

WIND OF THE SPIRIT

IMMIGRANT RESOURCE CENTER

Issue 6, September 2018



Wind of the Spirit
Immigrant Resource Center, N.J.

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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF OUR WORK ACROSS THE STATE





STUDENTS FACE HARDSHIP AT COUNTY COLLEGE OF MORRIS

While New Jersey politics moves closer to policies that support immigrants, there are institutions within the state that continue to make it difficult for them to survive and succeed. One institution that has placed unnecessary barriers on undocumented immigrants is the County College of Morris (CCM). Despite the 2013 in-state tuition law signed by former governor Chris Christie, allowing students who have met certain requirements to pay in-state tuition (including in-county tuition for county colleges), CCM is charging out-of-state tuition to many students who qualify for in-county. This places a burden on undocumented students and their families to come up with an additional \$3,000 per semester for full-time students. Often, students and their families cannot come up with this additional charge per semester, and would-be students are forced to withdraw from classes.

According to the CCM administration, the New Jersey Higher Education Assistance Authority has allowed colleges throughout the state to interpret the guidelines of the 2013 law. This has led CCM to incorrectly interpret who is considered undocumented, and as a result impacts who qualifies for in-county tuition under the 2013 guidelines. There is no way of telling how many students have been incorrectly charged out-of-state tuition since the legislation was signed. The problem would have gone undetected except for Wind of the Spirit's (WOTS) current state aid implementation campaign around legislation championed by Senator Theresa Ruiz and counterparts in the state assembly, such as Gary Schaer. During the state aid implementation campaign, in which WOTS organizers and community leaders helped undocumented students fill out state aid forms, organizers began to notice that many students who met all of the requirements were being charged something other than in-county tuition. Since then, WOTS immigration attorneys and organizers have communicated to CCM administration about their incorrect interpretation.

In particular, two groups of undocumented students are suffering the consequences of this erroneous interpretation: students who have overstayed their tourist visas, and students who came in through the southern border.

For students and other advocates who remember CCM from before the enactment of the 2013 in-state tuition legislation, this is a blow to the organizing efforts that were pivotal in pushing state legislation across the finish line. Francisco, a current student at CCM and one of many at the forefront of the in-state tuition campaign in 2013, expresses it this way: "We as [undocumented] students, through awareness, organizing, and civil discourse, were able to plead our case for an equal opportunity for our education. CCM and any other institution unnecessarily places barriers on higher education should be ashamed of themselves for not following through on their part in this legislation that so many worked so hard to achieve."

For more information on this campaign, you can contact: organizing@windofthespirit.net.

WE STAND WITH OUR STUDENTS!

CURRENT AND FUTURE STUDENTS AT COUNTY COLLEGE OF MORRIS

In-County / In-State Tuition and Access to Financial Aid

Did you know?

- **BY NEW JERSEY LAW (NJ S2479), ALL STUDENTS that meet the following criteria are eligible for in-county and in-state tuition:**
 - Attended an New Jersey high school for three or more years
 - Graduated from a high school in New Jersey or received the equivalent of a high school diploma in this state
 - Registered as an entering student or currently enrolled in public institution of higher education
 - In the case of students without lawful immigration status, file an affidavit with the institution of higher education, stating you have filed (or will file) an application to legalize your immigration status
 - Or is a DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) recipient with up to date documentation
- **BY NEW JERSEY LAW (NJ S699), ALL STUDENTS that meet the above-mentioned criteria qualify for State student financial aid programs**

County College of Morris – PRICE INDEX

- **Out-of-State Tuition:** \$395 per credit (Typical 16 credit semester = \$6320)
- **In-State / Out-of-County Tuition:** \$285 per credit (Typical 16 credit semester = \$4560)
- **In-State / In-County Tuition:** \$157 per credit (Typical 16 credit semester = \$2512)
- **With Financial Aid,** you can save from \$500 - \$5000 depending on your individual circumstance.

Students have reported difficulties with the County College of Morris - Admissions Office, receiving in-state and in-county tuition and financial aid. **If you are having problems and need assistance,** please contact Wind of the Spirit

973-538-2035, or organizing@windofthespirit.net

**WE ARE HERE TO
FIGHT FOR YOUR
ACCESS TO
AFFORDABLE
EDUCATION!**

If you are having problems with your institution and need assistance, please contact us!

