

## FINDING A LIVING WAGE

### Families

The instructor will assign a family to your group:

- A. Single adult
- B. Single parent, two kids
- C. Two parents, both work, two kids
- D. Two parents, one works, two kids

### Task

Your group must be prepared to share:

- What **hourly wage** do the workers in your family need to earn to pay their bills?
- How did you find this value?
- What assumptions did you make and why do you think they are reasonable?

While you have been given some information, your group will still have to make a number of decisions. Some (but not all) things you might think about are:

- What (if any) other essential costs do you want to include?
- How much should someone work in a year?
- Do you think the typical expenses from the handout are reasonable? (take a look at how they are defined on the handout)

### Extensions

1. Breakdown the amount spent on food. On average, how much is being spent each day? Each meal? Compare and contrast this with your own spending habits. Repeat this process with some of the other spending categories.
2. Add a financial goal for your family (e.g., saving to go back to school, vacation, down payment on a home) and recalculate the needed hourly wage.
3. Figuring out a living wage is one piece of the debate about minimum wage. Discuss: What other factors would you still want to explore?
4. Discuss: What are your thoughts on the minimum wage? How, if at all, were they influenced by this activity?
5. Choose one of the following:
  - a. Another family scenario and repeat this process
  - b. Another geographical region (data for New York is provided and more can be found online)