

**Living Wage Campaign**  
**An opportunity to change**  
**from top-decision making**  
**to democracy in Swarthmore education and the workplace**

**Important questions about decision-making at Swarthmore:**

- *Who* makes the decision what faculty, staff and students are to be paid?
- *Why* are some people central to decision-making and others not?
- Are we at the mercy to beg, plead, cajole, and threaten the powers in charge to see our view rather than being part of the decision-making process?
- Do we (the entire College Community) have a right to be in on this decision making?

**Why embark on a Living Wage/Democracy Campaign:**

- If we change decision-making, all community members have a voice in all issues, not just living wage.
- To educate others/ourselves on democratic literacy.

**The Mandate**

- *Declaration of Independence*

We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness--That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, **deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed**, that whenever **any** Form of Government become destructive of these Ends it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its Foundation on such Principles, and organizing its Power in such Form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.

- *\*Al Bloom's consensus speech*
- *Ad Hoc Committee 1/98 Statement and Petition to the College:*

**" The base wage**

Given the erosion in the buying power of the minimum wage, we consider it essential that the College maintain a policy (whatever the market may suggest at the moment) of setting its lowest full-time wage as a living wage for Delaware County. Because so many of our lowest-paid workers come from Chester, such a policy would also demonstrate unequivocally the College's concern for its neighbor."

**Information Needed on Decision-Making:**

- Understanding decision-making at Swat.
- *\*List of Committees of the Faculty.*
- The Committee System is only an *advisory* system. Al and Senior Staff make decisions/policy with input from committees but NOT in consensus with College Committees.

**Our College Community receives no information on what happens in Committee Meetings or follow-up/discussion on issues before the Committees. Our representatives do not have a reporting system to get back to the people they represent.**

Possible goals:

- To set up a structure to report on all the issues being discussed in all the committee meetings.
- To meet regularly with our committee members to discuss points of view, need for support, etc.
- Identify where consensus is not being reached . . . where decisions are passed on to administration and where decision-making is placed in limbo.

### **Information Needed on Living Wage**

- \*Current Salary Schedule.
- Identify numbers of people affected and gain support.
- This issue is not just about money! It's about POWER.
- Melanie Young, HR Director, has offered to meet with anyone needing information.
- In the next several months, the Budget Committee will be reaching important decisions concerning how money will be spent next year.
- Establish communication with representatives on Budget Committee identifying community priorities.
- Communicate the discussion to College Community.
- Establish Community's commitment to Living Wage and publicize/advertise support.
- Living Wage Campaign Web Sites:
  - <http://www.livingwagecampaign.org/>
  - <http://www.earlham.edu/~fairwage/> (Quaker College)
  - <http://yukiok.soc.jhu.edu/neoslac/lw/front.htm>
  - <http://record.law.harvard.edu/~mirarchi/living-wage/index.html>
  - <http://jhunix.hcf.jhu.edu/~yk14/SLAC/>
  - <http://jean.capt.wm.edu/~tlsc/>
  - <http://www.justiceforjanitors.org/>

### **Benefits**

- Decision-making process empowered--consensus/democracy in education and workplace.
- Skills learned to improve workplaces in your future.
- Living Wage for those living at or near the poverty level.

*. . . . we have the opportunity to labor for freedom, to demand of ourselves and our comrades, an openness of mind and heart that allows us to face reality even as we collectively imagine ways to move beyond boundaries, to transgress. This is education as the practice of freedom.*  
bell hooks