

## Towns and non-profits outpace state and federal pay

I RECENTLY LOOKED at city versus state salaries, and found a huge difference between Manchester, which has 165 employees earning more than \$100,000 per year, and the entire group of unclassified state executives, where just 103 out of about 10,000 state employees earn salaries exceeding \$100,000.

Many have asked about town pay levels. While I surveyed all of the cities, I did not have the time or patience to investigate every town in New Hampshire, but looking at some of the larger towns is quite revealing. Salem leads the list with 53 employees making more than \$100,000 per year, followed by Derry at 23, and Londonderry at 10. Bedford only has four employees above \$100,000, with just three in Merrimack. The town administrators in Goffstown and Bow make more than \$100,000. The New Hampshire Municipal Association pays its executive director more than \$140,000.

The big difference is the nonprofit world. Every hospital in this state pays more than \$100,000 a year to its chief executives, with 2014 pay levels more than \$1 million for Mary Hitchcock and the Elliot. The head of little rural Weeks Memorial in Lancaster made \$225,000 that year.

But stay tuned. That constantly pleading for money nonprofit called New Hampshire Public Radio doesn't skimp at the top. Its CEO made \$263,430 during 2015, including a \$34,366 bonus. Not bad when the secretary of the U.S. Department of Defense is paid \$199,700.

Perhaps there is an inverse formula of more money at the top the fewer employees you have? That might explain why NPR in Washington paid 25 executives more than \$200,000, while the U.S. secretary of state gets less than that.

If we look at the very lucrative field of education, we find Dartmouth pays

862 employees more than \$100,000 and the University of New Hampshire does the same for 654. UNH President Huddleston got \$405,000 and a bonus of \$108,000, plus free housing. The country's President is only paid \$400,000, plus housing.

The autonomous New Hampshire Retirement System, providing benefits to state and local government employees, has pay scales higher than state department heads. Its executive director got \$248,600 in 2014, while its director of investments earned \$214,900. Three others earn more than \$100,000, but the NHRS is not part of the state executive branch.

It is obvious that state and federal department head salaries are far out of scale, if we are to retain and recruit the best and brightest to run the government.

But what about the private sector that pays the tuition, taxes, and checks to charities? New Hampshire had 577,800 total private employees in 2016. According to the New Hampshire Department of Employment Security, their total average weekly wage was \$869, or \$45,188 a year.

But according to MIT statistics, to have a living wage for a family of two adults and two children would require a private income of \$75,078 a year in New Hampshire.

The charity and nonprofit pay levels show that if you are doing good, you are also doing very well.

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### Another View

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