay in most cases. This decrease in nominal pay is exacerbated by continued inflation and increases in the cost of living, meaning real wages have further declined during the same period.

VI. LEGALITY OF A LIVING WAGE

VI. LEGALITY OF A LIVING WAGE

I. DIRECT EMPLOYEES

The University's ability to determine wages for its *direct* employees has never been in question. Virginia's Secretary of Education states, "The Commonwealth of Virginia's colleges and universities are autonomous in their ability to make decisions regarding wages for those employed at their institutions."^{xliv} This is why the University has managed to keep its wage rates above the federal minimum of \$7.25/hr. Adopting a living wage policy for direct employees is well within the institution's legal rights and precedents.

II. CONTRACTED EMPLOYEES

But not all those who work at the University are direct employees. The University outsources hundreds of jobs to contract firms, yet it refuses to exercise any oversight over how much contract firms pay their employees. Contract workers, then, can be paid as little as \$7.25 with no benefits. The contract system allows the University to avoid upholding its own labor standards, even though contract employees comprise a significant portion of the University's actual labor force at any given time.

Previously, administrators have hidden behind the poorly reasoned legal opinion of a former attorney general, which claims that we cannot require a decent wage for contract workers because other companies manage them. The notion that these workers don't work for U.Va. is a convenient fiction. The University indirectly employs these workers and thus funds their salaries, and their work benefits the University no less than that of direct employees. The fact that outside companies hire and manage contract U.Va. employees should not mean that we abdicate responsibility for their welfare.

Consider the case of Joseph, a U.Va. employee who held a contract position for Dining Services: "They were only paying me \$9 an hour with no benefits. It all broke down when my wife and I had our first child. She stayed at home to take care of my baby daughter, and since my work at U.Va. provided our only income, we could hardly pay for food. So my mother-in-law was having to buy our groceries for us, even though I was working for Dining Services handing out food at a buffet. The worst part of it all was that we had no health care, no nothing. Eventually, we had to declare bankruptcy."^{xlv} Joseph now works in U.Va.'s academic buildings, often putting in 14-hour days.

III. PARITY WAGES

This double standard is patently unjust. In the past, the Living Wage Campaign has asked the University to include a parity wage clause in all contracts that would require firms to compensate workers at the same basic rate that the University pays direct employees. This would provide a uniform set of labor standards for all employees. The University administration has refused this request, citing Virginia's Public Procurement Act to claim that as a state entity, U.Va. cannot legally determine minimum wage rates for the employees of private contractors.

But this claim is misleading. Nowhere does the Procurement Act assert that a state entity may not require contractors to pay specific minimum wage rates. Indeed, several public entities in Virginia – including the city governments of Alexandria, Arlington, and Charlottesville – have already adopted living wage standards for all workers, direct and contract. The City of Charlottesville, for example, sets a minimum wage of \$11.44 (as of 2010) as a stipulation to which all contractors must adhere.^{xlvi} These measures have never been challenged in court. If public entities are prohibited from setting wage requirements for contractors, as some administrators claim, then why has there been no legal challenge to these Virginia municipalities? Like other state entities in Virginia, the University has the right to stipulate minimum wage rates for contractors, to determine its standards of decency, and to demonstrate leadership in its community.

In principle, awarding contracts to the lowest bidder protects the state from unnecessary costs, thus serving the public interest. But the public interest broadly interpreted would also consider workers as citizens and taxpayers in their own right, not simply the objectified means to economic ends. Adequate compensation is key to the long-term health of our state institutions and our community. Indeed, the same economic concerns that underlie the minimization of contract costs practically ensure that the cost of underpaying workers will be passed onto the state in any case. Workers who are paid too little to support themselves rely on services supported by taxpayer dollars, in the form of subsidized housing, soup kitchens, foods stamps, uninsured emergency room visits, and other social safety nets.

Rewarding cut-rate contracts while requiring no protections for workers' wages or benefits pressures contractors to pay disproportionately low wages, and all but condemns many workers to dependence on underfunded and inefficient welfare programs.

IV. CONTRACT STIPULATION

Despite the former attorney general's opinion, legal experts say the University of Virginia has full authority to adopt a living wage standard for contract employees. The University already has policies that require that contractors spend their money in stipulated ways. For instance, Aramark Dining Services must by contract invest at least an annual 1.5 percent in facilities.

For 2010-2011, planned expenditures of \$5.1 million are earmarked for facility repairs and improvements.^{xlvii} If administrators can require contractors to invest in facilities, they can also require companies to invest in their workers by providing a living wage. Furthermore, the University already exercises authority to protect contract workers from harm; for instance, U.Va. can enforce safety regulations for construction workers. Our administration should exercise this same power to protect the dignity and health of workers by requiring decent compensation for their work.

Paul Sonn, the legal co-director for the National Employment Law Project, has shown that there is nothing unusual about universities insisting on precise requirements from bidders. For example, when institutions seek to hire an architect for a new building, or database developers for technological infrastructure, they rarely opt for the cheapest available contract but instead take into account other important considerations related to the quality of the work expected under the contract. By the same logic, the University can require certain wage floors and benefits for contract services. When outsourcing jobs, the University must take into account its stated commitments to equal opportunity, respect, and integrity.^{xlviii}

V. CONCLUSION

A living wage standard is legal, ethical and economically sensible. Even contractors themselves agree that better wages would reduce employee turnover, incentivize higher-quality work and promote competition among a wider range of bidders with higher ethical standards.^{xlix} Thus, the University could reasonably expect a living wage to effect gains in morale and productivity, without necessarily increasing the cost of contracts in any significant way (see appropriate section in Chapter IV, “Economic Arguments” of this document).

