
Annual Report

Living Wage Movement Aotearoa NZ

April 1, 2016 - March 30, 2017



The Living Wage Movement Aotearoa NZ aims to facilitate the organisation of communities to secure the income necessary to provide workers and their families with the basic necessities of life; to encourage and promote the development of better policies for working people; to raise public awareness and understanding of the issues associated with low income workers; and to develop the capacity and skills of our members to support and advocate for low waged workers.

Introduction

If results are a test of success, 2016-17 was the year the hard work of many leaders and their communities came to fruition. Wellington City Council and Auckland Council took concrete steps toward becoming Living Wage councils, and 70 businesses committed to becoming accredited Living Wage Employers. Our practice of building relationships across diverse communities through hundreds of conversations and numerous vibrant actions across Aotearoa has translated into political will that makes a difference in the lives of working New Zealanders and their families. 2016-17 was a great success for the Living Wage Movement Aotearoa NZ.

Growing our local communities

Powerful delegations, public meetings, rallies and forums at local government level have illustrated again that action is the lifeblood of organisation, growing new leaders and raising the profile of the Living Wage in communities in Wellington, Auckland, West Coast, Nelson, Whanganui, Hamilton, Porirua, Hutt Valley. Significantly, we have secured the political will to make bold steps toward a Living Wage at big councils around the country.

Our front-runners, Living Wage Wellington, had a very successful and vibrant local government election forum and, after four years' of campaigning, the council committed to significant steps in the implementation of the Living Wage, putting Wellington City Council on a path to become New Zealand's first accredited Living Wage council.

The art of doing public business through an election forum was evident at Auckland's St Matthew-in the-City where mayoral candidate Phil Goff said "yes" to a Living Wage and honoured his pledge to establish an advisory group for implementation of a Living Wage for directly employed staff, before Christmas 2016. The subsequent submissions, actions and rallies ensured the demand remained on the annual plan agenda and the unfolding of decent incomes in "the world's most liveable city" over the ensuing months is imminent.

Other campaigns have been highly visible during the year, including Victoria University of Wellington, where the Vice-Chancellor has been brought to the table; and King Salmon Nelson, where community activity resulted pay rises of up to 10% over two years in this iconic NZ company as it tries to shift its business to paying a Living Wage.

Sustaining regional networks is an important part of our commitment to building locally, based on local relationships and local challenges. A new Local Board in Auckland brings together leaders from across the city to plan and ensure our people are activated around our key strategy of winning a Living Wage at local and central government.



A well-established Wellington Local Board and networks across the three cities of Wellington region have been running stalls, collecting submissions, participating in, and supporting delegations, lobbying and fundraising in the last financial year. Artists for the Living Wage organised a Living Wage stage at the Newtown Festival for the third year, while another group walked and ran around the bays to raise money for Unions Wellington membership fee.

Accreditation

The growth in the number of Living Wage businesses reflects the growth in our Movement and we know the two streams of our Movement cannot exist independently at our current stage of development. The Governance Committee decided to focus on investing our limited resources in growing the community movement and subsequently moved to administer the system voluntarily. We were sad to lose Clay Nelson who was employed specifically for the accreditation programme in August 2016. Diana Yukich took up a voluntary role to oversee the employer strategy for two days a week and this continues to operate effectively.

The launch of the Living Wage accredited employers 2016 was an exciting dual-city celebration at our Anglican cathedrals in Christchurch and Auckland, and at Pivotal Print in Wellington where we profiled new IT, manufacturing, print and hospitality Living Wage businesses alongside our faith, union and community-based businesses. Our second annual event takes place with the announcement of the Living Wage rate and in 2017 we elected to tell the stories of the people that matter, the workers who at the heart of our Movement. This generated national television, radio and print media stories that can be accessed through www.livingwage.org.nz. See the section in this report for some of the stories of our people.

A list of Living Wage Employers is on the website also, uploaded as soon as the license to use the trade mark is issued. A new Facebook site for Living Wage Employers speaks directly to our important community of ethical businesses as we seek ever new ways to promote the goods and services to consumers. FB: Living Wage Employer.

