

# DON'T SHORTCHANGE MOMS AND DAUGHTERS!

## FAMILIES NEED EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK



*Guest Check*

SERVER	TABLE	GUESTS	
			Nº 010382

*Including a Special Feature*

Moms share stories about trying to live on \$2.13/hour – the Federal tipped minimum wage

TAX	
TOTAL	

*Thank You*



### STORIES FROM THE FRONT LINES OF MOTHERHOOD:

Women and mothers from across the country share how pay discrimination impacts their lives and the lives of their families.



**MomsRising.org**

April 17, 2012

Dear Elected Leader,

Families are hurting right now. The tough economy and slow recovery mean that worries about financial security are at the forefront of most parents' minds these days: *Will we be able to afford to raise healthy children, to pay for childcare/pre-school, to save enough for retirement or to pay for college for our kids? Could my job be in jeopardy? What will happen to us if we can't make the rent or pay the mortgage?*

And since more and more families are relying on the paychecks of women and mothers, these worries are compounded by the outrageous fact that women--and particularly mothers--aren't getting paid fairly for the equal work they do. Sadly, women not getting equal pay for equal work is still an issue that needs to be addressed in our nation.

In this document you'll find stories and messages about the need for fair pay policies from MomsRising members across the country. Their situations and circumstances vary, but one thing is loud and clear: Families need equal pay for equal work.

Stories from MomsRising members like Laura, who had an identical advanced degree as her husband, and landed the exact same job as her husband, but at different sites. What wasn't identical? Their pay. Laura's husband was offered over \$5,000 more starting salary for the same job, with the same resume. (Actually, Laura's resume gave her slightly more qualifications for the job than her husband because of her previous work experience). And, we've also heard from members who were fired after having children – and then had a less qualified male replacement be hired for 30% more of their salary; as well as from members who retired from executive level positions only to find that less qualified male candidates were hired at higher salary rates than the retiring women's outgoing rate.

These stories bring to life the statistics that show wage and hiring discrimination against women and mothers is still rampant in our nation. In fact, data released last year by the U.S. Census found that **women who worked full-time, year round on average still made 23 cents less for every dollar earned by their male counterparts**. (This marks no change from 2008's wage gap and amounts to nearly \$11,000 per year in lost earnings). And, the wage gap for women of color in 2009 was even more staggering than for women overall. When Black and Hispanic women work full-time, year round, they only make 62 and 53 cents, respectively, for every dollar their white, non-Hispanic male counterparts earn. [1] Further, a recent study found that with equal resumes and job experiences, mothers were offered \$11,000 lower starting salaries (fathers, on the other hand, were offered \$6,000 more in starting salaries than non-fathers). [2]

Since over 80% of women in our nation have children by the time they're 44 years old, **this means the majority of women in our nation are touched by this type of wage discrimination at some point in their lives.**

To say that families are struggling right now is an understatement. In 40 states, the average annual cost for center-based child care is higher than a year's tuition and related fees at a four-year public college. [3] Nationwide, climbing gas prices have now reached over \$3.50 per gallon. [4] Many jobs that are available during this painfully slow economic recovery don't pay enough to cover the costs of basics like food and health care. [5] The majority of families now need two paychecks to make ends meet, which means that pay discrimination against women is further compounding families' suffering during this economic downturn.

We have work to do. Even though President Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act in 1963, the pay gap has been narrowing by less than half a percent a year. If the wage gap continues to narrow at the same rate as it has done since 1960, it will take another 44 years, or until 2056, for women and men to reach pay equity. [6]



That is simply not okay. In the meantime women and mothers continue to fight discrimination in the workplace simply for being women and mothers.

When we asked MomsRising members to share their experiences with pay discrimination, their response was loud and clear: Pay discrimination abounds and hurts not just women and mothers, but it also hurts families and ultimately the economy too.

Today, April 17, is Equal Pay Day. This day symbolizes how far into 2012 women must work to earn what men earned in 2011. On this day I hope that you will read the messages and stories of frustration and hope that MomsRising members have that someday, very soon, our daughters won't be facing the same struggles that we face.

Thanks for all that you do.

Kristin Rowe-Finkbeiner  
Co-Founder and Executive Director

[1] *United States Census: Income, Poverty and Health Insurance in the United States: 2009* and National Women's Law Center blog post, "State Wage Gap Data Show Little or No Improvement from 2008," September 28 2010

[2] Franklin Crawford, "Motherhood and the math factor: Sociologist Shelley Correll exposes biases that affect women in business and academia," Cornell University, Chronicle Online, Feb 6, 2007

[3] "Parents and The High Cost of Child Care: 2010 Update," National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies.

[4] AAA Fuel Gauge Report – [www.fuelgaugereport.aaa.com](http://www.fuelgaugereport.aaa.com)

[5] "Many Low-Wage Jobs Seen as Failing to Meet Basic Needs," *The New York Times*, March 31st, 2011.

[6] IWPR Report: "Women's Median Earnings as a Percent of Men's Median Earnings, 1960-2009 (Full-Time, Year-Round Workers) with Projection for Pay Equity in 2056," Jeff Hayes, Ph.D. (March 2011)

## Personal Stories from MomsRising Members

### **Laura, San Ramon, CA**

From my readings and hearing about others' stories, I have always known that men earn more than women for the same job/position. But somehow, I thought that this would never happen to me.

Working in the field of mental health, I thought that this would be the one field that would not and COULD not allow this kind of injustice. I thought this because in the field of mental health, we understand just how psychologically, socially, and emotionally debilitating it is to be discriminated against – we see and combat these overlapping layers of discrimination: racism, classism, heterosexism, sexism, ageism, ableism, non-acceptance of different religions/spirituality etc., everyday in our work.

So, when it personally happened to me, within this very field that supposedly prides itself on having equality in the work place, I was, to say the least, disenchanted. How do I know that I was discriminated against by my sex and race? Easy. The person who was earning more than me was my husband. You see, I met my husband in graduate school. We met five years ago as students at Columbia University's counseling psychology

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"I felt demeaned,  
disrespected,  
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deVALUED."

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Laura, San Ramon, CA

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program. We graduated together. We have the EXACT same degrees. When we became employed by the same agency for the EXACT same position (just at different school sites) we were both dumbfounded by our salary offers.

At his first job within the field of mental health straight out of school, he was offered \$41,000/yr. We both naturally thought that I would earn more for several straightforward reasons: prior to graduate school, I worked in the field of mental health for a total of five years, I had outstanding references and I held a California Pupil Personnel Services Credential, all of which substantially "beefed" up my resume in comparison to my husband's.

And yet, my salary offer was \$35,700/yr. A whopping 13% less!



The only thing that we could possibly reason out of this were two other “straightforward” differences: I am female and Chinese American. My husband? White and male.

Everyday at work, this knowledge burned my very being. I felt demeaned, disrespected, belittled, and deVALUED. This knowledge also affected our relationship. At times, it was difficult to be with my husband knowing that I worked every bit as hard as him, brought to my job an understanding of children, of the school system and of working with disadvantaged populations that my husband asked ME for help with.

In our relationship we strive to be as equals. But this was made much more challenging knowing that we weren’t treated as equals on a professional level. We even attempted to fix or at least mediate our situation with the agency. But when we questioned, we were given the runaround. Emails, phone calls and letters were left unanswered. We could not afford a lawyer, and in the end we “sucked it up” because at least in our case, the difference in salary was still going to the same place.

My story is sadly very real. And my husband and I are committed to help change this injustice for everyone!

#### **Sulyn, Fairport, NY**

I have a masters degree and 15 years teaching experience and yet many, many of my male counterparts, many of whom have been teaching for less time than I, make \$10,000-\$15,000 more than I do! When I pursued this with our personnel representative it was dragged out with no communication for months and then I received a benign letter stating that my rate was appropriate for my years of experience when I got my job.



## **WOMEN EARN 77 CENTS FOR EVERY DOLLAR MEN EARN** FOR WOMEN WORKING FULL-TIME, YEAR-ROUND

### **THIS AMOUNTS TO NEARLY \$11,000 PER YEAR IN LOST EARNINGS**

U.S. Census Income, Poverty and Health Insurance in the United States: 2009  
<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/incpovhlth/2009/index.html> and  
National Women's Law Center: State Wage Gap Data Show Little or No  
Improvement from 2008 Posted on September 28, 2010. <http://www.nwlc.org/our-blog/state-wage-gap-data-show-little-or-no-improvement-2008>

Unfortunately I didn’t know (and was not taught) that you could negotiate a salary when you work for a public school. So as many of my colleagues make more, leave earlier than I do, I hope that one day this reality will change. I am the primary breadwinner of my family and we struggle every day to make ends meet. I did not pursue this further with my employer because I can’t afford to lose my job.

#### **Anonymous**

I retired from a CEO position in a public agency after 15 years as its Executive Director. I was well respected nationally and had earned the agency numerous awards and recognition. My male successor was an appointee from local city government with only tangential experience in the field, and no executive level leadership experience, yet was hired at a salary higher than what I was being paid, as I exited with 15 years on the job and a record of stellar accomplishments!

By contrast, when I was initially hired for that same position, replacing a male, the salary offered me was far lower than the male I replaced – supposedly because I wasn’t as experienced, yet I had been working at an executive level in that agency for four years prior to my selection as its Executive Director.

#### **Sharon**

##### **South Hempstead, NY**

I have worked in health care in NY as a Medical Practitioner and have always been paid over \$10.00+ an hour LESS than my male colleagues with the same or less experience (this is about 20% less) and was reprimanded for asking about this unfair policy.

#### **Beverly, San Diego, CA**

It’s not an issue of male persons not treating moms equally. My experience as a freelance worker is that I feel I should not tell any manager I have a child because they don’t want to hire me as I may have more responsibilities than a childless worker. But the perception has to shift in all companies in the U.S., that children are a part of life and we must put them on a priority list because this makes for a better society. We must not look at moms as a handicap but as contributors to a strong and healthy society for the future.

#### **Catherine Anne, Decatur, GA**

In the company in which I work there are very few women managers. Nearly all of the workers are women and nearly all of the managers are men. There are women



# BLACK WOMEN EARN ONLY 62 CENTS FOR EVERY DOLLAR THEIR WHITE, MALE COUNTERPARTS EARN FOR WOMEN WORKING FULL-TIME, YEAR-ROUND

U.S. Census Income, Poverty and Health Insurance in the United States: 2009 <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/ncpov/hlth/2009/index.html> and National Women's Law Center: State Wage Gap Data Show Little or No Improvement from 2008 Posted on September 28, <http://www.nwlc.org/womenofcolorwagegap>

supervisors, but they answer to men. And nearly all of the managers are not only men, they are white men. Over half of the work force is black women. I cannot remember seeing any black women even as supervisors.

I had a friend, a black woman, who was named as a lead worker, but they demoted her after a few months. I had been in IT, where about half of the workers were men, but in the six years there the only woman they promoted, and just to lead worker, was my friend mentioned above. During that time over fifty men were promoted, some with only a few days experience.

So, I transferred to an administrative job and now I am in a nearly all female ghetto. There are a few men, but most of them are on salary. I am trying to do anything different, so I volunteered for a special project.

## **Koi**

I have over five years experience in a specialized field of law. I've been at my firm for three

years. I just learned my younger (four years) male co-worker was just hired and makes \$5K more than me.

He also has one year of experience. I am told every year they don't pay that much, yet they gave it to him.

## **Jane**

I worked for a nonprofit in California. I was fired after I had a child. There wasn't one other parent in the organization (about 25 employees). I discussed this with the Board President and they settled out of court for a small sum (about three months of pay).

They hired a man to replace me and he was given a salary 30% more than my outgoing salary, with similar education experience but less job related professional experience. I know this because the information is made public on guidestar.

## **Caroline, Bellevue, WA**

I was told SO many times that firms already had their (token) "lady lawyer" and weren't interested in hiring another. Later I was told that firms couldn't afford to pay me the same amount they pay the men... after all, the men had families to support! I was literally told exactly this in so many words.

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"I was told firms couldn't afford to pay me the same amount they pay the men... after all, the men had families to support!"

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*Caroline, Bellevue, WA*

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On another occasion, a female colleague came to me. She had accidentally been given the pay stub for a male colleague in her interoffice mailbox. She opened it without noticing that it was not hers. While he held the same job – with a lighter portfolio of work – he was paid more than twice as much as she was. We were terribly demoralized.

At my most recent employer's, I had a fairly good grasp of pay scales owing to my salary negotiations during the recruitment process. During a conversation one day, a senior female colleague alluded to her compensation. I was horrified to learn that it was a fraction (less than half) what her male colleagues were being paid.

## **Shelley, OR**

As a 25-year-old single woman with one year in my first full-time job, I asked my (older, male) boss to coffee to talk about taking on more responsibilities (and making more money). He told me I had several options. I don't remember the others, but I do remember the last one: "You can always stay home and make babies."

What he knew, and I didn't, was that he would soon retire for medical reasons. He probably felt that Human Resources wouldn't go after a dying man.

## **Mary Helen Jamaica Plain, MA**

Moms, women, we've gotta be able to ASK. Let's make sure this bill passes – they've taken this up in the Supreme Court, from what I understand – so that you and I can have legal protection to bring it up to our employers when we're concerned about pay inequity.

Years ago I was hired as a subcontractor for a consultant on contract with a huge manufacturer. When I learned I was making \$5/

hour less than my (male) co-worker, I asked our supervisor/contractor, "Why?" I think the boss, who was a sole proprietor, wisely wanted to avoid a discrimination lawsuit, and so he simply matched my wage to my co-worker's, more or less on the spot. It was a short-term contract, but all the same, I've always been glad I asked.

I know asking can feel, and be, risky, so I hope this bill will give solid protections to women who are experiencing wage discrimination, giving us courage and legal backing to question our employers.

### **Anonymous**

In high school, my best friend was hired at a grocery store and she started at \$6.50 an hour, only to find out six months later that all of the men who worked at the store started at \$8.00 an hour.

### **Ingrid, Los Angeles, CA**

At my current company, all the women are paid less by at least 5% or more due to just being a woman. I was hiring a new analyst to work for me, I would be his supervisor and when I found out how much they were offering him, over \$100K plus bonus, I was appalled.

I complained to my superiors who raised my salary by 10% in order to be above him... but seriously, just making 10% more than a new analyst while I'm a Vice President! I complained to HR but all they said was that I could always look for another job elsewhere.

### **Estella, Winchester, CA**

Twenty-seven years ago I worked in the mall at a coin store and trained a young man (19 years old) to become my manager. When I asked my boss/owner why he didn't consider me for the job, his reply was, "because you're a

# **WOMEN ARE NOW THE PRIMARY BREADWINNER OR CO-BREADWINNER IN 4 OUT OF 10 HOUSEHOLDS**



Maria Shriver and the Center for American Progress, "The Shriver Report: A Woman's Nation Changes Everything" 2009

woman." He said because it was dangerous for a woman to run a business with so much money although I carried thousands of dollars across the mall to the bank everyday.

That's why I started my own business: so I can get paid what I'm worth. Unfortunately not every woman is self-employed. More and more women are the sole providers for their families so laws need to change. Women need health care, childcare, etc. in order to support their families and not live in poverty.

### **Ann Marie, Springfield, MA**

My male colleague makes approximately \$500 a year more than I do and we were hired at the same time, have the same work and education qualifications and we advanced into equal positions at the same time. I have asked why this hasn't been rectified and never been given an answer.

### **Chris, Madison, WI**

I have experienced pay discrimination my whole life. I have been required to do twice and sometimes three times the work at half the pay in most of those work places. My SS retirement payments reflect that discrimination.

A woman, unless she is ready to sell her soul, give up her family life, or prostitute herself, will not advance herself.

### **Judith, Janesville, WI**

I have been told – to my face – no less than 3 times during my adult life that when a particular job I had applied for or wanted to advance to had come down to two candidates (me and a man). The man "had" to be selected because, after all, he has a family to support.

The first time I was a single young woman applying for the job of a fashion illustrator.

The second time I was married, had been on staff at a newspaper for 2 years submitting political cartoons for publication now and then was promised if I "built up an audience," I might get \$25 per cartoon. I was shocked when a new political cartoonist position was created and filled by a male applicant never before associated with the newspaper. My editor told me that even though I had more creative ideas and my illustration skills were superior...yup, he had a new wife to support.

The third time, I was the corporate art director for an international manufacturer and still married but with 2 children and a 3rd on the way. A new male hire, 15-years my junior with NO relevant experience whom I had just two weeks to train for his new position was suddenly and without explanation made the new art department head when previously I had reported to the company (misogynist) president.



He achieved this status just before I left on maternity leave and even though I had to return to work during my leave to resolve a mess he had created, I was not paid for that 10-hour day of work upon my returning after my six-week, unpaid leave. I simply went back, tried to work through the now-male dominated and clearly hostile work environment, and then subsequently quit and filed a gender discrimination suit. Enough was enough!

**Jenneh, Louisville, KY**

I have been asked blatant illegal questions in interviews by major corporations. For example, as a single mother, if I worked an opposite shift from my daughter and I never got to see her, would I allow that to affect my job performance and how would I handle the situation? Or, as a single mother do I have childcare arranged prior to seeking employment?

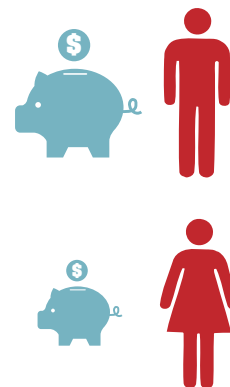
I hope with pursuing my degree in communications and politics that I can work to change laws that prevent this from happening or at least encourage workers to speak up. It really creates a conundrum for the potential employee, regardless of their skills they know they will be turned down.

As it came about, one employer noticed I was a single mom based on my tax forms I had filled out. So, you can't hide it. I've also been employed by employers that will turn down potential employees based on their number of exemptions —one lady had five kids and was a single mom, which gave her eight exemptions, I think. It's pathetic what employers can and will get away with.

**Laura, CA**

I have always made less than male engineers with similar experience and education. This is wrong and it should be stopped.

# THE PAY GAP COULD CREATE A RETIREMENT SAVINGS SHORTFALL FOR WOMEN OF HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS



Reported by the Wall Street Journal. <http://blogs.wsj.com/juggle/2010/10/01/for-women-pay-gap-means-retirement-shortfall/>

"Women are responsible for 46% of the saving and spending of money. It wouldn't hurt to give a little."

*Gwenn, Woodlyn, PA*

**Gwenn, Woodlyn, PA**

I am an advocate advisor. I hear this all the time! Too often, women work just as hard as men. Women are responsible for 49.1% of the jobs in this country. They pay the same in tax. Most are also mothers, which is a 'full time job,' but no one recognizes that but their family.

Women are responsible for 46% of the saving and spending of money. It wouldn't hurt to GIVE a little.

**Coleen, Ridgewood, NJ**

After I graduated from college, I had applied for a job as a lab technician. I was told that the position was filled by someone who had more relevant experience than me.

A few months later, I ended up working in the same lab, on a different grant. I had been working at FAO Schwarz, while a man the same age as me, had been working at the Gap, folding t-shirts. I had earned my BA in Psychology from the Claremont Colleges in California.

He had worked for a few months on a salmon fishing boat. I had worked on a research paper on Autism that was published while I was in college. Later, this man received a raise. When I asked for one, I was told that there wasn't any money.