VII. SOCIAL ARGUMENTS FOR A LIVING WAGE

VII. SOCIAL ARGUMENTS FOR A LIVING WAGE

I. DIRECT AND CONTRACT EMPLOYEES ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA COMMUNITY.

Incoming students are told several things about the U.Va. community: that students commit hundreds of hours to extra-curricular activities to foster the sense of community on grounds and off; that the faculty open their doors to students in efforts to build relationships with them; that dozens of resources are available at this University to make students feel welcomed. Students are told that trust, honor and tradition are not simply ideas, but the values that create community and unite us. Invisible from this narrative of community at U.Va. are the workers who silently make this institution function and thrive every day.

The 2009 federal poverty guidelines place the poverty threshold for a family of four at \$22,050 annually, or \$10.60 an hour for full-time work.¹ Therefore, at so-called entry-level wages (\$10.14/hour), the University is not only paying far less than a living wage but also keeping its employees *below* the federal poverty threshold if those employees are supporting a family solely on their income. Furthermore, contract employees' wages, which can be as low as \$7.25 an hour, push workers further into economic marginalization and make them increasingly vulnerable to hardship.

Ultimately, workers comprise a necessary and central part of this community. In comparison to the four short years most undergraduates spend on Grounds, many University employees dedicate the majority of their working years to the facility. Because one's experience at work greatly affects all other aspects of life, it is critical that University jobs provide a sense of dignity. It is critical that we reconsider the ways in which workers are excluded from our community and begin to respect their place at this University.

II. IT COMPROMISES THE VALUES OF THE UNIVERSITY WHEN ITS EMPLOYEES MUST OFTEN TAKE SECOND AND THIRD JOBS TO MEET THEIR BASIC NEEDS AND THOSE OF THEIR FAMILIES.

Justin works at a dining hall as a contract employee for the University. He is a full-time worker and a single father of two small children. For a decade, Justin has worked an average of 45 hours per week at the dining hall, but he no longer earns enough to pay for babysitting and other family expenses. As a result, Justin has taken on an additional 25 hours per week at a second job. The exhaustion of working seventy hours a week leaves him with almost no time or energy to participate in his children's upbringing. Justin draws strength from reading the Bible daily, but "it's hard not to feel stressed from trying to make the money stretch so far each month."

The Living Wage Campaign asserts that both families and communities benefit when parents are able to spend time with their children, because greater contact with parents and guardians improves children's lives as future students and community members. The Campaign agrees with the stance of former US Secretary of Education Richard Riley, who noted that "The American family is the rock on which a solid education can be built. I have seen examples all over this nation where two-parent families, single parents, stepparents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles are providing strong support for their children to learn. If families teach the love of learning, it can make all the difference in the world to their children."^{li} The Living Wage Campaign believes that insufficient wages, which force parents to take multiple jobs to cover basic expenses, negatively impact the education and well-being of their children, who are robbed of the kind of parent interaction that is so crucial to their development. The institution of a living wage would restore to parents and guardians their right to teach, nurture and enjoy their children.

It has been suggested that, because the living wage is calculated for families comprised of two working adults and two children, paying a living wage would "overcompensate" workers without dependents because such employees allegedly have fewer needs and thus lower standards for what constitutes a living wage. This is, of course, a non-argument: refusing to pay a living wage would not particularize employee compensation in a "needs-based" way because wages are not *currently* based on need; this criticism merely proposes a problem that technically already exists, with the caveat that many employees who do have dependents currently do not earn enough to adequately sustain their families.

Paying wages strictly on the basis of need would mean, in fact, that the lowest-paid employees would begin earning a living wage—which is to say, wages that meet their basic needs. Such a system would also mean significantly decreasing the salaries of the highest paid University administrators; no one, strictly speaking, *needs* upwards of \$400,000 a year.

III. A LIVING WAGE ULTIMATELY CUTS BUSINESS COSTS BY REDUCING TURNOVER RATES WHILE RAISING PRODUCTIVITY, JOB COMMITMENT, AND MORALE.

The added costs of instating a living wage are offset by the savings of reduced turnover and higher productivity. While many studies have proven wage increases to be economically beneficial to businesses, a living wage enhances more than that which one can measure in strictly economic terms.^{lii}

The Living Wage Campaign recognizes that markets do *not* exist outside of human intervention. A living wage calls us to see that *people* – not an invisible hand – control the economy. A living wage shifts from the ideology that markets should be free, to the ideology that markets should promote freedom; the freedom for full-time, hard-working employees anywhere to make enough money to pay the rent and send their kids to college.

A living wage, in the end, is about *democracy*, about bringing the economy back under the control of the *people* that it affects.

IV. A LIVING WAGE WILL ALSO BENEFIT THE LOCAL CHARLOTTESVILLE / ALBEMARLE ECONOMY AND COMMUNITY.

In 2004, Frommer's ranked Charlottesville the #1 place to live in America in *Cities Ranked & Rated*. However, according to the most recent U.S. Census data, 27.1% of Charlottesville's population lives below the federal poverty line, a threshold which in itself is considered by many to represent only half the real cost of basic needs.^{liii} According to this framework, over nine thousand people in our community live in poverty.