Pictured here at the 2016 announcement of Living Wage Employers with our first printing firm, Pivotal Print, Wellington



Growing our infrastructure

A new web page linked with www.livingwage.org.nz has enabled us to collect and collate submissions digitally to supplement our many actions that raise the profile of the Movement in the community. This is livingwageaction and was utilized in both Auckland and Wellington annual plan consultation processes. Our Nationbuilder website is now the supporter and membership data base ensuring we grow our “nation” of contacts systematically and provide the monthly mail list for our digital newsletter.

Financial stability

The Living Wage Movement is in a solid financial position with membership and Living Wage Accredited Employers growing in number and engagement. Fundraising primarily in Auckland and Wellington maintains \$10,000 per annum for local events. Member groups provide infrastructure support to our paid staff, notably E tū, which has dedicated office space to the Living Wage Movement in Auckland and a database management system.

In the second year of three years of funding for community organising in Wellington and Auckland, we are immensely grateful to JR McKenzie Trust. All the evidence of points to the critical role of a paid organiser in community organising and this has been borne out by the flourishing campaigns in the two main centres where dedicated time is available to us. We were fortunate to receive from the Trust supplementary support during this financial year to pay for an analysis of the residential training programme that cements in the methodology of broad-based organising.

Learning through research

The Living Wage Movement has a strategy to win incomes that enable people to live with dignity and participate in society as active citizens. No one institution of civil society can do this alone but we have proved we can do it by joining together. E tū stands shoulder to shoulder with the Catholic Social Justice and Peace Commission and the Auckland Resettled Communities Coalition; St Peters on Willis stands shoulder to shoulder with Vic University student leaders and Tertiary Education Union. PSA stands with Auckland Women’s Centre and St Matthew-in-the-City. Key to our success is the education and development of leaders in building broad-based organisation across our diverse faith-base, union and community sectors.



The 2016 participants in the 5-day residential training programme north of Wellington

This model of leadership development is rare in Aotearoa and to ensure we reflected on our model from the Industrial Areas Foundation, to which we affiliate, we undertook research, funded by the JR McKenzie Trust.

One participant said *"It's worth it. Every investment, every cent spent on this training is really well spent."* Another said:

"The training changed my life. It had a massive impact on me, not only for my organisation but in my personal life as well. I wish I could go to it every year but I know others need to attend."

Maintaining an ongoing record of the experience of our Living Wage Employers is an important element of ensuring we are seen as credible, accessible, and valuable to businesses that step up. In 2015 we accessed a research voucher for UNITEC to provide research on this. Many valuable insights were shared including one interviewee who said:

"I think it made us think a lot more about all the people who really work for our organisation including those who work for contractors such as the cleaners in our outer offices and to realise that we had responsibilities to these people as well as our existing staff."

And another business said:

"As a generation we have manifestly failed, the world we pass to our children is far more unequal than the world that was gifted to us. Families living in cars, begging in the street are evidence of a society which has turned its back on the poor. Our methods have not delivered for the most vulnerable. We have to try new ways."

While our star Living Wage businesses send a powerful message to the corporate sector that decent wages are doable, the Movement focuses its community campaigning on

public money. In 2017 this means the opportunities presented by the General Election to influence our politicians to say what they will do and stick to it. Researcher, Catriona MacLennan prepared a report for the Governance Committee called “Paying a Living Wage in Aotearoa New Zealand in 2017 – How the Government can do it.” Catriona says:

“The Government should implement a Living Wage throughout the public sector. Money for this could come from being more pro-active in tackling tax evasion; ensuring multinationals pay tax in Aotearoa New Zealand; not cutting taxes further; cancelling or postponing some of the planned \$20 billion in Defence spending; and other initiatives.”



Our people, their stories

Abeba is from Ethiopia (pictured below centre). After living all her life in Sudan as a refugee, she arrived in New Zealand in 2008 and started cleaning in 2010. All the jobs she has done were paid the minimum wage or very close to the minimum wage. Both Abeba and her husband clean at Victoria University. “Life on the minimum wage is hard,” says Abeba. “I have four children — all teenagers in school — and they need money for things. You just can’t provide them everything they need when you’re on the minimum wage.”