**Lynda, Des Moines, WA**

I worked for a large company and moved my way up in Company to Distribution Supervisor. The gentleman that I replaced was paid more and because I was a female they paid me less. I read in a personal file those words. This was back in the 80s. I was so upset that I finally quit. I had worked for them for 9 years.

**Edward, Eugene, OR**

In 1953 my mother got to cope with being a single mother with three small sons as she divorced our father. She went from being



an officer's wife with a maid to abruptly becoming a single mother facing formal pay discrimination when she found one of the rare jobs open to her in that benighted era.

She took a job as a draftsman for 30% less than her male colleagues because "they have families to support." She got me into college before that injustice was corrected.

### **Christy, Ford, WA**

I have been paid less than male peers since entering the work force in 1972. I have also been passed over for job opportunities because of having children. They have actually asked me if I have children in my interviews. I know for a fact that asking that is illegal, but if you refuse to answer, you really won't get the job.

Also, as far as other women I know, they all make less than men, and always have. Not one of us can figure out why, but we have suffered long enough and this needs to change right now!

### **Cheryl**

I am paid less than my male counterparts and my college has a rich and long history of this practice.

### **Anonymous**

I just had my employee performance review with my Manager; and although it was "good" overall; I was docked a number of points because I was out of the office for a few months (combo of complications with pregnancy and maternity leave). I am on the low end of the curve because of my "workload" and accomplishments for 2010.

I am the breadwinner in our family (more accurately, the sole breadwinner). A part of me understands the rationale for the less

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"He told his friend that he liked hiring women because women work harder and he can pay them less."

Donna

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than good review, but the other part does not want to agree because I put in a very strong effort when I am at the office, and I meet all my objectives and goals. In a way I feel punished for having a baby.

### **Donna**

Many years ago when I was working a low wage job, my boss was talking to his buddy in the warehouse where I was working. He told his friend that he liked hir-

ing women because women work harder and he can pay them less. That was in the mid-80s but not much has changed since then.

### **Patricia, Lexington, MA**

I gave birth in July 2008 during the middle of the worst of the recession. My company had already laid off many people in the past seven months. I was very busy despite the recession because I am always in demand at my company.

I went on maternity leave and was due to return six months later. I checked in regularly. They had two more rounds of layoffs while I was on leave. When I was due to return we set up my return date several weeks in advance. I checked in many times prior to my return date and they kept telling me that they were so happy I was returning. The evening before I was to return to the office I received a call at 4 pm from the company telling me that they could not take me back.

I had already packed my lunch and bought new business clothes that fit my new post-pregnancy body. AND I committed to full-time daycare. In my community, fulltime daycare costs \$2,000/month and requires at least 30 days notice to cancel your contract. So I was on the hook. They really left me in a financial storm. Additionally, there were a few other women in my office that had given birth and gone on maternity leave for the federally allowed 3 months. A couple of those women were also laid off right after their 3 month leave was finished and they were due to return to the office.

Although I can understand the problems that come with a bad economy I do not feel that a company can lay off women returning from maternity leave just because they happen to be out of the office for a specific life event that most



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U.S. Census Income, Poverty and Health Insurance in the United States: 2009 <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/ncpovhlth/2009/index.html> and National Women's Law Center: State Wage Gap Data Show Little or No Improvement from 2008 Posted on September 28, 2010. <http://www.nwlc.org/lour-blog/state-wage-gap-data-show-little-or-no-improvement-2008>



men and women desire to have – children.

I was one of the best at that company. I was sought after continuously. They have since asked me to return (two years later) but that does not excuse the injustice of the lay off.

Women on maternity leave should not be targeted for layoff just because their three months is up. The company should have a plan in place well in advance of the women's return so that she has work to come back to. If the company can't find work and they must lay off then there should be protocols put in place to assure the employee that they will be given sufficient notice so that they do not get stuck in a financial storm as I was.

#### **Mary, Ithaca, NY**

When my friend said she intended to apply for a promotion to a position for which she was more than qualified, her supervisor advised her not to. There was a less-qualified man with five children applying. My friend did not apply; he got the job.

#### **Robin, Southbury, CT**

Many moons ago, I worked in an advertising firm as a copywriter. I had been doing this job for four years when a new client came on board. The agency needed a new copywriter and they hired a man with no experience whatsoever and paid him \$20,000 more than me because, and I quote, "But he's a man. He has a wife and children to take care of." I was so stunned I just walked away.

#### **Anonymous, OR**

At one time I was hired into the same position as a male co-worker, who was paid a few thousand dollars a year more than I was to complete the same duties.

I believe that the justification for doing so was based on experience, but I think that men's experience can often be amplified by those in management who hire and are gender biased to begin with.

#### **Terri, Jackson, WY**

As the only woman working over a five-year period building homes in Jackson Wyoming 1997-2002, I was at a minimum of \$8/hour less working next to people with less seniority.

#### **Betty, Sarasota, FL**

I raised four boys without their father's help and needed to work two or three jobs to make ends come close to meeting.

The difference in pay scale for men and women made this necessary – men were the heads of the family and so was I but this was never part of the decision for my pay scale. I was often the better and harder working of the two

also. The male heads of business make these decisions and they should stop and think of putting their mothers, sisters and daughters in this belittling position. If not for their Mother, they would not even be here.

Against a lot of odds all of my sons are wonderful men today – they have wonderful families and I am extremely proud of the good people they are.

#### **Martha, Olympia, WA**

In past years I have had this happen to me. It was very discouraging to know I worked as hard as my male co-workers but wasn't paid what they were. I also know of (female) friends that this has happened to.

We have been told that male workers don't take much time off due to female health problems or due to sick children, which I believe is not legal to do. It is time women are paid for the work they do and not due to their gender.

#### **Cheryl, Santa Rosa, CA**

I was the CFO for a large, local non-profit for seven years in the early 1990s. During that entire time, all salaries for female employees were less than male employees with less experience and responsibility.

Performance reviews for women were held in the CEO's office, performance reviews for men were conducted as an agency funded lunch at a local restaurant – usually a sports bar.

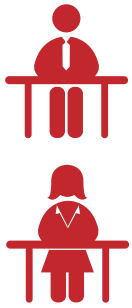
#### **Stephanie, Apex, NC**

As an employee of the State of North Carolina, my male boss told me during my annual review – the year I had my son – that my work was outstanding, but that I did not get a raise because I only worked nine months out of that year, since I took a three month maternity leave.



## **WOMEN MANAGERS IN FINANCE [FROM BANK TELLERS TO EXECUTIVES] EARNED LESS THAN 64 CENTS FOR EVERY DOLLAR OF INCOME MEN EARNED**

Figures are from 2000, based on median salaries, according to Government Accountability Office statistics analyzed by Bloomberg. In 2007, the last year for which data are available, the figure was 58.8 cents. <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2010-10-06/wall-street-says-women-worth-less-as-pay-disparity-widens-in-finance-ranks.html>



# MOTHERS IN MANAGEMENT EARNED 79 CENTS FOR EVERY DOLLAR EARNED BY FATHERS WHO ARE MANAGERS

Government Accountability Office (GAO) <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-10-892R>

## **Bobbie, Lincoln, CA**

I was told by a boss that I didn't need to make as much as a male counterpart because my husband had a good job. I was also denied promotions for many years based on the same reason. The job was with an association headed by retired senior military officers.

## **Shelba, Silver Spring, MD**

I, along with 7 other finalists, participated in a conference where I presented my research and ultimately was interviewed in a competition for a 2-year post-doctoral fellowship.

I drove through a big snowstorm to get there (and back) because it was just two weeks from the due date of the birth of my beautiful daughter. I even stopped at the doctor's office before leaving to make sure that I was not close to labor. I presented a 30-minute paper (it was difficult to breathe) and it was very well received. I then carried all of my belongings on a 45-minute walking tour of the library (it was very painful), and got through 12-hour days of social functions, meet-and-greets, lunches, evening gatherings, tours and everything one can imagine over the few days.

When I finally got to the interview, the department chair asked me her first and most important question: "How will you do research with a baby?"

Apparently, that was the ques-

tion that everyone had throughout the activities. I saw men with wedding rings, but I am sure that they were not asked this question. There was a very uncomfortable silence at the breakfast table the first morning of my arrival. It was certainly no surprise that I did not receive the fellowship.

I do not think I will ever forget that experience. That and the three years of sexual harassment that I endured at my doctoral university will forever taint my experiences in academia and the workplace. Can we get to equal treatment AND equal pay in this century? I would love it if my daughter did not have to suffer the same fate. I will raise her to be even stronger than I am. It hurts me to think what she will have to suffer in her life, merely because of her gender.

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"I was told by a boss that I didn't need to make as much as a male counterpart because my husband had a good job."

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*Bobbie, Lincoln, CA*

## **Lori**

My daughter has been working at the same "fast casual" restaurant for three years. It is a good "college job" because it has flexible hours. She recently discovered that two men she actually trained, who have worked there less time than she has, are being paid over \$1.00/hour more than she is.

When she asked the manager why, the reply was, "Well, they have more responsibility than you do." How responsible is it to knock up some seventeen-year-old girl? Neither of them even wanted the baby, and now their children are being supported by a \$9.50/hr job. I think that she should be paid as much as, if not more than these guys. She has worked there longer, she is an exemplary employee, and both guys even were fired, then rehired at more money than my daughter is paid.

## **Mercedes, Racine, WI**

My daughter works for small software firm. For several years now, my daughter has become the number one person to go to for issues, problems and solutions – for the product, for clients, for customers, for management, for training of staff (old and new) plus handling projects requested and required of her.

While my daughter is one of the main point people in the firm, she has not received a raise or promotion for years – nothing beyond the 0-1% all staff have received.

AND of course the ever constant problem of not being heard happens all the time. If a male repeats what she has suggested, WOW! It is heard and considered. She has been promised promotions and raises for over five years AND most recently she finally received a small decent raise and promotion.



**Veronica, West Hartford, CT**

Last October, my male supervisor denied me, along with another working mother, a raise. We worked very hard, however he did not fail to micro-manage us, and actually bullied us repeatedly, refusing to approve vacation despite our many vacation days available. As a result of the harassment – putting people on probation and giving us warning when some one called out sick – I was forced to resign my position when I started to develop palpitation and my health began to fail.

**Diana, Owosso, MI**

Yes, my boss who used to be my co-worker argued that my colleague was more deserving of a raise because he had children (so do I and I make more than my husband so am primary breadwinner in my family). Of course my jaw dropped.

**Geoffrey, Berkeley, CA**

My wife did her career at a California university. When we first met she was the manager of the largest single unit in the Library. They gave her an acting rank. When her (female) supervisor retired, she was demoted to a lower step and pay by the new (male) manager. She had a long bitter fight with her Union backing her. She finally won the hearing and was given back her old rank with pay. Yet, because of her strong leadership in her Union, she never was promoted to the highest rank and pay, which she deserved!

**Jessica, Renton, WA**

So my story begins with me deciding that I wanted to work outside the home. I thought since I was a people person and extroverted that I would be good at car sales. So I went in to the car dealership nearest to me to interview.

## THE AVERAGE WOMAN LOSES \$700,000 IN PAY DUE TO GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN HER LIFETIME FOR WOMEN OF COLOR, THE NUMBER CAN BE EVEN HIGHER

*National Committee on Pay Equity*

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“During the interview I was told that they ‘had hired women in the past and those women had had emotional problems once a month.’”

*Jessica, Renton, WA*

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During the interview I was told that they “had hired women in the past and those women had had emotional problems once a month.” I was so shocked by that, that I didn’t even know how to respond.

I was also asked if my husband would be okay with me working in a place that mostly employed men. Disgusting. Needless to say, I did not get the job.

**Anonymous**

I was hired to manage a flooring store, only to find out that the male managers were all being paid more than the female managers!

**Whitney, Old Hickory, TN**

When I worked at a national food chain restaurant, it was obvious that the male managers where scheduling male employees the best shifts.

They never blatantly said it was because they were male, but it was obvious that they were being favored. Working the best shifts meant way more money and clintial. It was just another covert way that the patriarchal hegemony persists.

**Colleen, Heath, OH**

In the early 90s, I was a young, single mom and I worked for a local bank as a teller. I was given increasing responsibility because of my job performance. However, I learned that a male colleague, who was the same age and had the same education level and less responsibility, was making significantly more per hour than I was.

Even after receiving a promotion and a 10-cent/hour raise, I decided to seek other employment. I’m so glad to not work for that company anymore (or bank there).

**Anonymous**

At my former Fortune 500 Company, women were paid less than men for the same work. Two men and I were hired at the same time. Even though my education and experience were similar to theirs, I was paid far less than they were.

After 5 years of stellar reviews from my old supervisor, my new supervisor fired me because he “suspected” I was a lesbian and women working outside the home “offended his religious beliefs.”



**Leslie, Forest Lake, MN**

Can't say I've necessarily experienced unfair pay and/or pay discrimination because I have no concrete evidence, and because I've worked for federal and state agencies which must follow strict pay-grade guidelines for jobs based upon position-descriptions, not persons doing the work.

Even in those settings, I noticed early on in my (former) career that any woman in a high-level and/or leadership position was single, or if she was married, then she didn't have children.

Conversely, all men in such positions usually were married, often with children – men without children and/or single seemed as rare as (married) women with children.

Fixing this should be important to men and women, because families today require both parents work, and single and/or childless people shouldn't be discriminated against either.

Just as we strive to become "color-blind" (not there yet either), we should also strive to not factor one's marital and/or family-status. Woe to the woman of color who is a mother with no spouse – hers is the face of all discrimination.

**Marcia, Dunedin, FL**

I didn't suffer from pay discrimination exactly, but when I was in graduate school and my supervising professor learned I was pregnant, he stopped critiquing my work. When I confronted him about it, he said I would be staying home and taking care of kids, so it didn't matter whether or not my skills improved. Actually I got divorced and worked professionally for twenty years.

**Anonymous**

After informing the president and senior vice president of my company of my pregnancy, I was

# UNMARRIED WOMEN WILL RECEIVE ABOUT \$8,000 LESS IN RETIREMENT INCOME THAN THEIR MALE COUNTERPARTS DESPITE WORKING THE SAME NUMBER OF YEARS WITH THE SAME EDUCATION LEVEL

<http://www.pay-equity.org/PDFs/PaycheckFairnessActApr06.pdf>

transferred to a different (worse) position within the company and was going to be paid hourly, losing all the benefits that go along with being a salaried position (including paid sick time). A man would have never had to suffer that situation, the discrimination or the stress associated with it.

**Susan, Wicomico Church, VA**

As a retired teacher, I can report that I was paid on the same scale as a man. This may have been as a result of union efforts since the profession has changed since I started in 1961. At that time, women had to leave the classroom by the end of the fifth month of pregnancy and today a woman can work through nine months. Therefore, I'd like to put in a good word for unions even though they are not perfect.

Many gains have been made in the workplace because of unions and the middle class earner has been able to live comfortably. However, this has been changing in recent years as we've just witnessed in Wisconsin.

**Anne, NJ**

Teachers are now under attack, as are all public workers. It is a known fact that teachers are paid less than their private counterparts in exchange for benefits and a pension that is funded only partly by the states. The profession primarily consists of females. Interestingly, all women's rights are being attacked and stripped by the far right as well as the right of all workers to make a living wage to take care of their families. It is the basic "human right" to live free from fear of harassment. Corporations and their profits have gained "human rights" and the people that serve them have lost it.

**Nora, Portland, OR**

When I was interviewing for a full-time professional position, two separate male bosses asked me "What does your husband do for a living?" during their interview process. I believe this question is neither legal nor ethical during a job



# JUST ONE YEAR AFTER COLLEGE GRADUATION WOMEN EARN ONLY 80 PERCENT OF WHAT THEIR MALE COUNTERPARTS MAKE



[http://www.aauw.org/lact/issue\\_advocacy/actionpages/payequity.cfm](http://www.aauw.org/lact/issue_advocacy/actionpages/payequity.cfm)

interview (no doubt swayed by the fact that I had an infant at home) and is indicative of the state of mind of many high-level male executives.

## **Rebecca, Cleveland, OH**

I think it's telling that typically female-dominated jobs are largely lower paid than male-dominated or more equally distributed jobs. Teachers and nurses, for example, have college degrees. Teachers in many states are required to earn a Master's degree to renew a license. Nurses are required to have continuing education as well. Engineers have similar requirements but make considerably more in the aggregate.

With the explosion of attacks on public employees' unions across the country, the gender gap with teaching and nursing becomes even more important.

## **Susan, Fox Lake, IL**

I started in the insurance industry as a licensed sales producer in the late 1970s. I was one of the few women selling insurance at the time. I had to compete for business against mostly salesMEN. The men in my offices always made at least \$5,000/year more than me and they usually had company cars and ex-

pense accounts whereas I did not. At 59 years old, I am still in the business and find that although there are many more women in the industry, we still make a lot less than the men who are doing exactly the same thing as we do. A lot of the time, we even write more on a monthly basis than they do.

As more young women get into the business, I would like to them collect at least what the men are collecting in salary for doing the same thing!

## **Charlotte, Concord, MA**

I had two children in the past three years, and for both, took unpaid maternity leave from my job. When I was pregnant with my second child, I had to take a month off due to pregnancy-related health problems, which was also unpaid after I used up all 10 sick days.

To the small organization I work for, I have contributed full-time equivalent work, I manage several major projects and have authored numerous major reports. My two bosses have been extremely pleased with my work, and praise my work often.

Last week, one of my two bosses told me that he has been so happy with my work, that he'd like me to get a raise to bring my salary up to

the level of the two other senior policy analysts at the organization (both are men without children, who are able to devote their lives, literally, to the job), but that my other boss said, in their conversation about a potential raise for me, "well, when she actually works full-time for a year, then she'll get the raise."

Needless to say, I was shocked to hear such blatant discrimination against working mothers, especially since I have contributed so much to the organization. This incident actually prompted me to put my foot down and renegotiate my contract. My negotiation was successful, and I credit MomsRising for helping me realize I'm not the only one, and put my foot down to demand fair pay.

## **Armida, Decatur, GA**

Some people may think that discrimination in pay only happens to those in non-professional occupations, but I am proof that this is not true.

When I taught English as an assistant profession with a doctorate degree, the student newspaper published the fact that male faculty members at the same level (there were numbered faculty levels depending on experience, PhD, etc.) as females were making \$5,000 a year more. They had the same course loads, but female faculty were expected to work on 5 committees rather than the 1 committee expected of male faculty members (the excuse was "we need female representation" – but this could have been achieved by hiring more than 4 females in a total English faculty of 40+) and were expected to have more office hours (because "women should be more approachable").

When the newspaper asked the college president about the discrepancy, she – yes, she was a woman – informed them that their

figures were in error and gave them the correct figures, which showed the women were making \*over\* \$5,000 less than men at the same level! When she was asked to correct the discrepancy, she replied that faculty would never be allowed to dictate policy to administrators and that she would keep the unequal pay levels, despite the fact that she had just successfully requested from the Board a second chauffeured limousine because she couldn't get by with just one.

When two female faculty members went to court to ask that salaries be made equal, she increased student tuition drastically to fight them in court until they could not afford to pursue the suit any longer.

This was only one part, but a representative part, of a pattern of discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment, of female faculty.

### ***K, Chicago, IL***

I was hired by a prominent local architect to manage the administration of his startup nonprofit school. I had years of experience as an office manager plus some familiarity with architecture. When I left to go to graduate school, a much younger, much less experienced man was hired for thousands of dollars more a year.