973-538-2035 or

Organizing@windofthespirit.net





DRIVER'S LICENSE CAMPAIGN MOVES FORWARD

LET'S DRIVE
NEW
JERSEY!

THE 95 DEGREE WEATHER WAS NOT ENOUGH TO STOP THE KIDS, THE PARENTS, THE DIRECTLY AFFECTED AND THE ALLIES FROM TAKING OVER THE STREETS OF TRENTON. WIND OF THE SPIRIT ALONGSIDE OTHER ORGANIZATIONS MARCHED FROM THE WAR MEMORIAL TO THE STATE HOUSE ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 6 TO URGE CONGRESS TO PASS A BILL THAT ALLOWS ALL NEW JERSEY RESIDENTS ACCESS TO A DRIVER'S LICENSE. BUSES PULLED IN FROM MORRISTOWN, AND DOVER WITH MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY EAGER TO GET OUT THERE AND UPLIFT THEIR VOICE.

THIS IS ONE OF THE MANY ACTIONS THE ORGANIZATION HAS BEEN PART OF. IN THE MONTH OF AUGUST MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS CANVASSED FOR LOCAL BUSINESS SUPPORT OF THE LET'S DRIVE NEW JERSEY CAMPAIGN. FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO GET INVOLVED IN THE CAMPAIGN, CONTACT THE CENTER TODAY!



LIVING WITH AN UNLIVABLE WAGE

\$15 MINIMUM WAGE

People's lives depend on it.

Living in America is expensive; having a happy and healthy life is highly dependent on your income. High costs of housing, food, transportation, and health care make it impossible to maintain an adequate standard of living for full-time employees making under \$15/hour.

In New Jersey, \$15/hour is the minimum needed for a single adult with no dependents to maintain an adequate standard of living, with the majority of counties with higher costs, requiring a higher minimum wage.

Current Minimum Wage

- **Federal minimum wage:** \$7.25 / hour
- **New Jersey minimum wage:** \$8.60 / hour
- **Washington D.C., California, Massachusetts, Washington minimum wage:** \$11.00 + / hour

Washington D.C., California, Massachusetts, and Washington already have \$15 minimum wage and are gradually phasing it in with positive impacts on their local economy. Increased minimum wage has already shown to decrease rates of poverty and increase the number of local businesses with no significant rise in unemployment or in price of basic necessities. In 2013, when New Jersey raised its minimum wage from \$7.25/hour to \$8.25/hour, poverty rates decreased, and 90,000 new jobs were created across the state.

Current minimum wage is a poverty wage, with many

Minimum Wage Falls Short in Every Part of New Jersey

The wage required for a single adult who works full time to meet a basic budget in every part of New Jersey is far higher than the state minimum wage of \$8.60 – and in all but three areas it is more than double. The wage covers only between 41 percent (Bergen/Passaic) and 57 percent (Ocean City metro area) of this basic budget.

Bergen/Passaic	\$20.83	Camden/Philadelphia	\$17.42
Newark Metro	\$19.99	Atlantic City/Hammonton	\$17.38
Jersey City Metro	\$19.67	Vineland/Millville/Bridgeton	\$16.78
Middlesex/Somerset/Hunterdon	\$18.90	Warren County	\$16.36
Monmouth/Ocean	\$18.78	Ocean City Metro	\$15.15
Trenton/Ewing	\$18.62		

Source: NJPP analysis of Economic Policy Institute Basic Family Budgets by metro area, adjusted to 2018 dollars for inflation. Analysis assumes the worker is working full time for the entire year (2080 hours per year).

NEW JERSEY POLICY PERSPECTIVE NJPP.ORG

families struggling to pay for housing, food, transportation, medical, and other necessary expenses. 23% of New Jerseyans (2 million people) are below federal poverty level despite New Jersey unemployment being at 6%. This means the majority of New Jerseyans living in poverty are working full-time, but are not being paid enough to live.

Did you know that income is the greatest indicator of health outcomes? Increased income offers access to doctors, hospitals, and medication. Decreased income is linked with increases in diabetes, heart disease, arthritis, and infant mortality.

Increased income is shown to positively impact housing, education, and job opportunities, while decreased income is linked to criminal recidivism, domestic violence, child abuse, and teen pregnancy.



Raising the minimum wage puts money in the pockets of low-income workers who will spend immediately on their everyday needs. Low-income workers will pay for goods and services that will positively impact local businesses and the economy as a whole.

