

A new no-tip wage system comes to FoCo restaurant William Oliver's Publick House

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The owners of [William Oliver's Publick House](#), a pub on Timberline Road and Drake Road, did something unprecedented in Fort Collins: its employees now do not accept tips.

Instead of earning a small hourly wage and splitting tips, like is common in restaurants, employees now receive a higher hourly wage between \$15 to \$25 an hour, and all proceeds from tips left behind are donated to charity.

In the last week with this new wage plan, William Oliver's has raised almost \$400 for charity, according to Ryan Wallace.

"I would say our biggest benefactor would be Respite Care," Wallace said. [Respite Care](#) is a charity that works with children, and the families of children, who have mental or physical disabilities.

"It fits our idea of raising a community because it allows for us to have a more wholesome community and it allows people with disabilities, especially children, to grow up learning that their disabilities will not define them if they do not let it," Wallace said.

As a customer steps into the restaurant, a warm, welcoming environment invites them in, as a mouthwatering aroma of bacon fills the air. Besides being a whiskey neighborhood pub, the owners of William Oliver's, Ryan and Tiffany Wallace, have created a tight-knit business that is committed to community and charity.

The William Oliver's restaurant works closely with two other charities, [Partners Mentoring Youth](#) and the [Firefighter Community Compassion Fund](#).

"The thing I probably say the most is that the idea of the rising tide raises all ships," Wallace said. "If we can figure out how to get our community to be bigger and better, then everybody within our community will be bigger and better and we'll have to ability to lift everyone up with us."

According to Wallace, this decision — the first like it in Fort Collins — was thought over for many months, and at first, employees were nervous for the change.

"Our long-standing employees recognized that Tiffany and I are not greedy," Wallace said. "We are not in this for ourselves, we really do have a community and a family mentality, and we believe that the people that work with us are a part of that extended family."

Wallace held group and one-on-one meetings to listen to the concerns of his employees.

"This community is all about giving it back and paying it forward," said Bryan Smith, a bartender at William Oliver's. "So, I think what Ryan and Tiff are doing is right up the alley of what Fort Collins does."

William Oliver's is the only restaurant and pub in Fort Collins to adopt this new wage plan.

Although excess is donated to charity, the Wallace's had their employees in mind when making this shift. Since their opening, unlike many restaurants, William Oliver's has offered paid time off, retirement plans, bonuses and health benefits. True wage, according to Wallace, was the last step in making their business a professional company and a professional career choice for their employees.

"If they do this for five years or ten years and they decide to switch industries, I want this to be a relevant experience for them," Wallace said. "That [this job] means something to their career path and it wasn't just something [they] did to get through."

The new model also allows employees to have a steady, predictable income that allows for a flexible work schedule and will not cause employees to lose money for taking time off on busy nights.

"I took a month off and I realized how much of a community this place really is," said Kyle Bobkowski, a chef at William Oliver's. "I'm friends with most of the regulars here and they're the closest thing I have to a family in Fort Collins, we're doing something really cool here."

Between bacon, charity and whiskey, William Oliver's also tries to buy most of its products from Colorado businesses. William Oliver's receives products from 16 Colorado businesses and one southern Wyoming business. All of the non-whiskey spirits are produced here in Colorado, excluding tequila, which they still try to receive from a Denver-based company.

"Keeping it local helps our economy, it helps our businesses, [it] helps you, [it] helps me," Smith said. "The more we purchase local, the better it is for the people in this community."

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Ryan Wallace, owner of William Oliver's on Drake and Timberline road, presents the newly remodeled bar back of the pub and eatery with over 300 unique bottles, and besides some whiskeys all of which are made locally in Colorado. (Photo credit: Topher Brancaccio).

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