### ***Cathy, Kansas City, MO***

My company decided to move the marketing department to Chicago. All the male employees were invited to move. When one of my female co-workers inquired as to why she had not been invited as well, she was told "clerical work" would be filled by workers from Chicago. My colleague has an MBA and manages all company websites. It appears my colleague didn't have the right hardware to make the invitation list.

# TEN YEARS AFTER COLLEGE GRADUATION WOMEN EARN ONLY 69 PERCENT OF WHAT THEIR MALE COUNTERPARTS MAKE



[http://www.aauw.org/act/issue\\_advocacy/actionpages/payequity.cfm](http://www.aauw.org/act/issue_advocacy/actionpages/payequity.cfm)

### ***Andrea, Columbus, OH***

Up until about 6 years ago, I worked for an international engineering firm which habitually gave higher percentage pay raises each year to men than to women. Was this based on performance ratings? NO!

When called to the mat on this, management conceded that it was based on the fact that the "powers that be" (MEN) saw men as the primary breadwinners of the household and, therefore, they should get bigger raises. Never mind the fact that there were single women, divorced women trying to support children, or women like myself, who are the primary breadwinners for their family, working in the same capacity as the men.

### ***Barbara, St. Louis, MO***

A male colleague with the same qualifications as you is earning more for the same work?

The males, qualified or not, were promoted to higher positions while females were held back at lower management positions. 2005 was the first female Center Director. I wrote COPs that weren't used until I left the company.

When I was replaced during

medical leave I was told that once I came back I would be given a comparable position but in reality I was given a lesser position as line staff and pay my was cut by 12 percent. Workers of the opposite sex were able to keep their pay and were moved rapidly. After two years of applying for other positions, I was declined the move which required me to leave the company because I went from Mon-Fri 8-5pm to 2-10 Mon-Fri and 10-6pm on weekends. I was made to work all holidays and weekends. The person I trained to work under me was promoted to Center Director.

### ***Dawn, IL***

Sadly, pay discrimination goes on. At my last job (a government-run railroad) I was paid less than my male coworkers and when I first inquired, they stated this was because they had more experience.

Since they were older I figured this was correct until I found out that a guy hired the same time as me (although in a different department) was paid more even though he had less education and experience (recent college grad).

Then my department hired a few guys to replace those retiring and THEY were making more. I asked





why and was told they had more experience, which was a lie. When I asked why the guy who started the same time as me was paid more I was told "you wouldn't like his job." Many women at this employer came forward and told me how they were paid less than men and they too were given excuses.

Long story short my former employer let me go and I know it's because of me questioning why I was paid much less. HR made my life hell while working and they made up lies about me to cover their excuses.

### **Tessa**

I once worked for a major corporation that employs over 25,000 employees. I started the job with a master's degree and 23 years of experience in the field.

I later learned that a male colleague in a neighboring state, doing the same job, began as a new graduate with 0 years of experience and was making \$20,000/year more than I. I was even asked to "mentor" him in his new position. It wasn't until he left the position because he found a job that paid more that I learned of the discrepancy. This is totally unacceptable.

### **Julie, Los Angeles, CA**

I work in the television entertainment business. From my previous experiences I have learned to use only a first initial on all my pieces in my presentation. I used to have my name on all my pieces but I was not getting a lot of calls back. Then I changed the letterhead to have only the first initial. Now I usually get called in for an interview. Once I am face to face with my perspective client of course I cannot hide the fact that I am a woman but the door is open and I use my shining personality to push it wide open.

I think that I have to be head and shoulders better than the com-

# 19 PERCENT OF EMPLOYEES SAY DISCUSSING WAGES IS FORMALLY PROHIBITED



Survey of 2,700 adults. <http://www.iwpr.org/press-room/press-releases/pay-secrecy-and-paycheck-fairness-new-data-shows-pay-transparency-needed>

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"I worked for IBM for many years and when I was hired I was told that to disclose your salary information was grounds for dismissal."

*Adrienne, Boca Raton, FL*

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larly promised me help. Then nine months later, they brought in a 26-year old guy without a GED and gave him a full-time job in the stock room with full benefits. They cut my hours with no warning to part-time.

All along they told me I had been doing a phenomenal job and that as soon as they had the money I would have help. They also claim they promote from within. This male had NEVER worked in a stockroom. The kicker was they wanted me to train him! Moreover, they claim to be a company that supports women!

### **Adrienne, Boca Raton, FL**

I worked for a major computer company for many years and when I was hired I was told that to disclose your salary information was grounds for dismissal. Since that time, I realized my male counterparts made more than I but had no written proof. No confirmed way I could challenge their system.

A fellow employee, female, who did not receive timely salary increases was told that her husband picked her up daily in a late model car did not need an increase because her husband was well employed.

When the wives of males in the dept had a new baby, there was an opportunity for them to receive a

petition and cheaper too to close the deal. We need to change how people think about women like me in the workplace.

### **Helen, Beverly, MA**

Last year, I was reduced to taking a stock associate position at a woman-owned clothing company. I was told, however, that given my background, I could easily move up to management, once I knew the stock room.

They hired me part-time, but had me working 40-50+ hours a week with no help. I was alone in a massive stockroom, lifting heavy boxes, moving hundreds of pounds of clothing every day. They regu-

bonus or an award. I thought it was a joke but after a while, I began to see the trend.

### **Tari, Onalaska, WA**

I started college at age 32... it took almost seven years to get my masters degree since I had a family and worked 2 jobs. I made the Dean's List for the first year.

I had college professors who refused to let me answer question, one who wouldn't look at me though I sat in the front row, and one whose class I walked out of after he told the entire class that he couldn't find a spark of intelligence in all of us combined.

Nearing the completion of my studies in the masters program, (1968) one professor gave a major paper I wrote, a D. I could see that the paper of several pages hadn't been handled, read, or marked in any way. When I confronted the professor he said, "I had to give someone a D so the class didn't look too easy. All of the other graduate students are males and they need the grades to get jobs." That's when I decided not to go for my PHD.

### **Patsy, Rochester, NY**

I was working at my first real (career) job and a team of three (two men and me) comprised the first bargaining team.

During the second or third meeting, the Superintendent asked me why would I need more money as I had a husband. And on top of that, I drove a fancy sports car. I rose up but didn't scream at him; however one of the men did point out that both men were married and their wives worked outside the home. And I chimed in that I was the one who made payments on my car.

That was in 1971. We concluded negotiations satisfactorily so that all members regardless of gender did get raises and benefits. We did not discriminate. However my first experience with discrimination was in 1969 when I bought my first new car. Despite the fact that I was working and my income clearly indicated that I had more than sufficient funds, the dealer coerced me into having my husband co-sign as the dealer said he "knew" I would become pregnant which I denied.

### **Ellen**

I interviewed at a very prominent nationwide family restaurant a number of years ago. I'd worked for them previously and had tons of experience. The interviewing manager said everything looked great and was going to have her store manager bring out the paperwork to complete the hiring process.

I let her know at that point

that I would really appreciate not working in a smoking section for the time being because I was two months pregnant. She left to talk to her supervisor and when she came back she said she was sorry but because I was pregnant they'd decided not to have me on board.

However, I was hired on at a home furnishings retailer and stayed for five years working my way up the ladder and they were to great to me.

### **Debbie, Houston, TX**

I went to college at night for many years and attained a BBA, graduating magna cum laude and making "outstanding business graduate" for the year in which I graduated.

My current job title? Administrative Assistant. Although I have seen MANY men at this company get promoted after getting a degree, I can count on the end of one hand the number of women who have been so fortunate. Much of this has to do with the corporate culture.

Many years ago, as a young woman, one of my first bosses told me that "the way to the boardroom is through the bedroom," especially if you're an attractive woman. I was horrified at the time, but am more horrified that nothing has changed in the nearly 37 years I have been with this company.

### **Theresa, Ventura, CA**

In 2001 I was hired as a sales assistant for an IPO expanding software company. I was fortunate enough to have a regional director who believed in equality and fairness. I would have otherwise never have known that the young man who was hired to assist me signed a contract for \$10k a year more than I was contracted. This was arranged



## **HIGH SCHOOL DEGREE YIELDS A MEDIAN INCOME OF**



**\$28,827**  
YEARLY FOR MEN



**\$19,175**  
YEARLY FOR WOMEN

<http://www.pay-equity.org/PDFs/PaycheckFairnessActApr06.pdf>

by my immediate supervisor who had hired me and this fresh from college, 21-year-old young man.

When the regional director discovered the discrepancy in our pay he offered me a pay raise that made our contracts equivalent. I was fortunate to have the support of an atypical male superior who defies norms and seeks justice. In the end, I was at the mercy of the decisions of men. When the director left, there was no one to advocate for me and there was no reason for anyone to follow through with what is fair or right when I would attempt to advocate for myself.

Pay discrimination is real, prevalent, and it is unjust! Do not count on the decency of men to do what is right. It must be mandated by law.

### **Laura**

I worked at an hourly wage position as a sales clerk in an antique store. I made 20 cents per hour above minimum wage. I trained one of our new staff, the only male on staff, and found out that he was hired at 75 cents more an hour than I was earning. When I questioned the manager about it, I was told flat out that it was because he was a guy. I said I would quit if I didn't get the same pay as him, so they gave me a raise and made our pay equal.

I shouldn't have had to threaten

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"When the position came open, I asked the boss, 'What does this job require that I do not have?' I was amazed in 1997 California that he said, 'You're not a man.'"

*Shirley, Bonny Doon, CA*

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to quit in order to be treated the same way as a male employee. Even with my pay equal to his at that time, I always felt "behind," because we were earning the same pay though I had experience with the company and he did not.

### **Shirley, Bonny Doon, CA**

I graduated with a degree in physics. When I looked for work I was told "Women don't do this kind of work. Do you type?" This was 1962. I ended up getting a job for the state training the people who got the job instead of me.

I was the first woman appraiser hired by the County. I was the most qualified to be in charge of Quality Assurance as I have statistics and system knowledge.

When the position came open, I asked the boss, "What does this job require that I do not have." I was amazed in 1997 California that he said, "You're not a man." I did NOT get the job.

### **Erin**

I have spent the past 16 years working in an industry that hires 99.9% women with 99.9% of CEOs nationwide being male. We have no union. Most of us telecommute, but many work in clinics and hospitals. We are medical transcriptionists.

I am certified through a national certification program and have a college degree, yet I earn the same I did 16 years ago for work that has become increasingly more complex with HIPAA laws making us legally responsible for accuracy of medical documents; voice recognition editing, electronic health systems, and highly specialized medical terminology.

I have met two male medical transcriptionists during my career, one of whom was doing the job while in a medical residency program on his way to becoming a doctor. He told me the job was much more difficult than he realized and in fact was so challenging, he quit after a few months.

I cannot help but be convinced that if more of the work force in medical transcription was male, men simply would not stand for the pay and demands of the job, and changes would happen.

### **Susan**

Several years ago I applied for a position at a Massachusetts University as director of a program, for which I was extremely qualified. It

# ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE YIELDS A MEDIAN INCOME OF



**\$40,453**  
YEARLY FOR MEN



**\$26,049**  
YEARLY FOR WOMEN

<http://www.pay-equity.org/PDFs/PaycheckFairnessActApr06.pdf>



was at my final interview (I basically had all but a contract in hand) meeting with a man who would be my supervisor. I made a comment about photos on his desk of two Chinese children, which started a string of questions regarding my 4-year old adopted Chinese daughter. He asked me about travel time to work among other questions.

Two days later I received a letter informing me that I had not gotten the position; later I learned that the search was "reopened." When I asked my attorney about this incident, he told me that this kind of discrimination was "very hard to prove" and that I should drop it. So, once again I felt put off by another male with authority; that makes two! Being a mom is not easy, for sure. But not being able to work at one's professional career or receive a fair salary, promotion, or respect from co-workers or supervisors is despicable in a democratic society.

#### **Amy, St. Louis, MO**

When I was in high school, we were advised to visit businesses and interview the people there to find out about careers that we might like to pursue. I wanted to be an artist, so I visited a gallery. The director, a man, told me, "We don't represent female artists. Once they have babies, they quit making art."

#### **Adriana, Olympia, WA**

In 1993 when I was in college I was working at a restaurant in Bellingham, WA. This job enabled me to pay my way through school (with no student loans). A young man several years younger than me with less experience was making a larger wage and I found out about it.

I politely confronted the owner as to why this fellow was making more money than me. The owner was caught off guard and could give me no reason whatsoever as to

# BACHELOR'S DEGREE YIELDS A MEDIAN INCOME OF



**\$50,527**

YEARLY FOR MEN



**\$32,394**

YEARLY FOR WOMEN

<http://www.pay-equity.org/PDFs/PaycheckFairnessActApr06.pdf>

why I was making less. The thing that really stuck in my craw was that the young man making more than me was from a very privileged family and did not have to pay for his own schooling. He told me he only worked there so he could get money to gamble on his racehorse (yes, he owned his own racehorse).

It really upset me that I was busting my buns to scrape together enough money to live on rice and beans and put myself through school. Of course, I had no other choice and just worked very hard (mostly seven days a week) for five years to get a bachelor's degree.

#### **Susan, Atlanta, GA**

Over and over again throughout my entire career, I did my job in an outstanding way. I never had a reprimand for anything, and at one point I was 2% of a department and doing 50% of the production. That year I received the highest raise I ever received – 7% of my annual pay, but the new manager of the department was a man, who had no experience at all in that field.

In addition, I repeatedly trained men to do the job I was doing, only to find out that they were paid at least \$10,000 more annually than I received. These are just a few examples of the types of treatment women received where I worked.

#### **Mary, Evanston, IL**

I took a part-time job to fill in the pay gap as I was approaching my maternity leave. As a therapist, I had to slowly scale back on new clients as I approached the due date so as to "terminate," and it drastically reduced my pay.

I was paid \$10 an hour with my master's degree to do admin work for a small company. I found out I had replaced a male college student who had been doing admin work for \$12 an hour!

#### **Melanie, Houston, TX**

What ultimately got me to go back to school to finish my degree was working for a construction company contractor as an Executive Assistant on a government project in El Paso, TX on Ft. Bliss.

I was doing all of the work of the male employees, writing their reports, choosing and giving safety meetings, basically interviewing and hiring laborers but I was barely making above minimum wage. I asked for a raise and my boss offered to let me clean the buildings to make more money instead.

I was repeatedly harassed and verbally abused by several of my bosses, even at one point physically threatened by one. Construction is a tough place for a woman to



work, one of the few places misogynists feel absolutely free to practice their creed.

**Jennifer, San Francisco, CA**

I had a female manager give me a review where I was told I was doing very well. Once I knew my salary increase, I asked why another employee hired just after I'd been hired had, in the same review cycle, been granted a salary higher than mine. He had exactly the same job title, fewer qualifications, and a more critical review (we were friends, and he was concerned about sexism in the office).

She told me that my male co-worker would need to support a family, and therefore needed to be paid more. When I pointed out that both of us were single and not dating anyone seriously, she still insisted that as a man, he needed to be paid more throughout his career; no one would ever rely upon me to support a family, since I'm a woman. I'm still shocked this was her formal explanation.

This was in the mid-90s. I should have sued them, but was too young and shocked to know better. I quit immediately.

**Heidi, Mundelein, IL**

For many years I worked as part of a human resources department. A colleague of mine worked directly with hourly staff and their leads, supervisors and managers, training the employees and managers on safety, OSHA regulations, company policies and employment law. She was more educated, qualified and experienced than the male managers she supported, but she was paid \$10,000 to \$20,000 less than the male managers, who also drove company vehicles.

She was not assigned a company vehicle even though she worked between two facilities

**MOTHERS ARE OFFERED  
\$11,000 LOWER  
STARTING SALARIES  
THAN NON-MOTHERS  
DESPITE EQUAL RESUMES & EXPERIENCE**

**ONE THE OTHER HAND...**

**FATHERS WERE OFFERED  
\$6,000 HIGHER  
STARTING SALARIES  
THAN NON-FATHERS  
DESPITE EQUAL RESUMES & EXPERIENCE**

[http://www.news.cornell.edu/stories/Feb07/SS.Focus.Cornell.html?ak\\_proof=1](http://www.news.cornell.edu/stories/Feb07/SS.Focus.Cornell.html?ak_proof=1)

and was required to provide on-site training to crews at customer sites and go to accident sites for investigations and case management, as well as accompany injured employees to the emergency room.

The reason she was given for the pay disparity? She wasn't a manager with direct reports. Slick way to get out of paying her for her experience, efforts, contributions and valuable knowledge of employment law. She actually had more responsibility for employees than the managers because she hired them, fired them, trained them and disciplined them.

The managers just signed their time sheets and (sometimes) checked on their work, leaving most of the day-to-day supervision to the lead men. Wow!

**Cynthia, MA**

I think this story is worthy to share here. It's a blanket of discrimination. I was working as an

Assistant Account Executive at an advertising firm in New York. At an employee birthday celebration it became obvious how many women were working for the Executive Director. I asked him why he had so many women working for him. Without missing a beat he replied, "I can pay them less." I was 23 and shocked. I hadn't learned that I was less valuable than a man yet.

**Roseanne, Sunrise, FL**

Years ago, I was working in the prosecutor's office when a well-known defense attorney suggested that I come and work for him. During salary negotiations, the topic of health insurance came up and he bristled when I said that I had to have health insurance. He just decided that my husband should be taking care of that! Even if that were true, he still needed to pay me what my benefits were worth. I was so angry that he wasted my time with what I considered to be an insulting offer.

Years later, after law school, I trained a newer male lawyer in my office in the felony division and shortly thereafter, I was promoted to a supervisory position. The male lawyer told me he was looking for a new job because he could not afford to work for X amount per year anymore.

I was shocked to learn that he was making the same salary that I was making, even after I had received a raise for the promotion. I was making \$5,000 more by the end of the day!

**Anonymous**

Yes, I have direct knowledge that a male co-worker, doing the same or less work than I do, is getting paid \$20k more than myself. Very frustrating and infuriating!

Back when I joined the work

force, women were getting \$0.70 on the dollar for every \$1 a man made. Now we are making a whopping \$0.75 on the \$1 that a man makes? Pitiful! Disrespectful! Absurd!

Women are =>50% of the current workforce. Women are able to multi-task better than men. Women can be just as cutthroat as men. Women are smart, able-bodied members of the workforce that deserve to be paid as such!

WHEN are women going to get paid \$1 for every \$1 that a man makes?!?!? I thought we passed the equal rights amendment back in the 60's. Is it like racism that will have to die out with the 'old boys'? If so, that is completely atrocious.

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"He said they had considered promoting another woman but after he overheard she was pregnant, they decided they didn't want that kind of hassle."

*Jeanne Marie,  
Round Lake, IL*

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### **Danicia, Tennessee Ridge, TN**

I was a certified welder hired into the world's largest zinc smelter company. I have worked for this company for the last five years, still to date.

I went through a year and half of down right utter hell from a co-worker who harassed me, smashed

my lunch, destroyed my work tools, spat on my truck, cursed me in front of other co-workers... the list goes on and on. There were complaints made to management only to be met with less the helpful people due to the co-worker growing up with my immediate supervisors son's.

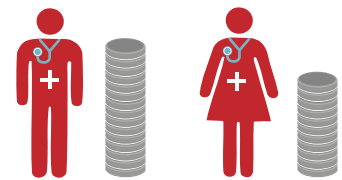
In fact my supervisor gave me a negative employee review to include in it that "I needed to learn to get along with my co-worker's better." This resulted in me getting a lesser pay bonus. On top of that, I've been there five years with a pay grade increase.