Higher wages save New Jersey taxpayers money. Many large corporations take advantage of social safety net programs by paying employees poverty wages, forcing the government to subsidize their low wages with social welfare programs. A higher minimum wage would significantly reduce the number of people forced onto social welfare programs, saving New Jersey millions of dollars in taxes.

All workers must be included in a \$15 minimum wage, no exceptions!

Currently in New Jersey:

workers are not given overtime for working over 40 hours per week.

Tipped workers have a wage gap of \$6.47 compared to non-tipped workers and are subject to higher rates of wage theft by employers.

A sub-minimum wage for youth workers encourages employers to hire teens over adult workers and incentivizes large-scale turnover in workforce.

New immigrant workers are subject to the highest rates of wage theft and exploitation.

New Jersey should have a \$15 minimum wage. Current NJ Governor Phil Murphy made the \$15 minimum wage a core platform of his campaign. A \$15 minimum wage bill already passed the New Jersey legislature in 2017, but was vetoed by then Governor Chris Christie.

New Jersey must address its income inequality and poverty issues now! According to a new United Nations study, America has the lowest rate of social mobility among rich countries in the world. In New Jersey specifically, the richest 5% of earners have an average income of \$400,367; while the poorest 20% of earners have an average income of \$25,646.

INCREASE THE MINIMUM
WAGE TO \$15/HOUR AND
MAKE SURE ALL NEW
JERSEYANS CAN AFFORD
A HEALTHY LIFE FOR
THEMSELVES AND THEIR
FAMILIES

PHASE IN ESTIMATE

\$8.60: Current minimum wage

\$10.10: Minimum wage as of Jan. 1, 2019

\$11.35: Minimum wage as of Jan. 1, 2020

\$12.60: Minimum wage as of Jan. 1, 2021

\$13.85: Minimum wage as of Jan. 1, 2022

\$15.10: Minimum wage as of Jan. 1, 2023

This assumes the minimum wage would be increased to \$10.10 an hour in the first step, on January 1 of 2019, with four \$1.25 an hour increases to follow, bringing New Jersey's minimum wage to \$15.10 an hour by 2023.



Calendar of Events

Sunday, August 5th

No Human Being Is Illegal presentation in Chatham

Monday August 13-Friday August 17th

Health and Safety OSHA, HAZWOPER training

Saturday, August 18th

Financial Aid forum at the Dover Public Library

Saturday, August 18th

Open soccer and Driver's License Campaign tabling in Maplewood

Sunday, August 19th

TPS committee event
Our TPS committee hosted an event

Saturday, August 25th 12-3pm

Members and volunteers cookout at Morris Lewis Park

Monday, August 27th

State Aid forum in Morristown

September 1st 7pm

LGBTQ & Immigration community presents their social night event in Randolph

Thursday, September 6th

Driver's License rally in Trenton 9-4pm

Friday, September 7th

New Volunteer orientation at the Center 7pm

Saturday, September 8th

People's Climate Rally 11am at the Morristown Town Hall

Upcoming events:

Monday September 10th

Books and Bustelo -Afrolatinidad and Tainos

Thursday, September 13th

3-5pm and 7-9pm
Canvassing around Morristown
Outreach for the organization

September 15

1:00pm
Ocean County library Courtyard
101 Washington Street
Toms River, NJ
March for Peace to end the wars

Sunday, September 23rd

1-2pm
Immigration forum at El Encuentro Centro Americano Restaurant
30 Lafayette Avenue

CPR training - September 29th

at 8am
Wind of the Spirit Center



Join a committee

Migrant's rights working group

Every other Monday at 7:00pm; Contact Theresa@Markila.com for more information

Dover and Morristown Immigrant Justice Committee

Every other Monday at 7:30pm; Contact Organizing@Windofthespirit.net for more information

Events/Fundraising

Every other Wednesday at 7:00pm; Contact Theresa@Markila.com for more information

Wind of the Spirit Immigrant Resource Center

120 Speedwell Avenue
Morristown, New Jersey 07960

T: (973) 538-2035

E: office@windofthespirit.net

LGBTQ

Every other Tuesday at 7:30pm; Contact Theresa@Markila.com for more information

Temporary Protective Status

Every other Sunday at 4:00pm; Contact Organizing@windofthespirit.net for more information

Newsletter

Contact Organizing@windofthespirit.net for more information



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