
Annual Report

Living Wage Movement Aotearoa NZ

April 1, 2015 - March 30, 2016



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

Community action, concrete wins, and steady growth of local organisation made 2015-16 transformational for the Living Wage Movement. With our sights set on the big goal of contributing to a reduction of poverty and inequality through the Living Wage, our Movement has focused on the democratic project of building connections within organisations and across civil society. This is the third year since becoming incorporated in April 2013 and we are now establishing the structures, practices and networks necessary for an enduring and sustainable Movement.

Local networks have now existed for some time in Auckland, Hamilton, Christchurch and Wellington but in the last year we have seen new organisation emerge in Palmerston North, Nelson, Porirua, and Hutt Valley. Local networks and groups have designed and delivered important events that have raised the profile of the Movement including participating in local festivals, performances, celebrations of the new accredited employers and launches of the new Living Wage rate announcement. Two successful training events delivered leadership development to our member groups, and this was supplemented by local education days.



Developing leaders

“Now I believe we can change the world for the better”

The 2015 residential training took place in October (Auckland/Hamilton) and November (Wellington/Palmerston North). This enables new leaders to experience a community organising model adopted from the Industrial Areas Foundation. For the third year, 20 community leaders came together for each course to learn about broad-based community organising. They were from union, community and faith traditions and diverse sectors such as the migrant and refugee groups, unemployed worker’s rights organisations, and

Pacific youth networks. The training focused on building new relationships, learning about the art of effectively influencing important decision-makers and the development of plans to build power to transform the lives of low paid workers, their families and communities. The comment from a trainee, “now I believe we can change the world for the better” is testimony to the power of this programme.

Learning through research

Our research continued with a report on the affordability of a Living Wage at Auckland Council by Catriona MacLennan and the contracting of UNITEC in Auckland to follow through the experience of newly accredited Living Wage Employers. Lyndy McIntyre provided a comprehensive report into the experience of organising toward a Living Wage at Wellington Council and both Lyndy and Diana Yukich provided valuable reflections on time spent with the Living Wage Foundation and Citizens UK in London and Brighton.

After three years of leadership training and some 120 trainees graduating, it is timely to explore the impact of our education model on long term engagement in the Movement; and, the success of a U.S. model adapted to New Zealand circumstances. Catriona MacLennan has been contracted to deliver this work before the end of the next financial year. We have the J R McKenzie Trust to thank for their support of this evaluation.

Growing our local communities

Our Movement aspires to grow locally by building on local relationships and energy and local issues and opportunities. This presents challenges because the paucity of resources often leaves local leaders with moral commitment but little organizational support. The Movement is most vibrant where community organisers and committed institutions are based. However, the emergence of a new network in Nelson is an encouraging sign that the determination to win a Living Wage in our smaller locations is alive and well.



Highlighting a few of the many successes a Victoria University of Wellington campaign has grown around the commitment of students, cleaners, academics and unions to raise the wages of the lowest paid in organisations funded by public money and branding themselves as the conscience of the public.

A newly formed group called Selwyn Supporters Coalition comprising Pt Chevalier residents, Anglican Church members, residents of the Selwyn Foundation aged care facility, Grey Power and the unions all calling on the Foundation to pay their care workers on poverty wages a decent income. The group gathered petitions for a Living Wage; leafleted visitors to the aged care village, and held a packed public meeting that received widespread publicity and was attended by all the communities in the Coalition, the Human Rights Commission, academics and advocates.

Hundreds of youth from the Tongan community filled the hall on February 26 to see the concert that was the culmination of a project with the Tongan Youth Trust. This was a creative project that aimed to build community leadership, deepen understanding about the Living Wage and explore the potential of Tongan youth through dance, theatre, music and visual media.

In March a new group ‘Artists for the Living Wage’ organised a Living Wage stage and all-day concert at Newtown’s huge annual festival, where performances were enjoyed by hundreds of people.

In August the Living Wage Porirua group held a public launch at the Cannons Creek Church of Christ the King, supported by over 150 members of the local community and resulting in a commitment across the community to working to achieve the Living Wage in Porirua. The Mayor Nick Leggett was among those who made this commitment.



A Hutt Valley group hosted a community discussion, attracting over 60 people. That group has continued to grow and has now held a public launch at Pomare School.

There are so many highlights across the country only Facebook can truly capture the vitality and creativity of this Movement on a day to day basis. However, to focus on the outcome briefly is important. We seek to win a Living Wage by influencing the way public money is spent. Majorities on local or central governments are hard to secure but not impossible and the next section is a celebration of the Wellington victory.