There have been several other men hired since me – hired in at as much as \$3/hour more than me. I am the only woman in my department. I also have filed a complaint with the EEOC and was given a letter for the right to sue, but have yet to find an attorney to take the case. I have documentation to back all of the above up. I pray that women will one day be paid our true worth, and not just pushed to the side and further to the background.

### **Jeanne Marie, Round Lake, IL**

This affects many woman, and probably some you know. My cousin was working at a law firm downtown and had just made partner. Then she became pregnant and the misery began. It was just two months after the baby was born and they insisted she work outside the country on a case for three weeks. They continued to ride her, even telling her that she had to prove her loyalty to the firm. She eventually left the firm and the practice of law altogether.

My ex-husband, who worked for a financial services firm, came home and told me how they ended up re-hiring "Sharon" for their IT team because she made good eye candy for around the office (it was all men). He said they had considered promoting another woman,



## **FEMALE PHYSICIANS EARN LESS THAN TWO-THIRDS OF MALE PHYSICIANS**

<http://www.pay-equity.org/PDFs/PaycheckFairnessActApr06.pdf>

but after he overheard she was pregnant, they decided they didn't want that kind of hassle.

Is this the kind of situations women should have to deal with in the workplace? Is this fair? It's obvious discrimination is still a huge issue, but it would seem that there are plenty of men out there making the laws and running things at the top who believe it is perfectly acceptable.

### **Amber**

I worked at a large discount department store chain for almost three years. Within six months of being hired, my curiosity allowed me to be trained in the Money Center and Customer Service and unofficially as a CSM – all of which were higher paying jobs.

The last year and a half, I worked in those areas – predominantly customer service – 95% of the time. However, when I or other CSM's questioned whether I could be moved permanently, we were told that there were no positions





# 31 PERCENT OF EMPLOYEES SAY DISCUSSING WAGES IS DISCOURAGED BY MANAGERS



Survey of 2,700 adults. <http://www.ivpr.org/press-room/press-releases/pay-secrecy-and-paycheck-fairness-new-data-shows-pay-transparency-needed>

for that time period – even though I was the only one working that time period the majority of the time.

They avoided promoting me by giving me a “secondary code” which qualified me to work there but not get paid for the position IF I was in that position for a very limited amount of time. Eventually, I simply quit. Their employees as a whole are not appreciated and, if you are a woman who cannot work whenever they calls, they have no use for you, no matter how good you are.

## **Kirsten, Santa Cruz, CA**

While working for a gym and health club as a District Service Manager in 1997 (training club employees), I was well aware of the gender discrepancies. The General Managers (who were promoted solely from the Sales department) were 98% men and easily made twice as much as the club’s Service Manager. The Service Managers were 95% women and were paid less in salary, in bonuses, and in pager/cell phone allotment.

The Service Managers oversaw, trained/managed, and reported on the reception staff, fitness staff, and operations staff while the General Manager handled the 3 - 5 people in sales.

The Service Managers had to do all of the operational reporting to the corporate office while the GM only had to account for sales. When GMs were missing from a club, it still functioned and sales were still made. If a Service Manager was lacking from a club, the GM often flailed, not knowing anything of operations and many times overburdened the Front Desk supervisor (female usually) to get things squared away (at \$10 an hour).

When I attempted to shed light on this rude discrepancy of expectation, training, and pay between GMs and SMs, I apparently rubbed up against a lot of egos (all the District Sales Managers were inept with club operations as well and I called them on it), and I quickly got black balled.

Apparently, women are just suppose to make it all work out in an orderly fashion and with grace and let the men do their “high paying” jobs so they can support us. Regardless of my strong opinions, the facts were blatant and I didn’t need a study done to figure out the percentages – I trained classes of SMs learning everything from security audits to daily balancing to hiring/training/firing procedures, AND I trained the Sales team on how to fill out a contract correctly to get their full commission.

It was insulting to work for a company of “executives” who could overlook the value and weight of jobs, pay, and people and be so blinded by “Yeah, Sales!” vs. “All that other stuff just needs to get done and it costs us money” attitude.

Can we all just grow up now? and value the incredible work that all nurturing, organized people do? (Usually women, but men in these career paths struggle too.)

## **Cheryl, MI**

The college that I work at has a long history of paying male faculty more than female faculty. We know that in third world countries it is best to let women handle the finances because they take care of their families more reliably than their male counterparts. It is time to raise the United States to this level.

## **Patience, Colrain, MA**

I worked for an insurance company for a few years. They have you renew insurance policy at the customers’ homes or places or business while canvassing for more business in their neighborhoods.

The managers always gave us the outskirts of town while the men got the center of town, main street, so got more commission for walking in the door over and over again, while I who lived in rural mass drove hundreds of miles to make a few hundred dollars.

Finally one day a woman got fed up and sued them and won. I got a check, a small percentage out of the 9 million dollars – the lawyers got a lot.

But I did wear myself out. I’d quit, go back, quit again, and not complain whenever I went to a door they said we never get the same person back again. They did with me. It took a long time to re-

alize they didn't pay residuals they wore out giving them all the rural assignments. In fact the manager got the residuals if we quit. Largest broker in the world owns the company. Lousy sexual politics. Same happened with Hartford Life and Annuity. I don't sell insurance anymore.

**Lisa, Port Deposit, MD**

I was the Veterinary Medical Director for a location of chain of pet hospitals, making \$50,000/yr for more than full-time work (salaried).

My regional director was in negotiations with a colleague of the same age and relative veterinary experience who happened to be male, hoping to lure him into a position with the company. He hoped to hire him to work with me, and had him spend a day shadowing me. This person was someone I had previously met and we had always been friendly.

I hoped it would work, too, until he told me that he would be hired at a far higher salary than I was currently making. We both saw the injustice of this, and he gracefully bowed out.

I approached my regional director about the issue, and he told me that "it wasn't really about the money; what are you really looking for? Fewer hours? A better career path?" I was looking for equality! I didn't stay with the company.

**Dionne, Lisle, IL**

This happened 14 years ago when I worked for a local newspaper in my area. I had worked at this company for ten years and was at the time a mother of a 5-year-old and was seven months pregnant with my second child. I also came to work each day with a cast on my left foot. I also worked overtime the day I went into labor.

## IN 12 OUT OF 13 MAJOR INDUSTRIES FATHERS WERE MORE LIKELY THAN MOTHERS TO BE MANAGERS

Government Accountability Office (GAO)  
<http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-10-892R>

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"The hiring manager refused to hire a single mother even though she was the most qualified because he believed that women should be at home with their children."

Stacy, AZ

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We "downsized" and everyone was required to take a test for a newly created position that combined two jobs. The male holder of the other position and I both took written and oral tests with two supervisors.

I was very confident that I would get the position and also somewhat excited because it paid a lot more! I had seniority, education and work experience. I was shocked when I learned that I had not gotten the job. My job!

When I questioned one of the supervisors she said that she had to make the decision with her head, not her heart. She related that em-

ployees were being cut back and that I would be gone on maternity leave and she didn't see how they could fill in for me.

I was also told that the young man who had gotten the position was a young father, living at home with his parents, who needed the job because he had to support a child.

Basically it had nothing to do with my ability but everything to do with the fact that I was pregnant, married and a woman.

Because Illinois is an "at will" state there wasn't anything I could do legally and to add insult to injury I lost all of my severance pay because I was on maternity leave and could not work until the severance date they had set.

It seems that today things are going even more backward. Women are being treated as second-class citizens whose work is deemed simply as extra family income that we don't really need.

Losing that job set me way back in earnings and damaged my self-esteem.

I encourage any working mother out there to VOTE. Learn who your local and national candidates are and what they stand for. Attend town hall meetings and webinars. We need to continue to demand equality.

**Stacy, AZ**

For more than 15 years in Human Resources Management I have dealt with numerous male managers who discriminated against women in pay and promotional opportunities.

Some examples: 1. The manufacturing plant manager who refused to pay the woman who took over the Graphics Department the same pay as her male predecessor



# IF WOMEN EARNED THE SAME AS MEN, THEIR FAMILY INCOME WOULD RISE BY \$4,000 ANNUALLY AND POVERTY RATES WOULD BE CUT IN HALF OR MORE FOR MEN & WOMEN WITH THE SAME NUMBER OF HOURS, SAME EDUCATION, UNION STATUS AND LIVING IN THE SAME REGION

<http://www.pay-equity.org/PDFs/PaycheckFairnessActApr06.pdf>

because of her long blonde long hair and long nails; he didn't see how anyone could take her seriously. She went on to run the most successful, cost-effective department in company history and decreased turnover substantially – but with 30% less pay than her male counterpart.

2. In banking, the men that relocated were ALWAYS compensated more because their wives were having to find new jobs and their family income would be temporarily affected. The female employees were denied the same consideration.

3. The hiring manager who refused to hire a single mother even though she was the most qualified applicant because he believed that women should be at home with their children.

4. One female manager was denied additional resources or pay increases as her job scope increased. When she finally transferred, her male replacement was immediately hired in at a higher pay and provid-

ed more people to support the job scope. Her job performance was not a factor, in fact she was a top rated manager.

These examples were all supported by executive management.

## ***Anonymous, Santa Fe, NM***

I work for state government in New Mexico. I have a college degree and have been passed up many times for promotions by men who have no college degree. I have worked hard and have done well on all my evals. It's sad. Also, men who have been brought off the street doing the same job as me are offered more money. Yet, I have been the one carrying the whole operation on my back.

## ***Kerstin, Snohomish, WA***

When I was a camp counselor I learned that the male counselors were making 1/3 more than the females because "it's harder to get

male counselors." They had the same or fewer qualifications.

When I brought this complaint up to a supervisor she threatened to fire me because there had been fine print in my employment contract (that I didn't see) stating that we could not discuss salaries with one another. All the better to keep us in the dark as to the gender inequality, it seemed to me.

## ***Ann, CO***

I worked one job for 9 years, in which I was repeatedly passed over for promotion because I was unable to work the night shift due to child-care considerations. Whenever a day shift position opened up, night shift workers were given hiring preference because they were considered to have 'paid their dues.' It should be noted, the night shift folks were almost all single, none had children and were already given a 15% shift differential. I consistently worked 40-50 hour weeks at that job, including many evenings and weekends when I could arrange childcare. This did not seem to change my bosses' view that I was less dedicated and available to work than single childless employees.

At one point my male boss left the company, and I was promoted to his position with NO pay increase, and yes, I did train two new employees (men) and found out later they were making significantly more than I was.

When I left that company, I did so for 1/3 more in pay and was soon making twice what I had made. I had no idea until then how much I had come to undervalue myself as an employee!!

## ***Pat, St. Paul, MN***

I once quit a job because my boss wouldn't leave me alone (kept asking me out, and when I refused, kept finding fault with my work).

Years later, having completed an advanced degree, I was teaching at a university. I was at work when my baby sitter called and said my son (then 6 months old and asthmatic) was blu., I needed to come and get him. A male colleague overheard my conversation and remarked, "maybe you're just not cut out to be a teacher and a mom."

**Jo Ann, Louisville, KY**

I have experienced gender discrimination in almost every job I have ever had, except in the construction trades! Even in academia, male grad students are treated better than female students, no matter the proficiency levels. You would think that people who teach about social justice would promote an egalitarian workplace, but no. Most of the male professors only want to mentor the young men and they pay little or no attention to the female grad students. This needs to change! Yesterday!

**Miriam, Yucaipa, CA**

Men are falling behind in the job market. More women are working and bringing home the bacon. Unfortunately they still are getting paid less than men make in salary. This must stop. I wonder who doesn't want women to get fair pay?? WOW maybe it's the fat, old, rich, well you know who still want women to have babies and stay in the kitchen. Those days are gone forever. Get with the program and give us our rightful, fair, equal pay that we deserve now.

**Virginia, Honolulu, HI**

As someone who began working at age 12 and is still working at 71 as a university professor, I have yet to achieve the same paycheck as my male colleagues. Right now I am supporting my daughter and granddaughter and must go on working for several more years at least. I know I'm not an exception!

# IT WILL TAKE 45 YEARS TO REACH PAY EQUITY IF THE WAGE GAP CONTINUES TO NARROW AT THE SAME RATE AS IT HAS SINCE 1960

IWPR Report: Women's Median Earnings as a Percent of Men's Median Earnings, 1960-2009 (Full-Time, Year-Round Workers) with Projection for Pay Equity in 2056, Jeff Hayes, Ph.D. (March 2011)

**Christine, San Diego, CA**

When women stay home with their children, they make a huge uncompensated contribution to society. I am the principal of a public school. I could tell you who has a mother at home and for how long based on their behavior. Children with parents who work outside the home when the children are very young do not develop the same relationship with their parents. But we don't reward mothers for this

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"When women stay home with their children, they make a huge uncompensated contribution to society. I'm a principal of a public school. I could tell you who has a mother at home..."

*Christine, San Diego, CA*

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contribution, instead they are penalized. When they return they are seen as behind. When they go back into the paid workforce after 5-20 years they have lost valuable time while their male counterparts have been climbing the ladder. On top of having lost time, they now face discrimination. It is a shame.

**Ileane, Aurora, IL**

As a married mother of four, I had to go to work to help support our family and soon learned that "women's work" paid next to nothing. I had to suffer the indignity of training a man to do the same work I was doing and saw him get more pay, more privileges, do less work and get more and better raises. Women have always been the mules of society, and not much has changed in the years since my experiences.

**Sheree, Peoria, AZ**

My boss used to tell me I should be home having children instead of working. Then he told me I did just as good if not better a job than the men did. We are supposed to be a modern society here where all men and women are treated and paid equally. What happened to our values?





### **Joby, Galveston, TX**

In today's economy, every household needs income from two salaries, just to make ends meet. "Two" does NOT mean one and a half, or one and three quarters; it means TWO complete salaries. All those companies who continue to shortchange women are short-changing the U.S. economy, and must be forced to pay everyone the same, without exceptions.

### **Rachel, Bronx, NY**

Pay equality affects us ALL regardless of marital and family status (in my case – don't forget single and childless women who are short-changed in turn.) Additionally, why is it that when a man becomes a father he doesn't have to fear for his job? Or forget about promotions and raises?

The "families to support" excuse to compensate male employees higher is also ridiculous. Many single and/or childless men get paid more than most working moms I know... most of whom are SINGLE and the sole breadwinner of their family.

### **Karen, Albuquerque, NM**

Today most women have to work – it is NOT optional and we are not working for spare change or because we're bored. Many women are the sole provider for their family. Regardless – single or married, childless or a parent – we deserve equal pay and equal opportunities for advancement for equal work. Anything less is indefensible.

### **Valerie, Charleston, WV**

Many women are the sole providers for their families, even in a two-parent household. Rate of pay should have nothing to do with gender, it should be based on ability and performance.

## **AS WOMEN GET OLDER, THE WAGE GAP WIDENS**



## **AS RETIREMENT APPROACHES [WOMEN AGED 45 TO 64] THEY EARN ONLY 70 PERCENT OF WHAT MEN EARN**

Full-time workers. <http://www.pay-equity.org/IPDFs/PaycheckFairnessActApr06.pdf>

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"I am 66 years old and would have to write a book about all the wage discrimination I have suffered over the years."

*Annette, West Haven, CT*

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Women and their children deserve better than second rate pay and benefits, especially when they frequently outperform their male co-workers by doing additional tasks that they see need to be done but haven't been assigned to anyone.

### **Demian, Venice, CA**

I am a middle school English teacher. I have a PhD and 18 years of teaching experience, yet was offered over \$10,000/year less for my position than my education and experience merit.

When trying to negotiate a salary more on a par with my experience and education, the Director of the school said to me: "Don't you get Child Support? You should be fine."

Underlying her question and statement were the presumptions that women – even single mothers – are never heads of households or primary wage earners AND that, due to having jobs for spending money only, we don't really need to be paid what we should.

Please help to bring this nation into the 21st century and support equal pay for equal work!

### **Annette, West Haven, CT**

I am 66 years old and would have to write a book about all the wage discrimination I have suffered over the years – one boss's recommendation to a new boss I overheard "she doesn't know what she's worth."

In other words, feel free to screw her over. And that was one of my first jobs!

### **Corinne, Portland, OR**

As the bearers, nurturers and caretakers of the citizens of the United States, it is absolutely astonishing and shameful that women continue to bear the highest burdens of low wages and prejudicial legal restrictions.

There should be NO question that women should receive equal pay and be compensated for lower wages. The Senate should uphold this by supporting for the Paycheck Fairness Act.

**Katherine, West Hartford, CT**

Of course I have gotten less pay and been passed over for promotions even though I was doing a better job than my male colleagues. My employer was sued and the women won a class action. However, I had already left the corporation and gone on to form my own freelance business by then. Women and children in this country are treated so much worse than women and children in other Western nations. This is a National disgrace. We spend too much of our people's hard earned tax money on guns and bombs and nothing on the welfare of our citizens.

**Nancy, Palo Alto, CA**

I was told by the VP of Communications in a large construction corporation that I was the best candidate for a director of communications, and had more experience than a male applicant less qualified for the job, but that his boss would not want him to hire a woman who would be the only one at meetings of all the directors. NO kidding.

**Ginger, Tucson, AZ**

I have been a single mother for 15 years and made 60 cents on the dollar to my male counterparts. I have been discriminated against and I work for a federal contractor.

We have to bring equality to pay and support American families. In my community over 50 percent of the households are run by single mothers and we make the least amount of money and have a stronger work ethic than any other group. The only way companies make changes is through legislation.

**Sayde, Cedar Rapids, IA**

Just today we found out that we are having a baby girl! My athlete husband's tears turned to

# CEO, PHARMACIST AND AND LAWYER ARE LUCRATIVE JOB TITLES – HOWEVER WOMEN EARN ONLY 75% OF WHAT MEN WITH THE SAME JOB TITLE EARN

[http://money.cnn.com/2010/04/20/news/economy/highest\\_paying\\_jobs\\_for\\_women/](http://money.cnn.com/2010/04/20/news/economy/highest_paying_jobs_for_women/)

realistic worries, about pregnancy, hormones in the food bringing about early development, and then he got back to the "positive" thoughts. He pointed out that she could be a great tennis player, swimmer, good at tennis but he would steer her away from soccer.

But she would never make as much money as an athlete, or at any job she takes. I told him that things could change in 20 years. Make sure they do!

**Lorraine, Frederick, MD**

After working part and full time, raising four kids, cooking and hosting lovely little business dinners for my husband to get ahead in his job he kicked me out of our house. I am now self supporting.

I thank God I was working, but know if I were male with my education, experience and work history I would not be living pay check to pay check This must stop and all people be valued.

**Melinda, Baltimore, MD**

In a country that professes to love families and children, we do not provide the necessary compensation for women in the workforce.

We are like a third world country in the manner in which we treat women in the work force. Unfair pay and promotion practices are the bane of America's male orientated culture. Give women what we deserve equal pay for equal work.

**Ronnie, Mountain View, CA**

I was working as a software engineer and went to talk to the HR people about "mild" sex discrimination happening in the engineering department: the VP of engineering gave Valentine's cards to all the female engineers and not to the male engineers. Weird, yes, definitely. He also had trouble talking to me at meetings, using the male engineers as an intermediary, even when he was asking questions about the work I knew best. Classic stuff. Anyway, the HR rep. told me I shouldn't be complaining because I was earning good money "for a woman". Thanks. Apparently they thought I shouldn't be complaining about discrimination because I was making more money than the receptionist. And it seems pretty clear that she was also saying I was making less than the guys. No hard numbers here, but the attitude says everything.



