

# FAIRNESS INITIATIVE

## *on Low-Wage Work*

The Fairness Initiative on Low-Wage Work ([www.lowwagework.org](http://www.lowwagework.org)) is a three-year-old collaborative of more than 20 non-profit and advocacy organizations working on various aspects of workforce supports for low-wage workers. The initiative is coordinated by the Communications Consortium Media Center ([www.ccmc.org](http://www.ccmc.org)). Its co-directors are CCMC Vice President Phil Sparks and author and low-wage work expert Beth Shulman ([www.lowwagework.org/Shulman.htm](http://www.lowwagework.org/Shulman.htm)).

Funded by the Ford Foundation and the Nathan Cummings Foundation, the project seeks to reframe issues relating to poverty and the working poor to articulate positive policy suggestions for building “an economy that works for all.” Part of the reframing involves an effort to focus the media’s approach to these issues not as affecting the “working poor” or “low-income workers” but, instead, as relating to low-wage work and low-wage workers. This reframe is supported by a comprehensive message development project conducted by the communications firm Douglas Gould and Company. The project, ([www.economythatworks.org](http://www.economythatworks.org)), which incorporated focus groups, polling and cognitive research was conducted prior to the creation of the Fairness Initiative.

Although the Fairness Initiative works on a wide variety of low-wage work issues, it currently focuses on three issues:

- Raising the minimum wage
- Family leave
- Improvements and expansion of the SCHIP program for children

The Fairness Initiative works with nonprofits and advocacy groups at the federal and state levels to assist planning, designing and implementing strategic media campaigns on policy change around low-wage work.

Some of the major organizations in the Fairness Initiative collaborative and their key representatives are:

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