The University of Virginia is the largest employer in the Charlottesville area, and it has both the power and the responsibility to set a decent standard of living for city residents. By paying a living wage to all its workers, the U.Va. administration could significantly decrease the number of workers relying on public means of financial assistance. The City of Charlottesville pays its own employees a living wage, and on numerous occasions, has publicly implored the University to do the same. Tension between the City and the University is heightened by the negative economic impact of the fact that University wages are not enough to live in the city of Charlottesville. In the words of one Charlottesville City Council member, "The City is subsidizing U.Va.'s low rates of pay with social safety nets," including the provision of social services, food stamps, and public housing.

Instituting a living wage at the University of Virginia would not only alleviate the undue burden of the city to compensate for U.Va.'s low wages; it would also be beneficial to the local economy. Employees who earn a living wage can afford higher quality housing closer to the University, both improving the quality of our neighborhoods and reducing the need for long commutes. They will likely spend their money locally, be able to afford car insurance and preventative health care, and further support the economic and social health of our region.

V. THE UNIVERSITY'S STATED COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY MUST CONFRONT THE FACT THAT PEOPLE OF COLOR AND WOMEN FORM A DISPROPORTIONATE NUMBER OF THOSE RECEIVING LESS THAN A LIVING WAGE.^{liv}

Despite much progress over the past few decades, the University of Virginia continues to support certain hierarchies of power, privilege, and prejudice. Women and people of color continue to receive lower wages, and they bear a disproportionate burden of the poverty and marginalization in Charlottesville and in American society at large. Over the course of the last year, several significant incidences of violence and discrimination have illustrated that we are still struggling to make our school a caring community. The response of the University

administration and others has given us hope that we can engage in meaningful dialogue and measurable action.

In 2007, the Board of Visitors passed a resolution echoing the Governor in expressing regret for the historical use of slaves in the construction and maintenance of U.Va. The resolution asserts that the enslavement of persons goes against the values of Thomas Jefferson and the University. In the statement, the BOV recommits itself to the principles of equal opportunity and to the principle that human freedom and learning are and must be inextricably linked in this commonwealth and in this republic.^{lv} The Living Wage Campaign hopes to work with the Board of Visitors and other U.Va. administrators so that we may all hold one another accountable to this vision of justice and human dignity in our University community.

It is vital that the administration take proactive measures to ensure that all workers receive not only *adequate* compensation, but also *equitable* compensation, without regard for race, gender, sexual orientation, immigrant status, or any other factor irrelevant to the completion of a given job.

VI. INCREASINGLY, CITIES, CAMPUSES, AND COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY RECOGNIZE THE VALUE OF A LIVING WAGE.

Multiple localities in Virginia – including Charlottesville, Arlington, and Alexandria – are among the 150 communities across the country that have instituted living wage laws since 1994. Other cities with living wage ordinances include Boston, Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York, Miami, Cleveland, and St. Louis. Nationwide, students, faculty, and staff have and continue to press for a living wage at their schools. Many of the top 25 universities in the United States - the universities that the University of Virginia likes to consider its peer institutions - pay a living wage. Among these are Harvard, Princeton, Yale, Columbia, the University of Pennsylvania, Stanford, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Dartmouth, Duke, Washington University at St. Louis, Brown, Cornell, Emory, Georgetown, and the University of California at Berkeley. This year, seven colleges within the University of London adopted living wage policies, including the London School of Economics.^{lvi}

Ongoing living wage campaigns within the United States, many of which are taking place in the south, include premier national universities such as Northwestern, Vanderbilt, the University of Georgia and Miami University. Finally, living wage is an issue central to many campuses across Virginia. The Living Wage Campaign at the University of Virginia stands in solidarity with the concurrent movements at Virginia Commonwealth University and William and Mary.

VIII. ON ALTERNATIVES TO A LIVING WAGE

VIII. ON ALTERNATIVES TO A LIVING WAGE

Many arguments against the implementation of a Living Wage are based on the opinion that there are superior alternatives that would improve the conditions of those who are not earning enough to live modestly in our community. Two solutions that are brought up often are aid programs (government aid or private charity) and worker training programs. To fully appreciate the differences between these options and a living wage, it helps to remember some of the strengths of the living wage solution.

The core idea of a living wage is honest pay for honest work. For most people in our society, the value placed on their jobs plays a large role in how they value themselves. This reality has to be kept in mind when thinking about the consequences of paying people less than what it takes to get by. The lowest paid employees of our university do not do easy or unnecessary work; it is essential work with dignity that deserves a fair wage. Additionally, employees who feel adequately valued are much more motivated, reducing employee turnover and increasing efficiency. This is also a solution that does not require any new administrative overhead or a radical change in structure.

Using or creating new government aid programs is often given as an alternative to the University paying a living wage. An immediate problem is that this solution distributes its cost across all taxpayers while a living wage could be implemented without any such tax or tuition increases. Externalizing costs in such a manner is clearly at odds with the University's goal of fostering civic responsibility. The implementation of more government aid as a solution is also much more complicated and less transparent than what would be required in the implementation of a living wage.

Some believe that government aid is a superior solution since it can be distributed in a way that is more proportional to need. However, this is tantamount to asking the workers in question to prove their poverty to a government body. Giving members of our community the choice to prove their poverty or risk being unable to support their families is unacceptable, such treatment would be hypocrisy from a university that calls itself a "caring community." This same flaw applies to the private charity option; paying people honestly for their work is clearly a more dignified and direct solution. An even larger flaw with charity as a primary solution is that it falsely frames the problem of compensation as a matter of discretion of privately privileged entities instead of a fundamental precondition to self-actualization through labor.

