

# MARC SAVE DD Campaign

MARC (and other) workers in developmental disabilities are worthy too.

You have before you a difficult planning decision for the future of Badger Prairie. MARC believes that the community-based system has helped lower the resident population at Badger Prairie, saving countless dollars, and affording community-based living for many people. The community-based system must remain healthy to continue these savings.

A healthy community-based service system requires workers who are valued and supported. MARC workers are represented by AFSCME Local 412. Budget cuts have resulted in no raises for three years, staff layoffs, more clients, larger class sizes, declining morale, loss of line of sight supervision, employee dissatisfaction, and stress at the bargaining table. Clearly, if present trends continue, MARC's ability to provide cost-effective community-based services will be compromised, and institutional referrals may increase.

Dane County direct service staff are worthy, but MARC believes community-based direct service staff are worthy too. The purpose of this presentation is to compare compensation between the MARC Personal Care Assistant and the Badger Prairie Aid. The method used was to examine both union contracts side-by-side. The Dane County contract is available on the website. The MARC AFSCME Agreement is available to you upon request.

The MARC PCA now earns the Dane County Living Wage (currently \$8.85 for 2004). The MARC PCA used to earn more than the Living Wage, but inadequate annual COLA's pulled the MARC PCA wage down to the Living Wage level.

The analysis indicates that a few years ago MARC staff made about 67% of Badger Prairie staff earnings. Now MARC PCA's earn 57% of Badger Prairie staff earnings. Our concern is that the gap in compensation is growing.

Our calculations indicate that a Badger Prairie Aid hired January first 2003 will earn \$30,419 in 2004, while a MARC PCA will only earn \$17,258, or 57% of what a Badger Prairie Aid earns. Future projections indicate a growing gap. By 2007 the MARC PCA will only earn 52% of what a Badger Prairie Aid earns.

Our analysis indicates that the wage disparity alone is growing annually by as much as \$.45 per year. We believe that by 2010 the Badger Prairie Aid may earn fully twice what a MARC PCA earns for similar work.

We recommend:

1. The study to determine the prospective future role of Badger Prairie consider the need for a healthy community-based system to reduce institutionalization and associated costs
2. The relationship between Badger Prairie wages and community-based wages be monitored
3. That community-based direct service workers be valued for the contribution they make to the Dane County economy

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