

WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY  
STUDENT GOVERNMENT



**Making Wake Forest University a “Poverty-Free” Space**  
**Office of the President**

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**Resolution #1**  
**Fall 2016**

- WHEREAS: The official motto of Wake Forest University is “Pro Humanitate”; and
- WHEREAS: This motto is defined by the University Admissions website as “a calling to use our knowledge, talents and compassion to better the lives of others;”<sup>1</sup> and
- WHEREAS: In many American communities, families working in low-wage jobs make insufficient income to live locally given the local cost of living;<sup>2</sup> and
- WHEREAS: The concept of a “living wage” has been developed by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) to accurately reflect the costs of living and expenses in local communities; and
- WHEREAS: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) has calculated the living wage of North Carolina and recommends a minimum hourly paid rate of \$10.53 for a single adult, \$16.89 for two adults (only one of whom is working), and \$23.52 for the adult sustaining a family of four;<sup>3</sup> and
- WHEREAS: Data from the website of one firm on which the University heavily depends for basic services – Aramark – suggests that the company currently pays its cashiers in the range \$7.74-11.58 an hour, and its service workers just slightly more: \$7.75-14.85 an hour;<sup>4</sup> and
- WHEREAS: Anecdotal information obtained by the Wake Forward task force also indicates the persistence of particularly low average earnings for staff employed part-time and on the weekends, specifically those accomplishing some of the most unpleasant but essential tasks like cleaning dorms at the weekend, feeding students in all weathers, and being around through the night when the students are in residence; and
- WHEREAS: Wake Forest University is the largest employer of Forsyth County when combined with Wake Forest Baptist Medical, thus impacting a significant portion of our community and being capable of setting the labor market trend in our local economy; and

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<sup>1</sup> <http://admissions.wfu.edu/our-philosophy/pro-humanitate/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://livingwage.mit.edu/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://livingwage.mit.edu/>

<sup>4</sup> *Ensuring that Wake Forest is a “Poverty-Free” Space*, Wake Forward, 2016

WHEREAS: To the best of Student Government's knowledge, Wake Forest University only honors the lowest rate of living wage – the \$10.53 rate – regardless of an employees' family size; and

WHEREAS: A just employment policy of at least \$15/hour would bring the university in line with enlightened employers, cities, and entire states who have attempted to meet the minimum set by the Fair Labor Standards Act, namely “the maintenance of the minimum standard of living necessary for the health, efficiency and general well-being of workers;” and

WHEREAS: If the university is to hold itself to its motto of “Pro Humanitate”, the creation of a just employment policy built around a higher salary floor is essential to make Wake Forest University a poverty-free space and an environment that supports all of its workers.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: The Wake Forest University Student Government strongly encourages the continuation of moves underway to make the Reynolda campus a “poverty-free” space through the establishment of a just employment policy for everyone working there.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jordan Monaghan  
President