The Wellington story

The Wellington City Council voted in principle to become a Living Wage council in June 2013 and by 2014 hundreds of minimum wage workers had their wages increased to the then Living Wage of \$18.40p/h and parking wardens were brought in-house increasing their earnings by up to \$4.00 p/h. This flowed through in the last financial year to workers employed in CCOs, who were moved to a \$18.55p/h minimum wage. The work behind these victories, as wages move in leaps and bounds toward a Living Wage, cannot be underestimated. The dedication of a local team, coordinated by our community organiser, has set the bar high and enabled workers and community leaders to dream that the Movement is more than standard-setting, it is in reality a means to a better life for hundreds of thousands of workers in Aotearoa. Those to be congratulated include Lyndy McIntyre, John Ryall, Paul Barber, and Rev. Brian Dawson but, of course, many more from Living Wage Wellington.



Deepening our structures

The Living Wage Movement now has a Governance Body with experience and understanding of the model of building power in society. The Committee have started planning for long-term growth and decided to affiliate to the Industrial Areas Foundation in order to secure the relationships and support that have provided a strong basis for our development so far. We know the Living Wage Movement provides the only broad-based organising kaupapa in NZ and so this relationship is important if we are to see the fruits of our investment in Aotearoa. In particular, the support of Sister Maribeth Larkin, as a teacher, professional supervisor for the community organisers, and sounding board for our leadership, is to be acknowledged and celebrated.

Accreditation

The steady growth in the number of Living Wage Employers ensures our Movement's focus is clear: we aim to set new standards for the amount workers need to survive and participate in society; we aim to provide a credible trade mark and license for businesses that take a stand and pay their workers in accordance with our accreditation programme; and we aim to target public money but embrace any business that puts their name into the public arena as an ethical employer. There has been creditable growth in our accreditation programme to 60 businesses and 2 celebrations during the 2015-16 year. Our annual July 1 announcement of new Living Wage Employers took place in Hamilton with Tuaropaki Trust a Maori corporate business at centre stage, while the announcement of the 2016 Living Wage rate was celebrated at the Manukau Rugby League Club in Mangere.

Financial stability

The Living Wage Movement is in a solid financial position with membership growing in the financial period to 76 and Living Wage Accredited Employers to 60. Fundraising primarily in Auckland and Wellington ensures a further \$10,000 per annum for local



events and member groups provide infrastructure support to our paid staff, notably E tū, in Auckland, for the community organiser and accreditation coordinator. The critical support of our funders, in particular JR McKenzie Trst, along with Think Tank Trust has enabled us to deliver growth that would be otherwise impossible.

Our staff and volunteers

Lyndy McIntyre, Diana Yukich , Cissy Rock and Clay Nelson have undertaken the challenging role of paid staff in a commitment far beyond their paid hours. Shirley Zhuang, as Treasurer; Marina Kokanovic as accountant; Barry Lee as auditor; and Leah Foxcroft as IT support and developer, have dedicated their personal time and professional services to ensuring a credible and high quality infrastructure for the Movement

Our volunteers include Susan Adams (community organiser supervisor) Muriel Tunoho; the Governance Committee; the Wellington Living Wage Network; the Accreditation Board; and, the many individuals who have made a commitment of time, money and energy - THANK YOU!

Governance Committee 2015-16



| | |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| Annie Newman | Convenor |
| Rev. Brian Dawson | Faith |
| David Hall | Faith |
| Rev. Dr Susan Adams | Faith |
| Sandra Grey | Union |
| Warwick Jones | Union |
| John Ryall | Union |
| Rose Black | Community/Faith |
| Leonie Morris | Community |

| | |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Rory Lenihan-Ikin | Community |
| Muriel Tunoho | Community |
| Shirley Zhuang | Treasurer |
| Linda Jordan | Secretary |

Accreditation Advisory Board

| | |
|---------------|-----------|
| Kevin Church | Employer |
| Honey Rasalan | Community |
| David Hall | Faith |
| David Wait | Union |

Community Organisers

| | |
|-----------|---|
| 02/2015 - | Lyndy McIntyre Diana Yukich/Cissy Rock |
|-----------|---|

Accreditation Coordinator

| | |
|-----------|-------------|
| - 04/2015 | Clay Nelson |
|-----------|-------------|