My name is Malia Uaisele (pictured below left), from the beautiful and friendly island of Tonga and now live in Manurewa. In 2008, I came to New Zealand to join my husband for a better future. Owning our own home is also a dream for my family. We are so lucky as my in laws are giving us a roof over our heads at the moment. But we don’t want to live like that all our life. We need our own space to raise our family. But how

can I afford a house that cost \$300,000 or more on \$15.75 an hour. I can't save any money after I have paid all our bills.

Ann Simone and Alana Moss (pictured below right) arrived from Samoa in 2011 and have worked as cleaners on the minimum wage ever since. They have a 2 ½ year old child and a baby on the way. Like many other couples who clean, he does night shift and she does mornings. It's hard to find time to spend together, especially when low hourly rates necessitate long hours. Ann: "Even though we both worked hard we had to work long hours just to get the necessities, as well as to cover other expenses such as rent, power and food. We were squeezed into a tiny room, as we couldn't afford anything else. We never made ends meet." As a direct outcome of the local Living Wage campaign, Ann says: "We are now working 40 hours a week and spending more time with our baby. We managed to move into a two-bedroom place with more space for our baby to play in."



Our staff, volunteers and supporters

The Living Wage Movement would not have succeeded without the critical support of staff, volunteers, and supporters.

The accreditation coordinator, Diana Yukich, provides two days a week as a volunteer to manage the growing programme of Living Wage Employers and our IT system is maintained through the support of Leah Foxcroft, who volunteers to maintain our website, Facebook and other digital systems. Many hours of voluntary time is also provided for the fourth year running by Treasurer, Shirley Zhuang, who manages all our accounts and is supported by our volunteer accountant, Marina Kokanovic, and auditor Barry Lee. Muriel Tunoho is a volunteer community organiser in the Hutt Valley,

Wellington, and many hundreds of others dedicate their time across the country fundraising, organising, and being at our events because being there is changing lives.

Lyndy McIntyre, has provided relentless dedication as a community organiser in Wellington ensuring that all three cities and other centres, such as Whanganui, are growing in leaders and organisation. During the financial year Cissy Rock departed her role as Auckland community organiser and this was ably filled by Felicia Scherrer until the new appointee Fala Haulangi was able to join us in February 2017. Focused on South Auckland we are now seeing exciting developments as the critical issues of the “south” emerge to enrich the Living Wage conversation.

The Living Wage Movement is fortunate to have people who commit time and effort to projects that support our campaigns because they believe we are making a difference. Special thanks goes to our supporter, Catriona MacLennan, who has delivered two research papers, on the affordability of a Living Wage at Auckland Council and for central government. This creates an invaluable resource to address the complex economic arguments and front the many political debates around distribution of public funds to support working New Zealanders and their families.



From cleaning to coffee to cafes, they join us....



Governance Committee 2016-17



Pictured above members of the Governance Committee with community organisers. Back from left: : Annie Newman, Rose Black, John Ryall, Ibrahim Omer-Salin, Lyndy McIntyre, Jenny Dawson, Fala Haulangi. Front, from left: Linda Jordan, David Hall, Muriel Tunoho

Annie Newman	Convenor	Shirley Zhuang	Treasurer
David Hall	Faith	Linda Jordan	Secretary
Rev. Dr Susan Adams	Faith		
Rev. Jenny Dawson	Faith		
Bronwynn Maxwell	Union		
John Ryall	Union		
Rose Black	Community/Faith		
Leonie Morris	Community		
Ibrahim Omer-Salin	Community		
Muriel Tunoho	Community		
Diana Yukich	Community		

Accreditation Advisory Board

Kevin Church	Employer
Honey Rasalan	Community
David Hall	Faith
David Wait	Union
Jeff Rowe	Union



Community Organisers

Lyndy McIntyre
Cissy Rock/Fala Haulangi

Accreditation Coordinator

Diana Yukich