Another solution that is offered is that of worker training programs. There is certainly nothing wrong with offering workers more education but it is not a direct solution for the problem at hand. Even in a world where everyone is highly educated, the work that we currently underpay people for will still exist. Secondly, there is the question of what new jobs workers will be trained for.

When looking at the University's current worker training programs it is clear that they are ill-suited for the scale of the problem. One program, "University Essential WorkSkills," is targeted at entry-level and front-line employees and offers them a \$600 yearly raise upon completion of the program. But this still does not bring the lowest wages to an acceptable level, and the program has only been completed by a small minority of workers. The "Education Benefits" program offers up to \$2,000 per year for employees who wish to further their education. This benefit is certainly not enough to give an employee without prior advanced education a chance at earning a degree, and many of the University's lowest-paid full-time employees, taking on additional work to make ends meet, simply do not have the time to take classes in addition to time spent working.^{lvii}

IX. CONCLUDING REMARKS

IX. CONCLUDING REMARKS

“Everyone is bound to bear witness, where wrong has been done.”

-Thomas Jefferson, in an 1824 directive to the University’s Board of Visitors^{lviii}

The preceding pages demonstrate that a living wage is both legally feasible and makes good economic sense. But a living wage also fits within the moral vision that we strive to honor at the University of Virginia, and aligns with the core values that underwrite our nation more broadly.

As Martin Luther King Jr. put it, today we have the techniques and the resources to get rid of poverty. The real question is whether we have the will. In the same vein, we here at the University of Virginia have the resources and the power to guarantee that every worker receives a living wage. But do we have the will? Do we have the will to make the small sacrifices necessary to guarantee the University’s workers a basic modicum of dignity and respect? Do we have the will to take the critical perspectives that we learn in the classroom out into our own world? In short, do we have the will to fully honor the ideals of the University, and in so doing, transform our own community?

A living wage is about our cherished value of liberty. It is about ensuring that every person who works full-time has the freedom to live a decent life, the freedom to acquire safe shelter and healthy food, the freedom to provide for his or her children, the freedom to have the peace of mind that comes with financial security, and the freedom to spend time with loved ones. Today, hundreds of people who work full-time for U.Va. earn so little that they have to take second jobs to support their families, and have to rely on public housing, food stamps and soup kitchens just to make ends meet. This is a violation of liberty and should be met with moral outrage.

A living wage is about our cherished value of equality. It is about ensuring that every person, regardless of their race or gender and sex or sexual orientation, is valued equally as a human being by their employers, is treated equally in the workplace, receives equal pay for equal work, and has equal opportunity to succeed on the basis of dedication, commitment, and hard work. Today, the overwhelming majority of U.Va. workers who earn less than a living wage are minorities and women. People who have dedicated their entire working lives to U.Va. are still earning less than a living wage. This is a violation of equality, and deserves our moral outrage.

Now is the time to rise to the standards of our own rhetoric. Now is the time to transform our ideals into reality, to use our resources to bring into being the kind of world that we envision. Now is the time to confront the wrongs of wages that fall far short of meeting basic needs, to compensate all members of our community fairly and equitably. Now is the time to put our education into action. There is nothing inevitable about the poverty induced

by inadequate wages. Gross inequality is not a natural thing that emerges without human volition; it is the outcome of our choices, of decisions made by real people. And if real people created this problem, then real people can fix it.

A living wage is not a matter of charity, but a matter of justice. It is not about giving handouts to the poor, but about giving hard workers the compensation they are due. The workers in question pour their labor into building the physical edifices of this University, into maintaining the systems that keep it running, into pruning its gardens and lawns, into polishing its floors and pillars. The people who perform these physically demanding tasks are not marginal to the University; they are central to making it everything that it is.

The University that educates the best and brightest of the Commonwealth and our country in the spirit of the democratic tradition should be eager to make an investment in what former President Casteen called our chief resource – our people. It would be an investment in the moral vision for which Mr. Jefferson’s University is so widely known, in the economic health of our region, in our employees and their families, and in the University they love and serve with such distinction.

The University of Virginia has established itself as one of the top institutions of higher learning in America. We now compare ourselves to Harvard, Columbia, Michigan, Duke, and Berkeley on the scales of research and student selectivity. But this reputation is deeply tarnished by the fact that so many of the University’s core members continue to live in poverty, and by the fact that some of the University’s leading spokespersons continue to defend these inequalities outright. We call upon the University of Virginia to take leadership among the great institutions of our nation by redressing this deficit head on.

Today, we must act to ensure that our reality matches our stated ideals. We must confront the wrongs of unjust wages, and compensate all members of our community fairly and adequately. We must honor each employee’s contribution – because the quality of their lives and the quality of their work are inextricably linked, but also, and chiefly, because it is morally right. Attaining a living wage is a priority that we have the resources to realize: the estimated cost of attaining a living wage amounts to merely one-tenth of one percent of the annual operating budget. After a decade and a half of talk, the time for action is now. *Do we have the will to pay deserving community members just wages?*

X. TESTIMONIES

X. TESTIMONIES

John* has been on the janitorial staff at U.Va. for many years. “The students don’t really see. They know, but they don’t know. They all go back home for the holidays in the winter when we’re up here at 5 or 6 o’clock in the morning chipping away at ice in 15-degree weather. They go home for the summertime while we work mandatory overtime, doing whatever we’re told and being mismanaged for embarrassing pay. We’re essential workers, we make this place run, but we’re at the bottom of the pay scale. Maybe I would like my job more if I got paid half decently. I do the work when a toilet gets clogged or a common area gets totally trashed. But students don’t necessarily see that. I think if the students put themselves in my shoes and ask themselves what it’s like to do this work for \$10 an hour, then things would change around here. They’ve got the power to do something. You know, I’m what they call old school. I don’t have all the computer skills that new jobs require. This is my job, it’s gonna be my job. And I’ve got to work this job all day because I’ve got a family.”

