



# CHANGE THE WORKPLACE, CHANGE THE WORLD.

## 9to5 ATLANTA

2010 Year-End Update

Founded in 1973, the **mission** of 9to5 is to build a movement to achieve economic justice, by engaging directly affected women to improve working conditions. Our **vision** is an economically just world where poverty and discrimination have been eliminated, the contributions of women are recognized and valued, and all women and their families thrive.

### Greetings from Charmaine Davis, Atlanta's New Lead Organizer

Hello 9to5 supporters!

When I first learned of 9to5, I was so excited by the opportunity to work with an organization that impacts working women's experiences in the workplace. Even before talking to 9to5 members, I was passionate about educating women in the legislative process while giving them the information and tools necessary to identify and change unjust policies and practices in the workplace.

My passion for the issues became even stronger once I started hearing the personal stories and testimonies of members affected by our issues. My heart was particularly touched by the story of new member Kayla Reid who shared the frustrating experience she had with her employer after the birth of her first child:

*"After receiving 8 weeks of maternity leave rather than the conventional 6, I was faced with a possible termination because my doctor didn't give a medical explanation as to why I needed the additional time. As a new single mother who had been employed with this company for more than three years, I was angry because I felt disposable and troubled because I was faced with bills, child-care, medical expenses and no job. As I looked at my daughter, I realized that no job should make me feel like having her was a mistake.*

**Charmaine** (Continued on page 2)

## Day of Action: Paid Sick Days Now!

### Atlanta Members and Activists Hit the Streets for Paid Sick Days

On August 26, Atlanta 9to5 members participated in a nationwide effort to raise awareness and support for paid sick days legislation The Healthy Families Act (HR 2460/SB 1152). During the *Paid Sick Days Now!* Day of Action, Atlanta 9to5 turned out 13 members on their lunch hour to canvass and educate voters about



9to5 Atlanta members collected over 220 signatures in support of the Healthy Families Act.

**The Healthy Families Act gives workers the right to support their families monetarily and to care for them when they're sick.**

the importance of this national legislation. Members collected over 220 signatures in support of paid sick days.

Currently, only 1 in 5 low-wage workers have access to paid sick days on the job. The Healthy Families Act would allow workers to earn up to seven days of paid sick leave per year to deal with their own or a family member's illness. This legislation gives workers the right to support their families monetarily and

to care for them when they're sick.

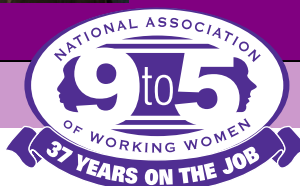
That evening, 9to5 staff and Board members hosted a Meet & Greet in the Atlanta office. Over 30 people attended to learn what they could do to help move the campaign forward. After learning about 9to5's work, Kayla Reid became a member and is now working as an intern in our Atlanta office!

In the upcoming year, 9to5 Atlanta will continue building awareness and support for national as well as state legislation in support of Flexible Sick Days.



*"Canvassing with the 9to5 National Day of Action was an eye opening experience. It was encouraging to see how many individuals really want to support paid sick days for all workers."*

-Rachel Lesperance



# Fair Eats: It's What's For Dinner

By: Jayne Mariotti, Jesuit Volunteer

As a new member of the 9to5 Atlanta staff, I was thrilled to find out that I would be working on the Fair Eats Campaign. 9to5 Atlanta's Fair Eats Campaign is a member-led project dedicated to increasing the minimum wage of \$2.13/hr for tipped workers. The federal tipped worker minimum wage has remained at \$2.13/hr – **just \$4,430 per year for a full-time worker** – since 1991. Waitresses and waiters have *three times the poverty rate* of the workforce as a whole. Launched in 2010, the Campaign grew out of the Tipped Worker Minimum Wage Committee, which was formed to bring the direct voices, experiences and needs of low-wage workers to the statewide Georgia Minimum Wage Coalition.

Not only do I know tipped workers who don't make enough money to support themselves, but I have also encountered servers here in Atlanta who are fed up with the little amount of money they are being paid. I have heard stories from women making less than \$100 a week; women working fulltime who still need to apply for food stamps. We need to make a change. These people deserve to earn a living wage.

In February, 9to5 Atlanta officially kicked off the campaign at the "Show Your Server Some Heart" press conference at Noni's restaurant in downtown Atlanta, where members shared their personal stories about struggling to make ends meet on \$2.13/hr.

Campaign goals include engaging 20-30 tipped workers as leaders, identifying 20-25 restaurants that agree to pay above the minimum, engaging 2,000 low-wage workers through the campaign, and organizing actions to hold legislators accountable. We will be asking GA Members of Congress to support the WAGES Act, (HR 2570) which would restore the federal tipped worker wage to 60% of the regular minimum wage - which would currently be \$4.35/hr. With a little help from our supporters, we will be able to achieve success and bring all tipped workers up to a fair wage.

## By the Numbers: Paid Sick Days

- 38 Percentage of U.S. workers without a single paid sick day
- 81 Percentage of low-wage workers without a single paid sick day
- 94 Number of millions of working Americans who don't have a paid sick day to care for an ill child—and cannot afford to take time off without pay.
- 86 percent of people surveyed who support paid sick days as a basic labor standard.
- 1 in 6 Number of workers who report they or a family member have been fired, disciplined or threatened with being fired for taking time off due to an illness.

Data comes from *The Work, Family, and Equity Index: How Does the United States Measure Up?*, Project on Global Working Families, 2007.



**Jayne Mariotti** is serving one year in the Jesuit Volunteer Corps. She attended the University of Scranton as a Health and Administration major. Jayne selected 9to5 because of her interests in policy and social justice and looks forward to health policy in her future plans.

**Beth Miller** is a member of the Lutheran Volunteer Corps, working with 9to5 Atlanta this year as a Chapter Organizer. She will be working on the 9to5 Job Helpline, doing outreach and advocacy campaigns, and working with the members of the Activist Network.



## 9to5 Atlanta Working Women

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To learn more about how you can support a world where women and their families thrive:

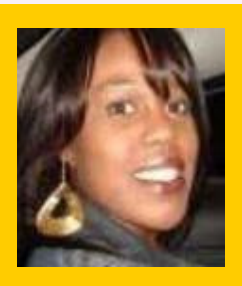
[www.9to5atlanta.org](http://www.9to5atlanta.org)

*Charmaine (Continued from page 1)*

*"This experience (helped me) understand the need for legislation . . . in support of paid sick days. I felt compelled to join an organization that boldly tackles such issues and gives a voice to people who would otherwise be unheard."*

It's stories like Kayla's that make 9to5's work so relevant. As the lead organizer, I thrive off of the enthusiasm and excitement of 9to5 members about getting involved in our paid sick days campaign.

**Charmaine Davis** joined 9to5 Atlanta in June as the chapter's Lead Organizer, and is working on the Work-Family, Election Connection and Minimum Wage campaigns. Charmaine brings great experience as a political organizer for Project Vote working on voter registration and Minimum Wage campaigns.



## Meet Our New Staff!

In addition to our new Lead Organizer Charmaine Davis, 9to5 Atlanta has also welcomed new Jesuit & Lutheran volunteers, who support 9to5 Atlanta staff and members, and are helping to broaden and strengthen the chapter's impact and reach.

