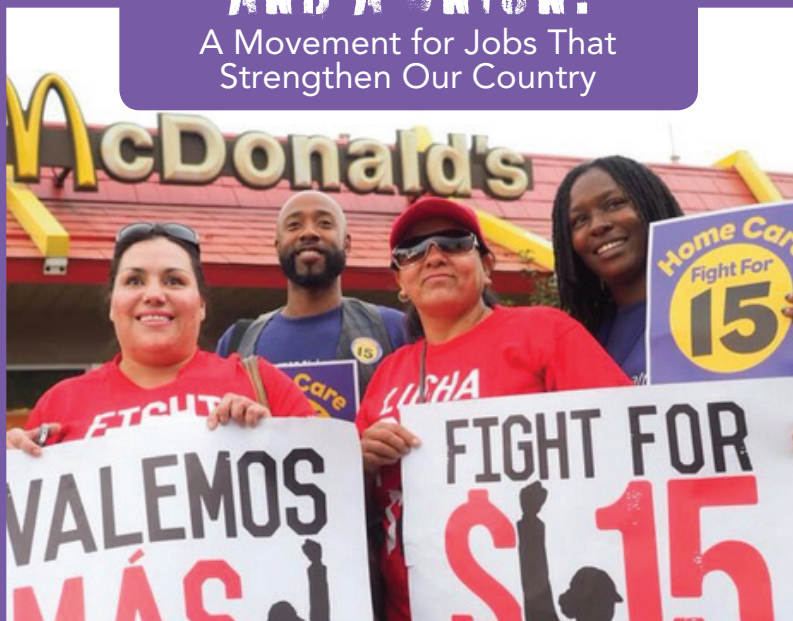




## THE FIGHT FOR \$15 AND A UNION:

A Movement for Jobs That  
Strengthen Our Country



Working families and the middle class are getting crushed. Powerful corporations are cutting our wages and benefits, and more and more working people can't afford basics such as housing and groceries.

Wages are so low that millions of full-time workers are below the poverty line. These economy-busting jobs are stalling our economy and hurting our communities.

Working families and the middle class are the engines of our economy. Raising the wage floor will boost ordinary families' purchasing power, boosting the economy, and building stronger communities.

The Fight for \$15 movement is growing as more Americans living on the brink decide to stick together to fight for better pay and an economy that works for all of us, not just the wealthy few.



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# FAST-FOOD WORKERS



In November 2012, hundreds of cooks and cashiers walked off their jobs in fast-food stores in New York City. They called for fast-food corporations to lift the wage floor for their jobs to \$15 an hour and to let them form a union without retaliation. The average age of a fast food worker is 29, over 30% of fast food workers have some college education, and more than one in four are raising at least one child. The average fast food worker earns \$10,932 a year.

Their strike launched a movement that has spread across the United States and throughout the world. Thousands of workers in 190 U.S. cities have gone on strike. More than 500 have been arrested through nonviolent civil disobedience.

Now their movement is spreading as other underpaid families start to stick together to raise wages.

### **Discussion Questions:**

- 1** What do you see in the story?
- 2** What does it mean to you?
- 3** How can we use the Fight for \$15 in our current work?
  - Bargaining
  - Issue Campaigns
  - Community Struggles
  - Raise Expectations



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# THE DREAM MARCHES ON FROM KENNEDY TO LAGUARDIA AIRPORTS

#March4TheDream 4.4.14

32BJ  
SEIU

## AIRPORT WORKERS STAND UP



Baggage handlers, skycaps, wheelchair attendants, ramp workers and aircraft cleaners keep America's airports moving every day.

These jobs used to be secure, middle-class jobs. But airlines have relentlessly pushed down pay by subcontracting work to contractors that pay as little as possible. For example in Washington, Alex Hoopes was making \$21 an hour in 2005 as a unionized Alaska Airlines baggage handler at the Seattle-Tacoma Airport. In 2013, he was doing the same job for \$9.50, just 31 cents above Washington's minimum wage. Like fast-food cooks and cashiers, people who work in airports are fighting for good jobs.

In SeaTac outside Seattle, airport workers led a successful ballot initiative to boost the minimum wage to \$15/hour.

On the other side of the country in early 2014 airport workers in New York and New Jersey organized and marched with signs that harkened back to the civil rights movement to raise their wages to \$10.10 an hour through passing a city ordinance. Then in July of 2014, Los Angeles airport workers have won their fight for \$15 through contract negotiations. Over 2,500 LAX workers organized and got a raise to \$15 an hour!

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## SCHOOL DISTRICT EMPLOYEES BOOST PAY



Bus driver Sandra Lee, a union officer, speaks in support of a pact that will provide low-wage school workers \$15 an hour in two years. Behind her are school board president Richard Viadovic and board member Monica Ratliff. (Howard Blume/ Los Angeles Times)

Cafeteria workers, custodians, special education assistants, campus safety monitors and other school service workers united in SEIU Local 99 decided to take a stand when they negotiated their new contract agreement with the Los Angeles Unified School District.

More than half of all children who go to public schools live in poverty. Through public pressure and a strong organizing presence by SEIU Local 99 and community allies, the Los Angeles Unified School District recognized that many of its employees have children that attend its schools and that raising the wage floor was a way to give these students a more fair shot at success.

They won a new wage floor that boosts pay to \$15 an hour in the new agreement. For some members, pay will be nearly doubled in the next two years. And, for workers who were already making over \$15 an hour, their wages will increase as well.

Higher pay will break down the barriers that currently keep so many people working in schools blocked into poverty.

**“This historic agreement sets a new standard for ending poverty in our schools.”**

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**CITIZENS USE  
VOTING POWER TO  
RAISE PAY**

**\$15**

**BIG WAGE INCREASES PASS FROM  
ARKANSAS TO ALASKA.**



The Fight for \$15 movement started a new debate over the need to raise the wage floor.

In cities and states from Seattle to Connecticut, voters are using their power to raise their local or statewide minimum wage.

Since fast-food workers began their strikes, citizens have boost pay for nearly 7 million workers by voting to raise minimum wage rates.

During the 2014 midterm elections, San Francisco passed a measure to raise its wage to \$15 an hour. In fact, raising the minimum wage is one of the biggest victories of the 2014 midterm elections.

Raising the wage won in every state and city it was proposed in, from Alaska to Arkansas.

Republicans and Democrats agree, it's time to raise the wage.

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## HOME CARE WORKERS



Home care workers do important work that is in high demand as more Americans need in-home care and support.

But these fast-growing jobs pay wages so low that home care workers can't make ends meet.

Home care workers are standing with the movement to raise pay—and we're making gains.

In Washington State, home care workers stood together to win an agreement that will boost pay to \$14.67 an hour.

### Discussion Questions:

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## HOSPITAL WORKERS



In cities such as Baltimore and Pittsburgh, families used to be able to count on manufacturing jobs that paid middle-class wages.

But as corporations sent manufacturing jobs to countries with lower wages, many of those jobs were replaced by healthcare jobs as hospitals grew rapidly.

In Baltimore, nursing aides, dietary workers, housekeepers, and other workers who are part of SEIU 1199 UHE at the prestigious Johns Hopkins Hospital stuck together to win a contract that raises pay as much as 38 percent for some workers, with a \$15 an hour wage floor for people who have worked for the hospital for 15 years.

In Pittsburgh, hospital employees are fighting to form a union so they can stick together for better pay, taking on the massive UPMC hospital corporation.

They have won strong support from people across the city as ordinary people stand with their fight for good jobs strengthen their city.

### **Discussion Questions:**

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