

LMU announced last week a new campus minimum wage of \$19.15 an hour (<https://newsroom.lmu.edu/administrative/lmu-raising-pay-for-lowest-paid-staff-colleagues/>). This pay increase should be understood as a direct response to hundreds of protesting LMU students. Last spring, these students, together with staff and faculty, denounced campus poverty wages in solidarity with Facilities Management workers. Our students have much to teach the LMU community about living out our mission of social justice, and alongside them, we must do more: LMU continues to deny its employees a just minimum wage of \$21 an hour.

Although LMU's least paid employees will likely welcome any supplement to their current poverty wages, too many will still struggle to feed their children and to pay rent in one of the world's most expensive cities. MIT's Living Wage Calculator establishes \$21.89 as a living wage in Los Angeles for a single individual who has no dependents (<https://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/06037>).

LMU's announcement pits our students against our most economically vulnerable workers, a threatening tactic that takes advantage of the crushing economic burden many of our students shoulder to secure an LMU degree and a deeply cynical move that seeks to fracture the LMU community. Important to the conversation about wages must be an acknowledgement of our University's ballooning upper administration and administrators who command salaries in the hundreds of thousands of dollars, some of which have continued to climb by tens of thousands even in the economically precarious time of COVID.

Our Jesuit commitment to social justice means we have a special obligation to the poor. Even with the recent wage increase, far too many of our Facilities Management workers—the majority of whom are people of color and many of whom are recent immigrants—will remain among America's working poor. We, the students, staff, and faculty of *LMU FM Solidarity*, reaffirm our commitment to standing with those most in need, insisting that LMU's stated commitment to social justice demands a just minimum wage of \$21.00.

*LMU FM Solidarity*