



Who We Are

Just Economics of Western North Carolina (JE) is a new grassroots, community organization based in Asheville. We educate, advocate, and organize for equitable economic conditions, increased union representation, and a fair share for all in the prosperity of our region, regardless of race, gender, or citizenship status.

Together, our membership is working to shape the economic development of Western North Carolina in a way that benefits all members of our community and promotes a sustainable future. We aim to have a membership that reflects the diversity of our community, with an intentional focus on leadership from those most affected by the economic issues we seek to change—low-wage workers.

What We Do

Just Economics is building a dynamic movement in Western North Carolina for economic justice and sustainability. Currently, we have three primary areas of work:

- **Asheville-Buncombe Living Wage Campaign-** A “living wage” is the amount that an individual should be paid to meet his or her basic necessities, without public or private assistance. For example, the living wage for a single individual living in the Asheville area for 2008 is \$11.35/hour. Over the past two years, JE has spearheaded the Asheville-Buncombe Living Wage Campaign, which resulted in the passage of a living wage ordinance by Asheville’s City Council in May 2007. The ordinance, which ensures that city employees are paid a living wage, is a significant first step in the struggle for economic justice in our region. We are now working with the City of Asheville to follow through on the contractor piece of the ordinance passed last spring, which would give preference to contractors that pay their workers a living wage.
- **Living Wage Employer Certification Program-** In March 2008, JE launched this new program, which identifies and promotes employers in Asheville that are paying a Living Wage. The LW Certification Program aims to reward existing Living Wage businesses in our community, encourage non-living wage compliant employers to increase their workers’ wages, and connect consumers to socially responsible employers offering workers fair wages and working conditions. Living Wage Certification also will help bolster community dialog and consciousness around the living wage issue, as we have seen on other issues such as organic food and environmental sustainability.
- **Community Education and Leadership Development-** JE also works to educate our membership and those in our community on the economic issues affecting our lives. Our members lead workshops for churches and community groups on income inequality, economic trends in our region, and the Living Wage Campaign to build consciousness and mobilize people to take collective action. We are committed especially to building leadership among those most affected by the issues we are working together to change; low-income people and people of color. In the fall of 2008, we plan on launching an intensive leadership development program, Voices for Economic Justice.

Ways to Get Involved

- **Become a member of Just Economics**--annual membership costs just \$10 and makes you part of a growing movement for economic justice in WNC. Join now online at our website, or mail your membership contribution to the address below.
- **Volunteer your time**--promote JE's Living Wage Employer Certification Program, do research, help staff JE events, design campaign materials and artwork, and more.
- **Organize an event or action** in your community or on campus in support of economic justice and a living wage in WNC.
- **Educate members of your community.** Visit our website for resources and materials.
- **Join one of Just Economics' committees.** All are welcome.
- **Become a Living Wage Certified Employer,** or recruit a friend or family member to have their business or organization certified. Visit our website for the enrollment form.
- **Sign the Living Wage Pledge,** and invite your friends and family to do the same. Download the pledge at our website.



For information on these and other ways to become involved
in JE's work, contact:

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