## MOMS AND DADS SPEAK DIRECTLY TO CONGRESS

Tuesday, April 17th is Equal Pay Day 2012. This is the day that marks the date in 2012 when women will have finally earned the same amount of money, for the same work, that men earned in 2011. Sad but true, women still aren't getting equal pay for equal work. And this issue is even more important than ever because these days women are the primary breadwinners in four out of 10 households.

This lingering wage gap, along with unfair pay and promotion practices that discriminate against women and mothers, means that families' economic security is undermined. This isn't good for any of us. Families need equal pay for equal work. So this Equal Pay Day we call on you to do everything in your power to support and pass federal legislation that would strengthen and increase enforcement of existing, weak fair pay laws.

*Below is a selection of personal notes from MomsRising members to their members of Congress urging their elected officials to support families and close the pay gap for women.*

As a single parent I can't rely on a man to help support me. Equal pay for equal work makes sense in this day and age.

Nina, Mercer Island , WA

Please make sure that my daughter does not have to experience the years of pay discrimination that were a part of my mother's life!

Carina, Dover, NH

If you want us to compete with other countries, remember that women test with higher scores and IQs. Destroying us is destroying America.

Felicia,  
Santa Fe, NM

This is long overdue and I am sure you realize that.

Wayne, Renton, WA

It's time for parity in fair wages for everyone!

Eric, Newton, MA

My partner earns way more money than I do and my job is more complex and takes more education than his job.

Jennifer,  
Santa Barbara, CA

So many working moms are single mothers and they deserve the same pay as working dads so they can support their families.

Trudy, Lyman, SC

As a woman, this pay gap disturbs me. I am a single parent, as are many women in this country. We need to support our families, so it should be fair. **Please protect the civil rights of half of our population.** Thanks for your strong consideration.

Valerie, Seattle, WA

This is **so past due** it is embarrassing!!!

Willie, Snohomish, WA

I have worked here for 10 years, currently making \$30,000 a year. Last fall they hired a **male replacement for the same basic function** in a parallel office. He is brand new and makes \$60,000.

Rosslyn,  
Portland, OR

I would like this to be **the last year we are having this conversation.** Sadly, I know that will not happen. I do not want my daughters to be facing these same issues when they enter the workforce.

Kamee,  
Bedford, NH

**Equal pay for equal work** no matter the gender. Get it done!

Rick, Lakeside, AZ

We like to think Americans are past such 1950s discrimination, and yet clearly we are not. **We must have tough laws** to support all of our citizens who are trying to make a living.

Jen,  
Medford, MA

**Shame...**

Haydee, San Gabriel, CA

I'm a single mom, by situation not choice and struggle constantly to make ends meet. I don't ask or take any extra help but **would love to earn what my male co-workers make.** Their benefits alone are astonishing.

Debra,  
Fort Lee, NJ



I'm a single woman who would **appreciate the support of my senators** on this issue.

Donna,  
Red Lion, PA

**Stay strong and fight**, even for those women who don't know or won't believe this type of discrimination is still happening!

Vera,  
Jacksonville, FL

This is just sad, some women are heads of household, **pay them the same as you would a man**. Get off this male ego crap, women have to eat and feed their families too!!!!

Ann, Florissant, MO

Pay discrepancies between the sexes **weakens American families**. Please support equal pay for women.

John, Fort Collins, CO

I was just laid off for being pregnant. They said I "may not want to come back to work after the babies arrive." Isn't that my decision to make? I was laid off in 2008 after returning from maternity leave, as well. **Discrimination against women and working mothers has got to stop!**

Stacey,  
Somerville, MA

Equal Pay for families is **more than overdue**. Gender discrimination is totally unacceptable. There must be equal pay today, tomorrow, and always; now this is acceptable.

Kimberly,  
Orlando, FL

**I am the primary breadwinner** in my family. Because I work and can support our two children, my husband has been able to go back to school to get an engineering degree. This would not be possible without equal and fair pay.

Jennifer, Lafayette, CO

**End economic discrimination against women.**

Karen, Federal Way, WA

I know for a fact I was paid less consistently than the male members of the office where I worked as architect. Yes, I am a registered architect, and **more education does not ensure you are paid fairly.**

Irene, Granbury, TX

A friend works as a respiratory therapist (female) and makes \$3/hr less than a male co-worker who has less experience and isn't nationally certified. **Afraid to complain** because we live in a "Right to Work" state (SC).

Sandra, Santee, SC

The primary bread winners are women. **We work just as hard as men** and we deserve the same pay.

Bernadette, Westbury, NJ

**As a guy, I find this behaviour towards women reprehensible** and laws need to be enacted to protect them from the neantherthal mentality of these jerks who behave this way. Reminds me of the Jim Crow days the way they treated black people and it's disgusting!

Nathan,  
Kansas City, MO

We as women have as much right to earn equal pay as men. Some women are the only one earning money to raise their family. God did make men first, but He does not women to be treated like second class. **Where would the men be if was not for us women.** To be brief, they would not be here. I've never seen a man bring a baby into the world. Be fair and pay us women fair pay.

Pearl, Huntsville, AL

The wage gap still exists. Let's get legislation in place to **hold employers accountable** for ongoing discrimination, so our daughters won't suffer the inequities we have.

Amy, San Francisco, CA

What difference does signing a bill into law make, if the employers are allowed to **get away with pay discrimination?**

Claire,  
Kansas City, KS

**I can't believe we are still fighting for equal pay.** I remember learning about this issue in elementary school, when I was about 10 or 11. And now I'm 50! Those same women who are "just mothers" need to be able to earn enough to at least get by, just like their male counterparts ... right?

Laura, Needham, MA

On a personal note, my car, which I relied on for transportation to and from work as well as my child's school, was repossessed because I am **not making enough to make ends meet** – even on a 40-hour work week. Something has to give.

Brenda, Danie Beach, FL

It's a no-brainer that if the job is well-done, then the pay must be the same for woman or man... being a woman or a man does not determine the value of the work. **The WORK determines its worth!**

K. N., Ontonagon, MI

Can't believe we still discriminate against women. **Talk about going backwards:** america is becoming a fundamentalist nation.

Helene, Stowe, VT

**My daughter deserves equal pay!**

Catherine, Macomb, MI

In today's world, women work just as hard if not harder than men. We deserve equal pay for equal work. Not only do we work for pay that is not enough to take care of our families, we also have to work for our families. **Our jobs are never ending,** we need equal pay so we can survive in today's world.

Bea, Alexandria, VA

This is about **protecting women, men and families** from corporate exploitation...well past time we worked on wage equity!!

Scott, Seattle, WA

What is so hard about **equal pay for equal work**?!?!

Gaya,  
Salt Lake City, UT

You get a very good tax dollar wage. Give our family one also. Families need **equal pay for equal work**.

B.E., Livingston, TN

Could it still be that women are not paid the same as men? Does anyone really need to be "re-trained" to exercise EQUALITY? Apparently so, and that is really sad! **Get your collective heads straight!!**

Mike,  
Saint Louis, MO

We should all be **treated fairly...**

Carmen,  
Lakeland, FL

Without women, there would be no USA. Why pick out women to express a class discrimination? **Let's get a grip on our thinking, America!**

MaryJordan, Jackson, MS

My place of employment has been known to hire male CNA's at a higher rate of pay than female new hires who have more experience. **If we report this, we can be fired** because it is against company policy for any employee to discuss wages with any other employee. This is a nation-wide company.

Theresa, Pueblo, CO

**Why is this an issue in THIS country in 2011.** The Stone Age is long past.

Dorothy, Holyoke, MA

**Do something worthwhile for a change by enacting equal pay for equal work!**

John, Portland, OR



I am a mother of two children with their father on disability. Please help in closing this wage gap so that the **women who are the primary breadwinners** for their families can provide for them equally as men can.

Janet, Perris, CA

I'm 64. I've now been **underpaid for how long?**

Carmen,  
Lakeland, FL

**Can't be more obvious.** Equal pay for equal work.

Ester Fuchs,  
Lapeer, MI

Let's put some **dignity into America!**

Jean,  
Kirkland, WA

This is not just a women issue; most working women are supporting families and every dollar robbed from that family by prejudice and discrimination **undermines that American family**. This is as much an American family issue as it is one of fairness and justice.

Don, Chester Springs, PA

Women should earn **equal pay**.

Darcy, Portland, OR

**Same job, same pay.** it's only fair!

Patty, Covington, WA

Many women are the sole supporters of their family and children. **They need every penny that they earn.** Women have great need for equal pay for equal work. Please pass legislation to promote these equal human rights.

Marianne,  
Milwaukee, WI

I'm nearly 70 now and I'm **ashamed of this country's failure** to fully support women's rights for equal pay!

Linda, Fairfield, CT

I would like to **recieve the same pay** for the same job too. it is about time this is changed.

Clara,  
Elmwood Park, NJ

I am retired now but for many years I was a single working mom with no child support. Twice I lost jobs because I would not "come across." **I was also refused raises** because I was not "head of household" even though I clearly was.

Natalie, Brooklyn, NY

I want to affirm now that when my daughter is doing the work to heal and bring peace to the world, **she'll be earning an equal paycheck!**

Jamie,  
Oregon City, OR

We not only do we do our paid jobs but **then we go home and do our other job**, which is thankless and low pay as well. Stop treating us like second class citizens.

Wilma, Pittsboro, NC

I was one of the 4 in 10 from 1961 until I retired in 2002. I supported a family of five and worked 2 and 3 jobs to pay the bills – did the work of men, better than some, and made less money. **Be fair to your mom and sister and niece** – pay equal pay for equal work.

Betty, Sarasota, FL

**Pay them, please.**

Royce, Seattle, WA

Many of us are the main wage earners. We need to **make what we are worth** in terms of pay and benefits.

Margaret, Hibbing, MN

Isn't it about time that women are treated equally in this country where **equality is supposedly the rule of the land?** (Except for individuals as opposed to corporations and in the case of minority groups?)

Lynne, San Francisco, CA

Wallet or womb you politicians want to **take WOMEN back to the middle ages!** Hell no, we won't go!

Aurea, Los Angeles, CA

I work at a large, well-known hospital and I'm sure that my male co-workers are paid higher salaries than the females. **We're not supposed to know, but most of us do.** The gap may be smaller now than when I first started working here, but any gap is wrong.

Karen, Oxford, NC

It's about time **ALL people of our country were treated fairly** and on a level playing field. Women should NOT face a 'glass ceiling' nor should they be paid less for doing the same job as a man. We need Good Democratic legislation to insure this. Enough's enough already!

Ralph, Bakerstown, PA

Forty percent of primary earners aren't getting their fair share? Besides the obvious moral discrepancy, **those numbers just don't make sense.**

Laurel, Maitland, FL

**What century is this?** Women are absolutely equal to men.

Natalie, Montclair, NJ

**Equal pay for equal work!**

Sandy,  
Clinton Township, MI

**As the sole breadwinner** for my family, it is especially important to me to be paid equally.

Julie, San Diego, CA

Women are the ones raising the majority of the families and it has always been that way, so they should get equal pay to the pay men get if they are doing the same job. Most men run from their responsibilities in the family situation leaving it to the woman to raise the children they had together. **It has been unfair forever** and that must change.

Anonymous, Canon City, CO

If there is **anything that can be done legislatively I hope you are on it.** You are doing great things and it is greatly appreciated by those of us here at home!

Jenna, Riverton, WY

It is the new millennium. With the number of single mothers heading households and the number of competent women in general in the workforce, they require equal pay. How **are men still so threatened by women's success** today that they will do this to them, and their families? Ridiculous and cowardly.

Mary, Macungie, PA

I'm an educated American woman.  
**Please show me that I matter!**

Anna, Boston, MA

**I want to be viewed as an equal** and that includes fair pay for equal work.

Molly, Chandler, AZ

By not treating our women equally, **we are practicing the behavior that we fight in our wars.**

Will, Ithaca, NY

Let's put some **dignity into America!**

Jean, Kirkland, WA

I'm sure **you can relate to this unfair pay gap**; even if you are not experiencing it at this point in your life, I'm willing to bet that you experience it earlier in your life, as did I and millions of other women in America.

Renny, Seattle, WA

From my early years: "You're a married woman. There are two of you working so **you don't "need" the same amount of pay as your male colleague.**" To the sexual discrimination of my daughters twenty years later, nothing has changed! What country is this?

Cheryl, Hudson, IL

**We vote!!!**

Wendy, Rawlins, WY

Make changes now! As a child I listened to this BS, I never thought **such an out-dated and utterly discriminating practice** would continue in 2010!

Margaret, Corvallis, OR

I, as a full time working mother, am the **primary breadwinner in my family of four.**

Andrea, Andover, MN

**I mean it.**

Sherrill,  
Davis, CA



Breadwinners are now women and **equality is an inalienable right.** Merit, capacity and skill is a universal attribute NOT relegated to one sex or the other. Wake up! Do the right thing!

Carol,  
Lake Placid, NY

It would help if we had jobs so that we COULD get fair pay. And raise taxes on the rich and corporations and watch the economy BOOM!

Lorene, Albuquerque, NM

Think about how many women are the **sole supporters** of their families.

LaTanya,  
Pasadena, CA

The sad reality is that it is **not just men discriminating against women**, it is other women managers discriminating against women because they feel threatened.

Cindy, La Porte, TX

It's more than disappointing that a **country which touts equality** for all still has this issue.

Natalie, Montclair, NJ

We are **over 70% of the workforce**, over 50% single moms, and 100% Head of Household and we still can't get equal pay in where we invest our lives 40-60/hrs. weekly?

Valkyrie, Hyattsville, MD

It would help if we had jobs so that we COULD get fair pay. And raise taxes on the rich and corporations and watch the economy BOOM!

Lorene, Albuquerque, NM

I DID have job once where I found out about how much more a male instructor was making more than I was! **Just not fair!!**

Mary, Laguna Woods, CA

Equality in the workplace **seems very little to ask** for women wage earners.

Anonymous, Monticello, FL

I have had **countless jobs** where I received **less pay** than my male counterparts and I did more complex work and was more qualified. This is immoral and must be stopped.

Cheryl, Garland, TX

It is **women** who **raise the next generation** so is business saying, "To hell with them"?

Sharon,  
Sylmar, CA

What husband, son, or father would not want his **wife mother, daughter to get equal pay for equal work?** this discrimination is based on fundamentalist Christian beliefs. The Constitution protects us from theocracy.

Ronald, Pelican, AK

On average colleges have 70% women graduating to 65% men. Except for engineering all workforces are becoming more women than men, and **there is power in numbers!**

Marcia, Clinton, WA

My daughter earns more than I do. I am so proud of her efforts. **We women need to support our daughters.**

Martha,  
Portland, OR

**We must have it – Equality!**

Howard,  
San Buenaventura, CA

It is very important you support equal pay for all women. I have worked as mastered prepared health care provider and **have yet to see equal pay for female vs male.** Your support can correct this issue.

Dona, Valrico, FL

In the interest of all concerned, **please remember your mother, sister,** or the women who have been an influence in your life.

Aisha, Atlanta, GA

**Why is my labor worth less? Stop supporting gender based discrimination.**

Karen, Somerville, MA

**Equal pay for equal work is the law.** There should be no more Lily Ledbetters in our country!

Karolyn,  
Silver Springs MD

Six years ago I note that the pay disparage between men and women was 70 cents on the dollar, today, in 2011, **it is still the same.**

Gary, Buena Vista, PA

**We so should not be still fighting this fight.**

Mary, Ashland, OR

As women, we often work to support ourselves and our families, just as men do. Between the **work we do for a living and that which is done on the homefront**, we put in many hours and deserve equality in our paychecks.

Mrs. D.E., Point Pleasant, PA

This is a no brainer. **Fair AND equal pay** for equal work.

Sue, Scottsdale, AZ

Treating women as if they are animals is **hideous, pathetic and cruel!!** Women must get equal pay for equal work!! Make it happen!

Phillip,  
Highland Village, TX

Think about how many women are the ***sole supporters*** of their families.

LaTanya,  
Pasadena, CA

Voters like myself want **real and substantial change**, not rhetoric. For a real quantum shift to take place, women need recognition as equals in the workplace, and we can't rely on Walmart wannabes to show any interest in equality. A slap of reality needs to come from the government.

Stephen,  
Albany, CA

**Be fair!**

Roberta, Seattle, WA

Pay inequality further diminishes the American middle and lower classes. American **women have borne this burden for generations** and legislation is a necessity to reverse this discrimination.

Mrs. Martin, Sea Cliff, NY

The pay disparity forces single mom and two-wage earner families to live on less than they deserve. **Consider the impact on the children** – less time with parents, less revenue for books and other resources. Not to mention lost pension and Social Security benefits.

Roberta,  
West Lafayette, IN

**I have two daughters**, ages 13 and 16. I hope that by the time they reach the workforce, equal pay for equal work will be a reality.

Jim, Houston, TX

Why can't the vast majority of Americans and, in particular, women, receive **living wages on par with men**? We are the majority, not the wealthy who you always defer? Equal pay for equal work. How about it?

John,  
Mount Vernon, WA

We are suppose to be paid for what we do irrespective of the sex. **Women need to be treated better than this** at this point in time. Gone are the days when people used to think of people in terms of a girl or boy. Equality should be our goal.

Beatrice, Adelphi, MD

I am female and I am the breadwinner of my family. I hate to think this wage-discrimination continues to this day! One has to ask **why is there a disparity**? To what do we owe this? Please bring pay wages into the 21st century in 2011!

Renee, Ford, VA

We're not living in the dark ages anymore. Just **do what's logical**.

Nicole,  
Beverly Hills, CA

What is it about paying women the **same pay for the same job** as a man that the Congress of the USA cannot grasp?

Jeffrey,  
Hollywood, FL

As a man, husband and father of two daughter, **I'm appalled that we still haven't done what is necessary** to eliminate discrimination and actually enforce the laws on the books that guarantee equal pay for equal work. Study after study has demonstrated that women do indeed work as hard as men and are as committed as any other employee. I hope we will finally rectify these injustices.

Steven, Pickerington, OH

As a double-mom household, **we both feel the strain of paycheck inequality**. Please right this situation, which has been considered "traditional."

Susan, Braintree, MA

Help close the **poverty gap** by supporting fair pay legislation.

Lynn, Tesuque, NM

**Mothers are much more important** than Wall Street bankers. Please treat them that way.

Dana, Olympia, WA

**What if we all earned our due:** equal pay for equal work. There would be more money to buy food, pay for housing, buy cars, save for retirement, send the kids to college, get good healthcare for the family, travel, help parents, give to charity, take on hobbies; to wit: **our economy would be much better off.**

Elodia, Midland, MI

I am utterly **disgusted by the appalling wage gap** that the misogyny of this country's leaders has allowed to continue.

Karisha, Bloomington, IN

In a democracy, **equal pay for equal work** should be a no brainer.

Nancy, Davis, CA



After spending the bulk of my life working in corporate America, this is an issue that hits very close to home. **Way past time to make this change occur folks.** Its never been fair and its unfairness in this world that makes things not work so hot.

