

2015 Priority Issue: Income



United Way of the
Greater Dayton Area

United Way of the Greater Dayton Area (UWGDA) advocates for policies that promote the financial stability of individuals and families in our community. Therefore, the UWGDA would like to ask our legislators to support legislation that will promote the following initiatives:

- **Family Sustaining Income** – UWGDA is asking our legislators to support initiatives that bring living wage jobs into our community. Particularly, collaborative strategies that promote education, training, and sector-based approaches that connect skilled workers with jobs in the growing fields of healthcare, technology, green industries, and community infrastructure. This will allow low-income individuals the opportunity to obtain family-sustaining employment that offers the potential for career advancement.

Current Need: Specific to our community, 12.9% of Greene, 18.6% of Montgomery, and 12.3 % of Preble County residents were living below the federal poverty line. Far too many of our residents are struggling to afford food, rent, childcare, and transportation which leaves them with little to no money left over for savings. Jobs with sustainable wages are needed; however 60% of sustainable wage jobs require at least an associate's degree. [1] Individuals that participate in work readiness programs do not end up in positions that pay a living wage. Now, more than ever educational attainment is fundamental to the long-term earning potential of an individual so it is critical to connect our disconnected youth and adult earners with alternative education and work experience opportunities in living wage jobs.

- **Income Supports** – UWGDA is asking our legislators to continue to see the importance and necessity of income support programs by assuring that there are no cuts in funding to these programs. Recognizing the need for a more streamline enrollment process with community-based organizations and agencies so that low-income working families are able to be connected with all the available income supports for which they are eligible is also a necessity.

Current Need: A self-sufficiency wage is what an individual or family must make an hour in order to meet their basic needs without relying on public assistance (i.e. SNAP, OWF, Medicaid) or private/informal assistance (food banks, family/friends babysitting for free, shared housing). The average self-sufficiency wage per hour for Montgomery, Greene, and Preble counties is \$8.80/hr for an individual and \$11.49/hr per adult in a family with two adults and one infant. [2] The disparity between the self-sufficiency wage and the minimum wage speaks directly to the importance of individuals and families being able to easily access all types of income supports.

- **Earned Income Tax Credit** – UWGDA is asking our legislators to support an increase in the state credit amount and consider making it fully refundable. This would make it so more of Ohio's poorest workers could benefit from the tax credit

Current Need: As previously stated, there is a difference in the amount an individual or family must make in order to be self-sufficient and the minimum wage in Ohio. Currently only those individuals making less than 19,000 a year are able to benefit from the state EITC; however an increase and making it refundable will make it possible for those families making above 20,000 a year to benefit as well. [3]

[1] Wright State University. (2014). Jobs Outlook.

[2] University of Washington. The self Sufficiency Standard by State. Retrieved from <http://www.selfsufficiencystandard.org/pubs.html>,

[3] Kalitha Williams and Hannah Halbert. (2015). Making Ohio's EITC Work for Workers. Policy Matters Ohio. Retrieved from http://www.policymattersohio.org/eitc-april2015#_ftn17