Rachel* works on the janitorial staff at U.Va.

“I’ve been working for the university 25 years. When I first get here, I have to clean 15 rooms in 30 minutes. I have a pager. As I’ve been here, there aren’t enough people. We get worked so hard. You need two people to a floor but there’s only one. Back years ago there were two people to each unit; now there’s one.

It’s not possible for one person to do a whole floor. Fifteen rooms, cleaned thoroughly.

The most rooms I’ve ever done on a floor is six. If I’m fast I can do ten. The stress tires you out. The crew leaders, the supervisor, they don’t work with us, they just push us.

We need fourteen people, and we had fourteen when I started working, but now there are only nine. We nine do the work of fourteen people. I haven’t gotten a raise since I started here. It’s not fair for us hard working people. The big shots get raises but they aren’t working like we’re working.

I got headaches. I was stressed all the time. I had a headache every day I was at work. They lose people every day. You see different people everyday. You can’t keep people. Everyone leaves because it’s too much stress. You get too stressed out. Being up on your back, pushing you.

There’s a point when you’re so pushed. The day I couldn’t get enough rooms done I got written up. They wouldn’t appreciate that I was helping a friend with an overload. The supervisor was there waiting, not cleaning. Why was she waiting instead of cleaning? It’ll make you snap. It’s sad. I got written up fifteen times. Everyone gets written up, you can’t do all the work. I got fired. Got fifteen write-ups.”

Martha* works for U.Va. through a subcontractor, which means that she sees none of the benefits (healthcare, higher wages) in working for a public employer. In fact, she makes only \$7.50/hr even though she has worked for the company for years. She has no health benefits of any kind and even she has to pay for her own uniform and parking. Even the managers of this company only make \$9.50/hr.

Sam* has been working for the University for many years. He has two kids and even though he is grateful for the stability his job provides, he is forced to work a second job on top of his full-time job at U.Va. to provide for his family. Sam told the Campaign that “by not paying a living wage, the UVa community is stressed by the amount of employees having to work a second and even third jobs, reducing the job market even further for student workers who are just starting to work...stressed workers are more likely to have health care issues and accidents and have less time to spend with their family... over 80% of the employees in my department work second jobs.” Sam feels that employees are discouraged from speaking out. He says that “most of the U.Va. workers feel their voices will be ignored or that there will be retaliation for speaking out... U.Va. needs a union to give employees backing when they have a grievance.” He has seen his cost of living rise and the amount of work expected of him rise with no rise in pay. Sam says “our cost of living is increasing and it is causing more stress and even an apathetic attitude in the worker, actually costing UVa in lost production... every year in our department we have more territory to maintain, yet the staff quality and number have not gone up, causing more stress on those who care about their work and undoubtedly more accidents.” When asked how we could live up to our ideal of a “caring community,” Sam said “just paying a living wage would be a huge improvement.”

*Names changed to respect requests for anonymity.

XI. ENDORSEMENTS

XI. ENDORSEMENTS

STATEMENT OF ENDORSEMENT

*Professor Cornel West
Class of 1943 University Professor
Center for African American Studies
Princeton University*

The symbolic impact of living wage campaigns is far-reaching in the national efforts of social, racial, and economic equality. Upon hearing about the University of Virginia's failure to act on the Living Wage Campaign's list of demands by the posted deadline of February 17th, 2012, particularly in light of the historic fourteen-year struggle for economic justice at the University, Professor Cornel West of Princeton contacted the Living Wage Campaign, expressing specific support for the Campaign's hunger strike beginning on February 18th, 2012. The following is a note from Professor Cornel West:

"I support you! Stay strong! I'm away in February but I'm there in spirit!"

STATEMENT OF ENDORSEMENT

Professor Julian Bond
U.Va. Department of History
Chair of NAACP Executive Board

“Since Thomas Jefferson declared all people have the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, Americans have struggled to force public and private institutions to honor the human rights of marginalized citizens. At the University of Virginia, that struggle continues, as a coalition of staff, students and faculty pressure the administration to recognize U.Va. direct and contract employees’ right to support their families.

The administration faces a moral imperative to recognize the human rights of all workers it employs, just as the University had the ethical responsibility to admit minorities and women in the recent past. Until our institutions honor our civil and social human rights, we cannot rest.”

-Julian Bond, Department of History and Former Chair of the NAACP Executive Board

STATEMENT OF ENDORSEMENT

Barbara Ehrenreich

Author of “Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America,” 2001

“Charlottesville doesn’t look like a town where 25 percent of the residents live in poverty, but that’s only because the poor people’s housing is cunningly hidden off the main roads, so the U-Va alumni who pour in every fall for Cavalier games don’t have to see it. If you shop at the upscale Barracks Road Mall instead of Sam’s Club, if you drive instead of taking the buses, you could live here indefinitely thinking everything is just fine, thank you, ma’am--unaware of the desperation going on within a two-mile radius.

But I know the true state of things in this lovely Blue Ridge mountain town, because I’ve been hanging out with the Virginia Organizing Project folks ever since I moved here in 2001 – agitating for a living wage in the local hotels as well as the university, which is the largest local employer. Another one of my informants is a lady who works behind the deli counter at Whole Foods, and the fact that she does so tells you a lot about wages at U-Va: She has another full-time job there as a housekeeper.”