Rita, St. Joseph, MN

**I want to viewed as an equal** and that includeds fair pay for equal work.

Molly, Chandler, AZ

I am sick of working and having minimum wage. I am a 59-year-old woman, own a home, and I am lucky if I can put food on my table! **Where is the justice?** I have worked for over 30 years and now since being unemployed and going back to work to make a minimum wage it's a disgrace!

Theresa,  
Youngstown, OH

As a gay man, I understand all too well what discrimination can do, but I am not the victim of **systematic unfairness in pay**, as women are. Please end the inequity in women's compensation.

James, Santa Rosa, CA

Families headed by women bread-winners **should not be shortchanged.**

Belinda, Birmingham, AL

At this point in time, it is amazing that gender discrimination in the area of wages still exists. **How can we as a nation tolerate this any longer?**

Anonymous,  
Kalamazoo, MI

We need to change the way the business world demoralizes its workers and its community. There should be some sense of the value of the work force – beyond the money and commerce. We need to understand that **honesty and morality have an integral part of the equation** of life. Anything less is debasing and dehumanizing. Please don't be a part of that! **ACT!**

Joseph, Greene, NY

## SPECIAL FEATURE

### TRYING TO LIVE ON THE \$2.13 TIPPED-WORKERS MINIMUM WAGE

Families have been waiting over 20 years to see an increase in the \$2.13 federal tipped minimum wage. Times have changed, costs have risen, but the federal minimum wage for tipped workers hasn't caught up with modern times.

This is a bad situation. And women are bearing the brunt of this problem: 71 percent of restaurant workers are women. As a result, this workforce of mostly women has three times the poverty rate of the rest of the United States workforce.

On the following pages, you'll find a collection of stories from MomsRising members all over the country who are raising families as tipped workers, and/or who were raised by a parent supporting their family on tipped income. Please help end this cycle of poverty for working families.

Sincerely,  
Kristin Rowe-Finkbeiner  
*Executive Director, MomsRising.org*

## Personal Stories from MomsRising Members

### **Amanda, Holiday Island, AZ**

My boyfriend works in a small tourist town as a bartender/server. Due to being a tourist town, the business fluctuates with guests throughout the year depending on the season. Therefore, he is not always able to bring home enough money to survive the week let alone drive to work on an empty gas tank.

I personally would like to see this minimum wage for tipped workers change and raised higher so people can afford to live!

### **Jane, Bisbee, AZ**

I have waited tables. If the kitchen is slow or makes a mistake, it is the waitress(er) who gets shorted on the tip. Even if service is perfect, many people 'save' money on their meal by not tipping. It is hard, hard work.

### **Denise, San Francisco, CA**

In early 1950 I worked as a waitperson in Under the Linden in Long Island where President Eisenhower spent time golfing. Many wealthy people stayed at this resort. The tips were miserable. I served a whole family for one week and they apologetically offered me a \$10 tip.

After awhile I quit but the only good thing that came out of that service is that the owners did not have a bed for me for my last day (because of my replacement) so I stayed in the Eisenhower suite.

### **Corry, Petaluma, CA**

I spent thirteen years as a waitress. The last year of that career was under the crack down on unreported tips. What I found was that the job was not worth doing at such low wages and I got out.

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"As long as employers rely on the clientele to make up the difference in low wages, the income will continue to be uncertain and demeaning."

*Corry, Petaluma, CA*

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Waitressing is stressful both physically and mentally and often the hours are not full time, making it imperative to make up the difference in tips.

As long as employers rely on the clientele to make up the difference in low wages, the income will continue to be uncertain and demeaning. The one least able to carry the burden is the only one asked to do so.

### **Barbara, Greenville, CA**

I raised my daughters as a tipped employee. Most of the time the tips made up the difference. That's why a lot of people worked for tips. But you have no insurance and no hope of paying for your own insurance because of the low wage. Also smoking is a health hazard to employees and too many, even now, don't want to accept that fact.

Tipping also causes the customer to make up the difference for what the business owner doesn't pay. This makes the cost of running a restaurant feasible because as Americans we don't want to pay the true cost of food. For the owner to pay more, they have to be able to charge more.

I was lucky to work in California, where the minimum wage is not different for tipped employees and where laws were passed regarding smoking. (Too late though for a friend, who never smoked, but is dying of lung cancer.)

When the IRS got pickier about tip reporting you could end up with next to nothing in your paycheck as you had to pay all those taxes.

I can't imagine working for \$2.13 per hour. You'd have to be dishonest in tip reporting just to not get a notice to pay taxes on payday. Tips aren't guaranteed after all, but the IRS thinks they are.

Restaurant workers work very hard and are expected to do it cheerfully for every jerk that walks in the door – or no tip for you! Then you have to split your tips with the busboy, and/or dishwasher, and/or cook even though they are paid a regular wage. It's a raw deal and I'm so thankful I haven't had to do it in years.



# \$2.13/HOUR



## FEDERAL MINIMUM WAGE FOR TIPPED WORKERS



# \$3.57

## THE AVERAGE COST OF A GALLON OF WHOLE MILK



# \$3.53

## THE AVERAGE COST OF A GALLON OF REGULAR GAS

Average prices for 2011 from the US Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (<http://www.bls.gov/data>)

### **Phyllis, Sacramento, CA**

I've had a job as a server twice. Each time was only for about a week. The reason it was such a short time is that I was terrible at it. Serving is a real and involved skill. Not just anyone can do it well.

I'm always appreciative and impressed with the tremendous multitasking that servers do. It's absurd that skilled and hard working people are paid such a ridiculously underpaid wage.

### **Allison, Oceanside, CA**

I worked in the restaurant industry to support myself in college and when I was starting out in the world. In addition to my 40 hour work week, I worked nights and weekends.

Quite frankly, I worked hard and sometimes left with over \$200 in my pocket at the end of the night. Others may have been more but never under \$75. My shifts were from 4 p.m. to 12 p.m. or 6 p.m. to 2 a.m. I have no idea how I made it all happen but I know I made somewhere between 20k and 40k per year at that time.

I was single though – I cannot imagine having a family and trying to survive on that. Rent was \$250

per month, utilities \$50-100, gas, and other things... and I ate for free. Working at the restaurant I was guaranteed a meal or two each shift.

If you are a professional server, find a great place to work, and really know how customer service works, you can make money waiting tables. I knew servers who made 90K per year working at some of Atlanta's top restaurants. One of the true factors in tips - if you cash - you'll spend it, but you can also save more. People use credit cards more often now and the payment structure is different.

I lived in a larger city (Atlanta, GA) at the time and worked at a restaurant where the average bill was \$20. I understand that there may be people trying to pull a family together working at Waffle House and \$2.13 per hour is ridiculous if you aren't making good tips.

### **Estella, Winchester, CA**

I only worked as a tipped employee when I was in my late teens. I quit after a couple of weeks. It's hard work and people do not tip much. I can't believe they are not paid minimum wage. Is that legal? Doesn't seem like it



should be legal. I've always thought waitress, etc. should keep ALL their tips. If I want to tip the owner or someone else I will tip them directly. Laws need to change.

**Elise, San Diego, CA**

When I worked as a graveyard server for a large chain of restaurants at the age of 19, I was lucky on several counts: 1) I lived with my parents rent free 2) I lived in California where servers are required to receive minimum wage 3) I didn't have to support a family of my own.

There were many nights I came home with less than \$10 in tips after working 8 or 9 long hours. Had I been making a mere \$2.13 an hour, that would mean my take home pay some nights would have been around \$27 for working 8 hours in 1999. Servers deserve the same rights and protections as all other workers. Servers deserve to have a minimum wage.

**Dolores, Northridge, CA**

I worked with an employment department and found out how low wages were for waiters and waitresses. Not only did they receive low wages, but they had to buy their uniforms and pay for meals which were supposed to be part of their wages.

**Ramon, Yucca Valley, CA**

For years, I have witnessed the quality of life experienced by women who work in food service venues. At one time tips were in addition to fair wages. Then corporations lobbied for tips to reduce the wages of the women who served the people who could afford eating out.

Most of us are tax producing units, rate payers, or responsible for the national debt... the word slaves comes to mind. It is time to change this and, at minimum, include a plethora of social benefits based upon need. Oh,

yes... push for fair wages and make tips be a social gratuity!

**Mary Nella,  
Bakersfield, CA**

My brothers worked in the restaurant business and believe me, they could not have lived on tips alone. The ridiculous wage of \$2.13 per hour will do nothing to help our citizens. Besides that, fewer people can afford to tip.

**William, California**

CEO's making millions, Wall Street getting million dollar bonuses and a person working for a base rate of \$85.20 for 40 hours, what a shame just to think about it.

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"No worker should have to depend on the generosity of their customers to receive a living wage."

*Doris, Aptos, CA*

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**Doris, Aptos, CA**

My dad was a waiter and always felt poverty stricken with the small amount of money from the owners. He felt demeaned by having to hold out his hand for tips.

No worker should have to depend on the generosity of their customers to receive a living wage. All workers are entitled to substantial salaries, benefits and the dignity they are entitled to. Unions have helped, but not enough to sufficiently compensate for the labor of these workers.

**WAITERS & WAITRESSES HAVE  
3 TIMES   
THE POVERTY RATE  
OF THE REST OF THE US WORKFORCE  
HALF LIVE BELOW THE  
FEDERAL POVERTY LEVEL  
FOR A FAMILY OF THREE**

<http://rocunited.org/action-center/wages/>

**Jenine, Lockwood, CA**

I worked for this basic wage as a waitress 30 years ago!

**Debra, Thornton, CA**

My son Brian worked for a restaurant that also had a home delivery service. Brian work for \$2 per hour plus tips and also had to use his own car for the home deliveries. Most of the time he was stiffed on tips with the deliveries.

Tips at the restaurant never amounted enough to even bring him close to \$5 per hour.

I had no idea this was the norm with the food service industry. This was back in the 90s. It's appalling this is still the accepted practice today! I can't imagine with home deliveries and the cost of fuel today how these workers are even making a dime!

**Roberta, Golden, CO**

It's no secret that inflation has outstripped wages for the past few decades, but to have your wage stand still for years while inflation occurs is ridiculous.

**Cynthia, Stambord, CT**

I worked in the restaurant arena at one time and I only got paid tips

and about a quarter on my check. I was being ripped off by the manager and I was a full time worker plus worked overtime for private parties at a upscale restaurant. After the manager admitted cheating me I quit.

When are people going to stop being unfair and realize that you treat people like you want to be treated? And be fair because you can't take it with you. Live right. Here today and gone tomorrow.

### **Melissa, West Hartford, CT**

I do not have a personal experience from the side of the workers but as someone who believes in fair pay for work I would rather end tipping and know that my server is being paid a proper wage that she or he could live on and help to raise a family on.

We all just want to live, eat and have our work cover our necessities. Please adopt a fair minimum wage for these hard working people.

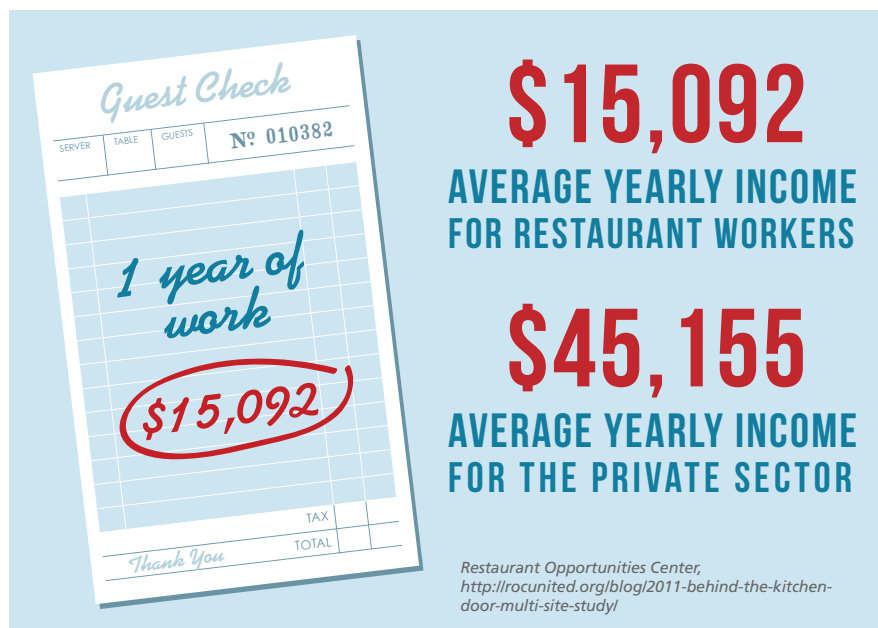
### **Christy, Washington, DC**

I worked in restaurants in both Maine and Colorado and it was extremely difficult trying to plan and budget while working at restaurants.

I never knew when I was going to have a 'good' night and be able to pay for all the things my son needed, but worse, I never knew when I was going to have a 'bad' night. This might be due to bad weather, the shift I was working, or that I had several tables that were bad tippers.

### **Rita, Indian Rocks Beach, FL**

I was a server for 15 years and raised four kids on a servers' wage plus tips. Depending on other people to tip you – which doesn't always happen – can be the most stressful part of being a server. There were many nights that I didn't even make enough to pay my babysitter with-



out digging into money put back for rent or utilities or groceries.

My best friend still works in this industry, as do my two oldest kids. They struggle 80% of the time to even make enough to pay the absolute necessities, never mind anything extra.

What most people don't realize is that servers don't make minimum wage like most people and when they have the money to go out to eat or drink they need to have the money to tip their server appropriately.

Another thing that most people don't know is that you, as a server, have to give up part of your tips every night to bussers, bartenders, and other staff, so you don't even get what you make.

Then comes the taxes... they tax credit card tips at a VERY unreasonable rate, to boot! Then you have employers, like at my friend's job, that CHARGES her every time someone runs a debit or credit card! This is absolutely sickening that our SERVICE industry is getting abused like this, and it IS abuse. Someone needs to help... and I am MORE than willing to lend my voice and support to this cause.

### **Sharon, Riverview, FL**

This is what I made working as a waitress back in my twenties. Unbelievable! I thought it was pathetic pay then.

### **Anonymous, FL**

It was not enough then. There is no way it could be enough now. These people get no benefits, zero, zilch, nada! They work sick or they are out a day's pay. They never have a paid vacation. What is a pension? Hell, if they want a vacation they can apply, but good luck, that is also to get your good shifts back. They get no insurance.

Lifetime of a nightclub is 3 to 5 years usually and then they are on the streets looking for another job. It is who you know to get 'in' to work there waitressing or bartending. Work downtown, pay your own parking; but high paid managers get free parking and insurance. Never was right with this little pay and no way is it justifiable now. Remember these tipped employees are also tipping out their co-workers, some of whom get paid more hourly than they do!





### **Doora, Honolulu, HI**

I currently work for two restaurants. One is very well established and tips are disbursed properly to all front of house employees and has a system of checks and balances. The other, however, does not tip employees at all. Though it is a fast, take-out restaurant environment, the owners keep a tip bucket out that easily collects over \$100 a day with about 5-6 front employees working a day.

As a family business, the owners not only pay under the table, but also keep 100% of the tips from the bucket as well as all credit card tips. Though I respect this business and the family that owns it, I feel ripped off everyday when customers thank me for my service and leave generous tips with no idea that those tips go straight to the owners.

It's getting quite tiring to deal with and I have printed out the laws that they are not complying with so I can speak to them formally about my concerns. If they are not addressed or are ignored, I will likely quit, and hope that others will follow to stand up to unfair labor practices.

### **Victoria, Makawao, HI**

More than 20 years ago when I got a job at a small local cafe I was surprised to learn that it was legal to underpay waitresses as long as the owners could prove they made at least 10 cents an hour in tips!! Usually we did but sometimes it was extremely difficult to make ends meet.

Add to that the trick the owners used of giving us less than 20 hours a week and so making us part timers thereby avoiding having to give us any benefits.

What an incredible shame and embarrassment to find that in all that time things have not changed for these very hardworking folks.

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"They are being made to wash dishes, shovel snow, clean bathrooms and do table prep work, all for \$2.13 per hour."

*Jeanne, South Bend, IN*

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### **Diane, Fairfield, IA**

My daughter is working two restaurant jobs, trying to pay back student loans, pay off credit cards, and pay her monthly bills. She works 16 hours 3-4 days a week and 8 hours the other 2-3 days. Working about 50 hours, she barely has enough money to make ends meet.

She lives a very skimpy lifestyle, hardly doing anything meaningful or enjoyable because she can't afford to. She wants to go back to college and get her degree, but is discouraged and overwhelmed by the financial pressure. She lives 4 miles from her jobs to which she walks every day since she can't afford to buy a car. She dislikes the home she rents a room in but can't afford anything nicer or closer to work. She lives in western Massachusetts, in an area with a high cost of living – so the \$2.13 doesn't go very far. Tips are variable. Her stress levels are very high – she feels she is on a treadmill and can't get anywhere. Is that anyway to live?

### **Hazel, Des Moines, IA**

This was many years ago in Florida. I worked for no wage, tips only. While we all knew this was not legal, we needed the jobs and felt like the terms were set, take it or leave it.

### **Jeanne, South Bend, IN**

Yes these people working in restaurants are being ripped off by their employees. They are expected to work for this ridiculous wage then the employer is stealing some of their tips. They are being made to wash dishes, shovel snow, clean bathrooms and do table prep work, all for \$2.13 per hour.

So unfair and all the while the employer is taking a percentage of their tips. They are also using a system to pay these employees that they aren't allowed to see what hours they are being paid for and some other shady tactics to pay these people.

I think this needs to be looked at especially since all the available jobs are service jobs. And how are these young people coming up supposed to even make it with the cost of living and rent sky high?

This is crazy yet we have people making big money and our elected officials trying to give them \$20,000 instant raises because they shouldn't have to work for such low wages as \$100,000 a year. And these kids are supposed to make it on \$7,000 a year? Something is a little messed up I think.

### **Martie, Chicago, IL**

I was a waitress and bartender for 20 years. Let us not forget that not only is the wage minimal but there are hardly any restaurant establishments that offer health care coverage options. So the pay is minimal, the work taxing and the opportunities to get affordable health care practically non-existent.

I could tell you a VERY long story about what all this means when you plan to start a family and are faced with infertility. Let's give the woman and the waitress and fairer wage.

### **Tim, Naperville, IL**

My cousin and roommate work in the restaurant field and they both rely heavily on tips.

This has dropped off because people don't have as much disposal cash, and therefore don't eat out as much. They are suffering and need a raise in their minimum wage.

### **Maureen, Manteno, IL**

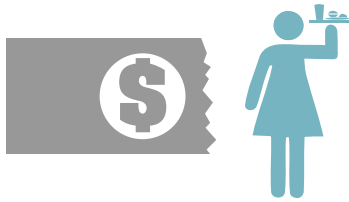
My son is working in the restaurant industry and trying to support himself as an independent adult. He searched for a job for months before he was able to get one, which is reflective of the times. With the economy as bad as it has been in decades, it is imperative that the minimum wage for 'tipped workers' be increased! Everyone is pinching pennies; therefore, tipping may not reflect their service.

The survival of these service-givers is dependent now on IF people feel like should tip at the RATE they should!! The cost of living has increased significantly over the last 20 years. So should the minimum wage of tipped workers. The government of the U.S. should be ashamed of this situation!

### **Val, Chicago, IL**

The last restaurant I waited tables at was a 'family owned' restaurant which, for the owner, was an excuse to not hire janitorial staff so the wait staff had to arrive an hour before the restaurant opened, clock in at the wait staff minimum wage, and prepare the restaurant for opening. This included sweeping, mopping, vacuuming, cleaning the bathrooms and scrubbing the toilets as well as food preparation.

