



Isabelle Grace, *Howard Hall Senator*
Griffin McAndrew, *Knott Hall Senator*
Gracie Eppler, *Flaherty Hall Senator*
Cate Porter, *Johnson Family Hall Senator*
Trista Brantley, *Breen-Phillips Hall Senator*
James Baird, *Alumni Hall Senator*
Andrew Lauerman, *Baumer Hall Senator*
Derick Williams, *Keough Hall Senator*

**A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR COMPENSATION AND LABOR POLICIES THAT
REDUCE ECONOMIC HARDSHIP**

Whereas, the University of Notre Dame is the largest employer in both South Bend and St. Joseph County, with 3,500 full-time and part-time employees in South Bend alone;

Whereas, the overall poverty rate in South Bend is 23.6%, and a large percentage of that poverty is concentrated among Black households with a poverty rate of 40.2%;

Whereas, MIT calculated the living wage in St. Joseph County for one adult supporting two kids as \$33.25 per hour and the living wage for two working adults supporting two kids as \$19.29 per hour, both far below the existing \$15 minimum wage for full-time, non-exempt employees;

Whereas, multiple employers within a mile of campus already offer higher comparable starting wages (Notre Dame Federal Credit Union offers a \$17 per hour starting wage, Culver's offers \$17 per hour, and Aldi offers \$16 per hour);

Whereas, many institutions – including Clarke University, Johns Hopkins University, the University of Rochester, Case Western Reserve University, Columbia University, Duquesne University, Harvard University, the University of Colorado, the University of Memphis, the University of Michigan, the University of Washington, and the University of Kentucky – have implemented plans to bring their own institutional minimum wage to \$15 per hour.

Whereas, student wages have not increased enough to offset the rate of inflation, meaning that in terms of purchasing power, student wages have decreased;

Whereas, the University of Notre Dame is increasingly accepting a more diverse student body, with 20.3% of the Class of 2026 being first-generation, pell grant students with family incomes under \$65,000;

Whereas, Notre Dame's 2020 Inclusive Campus Survey finds that the percentage of low-income respondents who say they “strongly disagree” with a sense of belonging at Notre Dame is nearly triple that of all other income brackets;

Whereas, 30% of students cited their academic performance as being somewhat or severely negatively affected by their socioeconomic status;

Whereas, Notre Dame's 2018 economic impact report states, “as a large anchor institution, [Notre Dame] understands that it is a major driver in the success of the immediate neighborhood and broader region it inhabits”;

Whereas, last August a group of South Bend civil rights leaders and community activists told a group of Notre Dame faculty under the name JusticeND that the number one thing Notre Dame could do to alleviate poverty and racism in the community is to pay its staff a living wage;

Whereas, despite the university's commitment to meet “all demonstrated financial need,” loans often constitute large portions of student aid packages and fail to consider the various other costs associated with campus life;

Whereas, the university's mission statement proclaims that “the University seeks to cultivate in its students [...] a sense of human solidarity and concern for the common good that will bear fruit as learning becomes service to justice”;

Whereas, that “solidarity” and “common good” are to be interpreted through Catholic Social Teaching is suggested by the final sentence of our mission statement, which asserts that “Notre Dame pursues its objectives through the formation of an authentic human community graced by the Spirit of Christ”;

Whereas, Pope Benedict XVI stated in Caritas in Veritate that poverty results from a violation of the dignity of human work “because a low value is put on work and the rights that flow from it, especially the right to a just wage and to the personal security of the worker and his or her family”;

Whereas, Pope Pius XI stated in Quadragesimo Anno that “in the first place, the worker must be paid a wage sufficient to support him and his Family”;

Whereas, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops explains that “the economy must serve people, not the other way around. Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God's creation. If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected—the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to the organization and joining of unions, to private property, and to economic initiative”;

Whereas, 110 faculty members signed a letter demanding the university engage in good faith negotiations on the Raising the Standard Campaign's wage proposal and offer a public response regarding its decision;

Whereas, over 400 students and alumni signed a petition demanding the university review and implement a just wage structure, which includes: raising the minimum wage to \$15 for all student workers, instituting a cost of living adjustment for all full-time and part-time employees, creating a Notre Dame Just Wages and Fair Employment Board, enhancing employee benefits, and prioritizing contractors who pay their workers a living wage;

Whereas, the University of Notre Dame du Lac has fallen short in upholding the dignity of work for its employees in its policies, resulting in discrepancies between Catholic Social Teaching and the university's actions; therefore, be it,

Resolved, by the Student Senate of the University of Notre Dame du Lac, that the University of Notre Dame's Budgetary Working Group should pursue the implementation of a just wage and benefit structure for all employees and student workers in accordance with Catholic Social Teaching, and engage in good faith negotiations with its community about appropriate policy decisions that address the economic and social inequalities affecting its workforce.

Patrick D. Lee

Patrick Lee
Student Body President