

“Why have workers’ wages stagnated, while corporate earnings continue to soar?”

By: Kelsie Barlow

My father is the hardest working man that I know, and has dedicated over twenty years of his life to his current job. He spends several hours per week working overtime, and even works when he’s sick or is in pain. Unfortunately, his wages do not reflect this. Shouldn’t the employees that give their blood, sweat, and tears every day receive proper compensation? For many years, his wage increase hasn’t been able to keep up with the increase of the cost of living. Because of this, his wage increase didn’t really act as an increase at all. Seeing the stagnated wages in my family has made me wonder why those in corporate management are continuously getting paid more than workers like my dad.

So, why do those in corporate management make more than the workers? There are many answers to this question, but the conclusions that I have made come from personal experience. At my father’s place of employment, they have something called a two tier wage system. This means that newly hired employees make less money than those with higher seniority. Even though this makes perfect sense in regards to our capitalistic government, it creates animosity among the employees since there is no two tier system in upper management because they are all paid premium wages. Why can’t the workers receive higher wages? From what I can see, they do more labor than corporate, and still they have to make a living on wages that can’t keep up with the cost of living.

While the stagnated wages seem unfair and unjust to the workers, corporate has addressed the issue. The reasoning they gave as to why the wages of workers is stagnated is so they can pay better wages to the CEO and upper management. This happens because those in

corporate positions have management skills and ideas that the workers do not have. Since they are the ones that keep the company up and running, they should be paid premium wages. The working class does not see it that way. Corporate may have the skills to work with the money and management, but they are doing way less work than their employees. My dad sweats in a hot warehouse every day, carting around the product that other workers are producing. He has gotten injured on the job, and has worked overtime on holidays. I cannot even begin to describe how poorly my dad is treated at his job, and how many aspects of my life that he has missed out on because of his hours, and the ridiculous demands of the company. With all of this rubbish that my dad has to put up with, you would think that he should at least make enough money to keep up with the rising cost of living. I think that companies should be more compassionate to their workers and put themselves in their shoes, because with the unfairness of the wages, they must not understand what most people need to earn in order to live.

The argument has come up about how pay can be controlled. Many people like to run to the defense of the CEO, and argue that the success of the company should be rewarded with the large salary that they receive. But one thing they do not know is that only about 20% of the CEO's salary is base pay. The rest of the money that they receive comes from made up incentives by the company. These incentives are great for the people in corporate that reap the benefits of them, but it is just a waste of money in my opinion. The extra money that is being used as bonuses for upper management could be going to the workers. Even though doing that would not solve all of the issues, it would definitely make a difference.

Making ends meet has become more and more of a challenge with every passing year. Inflation has risen dramatically, and unfortunately, the wages that many people in the working class are getting paid cannot keep up with the rising cost of living. I believe that the wages of

those in the working class have stagnated because of corporate greed. Even though corporate could make positive changes in wages for the workers, they do not. They make up incentives as a way to earn more money while the working class continues to struggle. This is something that has unfortunately become a regular occurrence within companies, and it seems like corporate greed will continue until someone in power decides to make a change that will positively impact the working class.