Whoever was stuck with closing was expected to restock, take inventory, fill in for the bussers and hostess already sent home and put left over food away for the next day – all while clocked in at \$2.13 an



## **ALMOST HALF OF RESTAURANT WORKERS (46.3%) WORKED OVERTIME WITHOUT RECEIVING OVERTIME PAY**

<http://rocunited.org/blog/waiting-on-equality-the-role-and-impact-of-gender-in-the-new-york-city-restaurant-industry-2/>

hour and usually one lone table to earn a tip off of. At the end of our shifts we had to tip 10% of our food sales and 10% of our bar sales to the bussers and bartender - regardless of what we might have been tipped by customers.

This was in the late 90s and knowing that wait staff still make the same paltry amount of money per hour and knowing how wait staff are worked sickens me. If I can't afford to tip 25%, I stay home.

### **Magie, Battle Ground, IN**

I left my waitressing days behind after college (thank god!) but cannot believe restaurant minimum is less than HALF the regular minimum wage, which is itself inadequate.

I remember I had a big family come in right before close and then leave me a quarter. I was so perplexed – I thought everything had gone well. They were just a nice family from Canada and so I couldn't understand why they had so under-tipped me. A friend of mine many years later clued me that that was the highest compliment.

In Canada wait staff are paid the

same as everyone else, so tipping really isn't necessary. But leaving a quarter is a symbolic gesture meaning you were an excellent waitress! I obviously live in the wrong country.

But why are wait staff dependent on the whims of customers? I had people come in just to pick a fight so they felt justified in stiffing me. It's a crappy system all around. I raised my daughter that if she can't tip 20% don't eat out.

### **Kristen, Noblesville, IN**

I worked at a local restaurant as a server and made a meager \$2.13 an hour. There would be weeks when I would get a \$20 paycheck. The tips were never more than \$20 a night. So, if I worked 3 nights at 4 hours each, how much money would I make BEFORE taxes? \$33. And now add the tips, which also get taxed, \$60 in a good week. So \$93 a week? And for a whole month? \$372, again, BEFORE taxes. Thankfully, back then, I didn't have to support a small child. I've always wanted to go back to serving but this \$2.13 business, well, it's for the birds.

### **Ashley, Kentucky**

I worked as a waitress for 7 years to make extra money while I was in college and then grad school. From 1993 - 1999 I worked in restaurants and bars in Iowa, Minnesota, Texas, New York and Massachusetts.

Some employers expected us to do cleaning and food prep if we had a slow night – nice savings as they would otherwise have to pay someone minimum wage to do that work. I used to tell friends at the time that I only made \$2 an hour and they couldn't believe the hourly pay was so bad. I can hardly believe it myself but it shocks me even more to know that though the cost of living has gone up so much since 1992 that the \$2 base pay hasn't moved.



It's a national disgrace. Other countries don't allow workers to be exploited in this way. Thanks MomsRising for shining a light on this issue. It deserves much more attention.

**AnnMarie, Springfield, MA**

My mom raised me on her waitress wages and tips. Nowadays she never could have supported a family this way. This needs to change!

**Jennifer, Silver Spring, MD**

I made \$2.13 an hour when I was just out of high school waitressing. I made the same when I was in college. I made the same when I put myself through graduate school. Even after I got married and had a graduate degree, I moonlighted as a server and made \$2.13. That was over a period of 18 years.

How is that possible in a country where we talk about a livable wage? Those working in restaurants often wait weeks to pick up their 'paychecks' because they are so paltry after taxes being taken out.

Tips can hardly support a family even if they slightly rise with the cost of eating out. It is a shame and a scam and it should end.

**Kathryn, Germantown, MD**

I was a waitress when I was in college. When I worked at a busy greasy spoon, I definitely made more than minimum wage – the turnover was fast and I bused my own tables and did my own dishes.

But the following summer, when I worked at a 'nice' restaurant, I was on the bottom rung – I was on the Sunday morning shift, when no one came in before 12 and not if the weather was really nice or really lousy. I got seated last.

Sometimes large tables would take up most of my seating area and on several occasions I was stiffed (once by my brother's friends who thought they didn't need to tip and once by churchgoers who left me a

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"My mom raised me on her waitress wages and tips. Nowadays she never could have supported a family this way."

*AnnMarie, Springfield, MA*

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pamphlet about how to get saved.) Regardless of how poorly I was tipped, I still had to pay out to the bar and the runners a percentage of my total bills. I often made less than minimum wage that summer.

**Victoria, Hagerstown, MD**

I worked for tips for more than 20 years while my kids were in school so I could be home when they were awake so we could spend more time together. \$2.13 an hour is not only slave wages, but most people do not understand that tipped workers are taxed based on a percentage of their sales, not how much they make in tips.

This often means they are paying income tax on tips they never received. In addition, when a tipped worker gets laid off their unemployment benefits are based on the \$2.13 an hour and NO TIPS are included!!

I was laid off from my last job at a 4 star fine dining restaurant. I worked full time but unemployment insurance only paid me \$46 a week because of this rip off formula. I was taxed on my full earnings but the restaurant got away with paying benefits based only on the \$2.13 an hour wage!

Why does the restaurant industry get away with this? Good luck with this project. It is long past time for the restaurant industry to join the rest of the 'free market' in 2012!

**Emily, Catonsville, MD**

In college, I worked as a waitress to offset the costs of books and classes. I often worked during opening hours of the restaurant on weekends. This was a period of an hour or more during which customers were not present as the restaurant was not officially open yet. We still earned \$2.13/hour. The same was true after closing. We also had to split our tips with the bar staff and hostess.

**Susan, Ypsilanti, MI**

Several of the waitresses at a local restaurant in our town are raising children, which is almost impossible to do given their low wages and our state's poor economy. My husband and I are retired, and appreciate their good service to us. We make sure that we leave a tip of at least 20% or more for them each week when we go out to dinner.

**Martha, Portage, MI**

Two sons worked their way through college, often working as waiters. In one instance, after a lay-off due to a business closing, a son was hired by a major hotel chain to work in the restaurant. He was required to share his tips with the kitchen help so that the hotel chain could qualify to pay the kitchen help \$2.13 an hour due to their working for tips.

Also, at that time the federal government reimbursed the business for hiring individuals in a certain category, I believe those who had lost jobs due to business closings. My son learned that the hotel chain earned more from his labor than he did.

**Rachel,  
Inver Grove Heights, MN**

My sister works for a restaurant in Salt Lake City. Over Christmas we were talking about her job and she

told me that she makes something like \$2.75 per hour. She's a full-time student who does not qualify for enough financial aid to cover her tuition. Changing requirements so that she could afford to pay for college would be extremely helpful to her.

### ***Nancy, Columbia, MO***

Even though I did work in the restaurant industry, I find myself tipping less as my budget gets tighter. With the bad economy, people are eating out less and tipping less; the old minimums don't always generate a livable wage.

### ***Brandy, University City, MO***

I worked in the food service industry for many years before obtaining my masters degree. During that time I worked as a server or bartender for several corporate restaurants and locally owned restaurants. Until I moved to Portland, OR for a short time, I never made more than \$2.13/hr as a base pay at any of the service jobs I held. While I consistently averaged at least minimum wage, which at the time was \$5.15/hr, working in the food service industry was one of the most demanding jobs I've ever held and the compensation that you make in tips can vary greatly from season to season.

In the summer when everyone is out and about, you might make quite a bit more than minimum wage, but you better hope you have the foresight to be a good financial planner, because when the bleak month of January hits and you are consistently making \$20-30 in tips for an 8+ hour day, it can get really hard to pay your bills. In addition to the uncertainty, at many restaurants servers are required to work brutally long shifts without any breaks.

In the past there were times when I worked 12+ hour shifts while only sitting down for maybe 30 minutes the entire time. Another downfall is that many restaurants require you to

share your tips with other employees and while I believe this practice can be done fairly, it often is not.

When I moved to Portland, OR in 2008, I was pleasantly surprised to learn that at my new restaurant job I would be making minimum wage! Because the practice in the service industry is to pay minimum wage in Oregon, many restaurants and bars practice what is referred to as a tip pool. With a tip pool system, all of the gratuity for the evening is collected and distributed back in an agreed upon percentage to each employee. At first I was concerned that this system would unfairly benefit employees who were not as hardworking as I was, but I quickly learned that this practice encouraged all of the service staff to perform at their best level and work as a team. It also insured that the kitchen staff, which is often not paid well at casual restaurants, was receiving a portion of the tip pool thereby encouraging a much more equitable system.

Throughout my years as a server, I found it very disheartening that even though I lived in America, I never had the insurance of earning a fair wage. I hope that the food service industry can find a way to insure that their servers make a fair living wage without compliance damaging small and locally owned restaurants.

### ***Sally, North Carolina***

I worked my way through college because I could not get student loans. The only way to work short hours and make enough pay to live and pay tuition was through waiting tables. I was astounded when I found out that I was only going to make \$2.13 an hour. Because I made so little I could only afford to go to school part-time throughout the fall, spring AND the summer. It was hard to have to wait so long just to finish my education. Most people think, well you will make it up in tips but your tips are taxed at a very high rate and most waitstaff I knew ended

up paying huge tax bills every April because you are still taxed like you make over \$4.25 an hour.

Add to that most restaurant jobs do not offer health insurance, vacation time or sick leave and you would see us work through the flu or goes years not taking a break because we could not afford to take one day off. Please help to change this because these men and women work very hard, on their feet and are not compensated and often insulted, accosted and unappreciated.

### ***Michelle, Cary, NC***

My position was eliminated in December 2008 and despite 400+ resumes sent in my field and closely-related fields over 2.5 years, I found myself looking for employment locally at restaurants to earn enough to feed my family of three.

As a single mom who has been employed for 30 years, I was horrified to hear repeatedly that the starting wage was \$2.13 an hour, plus tips. I would need five jobs to support my family, PLUS find the 'extra' time to continue looking for employment. Many of the jobs I applied for had the practice of tip sharing, and/or there would be no tips for the first couple of months "until I learned the back of the house" first. Needless to say, not an option.

I fully support the awareness required to change the law. Thankfully, I am now employed, coming within 3 weeks of losing my home and everything else I've worked for.

### ***Pamela, North Carolina***

I last worked as a server in 1999 and I made \$2.13/hour back then! I am appalled that that is still the server minimum. Back then, I think the general minimum wage was \$5-something; now it's over \$2/hour more and still, servers are supposed to make up the difference? Seriously?





### ***Mae, Winston-Salem, NC***

First, I believe the tip system should be by choice and not by demand. The wage for food handlers should be comparable to everyone else who works in that area. The tip is to tell the server I really enjoyed my food and want to do something special for you. The government should be ashamed that they passed just a law to cut down on the wages and rely heavily on the customers to pay the staff. They are working for the company, not the customers.

I work at an 8-5 job every day and wages are not that great, yet we do not expect our clients to tip us. It is a law made to degrade women and keep them struggling. They work hard and they should be given a guaranteed paycheck each pay period. The tips are just gravy. What is wrong with that? Most people who wait tables have mouths to feed and every little bit of extra income helps. The best thing to do is to increase his or her wages from the beginning to the normal wages that are required for everyone.

It is so unfair to the customers who receive poor services from a distraught server. At the same time, it is so unfair for the server to receive such poor tips especially with the economy in its current setting. Let them have a check that they can depend on like the common person. The meals are already overpriced and then you have to pay extra for being served. I believe people are being robbed both ways.

### ***Myra, Kinston, NC***

Not only do we make a mere \$2.13 per hour, which means we never get an actual paycheck (the taxes eat up that small amount), but we work in an industry that has no benefits – no health insurance, no 401k, no anything.

### ***Heather, Omaha, NE***

I have been a waitress at the same cafe for 12 years, and am now making \$4/hour. I find it really unfair that

we do not get a wage increase, as our tips vary on a daily basis. Having the minimum wage increases should affect our hourly wage also! I just find it so unjust that this is still going on! Our wages must be increased also!

The gas prices are almost double our hourly wage per gallon! This has been an issue for many years, and now it is really hurting your local servers. We all go out to eat and love to get waited on, so why do the servers get the low end! This must be addressed! All the prices on food, gas, and living keep rising, yet our wages stay the same, how is this fair! \$2.13/hour. Really!! Come on, this is simply ridiculous!

### ***Mary, New Providence, NJ***

From the summer I graduated college to my sophomore year, I worked in restaurants (at one point, I worked in 2 different restaurants in the same day, sometimes 3 shifts in a row!). I was a server/waiter and I worked my tail off to make as much money as I could to pay for books, meal plans, and gas money to come home. I worked during the summers, winter and spring breaks. I was always working. I really struggled to make any money because 1) people are not well-informed on what an appropriate tip amount should be for a check (the only people who usually tipped well were those who used to work as waiters) and 2) people have no idea how little a server makes for hourly wages! Not to mention 3) the government legislature said we had to report what 10% of our sales were as our tips – and there were some days where I LOST MONEY with reporting what I made as opposed to actually making money!

Because I was working so hard to save and working back-to-back shifts, I thought I was doing ok saving up. However, when I looked at the numbers, I realized I was barely scraping by and had to get out of waiting tables and go into temp work where

I could at least make minimum wage and not worry about IF I'd even get a tip for a table I worked. Restaurant workers need that rate to go up! I can't remember what the rate was when I was in college, but that was only 14 years ago, so it probably hasn't gone up that much!

People depend on the servers to do their jobs, take care of them when they go out to eat. Let's do the servers a service and have them paid what they're worth with a higher hourly wage and EDUCATE the public about how they should tip!

### ***Cathi, Mt Laurel, NJ***

As a director of a women's program, I have many working moms trying to make ends meet – just trying to feed their families. These wages do not support the family let alone the hours and the off times many have to put in just to have the job. They work very hard just not waiting on tables, but also cleaning the place. They are very often mistreated by customers as second class citizens. They swallow their pride and take it so that they can support their children.

The restaurants make enough money to pay a decent wage to them and they should NOT have to depend on the mercy of the customer on what they will get in a tip. If they customer gets food they don't like or they felt they should not have to tip because they are paying for the food – the server pays the price by getting NO TIP! This has gone on long enough! These businesses need to pay their employee a fair wage and they are not doing it. They receive no medical benefits, are made to work long hours with no breaks, need to do sales (sell their food & drinks) and be pleasant at all times. And what do they get from it?? \$2.13 hour! They should be ashamed of themselves. They don't even want to feed their employee or they can only have very limited food if they are allowed to eat anything.



The restaurant needs to take responsibility for their employees wages and not put it on the back of the paying customers! It been going on too long. If it is a slow day/month for a restaurant the employee suffers – no money to pay bills or eat or maybe not even enough money for gas to come back to work the next day.

Equal pay and they should have some sort of medical plan for them and pay for their uniforms that they want them to wear. Raise the salaries for these workers!

### ***Elena, Albuquerque, NM***

Wow, is it past time to bring up the tipped worker minimum wage issue! I worked as a server for over ten years beginning in 1986 in California. In California the minimum wage was either different or at the discretion of independent restaurant owners so when I spent a summer in Colorado (1989), I was horrified to learn that the wage for servers was \$2.13 per hour. Five years later I took my only work experience to New Mexico and worked for two years at the \$2.13 wage. I worked again as a server in 2006 while I was launching my own business.

With technology the way it is now servers have no choice about reporting tipped income – it is recorded automatically with credit card slips and otherwise calculated at a fixed percentage. Most servers will owe taxes at the end of every year because the hourly wage doesn't even cover withholding!

Put another way, servers most often pick up a zero pay check which is in actuality a negative paycheck. This is a huge oversight in minimum wage legislation and I am thrilled to see something being done.

### ***Judith, Las Cruces, NM***

I worked as a waitress in several restaurants during and after college. It was expected that waitresses/waiters would share their tips with bus-

boys and dishwashers, and most of the wait people I knew did share. For those who imagine that waitresses/waiters receive healthy tips if they do a good job of serving their tables, that's often a mistaken assumption.

Some people don't believe in tipping; they think the management should pay their servers better and by refusing to leave a tip, this will eventually happen.

### ***John, Liverpool, NY***

I have a son, a daughter and a niece who work as bartenders and servers. Fortunately, they have the force of their personalities to serve above and beyond, but some customers are downright stingy. Some nights are good, some are not, but they still have their living expenses and families to support.

I cannot believe the abysmally low wage has been around that long. It's way beyond time to update the minimum wage for these hard working kids. MY kids, who work double shifts, late shifts, whatever it takes. Give them a chance!

### ***Kathleen, Victor, NY***

I am 88. In the early 40s I waitressed my way through 5 years of college - 3 with scholarship help. No help from parents. I saved every penny. It was possible then, but impossible now. My son says he will be paying off his college debt until he is 65. What will his children do??

### ***Arthur, Rego Park, NY***

I worked in the Catskill Mountains almost 40 years ago. The "wages" that we earned for 2 weeks of work amounted to less than \$25 – especially after the "boss" took out for room rental (a bunk bed with a change of linen once in 2 weeks if we were lucky) and board (which frequently consisted of the leftovers from the previous week).

If it weren't for the generosity of

the guests at the hotel, our wages wouldn't have paid for bus fare back to NY City! It is a shame that this condition still exists 40 years later!

### ***Claribel, Bronx, NY***

It is time we pay our service workers a fair amount! I hate to see my family struggle. It's enough that our economy is in the dumps and people are not tipping fairly. Why should those who serve us food and drinks suffer? Never bite the hand that feeds you!

### ***Ines, New York, NY***

My father worked in the restaurant industry for many years and it was very hard for my mother to maintain the family depending on tips, especially since the tips fluctuate depending on the season and the type of client.

### ***Sonja, Ohio***

I worked in the restaurant industry 20 years ago and remember being so grateful for the raise... but still struggled to raise a family of three at the time on whatever extra I got from customers in tip compensation.

Reading this article I was absolutely mortified to find out that women and men today are still trying to support themselves and their families on something that is just equivalent to a full tank of gas now-a-days. I also wonder why the restaurants think they deserve a cut of that compensation? We need to stand up for these workers because we have all either been there or have had family members and friends work in the industry.

### ***Vera, Strongsville, OH***

I have been a server for many years. I started at the age of 16 in 1975. It is a very hard job. In all most all restaurants you get no healthcare,



vacations, and forget about ever getting a retirement plan. You also get no sick days but are expected to have a doctors note if you must miss work. You work holidays and weekends with no extra pay. You can work from open to close with no break. That can be 14 hours with no chance to eat or even sit down. We make \$2.13 an hour in most states (\$3.70 in Ohio) and out of that, in most restaurants, we must tip out the other workers like food runners, bartenders and bus boys. If you have a table that leaves a small tip or no tip, you still must tip everyone else!

Plus, we have to pay taxes on a percentage of our sales no matter if we make the tips or not. We pay for our uniforms and shoes. What other job in America makes such small wages? The wage laws started a long time ago for small diners, not large corporations! But who cares about poor servers? Working full time most of us are below the poverty line. It is wrong. I am always amazed when they raise the minimum wage and servers are excluded. We have to pay the same prices as everyone else for things. Why are we so undervalued as workers?

### **Amber, Kettering, OH**

I know several tipped workers, and am no longer one myself, because in most cases, the tips are not enough to truly keep afloat, pay for any benefits that MIGHT be offered, and pay for someone to watch children. The state welfare systems pay better than tipped service does.