Excerpt from an article published on Ehrenreich’s personal website, April 17th, 2006
http://ehrenreich.blogs.com/barbaras_blog/2006/04/living_wage_cam.html

ENDORISING ORGANIZATIONS

Alpha Phi Alpha
Amnesty International
Beyond Coal
Black Student Alliance
Black Voices
Campus Workers United
Charlottesville Center for Peace and Justice
Charlottesville Worker's Action Network
The Declaration
FaceAIDS
Human Rights Film Festival
Jewish Social Justice Council
Joyful Dissent
Latino Student Alliance
Legal Aid Justice Center
Living Wage Faculty Support Committee
Minority Rights Coalition
Minority Squared
NAACP (Albemarle-Charlottesville)
NAACP (U.Va.)
ONE
Organization of African Students
Public Housing Association of Residents
Queer Allied Activism
Richmond General Organizing Branch of Industrial Workers of the World (IWW)
Socialist Party of Central Virginia
Student Hip Hop Organization
Students for Peace and Justice in Palestine (SPJP)
University and Community Action for Racial Equity (UCARE)
U.Va. Student Council
Virginia Anthropology Society
Virginia Organizing
Wayside Center for Popular Education

2012 COMMUNITY PETITION FOR A LIVING WAGE

Delivered to Madison Hall on 15 February, 2012

“Dear President Sullivan and University of Virginia Board of Visitors:

We, the undersigned, write to you today to express our commitment to economic justice and to call on you to act.

We are individuals and organizations who have great concern for the well being of the people who live and work in our community, particularly in Charlottesville and Albemarle County. We share a commitment to economic justice and to equity in our communities. Collectively, the organizations we represent have thousands of members.

As the area's largest employer, the University of Virginia has a responsibility – indeed, an obligation – to improve our community. We believe that the University has neglected this obligation and continues to do so. We call on you to take action by finally resolving the issue of living wages at the University in a fair, satisfying, and comprehensive way. We call on you to take this action now.

As you surely recognize, the University affects the cost of living in Charlottesville in major ways, particularly with respect to housing costs. We believe that the University could offset the negative impacts of its increasing these costs for some of our community's most vulnerable members by paying its employees enough to meet the cost of living.

We remind you that in 2000 the University committed to a base pay increase for direct employees, and that we commended you for doing so. That increase, however, did not include cost of living adjustments, nor did it include contracted employees. We had hoped that these issues would be addressed in a timely manner – certainly by now, a dozen years later.

During that period, the Living Wage Campaign, currently configured as Workers And Students United, repeatedly presented its scrupulous research and stated its case with deep respect for administrative process. Concurrently, we in the community have stood with workers, students, and faculty. We have called on you to listen to their concerns, rallied, written letters, and requested meetings. In good faith, all of us have asked for commitments from you. The arguments have now been presented, the necessity and practicality of action proven.

Overall, it must be said, we have not been satisfied with the University's response. Frankly, at times we have even been disappointed by the dismissive tone of University communications. Such feelings, however, are fleeting compared with the enduring nature of the issues at stake. And like those issues, the Living Wage Campaign will not go away –

that is, until those issues are resolved in a fair, satisfying, and comprehensive manner.

The time for straight answers and firm commitments is here. The University of Virginia needs to pay a living wage to all of its employees. We believe that the University has the potential to be a powerful force for positive change in our community. To further this end, we call for:

- A living wage of no less than \$13.00 per hour as the base pay for all direct employees;
- Cost of living adjustments that are automatic and annual;
- All contracts with University service providers to include a living wage and cost of living adjustments

We stand with Workers And Students United and fully support their demands as presented on February 8, 2012 and will stand with them on February 17, 2012 and beyond if a commitment is not made to ensure a living wage, safe working conditions, and job security for all workers by that date.

As always, workers, students, faculty, and community are standing united in our call for a living wage. We are present, we are showing up, and we are taking the steps necessary to gain equity and economic justice in our community through the establishment of a living wage for all workers at the University of Virginia.”

2012 COMMUNITY PETITION FOR A LIVING WAGE - SIGNATURES

Albemarle-Charlottesville NAACP
Campus Workers United
Charlottesville Center for Peace and Justice
Charlottesville Workers Action Network
Joyful Dissent
Legal Aid Justice Center
Public Housing Association of Residents
Richmond General Organizing Branch Industrial Workers of the World
Socialist Party of Central Virginia
Virginia Organizing
Wayside Center for Popular Education

Kristin Szakos- Vice-Mayor City of Charlottesville
David Swanson- founder WarIsACrime.org, author, blogger
M. Rick Turner- president Albemarle-Charlottesville NAACP
Brenda Lambert- Community Activist
Jim Shea- Community Activist

2012 FACULTY PETITION FOR A LIVING WAGE FOR ALL UVA EMPLOYEES

Delivered to Madison Hall on 8 February, 2012

“We, the undersigned faculty members of the University of Virginia, urge the University, following the example of many peer institutions and the City of Charlottesville, to establish a living wage for all its employees. A “living wage,” currently at least \$11.44 an hour plus benefits, is indexed yearly to inflation, and entails wage parity for contract employees.* We believe that all workers in the UVa community are entitled to the fair compensation that a living wage represents.

