



United Campus Workers - JSU Communications Workers of America

****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****

Subject: Jacksonville State University Employees Call for Fair Wages

Jacksonville, Alabama - January 25, 2024

The JSU chapter of the United Campus Workers, which went public in Fall 2023, sent a letter this week calling on President Killingsworth and university leadership to address long-standing wage inequality at Jax State by raising the minimum wage for hourly employees.

UCW-JSU is calling for a phased increase to \$15 per hour by the end of 2024 and \$17 per hour by 2025.

The letter is the first step in a broader campaign by UCW-JSU to get the university to increase pay for hourly workers. Prior to the start of the campaign, multiple requests by union leaders to sit down with President Killingsworth to discuss the newly established union on campus went unanswered.

Hourly employees at Jax State play a crucial role in the university's day-to-day operations. Despite their integral role, many employees, including custodial and maintenance staff, student workers, and administrative assistants, are not adequately compensated for their efforts. As part of their launch, UCW-JSU surveyed employees about their work experiences at Jax State. Survey participants across all employee classifications identified low wages as their number one concern. The university advertises full-time housekeeping staff positions with a starting wage of \$9.09 per hour. Hourly wages for many undergraduate and graduate student workers are set at \$8.25. This stands in stark contrast to the [MIT Living Wage Calculator](#), which indicates that a living wage for each working-age adult in a family of four in Calhoun County, Alabama, is just over \$21 per hour.

Other universities in Alabama have recognized wage inequality on their campuses and worked to address it. In 2021, Auburn University doubled minimum hourly wages for campus employees to \$14.50. Earlier this year, [Auburn](#) increased the minimum hiring rate to \$15 per hour. The [University of Alabama](#) raised minimum hourly wages to \$15 in 2022-23. Local school districts have begun to address the issue of wages, too. Support staff at Jacksonville City Schools earn at least \$15 per hour, and this past fall, the [Calhoun County School System](#) announced that hourly wages would increase to \$15.

Equitable wages are overdue at Jax State. Offering hourly employees a living wage will not only help meet their basic needs, it will also benefit the university, its students, and the surrounding region. In doing so, the university would demonstrate its commitment to supporting the hardworking, dedicated employees who make up the Jax State family—who make it the “Friendliest Campus in the South.”

“\$15 we survive, \$17 we thrive” is the slogan UCW-JSU has adopted for the present campaign.

For Media Inquiries:

Lance Ingwersen
615-810-2203
lanceingwersen@gmail.com