### **Carolyn, Logan, OH**

I presently work for a restaurant, and have done so off and on since I was 21 years old. I am now 63. In general, servers and restaurant workers have always been underrated, though patrons expect good service, wherever they go. The hourly wages for this industry are shameful. Tips cannot be counted upon, generally. It is a real "crap shoot" as to whether

or not someone will tip you properly for your service.

Making a living in the restaurant industry is not an easy thing to do. More often than not, health care is not offered either. So, there you are, with hourly wages that are ridiculously low, and tips you cannot depend on, and no health care, but patrons who expect a lot. I admit to some satisfaction when serving good food to good and generous people. It has kept me going back to the profession, though it never gets easier.

### **Sarah, Oregon**

When my husband lost his job in 1999, it was time for me to find a job and support the family. We lived in Utah and I ended up getting a job waiting tables. I was appalled to find out that I would earn \$2.13 an hour, plus my tips.

The management would have waitstaff come in for their shift two hours before they were supposed to go on the floor and actually wait tables so that we could prep food in the back. Then they would keep us for at least an hour after our last table to clean. That when our actual time waiting tables might only be three, maybe four hours. Sometimes I would get done waiting tables at 11 p.m. but not get home until almost 2 a.m.

When I moved to Oregon, I stayed with the same company. My pay went up to over \$7 per hour, plus tips. When I went to work, I started waiting tables right away. After my last table, I had at most, a half an hour of sidework directly related to maintaining my tables. My experience is that places that get away with paying \$2.13 an hour abuse it.

### **Stephanie, Philadelphia, PA**

I don't get a paycheck. Well, I get a piece of paper every month with my tax statement and the hours I worked multiplied by the hourly rate of \$2.83, but I don't actually get to deposit my



**WOMEN ARE PAID  
21.8% LESS  
THAN MEN**  
WITH THE SAME QUALIFICATIONS

**WOMEN OF COLOR  
ARE PAID 28.5% LESS**

<http://locunited.org/blog/waiting-on-equality-the-role-and-impact-of-gender-in-the-new-york-city-restaurant-industry-2/>

check in my account because every single month, it's zero. That's right, \$0.

I am a waitress; a server; the woman who opens your wine, chills your beer, pours your water and speaks with you about tonight's specials. We're not friends but I am friendly, though I am quite busy. You see, the more efficiently I serve your delicious meal and refill your water, offer you dessert and make you feel welcomed, the more people I can get in your seat after I've dropped your check and you've left me the generous 20% gratuity Philadelphians are so well-known for doing.

It's great. I love my job, I really do. I wouldn't have been doing it for so long if i didn't... but i do not get money in my paycheck. The law tells my employer to pay me a certain nominal wage because the rest of my pay is collected from the customer for giving good, knowledgeable service. But that "wage" pays only for my taxes - on the gratuity, as well as city, state and federal withholdings, leaving me with a paystub stating "this is not a check."

It's a bummer and it really would be great to know that, like San Fran-

cisco's servers, I am guaranteed at least the money I've worked for to fill my gas tank, or buy our daughter a new pair of shoes, or get to the market for two nights' dinner, or pay for the sitter so my partner can be at his business - employing more folks. Kind of a no-brainer, if you ask me.

### ***Ann, Pennsylvania***

My two kids, 22 and 25 years old, worked in restaurants while in college, and they and all their friends are still working in restaurants even after getting a college degree – because there are no other jobs available. They are young, they are cute, and after a few 6-10 hour shifts on their feet they sometimes bring home a reasonable poverty wage (mostly in tips), adding up to maybe \$300-\$400 a week – that would add up to less than \$20,000 a year.

They don't always make even that, however, because it is not always busy, and their employer doesn't have to pay them more than \$2.13, even though they do have other responsibilities along with waiting tables. Those mythical restaurant jobs with the big tips were always hard to break in to, and now... just try to find one! Our young adults are wearing themselves to the bone without breaking the poverty line, and choosing each month between paying the rent and the student loan. When I got out of college the wages were like that and the work was hard, but just remember the cost of food and gasoline has more than doubled since then.

### ***Heather, Okatie, SC***

Here's what you need to know about me, and servers like me across the country: we work hard for the money we earn. I am a mother of six children. My husband works and is our main support. Because of my children's extraordinary medical needs (one child with a heart defect, one with autism, one visually impaired) I homeschool my kids to make sure their education isn't disrupted by our

many medical appointments. I am also a full time student.

Working in a restaurant gives me the ability to work late hours after my husband gets home from work and still contribute to the family finances. You might see me smiling, taking your order, refilling your drinks, and bringing your check, but that is only a tiny fraction of the work I do each night. Restaurants rely on their servers as cheap labor. We clean the floors, clean the tables, take out the trash, in some restaurants where I've worked servers even clean the bathroom. And why not? You couldn't legally pay a janitor \$2.13/hour.

Most of my shifts are closing shifts, to give my husband time to get home from work. That means I stay behind after the restaurant closes and do all kinds of extra work like restocking the dishes and cutlery in the kitchen, emptying and washing out trash bins, sweeping, mopping, cleaning the soda machines, cleaning the bread oven, the coffee pots, the tea urns, restocking items like paper goods and to-go containers, ketchup bottles, salt and pepper shakers, etc. If it sounds like a lot of work, it is!

Consider also that my tips are shared, not with other servers but with the bartenders, hostesses, and bussers who work in my restaurant. Taxes are taken out of my check for all of tips I receive, and I don't get the money back from my tip outs until I file my taxes. Most of the people I work with are other moms; many of us don't have a choice. We're educated but can't find better paying work that has such a flexible schedule.

I work for an ethical company that tries to do right by its servers, but many restaurants don't. I have been doing this for a long time and some businesses abuse their waitstaff, take advantage of the low hourly pay they are required to give them, and even steal their tips. Raising the minimum wage for servers would end a lot of that. Please consider making a change. And please think of my family the next time you are dining out.

### ***Marilyn, Memphis, TN***

I used to work as a waitress in 1984 and it was around \$2? an hour +tips. The restaurant where I worked even wanted the waitresses to pool their tips and then split them with all the other waitresses. I did not think that was fair either because some of them did not work and took breaks all the time. I did not share my tips because that was money I had earned. People don't realize how poorly waitresses and waiters are paid but they want excellent service. Most of these people are students trying to pay for their tuition or mothers/fathers trying to feed and clothe their families. We have got to do better with paying them.

### ***Michelle, Houston, TX***

I've been a server. It's a very hard job. You almost always have to have roommates just to make ends meet, and if you have a family to support, forget it! \$2.13 per hour is not a fair wage for this job, and there should be an increase.

### ***Herman, S. Padre Island, TX***

I waited tables for a few years and the tips I received at times did not even pay the bills.

### ***Dwinna, Crowley, TX***

I can remember when I was first on my own, all on my own, working in Albuquerque, NM, and only made 80 cents per hour at an A&W Root Beer. I mostly worked inside behind the counter so I didn't get many tips at all! The car hops are the only ones who really got tips to amount to anything. I worked double shift and replaced car hops who couldn't come in to get more money whenever I could. Then, I'll never forget the IRS people coming around one day and handing out literature about how we were going to be taxed on our tips!



All I could do, at that time, was to pay my rent - barely! The fridge in my apartment (which was in the back of a deserted laundry mat, in the alley - not exactly what some would even think about living in) was just for looks as I never had money to buy any groceries and had to work in a restaurant so that I could eat at least once per day. I had no car and had to rely on public transportation, which pretty much made getting a better job at age 17 very difficult.

This was in 1967 and it was next to impossible to survive but to think of anyone still, in this day and time, only making \$2.13 per hour is just unbelievable! One would have no choice but to work where tips are highest to survive at all and supporting a family just wouldn't happen, I don't think. I think most people have no idea about this either and everyone needs to know what these people make. Why can't restaurants afford to pay their employees better? It's just wrong for anyone to have to work for next to nothing!

### ***Melanie, Houston, Texas***

I worked for years as a waitress, cocktail waitress and bartender. Basically it was slave labor, working off the clock doing sidework for \$2.13 an hour, forced to breathe cigarette smoke and depend on the goodwill of others to tip me while I waited on them. I had to tip out to bartenders who made 3 and 4 times as much as me per hour. I never knew how much money I was going to make a week. It was a crazy nightmare.

### ***Christine, Fort Worth, TX***

I was a waitress as a young single mother because waiting tables offered flexible hours so I could (generally) be home with my daughter more and go to school. I can't tell you how many times I made less than \$20-\$40 a day (during the lunch rush at a busy chain restaurant). LOTS. And I was a good wait-

ress! Polite, fast, and I paid attention to detail.

What I don't understand to this day is how restaurants can get away with not paying their employees minimum wage. The patrons of a restaurant cannot be counted on to tip fairly and when they don't it is the hard working servers who suffer, no one else. Setting up a restaurant is worth more than \$2.13 an hour, too, but you only get paid \$2.13 an hour before and after close, too. Restaurants, like all other employers, should be required to pay their employees at least minimum wage. Right now they are getting away with barely paying their employees.

### ***Victoria, Houston, TX***

A good friend of mine works as a server in a restaurant and it's barely paying her bills, and it's just sad that it's the only thing you can do in life when you have been on your own since age 15 until present (age 20).

### ***Sarah, Humble, TX***

I just had my first baby and her father is not in the picture right now, so I'm having to do everything myself. I'm telling you, it's nearly impossible to pay rent, car payment, utilities, car insurance, and the cell phone bill on the pittance I'm making. After the holidays - when I seem to need money the most - business is almost nonexistent, and therefore my tips are, too. I can't afford to get health insurance for myself and my baby through my job because my paycheck, even when I'm working 40+ hours a week, isn't enough to cover it!

I'm very lucky to have family and friends that are willing to watch my baby girl free of charge while I'm at work. But I suspect that not all working moms are so lucky. And all servers' "pay" (tips) are being reduced as the recession worsens.

Oh, and then there's the fact that most of the general public doesn't

even KNOW that we're not getting the same wages as everyone else, so some people don't even tip at all, even if there was no problem with their service. I work very hard as a server. I'd like my income to reflect the work I put in to my job.

### ***Frank, Laredo, TX***

It really is unfair that these restaurant workers get paid so poorly. If the government doesn't protect these workers, who will? The restaurant owner?

### ***Angela, Texas***

I can remember frequently hearing the response, "Well, if Daddy has a good night," when I asked for things I "needed" for school. I always tip well now that I'm an adult but I am often questioned about it by fellow diners who seem to think tipping should only be in recognition for exceptional service. Few people realize that servers and bartenders depend on tips as part of their wage.

### ***Lorine, San Antonio, TX***

I encouraged my grandson to complete his college education because I thought a college degree would help him land a a job with a livable wage. After graduation, he applied to numerous companies and got no job offers. He was finally hired as a server at a restaurant, but due to the low wage, he has a difficult time paying student loans and meeting other living expenses.

When he called Sallie Mae to make arrangements to repay his student loan, the Sallie Mae rep suggested that he sell his plasma at a blood bank to supplement his income so that he could repay his student loan; my grandson would rather have a decent salary. He is grateful to have a job but it would certainly help to be able to take home a bigger paycheck.



### **Summer, Orem, UT**

I have worked as a server and bartender a few times. Sometimes I did well (and by “well” I am saying \$14-16 per hour). Sometimes not so well. The hardest part is really the inconsistency. At one high-end restaurant I worked at, the dinner servers did quite well but in order to get on the dinner schedule you had to have worked there for 4-5 months on lunches. Many, many days I would go home with perhaps five or ten dollars in tips after spending six hours there. Trying to put myself through college on that was really tough.

Not to mention I have yet to work at a restaurant that offered anything in terms of benefits such as health-care which my university required of its students. Another really miserable thing was that, at this same restaurant, tips were kept track of by the company – estimated by the credit payment receipts and figuring 15% on all cash and check payments. I got one pay check that was \$12 once. All the other pay periods (over the course of a year) I actually had to pay the company on payday (to cover taxes and SS/Medicare). If a customer leaves without paying their bill, generally the server is responsible for paying the tab. One hundred-dollar meal could devastate you. Clean out your entire night's tips and then some.

Finally, another very real problem is that only a portion of any shift is spent actually working tables and generating income. A good 25-40% of your time is spent doing “back-end” work: filling condiments, cleaning stations, making schedules, folding napkins, decorating for special events, etc.

Though technically (I think) restaurants are supposed to pay you at a higher rate to do those things I have never, ever, experienced that happening. In fact, in most places there was not really even a mechanism in place to be able to do that.

So you might make \$20 an hour for the five hours you are serving

but you are making two dollars an hour for the two hours you spend in the backend. It is tough for people. I don't know how people can support a family like that. But sadly, for many people, this is the best thing they can get.

### **Melissa, Vermont**

Although I have been a physician for over 20 years, I have worked as a waitress in many restaurants. Even over 20 years ago, that \$2.13 was low. And because tips depend on the total of the bill, someone who works in a diner is going to make a lot less than someone who works somewhere fancier. This minimum wage rule lets employers have their customers pick up their expenses. Like me, wait staff often are expected to share their wages with the cooks and hostesses, even though they get at least the full minimum wage.

Once I had a party of 12 walk out on me without paying the bill – not only did I not get my tips, but I was responsible for paying this party's entire bill out of the tips I did get. Tips are not a reliable way to make a living wage.

I've had lots of customers who do not believe in tips, especially those from Europe. They don't understand that a waitress will not get paid if you don't tip them.

### **Marta, Manassas, VA**

I have been waiting tables since 2001. I have 3 children and it's been quite a struggle to make ends meet. I am lucky that I live in a nice area where people typically tip 15%. I have always wondered why restaurants are allowed to pay their staff such minimal amounts. Servers do not see a paycheck, it goes all to taxes and if you do not have children or other tax exemptions you will surely owe taxes at the end of the year.

I do not mind working hard – serving is extremely hard on the body – but it is extremely difficult to

plan or budget as one never knows how things will turn out. There are many people that won't tip, will undertip or will leave you 2 dollars regardless of the amount of the bill or the amount of work you did for them. Everyone should serve for 90 days and try to support a family to a moderate standard. Forget vacations, unexpected emergencies, or having a sick day. Pretty much all out of the question if you want to keep your basics up and running. I beg and urge for a change. It's unbelievable it's over 20 years. The service industry deserves a raise.

### **Samantha, Midlothian, VA**

I am a server. I have worked in restaurants for years. I cannot believe the minimum wage for servers has stayed the same for ten years, while the other minimum wage has increased. I see so many parents struggling to make ends meet when the inconsistency of their tips is not enough. One slow night, one customer who leaves nothing can make or break rent. For many, this isn't just a roof over their heads, but the heads of their families as well. Raising the wage for servers could mean a world of difference.

### **Diana, Seattle, WA**

I used to be a restaurant worker. Not anymore. The wages were terrible and at the time (this was 25-30 years ago) we didn't even get sick leave, so we'd have to serve the customers even if we had the flu. If we stayed home we'd get fired. For our tips, at the end of the year, management would estimate how much we'd made on tips that year and we'd have to pay taxes on tips we'd never even made.

I remember one year having to pay taxes on several hundred more than I ever brought home. This was based on the tips that the highest earners,





who worked full time, made. It was grossly unfair. I remember bringing home approximately \$50 a week and trying to raise my daughter on that. Some restaurant workers who are in the expensive four-star houses, can make great money in tips. Servers in your corner restaurants make far less. They need a higher wage.

#### **Deirdre, Seattle, WA**

I am shocked to hear that the federal minimum wage for tipped workers is so low!! I live in Washington and my sister works in a restaurant, but she makes our state minimum wage AND gets tips. I am appalled that some restaurant workers are getting paid basically nothing!

#### **Cause, Seattle, WA**

My mom was a restaurant worker solely supporting two children. Our father left and in those days enforcing child support payments wasn't high on many legislators' priority lists. My mom would count her tips at the end of the day and whether I could sign up for after school activities would depend on the generosity of her customers. Often I would have to watch myself after school instead.

Whether I could buy new tennis shoes depended upon the generosity of her customers. Whether I had any money put away for college depended on the generosity of her customers. Some days her customers were generous. Many days they were not or just couldn't afford to tip much themselves. Financially, we were at their mercy. My mom deserved the same minimum wage as any other citizen. Her children deserved the guarantee of a minimum wage. Thank you for helping correct this problem.

#### **Barry, Anacortes, WA**

My mom was a waitress for years in Las Vegas, and kept us going when I was very young. I relied on tip income during college as a busboy.



## **WOMEN ARE TWICE AS LIKELY TO HOLD LOWER PAYING JOBS AS MEN IN THE RESTAURANT INDUSTRY**

**MEN HELD 67% OF THE HIGHER PAID FRONT OF THE HOUSE POSITIONS WHILE WOMEN HELD ONLY 32%**

<http://rocunited.org/blog/waiting-on-equality-the-role-and-impact-of-gender-in-the-new-york-city-restaurant-industry-2/>

#### **Sarah, Seattle, WA**

I grew up in Atlanta, a place where the minimum wage is \$5.15 an hour, a wage completely unlivable in and of itself. I worked at a restaurant making \$2.13 an hour with the expectation that I would be able to make more in tips. The thing is, in cheap Mexican restaurants this does not happen. Not only that, I had to give away my tips to the bussers, the cooks, and the bartenders every day and after that was left with next to nothing, certainly way less than \$5.15 an hour. This is immoral and unacceptable for a developed society where the CEOs of the company where I was working at was making millions.

#### **Susan, Friday Harbor, WA**

I recently have gone back to waitressing to help cover costs for my family. This is on top of my full time job. Fortunately, I have an employer that pays above the minimum wage. I would not take the job if I were paid \$2.13. I was paid that amount in college however and it was difficult to pay for all of living expenses.

I see only an advantage to the restaurant owner by paying such a dismal and paltry sum. It is rare to get enough of a tip to balance out a decent hourly wage from a customer who sits at a table for an hour and buys one item. It is tough for most folks financially nowadays. People want to treat themselves to a meal out now and again but they don't

necessarily treat a food server with a healthy tip.

#### **Thalia, Seattle, WA**

I have been lucky enough to have wages above minimum wage since the time I waited table nearly 50 years ago. To think that one would be "tip dependent" to earn a livable wage is horrifying in light of how few people tip, particularly in lower end restaurants where the wait staff is already earning below the \$2.13 Federal minimum wage.

#### **Al, Milwaukee, WI**

I met my wife while she was working as a waitress trying to support four kids. She worked nights at a small local community restaurant open 24/7. She was getting minimum wages in 1980 (less than \$2.13) plus tips. I remember many times she would count her tips in the morning to cover the kids lunch each day. All too often someone would walk out on her during the bar time as they called it. She would have to cover their ticket out of her tips. This was not right but they did it one way or another by docking her pay or taking her tips into the register.

I had to admire her for her drive to support her children. There was no room for anything else in life back in those days. Just the basics and she became very creative in what she could make to eat out of nothing. Those were hard days to say the least.

MomsRising.org is a multicultural, non-partisan, online and on-the-ground grassroots organization of more than a million people who are working to achieve economic security for all families in the United States. MomsRising listens to our constituency and focuses advocacy where we can most quickly improve family economic security, including advocating for affordable, quality early care and education, paid family leave, flexible work options and for an end to the wage and hiring discrimination which penalizes so many mothers. MomsRising also advocates for healthcare for all, toxic-free environments, and breastfeeding rights so that all children can have a healthy start.