**AGNES SCOTT COLLEGE LIVING WAGE CAMPAIGN**

***A coalition of students, staff, faculty and allies***

***seeking immediate adoption of a just, realistic living wage for all employees***

**What is a living wage?**

* It is a human right: “Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family [*sic*] an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary by other means of social protection. . . Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services . . .” (Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948, Articles 23, 25).
* It is the goal of a national movement, including the Fight for $15, a minimum wage adopted by the cities of Atlanta, Seattle, Washington, D.C., New York, and the state of California, etc.
* It is a proven means to increase productivity and reduce turn-over (International Labor Organization).

**How is a living wage calculated?**

* A living wage is high enough that workers must pay no more than 30% of their wages for housing; this allows them to meet their family's other basic needs, preserve their human dignity, and flourish.
* “A living wage is the amount working people must earn to adequately provide food, housing, utilities, transportation and health care, without outside assistance from public benefits programs. For a family head of household it would also include child care" (Interfaith Worker Justice).

**What is a living wage in DeKalb County?**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Household Size** | **Hourly Living wage** | **Gross Monthly Income** | **Housing (MIT)** | **Housing (EPI)** | **Housing / Income %** |
|  | http://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/13089 |  | http://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/13089 | http://www.epi.org/resources/budget/ |  |
| 1 adult | $12.01 | $1,922 | $764 |  | 40% |
| 1 adult, 1 child | $23.18 | $3,709 | $949 |  | 26% |
| 1 adult, 2 children | $28.31 | $4,530 | $949 | $896 | 21% |

* **Only when hourly wages are well over $20, do housing costs fall under 30% of gross income for 1 adult and 2 children (the average household size in Dekalb County according to the most recent census).**

**What does Agnes Scott currently pay as a minimum starting wage?**

* $8-$12/hour (variation is due to outsourcing and limited union membership).
* Complete information is not available.

**What is the College's position?**

* “A new Living Wage policy approved by the Board of Trustees established a living wage target for all fulltime college employees. The target, based on statistics on housing costs compiled by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, was set at $14.25 in 2007 and raised to $14.56 in 2012. The college provided supplemental wage increases to employees earning less than the target, and has made steady progress over time. In 2007, 47 staff positions earned under $14.25 an hour. Today, that number has been reduced to 12 staff earning less than the **$14.56 target**” (Final Report on “Engaging a Wider World” Strategic Plan, 2014).
* “The college will continue to support a Board-approved Living Wage policy which establishes a living wage target based on housing rates in the Atlanta area and ensures that all full-time staff are paid at or above this target **within five years of hire**” (Letter from President Elizabeth Kiss and Board Chair, Elizabeth Holder, August 2017).
* President Kiss and Chair Holder have not responded to a September 28, 2017 letter from the Campaign, urging an immediate recalculation and implementation of a realistic living wage.