

Support Professionals



What is a Living Wage?

A living wage is the hourly wage and the resources necessary for a person to be a fully functioning member in the community without having to be dependent upon friends, family and government for economic assistance.

What is a living wage in your area?

Do ESP in your local or Council need an opportunity to explore what a Living Wage is and how to begin a living wage campaign?

WEA and Council staff are ready to present a 2-3 hour workshop in which ESP identify the expense categories and monthly costs of living in your area of the state. This activity provides WEA Research with valuable data and the participants with a real sense of what a living wage means for them.

Participants will then begin to explore how to work with the WEA and NEA to use bargaining, political, community outreach and member organizing efforts to launch a living wage campaign!

This is just one of many opportunities for you to learn about living wage. See others in the next column. If you know of opportunities for sharing information about living wage, please let your leadership know!

Opportunities to learn about Living Wage

- Some of your leaders have learned of living wage at the ESP Presidents' meeting and at a session in the recent Bargaining Conference.
- There will be a session at each of the three ESP Issues Conferences scheduled for this year.
 - December 13 in Spokane
 - February 7 in Lacey
 - May 2 north of Seattle
- The six Living Wage grant locals will meet on November 24 to learn more and plan this year's activities. UniServ Reps will be a part of this valuable session.
- There are living wage presentations at local and council meetings around the state. Be sure to attend if there is one scheduled in your local.
- WEA electronic forums
<http://soundresearchgroup.com/LivingWage>
- WEA Web Site
<http://www.washingtonea.org/LivingWage>

Connect to Organization priorities in 08-09

Build organizational capacity.

- Strong locals
- Online engagement
- Expand activist base

Join WEA-PAC.

Coordinate bargaining among classified locals.

Take the lead - ESP members will benefit from and contribute to expanded state funding for schools.

ESP often have strong ties in their communities. Educate community leaders and state legislators on the need for more state funding for your living wage.

Learn about the NEWS lawsuit

<http://www.waschoolexcellence.org>





What is a Living Wage?

A living wage involves a grassroots movement to obtain higher wages for working men and women that are commensurate with expenditures of a family who lives **above** the poverty line.

According to NEA Today –

A living wage is the hourly wage and the resources necessary for a person to be a fully functioning member in the community without having to be dependent upon friends, family, and government for economic assistance.

Every local can organize to gain power and bargain hard to make progress. Every Bargain is a Living Wage Bargain. As you work hard to make that a reality in your local, always remember that you have an incredible advocate at your UniServ office. Contact your UniServ director to begin the journey to a Living Wage.

Note that –

- ✚ Living wage campaigns rely heavily on communities pressuring the employer and public officials to provide the compensation package needed by workers.
- ✚ Public officials decide how to respond based on the involvement of the Association and community and whether they will gain or lose politically.

Six locals have received funds from the WEA for their living wage efforts:

- ✚ Bainbridge Island
- ✚ Lake Washington ESP
- ✚ Yakima Association of Paraeducators
- ✚ Puyallup Paraeducators Association
- ✚ Federal Way Educational Support Professionals
- ✚ Clarkston Classified Association

Living wage is good for ESP. Living wage campaigns involve tactics and strategies that can benefit WEA and its members by:

- ✚ providing higher earnings
- ✚ increasing membership
- ✚ strengthening their locals
- ✚ involving them in their communities

There are lots of resources about living wage issues and efforts around the country. To access information on the WEA Website: <http://www.washingtonea.org/LivingWage>. Click on the red bars to access additional information and be sure to check out the 5 minute "Carrie" video you'll see on this page.

WEA RESEARCH TOOLS
RESEARCH SITES
THE ASSOCIATION
HANDY REFERENCES
A/V ASSETS