*A living wage is calculated to reflect the basic needs of an average family: a family of four with two full-time working adults and two dependent children. Based on the cost of living in Charlottesville, as calculated by the nonpartisan Economic Policy Institute (EPI), the Living Wage Campaign is calling for a base wage of *at least* \$11.44—the wage that the City of Charlottesville currently requires all contractors to pay. At this rate, a UVa employee who works 40 hours a week, all year round (52 weeks), would earn \$23,795.20. A living wage must be indexed to yearly inflation, assume basic employee benefits (including health insurance), and reflect cost of living increases. The current figure may be revised slightly upward this spring, depending on city actions, as well as the EPI’s release of revised numbers from 2011. See www.epi.org/resources/budget/.

For more information on efforts to establish a fair wage policy at the university, go to <http://www.livingwageatuva.org/>. An electronic version of this petition is posted there.”

2012 FACULTY PETITION FOR A LIVING WAGE - SIGNATURES

Manuela Achilles, General Faculty, Dept. of German
Matthew Affron, Associate Professor, McIntire Dept. of Art
Sahar Akhtar, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Philosophy
John Alexander, Associate Director, Sciences, Humanities and Arts Network of
Technological Initiatives (SHANTI)
Joseph Allen, Professor, Dept. of Psychology
Hector Amaya, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Media Studies
Stephen Arata, Associate Professor, Dept. of English
Albert J. Arnold, Professor Emeritus, Dept. of French
Cindy Aron, Professor Emerita, Corcoran Dept. of History
Dorothe Bach, Associate Professor and Assistant Director, Teaching Resource Center
Peter S. Baker, Professor, Dept. of English
Lawrie Balfour, Professor, Woodrow Wilson Dept. of Politics
Brian Balough, Professor, Corcoran Dept. of History
Raul Baragiola, Professor, Dept. of Materials Science & Engineering, School of Engineering
Marva Barnett, Professor, Dept. of French, and Director, Teaching Resource Center
Richard B. Barnett, Associate Professor, Corcoran Dept. of History
Ruth L. Barolsky, Piano Instructor, McIntire Dept. of Music
Paul Barolsky, Commonwealth Professor, McIntire Dept. of Art
Craig Barton, Professor, School of Architecture
Ira Bashkow, Associate Professor, Dept. of Anthropology
Charles L. Barzun, Associate Professor, School of Law
Malcolm Bell III, Professor Emeritus, McIntire Dept. of Art
James Taylor Beard, Associate Professor Emeritus, Dept. of Mechanical Engineering, School
of Engineering
Benjamin K. Bennett, Kenan Professor, Dept. of German
William H. Bennett, Associate Professor, McIntire Dept. of Art
Stephanie Berard, Assistant Professor, Dept. of French
Sarah Betzer, Assistant Professor, McIntire Dept. of Art
Asher Biemann, Associate Professor, Dept. of Religious Studies and Jewish Studies
Beth Bjorklund, Assistant Professor, Dept. of German
Thomas Bloom, Associate Professor, Dept. of Drama
Daniel Bluestone, Professor, School of Architecture
Jane E. Boatner, Lecturer, Center of American English Language and Culture
Julian Bond, Professor, Corcoran Dept. of History
Alison Booth, Professor, Dept. of English
Barbara Boswell, ACLS New Faculty Fellow, Carter G. Woodson Institute and Dept. of
English
Josh Bowers, Associate Professor, School of Law
Gordon Braden, Linden Kent Memorial Professor, Dept. of English
Herbert Tico Braun, Associate Professor, Corcoran Dept. of History

Tal Brewer, Professor and Department Chair, Corcoran Dept. of Philosophy
 Anna Brickhouse, Associate Professor, Dept. of English
 Tristan Bridges, Lecturer, Studies in Women and Gender (SWAG) and Dept. of Sociology
 Aniko Bodroghkozy, Associate Professor, Dept. of Media Studies
 Deborah Boucoyannis, Assistant Professor, Woodrow Wilson Dept. of Politics
 Linda Bullock, Jeanette Lancaster Alumni Professor of Nursing, School of Nursing
 Mary Katherine Burke, Associate Professor, Dept. of Drama
 Carolyn M. Callahan, Commonwealth Professor, Dept. of Curriculum, Instruction and
 Special Ed., Curry School of Education
 Jonathan Z. Cannon, Blaine T. Phillips Distinguished Professor of Environmental Law,
 School of Law
 Lena Carolyn Capps, Adjunct faculty, McIntire Dept. of Art
 John D. Casey, Henry Hoyns Professor, Dept. of English
 Enrico Cesaretti, Associate Professor, Dept. of Spanish, Italian and Portuguese
 Robert Chapel, Professor, Dept. of Drama
 Mrinalini Chakravorty, Assistant Professor, Dept. of English
 Karen Chase, Linden Kent Memorial Professor, Dept. of English
 Daniel Chávez, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Spanish, Italian and Portuguese
 James Childress, University Professor & John Allen Hollingsworth Professor of Ethics,
 Dept. of Religious Studies
 Sylvia Chong, Associate Professor, Dept. of English
 Jenny Strauss Clay, William R. Keenan, Jr., Professor of Classics, Dept. of Classics
 Gerald Clore, Commonwealth Professor of Psychology, Dept. of Psychology
 Linda Columbus, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Chemistry
 Ted Coffey, Associate Professor, McIntire Dept. of Music
 Alon Confino, Professor, Dept. of History
 Ellen Contini-Morava, Professor, Dept. of Anthropology
 Valerie C. Cooper, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Religious Studies
 Sarah M. Corse, Associate Professor, Dept. of Sociology
 Anne M. Coughlin, Lewis F. Powell, Jr., Professor of Law, School of Law
 Robert W. Covert, Associate Professor, Curry School of Education
 Jane Crawford, Professor, Dept. of Classics
 Claire Cronmiller, Professor, Dept. of Biology
 Stephen Cushman, Robert C. Taylor Professor, Dept. of English
 Joe Cutbirth, Lecturer, Dept. of Media Studies
 Frederick H. Damon, Professor and Interim Department Chair, Dept. of Anthropology
 Dean Allen Dass, Professor, McIntire Dept. of Art
 Eve Danzinger, Associate Professor, Dept. of Anthropology
 Angela M. Davis, General Faculty (retired), Dept. of English and Student Affairs
 Theresa M. Davis, Associate Professor, Dept. of Drama
 Donal Day, Research Professor, Dept. of Physics
 John D'earth, General Faculty and Director of Jazz Performance, McIntire Dept. of Music
 Jeff Decker, Performance Instructor, McIntire Dept. of Music
 Judy DeLoache, William R. Kenan, Jr. Professor, Dept. of Psychology

