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St. Mary's College Wage Plan First of its Kind in Nation

St. Mary's City, Maryland, Sept. 2013: Faculty, staff and students at St. Mary's College of Maryland are proposing a new salary structure they say will increase wages for the lowest paid while reining in college costs. The innovative plan is the first of its kind in the nation.

Titled "St. Mary's Wages, the St. Mary's Way," the proposal would guarantee a living wage to all full time employees of the College and place a cap on faculty, administrative, and presidential salaries. The proposal's authors say it reflects the mission of the State's only public honors college.

"We are a public college that values 'social responsibility and civic-mindedness' along with the goal of 'promoting and maintaining a community built on respect,'" said Dr. Laraine Glidden, Distinguished Professor of Psychology, Emerita. "I can think of no better way to demonstrate that we live what is in our catalog than by advocating for a living wage for all, paid for by limits on the highest earnings."

The proposal's supporters argue the caps on higher salaries and initiatives to stem the growth of non-faculty administrative positions would eliminate one of the drivers of the cost of college education. They hope to limit future tuition increases and improve the College's ability to implement its mission of inclusiveness and affordability.

"Affordability is important when it comes to maintaining the diversity of the student body, which matters to me and my classmates," said senior computer science major Ashok Chandwaney. "This proposal can help keep St. Mary's affordable by ending the insane and interlocked upward spiral of tuition and executive salaries that's happening everywhere."

The subject of wages has long been a point of interest at St. Mary's College. In 2006, a student campaign ended with students staging a Living Wage Sit-In in the President's office. In 2012, students launched the "Living Wage Campaign" culminating in a hundred-strong march of students, faculty and staff across campus.

"St. Mary's Wages, the St. Mary's Way," is available online at www.stmaryswages.org.

Images of past events are available upon request.

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