Elizabeth Denton, Lecturer, Dept. of English
Nancy Deutsch, Associate Professor, Dept. of Leadership, Foundations & Policy, Curry School of Education
Scott Deveaux, Associate Professor, McIntire Dept. of Music
Daniel Devereaux, Professor, Corcoran Dept. of Philosophy
John Dillery, Professor, Dept. of Classics
Ronald G. Dimberg, Associate Professor, Corcoran Dept. of History
John J. Dobbins, Professor of Art History, McIntire Dept. of Art
Lise Dobrin, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Anthropology
Chad Dodson, Associate Professor, Dept. of Psychology
Rita Dove, Commonwealth Professor, Dept. of English
Hoyt Nolan Duggan, Professor Emeritus, Dept. of English
Frank Dukes, Lecturer, Urban and Environmental Planning
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XII. APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A

Living Wage Resolution, City of Charlottesville

AS PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY CITY COUNCIL ON MAY 3, 2010

WHEREAS, it is in the best interests of the City of Charlottesville and its residents to have employment available that will provide to all persons an opportunity to earn a Living Wage sufficient to meet their basic living needs; and

WHEREAS, the City has amended its own pay plan to provide that no full-time employee of the City of Charlottesville will be paid a wage less than eleven dollars and forty-four cents (\$11.44) per hour; and

WHEREAS, case studies have shown that higher wages paid to employees lead to more efficient production, lower employee turnover, improvement in the quality of job applicants and performance, and improved morale within the workplace, and that such efficiency gains can be expected to offset the labor costs associated with payment of a Living Wage;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that this City Council hereby challenges all employers within the Charlottesville area, including the University of Virginia, to follow the City's lead, by offering all employees a wage of at least eleven dollars and forty-four cents (\$11.44) per hour.

-City of Charlottesville, City Council Meeting May 3, 2010.

XIII. NOTES

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- ^{xiii} Thomas Jefferson Planning District, *The State of Housing Report*, 2007. <<http://www.tjpd.org/housing/index.asp>>.
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- ^{xvii} Information for academic employees obtained from Carol Wood, March 17, 2009. Estimate on hospital employees based on Freedom of Information Act from November, 2005, because the University has avoided providing this information to the 2010 Living Wage Campaign in communications in March 2010 and October 2010.
- ^{xviii} *U.Va. Competitive Compensation*, <http://www.virginia.edu/wages/salariesnapshot.html>, accessed on 1/30/2012.
- ^{xix} Information provided by Carol Wood, U.Va. assistant vice president for public affairs, e-mail communication March 26, 2010.
- ^{xx} See WNRN Radio, *Wake Up Call*, April 18, 2010. Anonymous interview with contractor.
- ^{xxi} Information for academic employees obtained from Carol Wood, March 17, 2009. Estimate on hospital employees based on Freedom of Information Act from November, 2005, because the University has not provided this information to the 2010 Living Wage Campaign in communications asking for it in March 2010 and October 2010.
- ^{xxii} Email addressed to the University community from University of Virginia President Teresa Sullivan, 17 February, 2012.
- ^{xxiii} Communication with Carol Wood March 26, 2010.
- ^{xxiv} Elmore, Andrew J. 2003. *Living Wage Laws & Communities: Smarter Economic Development, Lower than Expected Costs*. New York, N.Y.: Brennan Center for Justice.
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- ^{xxviii} University of Virginia Code of Ethics and Statement of Purpose.
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- ^{xxxviii} University of Virginia Annual Budget, 2011-2012.
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And here: <http://www.virginia.edu/budget/Docs/Budget%20Summaries/2011-2012%20Budget%20Summary.pdf>
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<<http://www.hr.virginia.edu/other-hr-services/payroll-information/VRS-net-pay/>>.
- ^{xliv} Correspondence from Thomas, R. Morris, Secretary of Education, May 5, 2006.
- ^{xlvi} Interview with anonymous U.Va. worker, September 30, 2010.
- ^{xlvi} Several experienced local officials, including Kevin Lynch and Meredith Richards, who served on City Council when Charlottesville passed their living wage ordinance, have confirmed the legality of this course in recent conversation with members of our campaign.
- ^{xlvi} University of Virginia Budget Office. Budget Summary, All Divisions, 2010-2011.
- ^{xlvi} University of Virginia. Code of Ethics. <<http://www.virginia.edu/statementofpurpose/uethics.html>>. Health System Code of Ethics. <<http://www.virginia.edu/statementofpurpose/healthethics.html>>.
- ^{xlix} *WNRN Radio*, Wake Up Call, April 18, 2010. Anonymous interview with contractor.
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