



WNY WOMEN'S FOUNDATION FACT SHEET



WOMEN OF COLOR

Compiled in June 2019

WOC in Leadership Roles

- Just 1 in 5 C-suite executives is a woman—and fewer than 1 in 30 is a woman of color (U.S.)¹

WOC in Business in Buffalo

- In 2017, the comptroller's office gave the city a D+ on MWBEs (Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprises), finding that only 4.9% of the \$21 billion procurement budget went to MWBEs in the 2016-17 fiscal year.²
- State MWBE contracts rose from 27.20% in the 2016-17 fiscal year to 28.62% in the 2017-18 fiscal year.²

Wage gap

- In 1979, young black women had a median wage of \$13.43, and earned 77 cents for every dollar that black men did. Following the same trend as young black men, the median wage of black women also decreased during the ensuing years, although much more slowly. Black women's median wage fell to \$12.01 in 1997, increased to \$14.41 in 2004, and then fell again to \$12.35 in 2014 (an 8.0 percent decrease compared to 1979). However, since black men's median wage decreased more dramatically over this entire period, the gender pay gap for blacks still narrowed, with young black women earning 95 cents for every dollar earned by young black men in 2014.³
- In 1979, the median wage of young white women was \$14.43, \$1.00 more than black women. During the same year, white women earned 68 cents for every dollar earned by white men. Unlike others who saw their wages decrease over the next 15 years, white women actually saw a slight increase in their wages to \$14.85 in 1997. Their wages rose sharply during the 1990s boom, peaking at \$17.31 in 2003. Since then, white women's median wage has decreased much more slowly than others, falling to \$16.25 in 2014, but still remaining \$3.90 higher than black women's wages. In 2014, young white women earned 89 cents for every dollar earned by young white men, due in large part to the declining wages of white men.³
- In 1979, the median wage of young college-educated black women was \$18.23, and they earned 80 cents for every dollar earned by young black college educated men. After stagnant wages leading up to the mid-1990s, young black women with college degrees saw significant wage increases until the early 2000s, and then their wages began to decrease again. In 2014, young college-educated black women had a median wage of \$18.50, and they earned 96 cents for every dollar earned by black men with college degrees.³
- In 1979, the median wage for young white women with college degrees was \$18.23, and they earned 78 cents for every dollar earned by white men. They enjoyed steady wage increases until 1990, when their median wage was \$21.07. After about five years of mostly stagnant wages, their median wage increased steadily, peaking at \$22.76 in 2002, after which their wages began to fall. In 2014, the median wage of young college-educated white women was \$21.47, and they

¹ The Bad, the Ugly, and the Good

² https://issuu.com/cityandstate/docs/csnv_10292018_webissue/38 pages 37-44

³ Young Black America Part Four: The Wrong Way to Close the Gender Wage Gap



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earned 89 cents for every dollar earned by white men. White women with college degrees also earned \$2.97 more than black women with college degrees in 2014.³

- Black women's median annual earnings (\$34,000 for those who work full-time, year-round) lag behind most women's and men's earnings in the United States.⁴
- Between 2004 and 2014, Black women's real median annual earnings declined by 5.0 percent. As of 2014, Black women who worked full-time, year-round had median annual earnings that were 64.6 percent of White men's (\$53,000). In Louisiana, the state with the largest gap in earnings between Black women and White men, Black women earned less than half of White men's earnings (46.3 percent).⁴

Civic Engagement

- Black women vote at comparatively high rates and had a higher voting rate than all other groups of men and women during the last two presidential elections.⁴

Women as elected officials

- In 2014, Black women composed 6.4 percent of the United States population, but as of August 2016 held only 3.4 percent of seats in the United States Congress and no seats in the U.S. Senate. In state legislatures, Black women held just 3.5 percent of seats. Only two Black women in the country held a position in statewide executive elected office.⁴

Workforce

- More than six in ten (62.2 percent) Black women are in the workforce, making them one of the two racial/ethnic groups of women with the highest labor force participation rate among women and the only group of women with a higher labor force participation rate than their male counterparts.⁴
- About 28 percent of employed Black women work in service occupations, the occupational group with the lowest wages. Jobs in this broad occupational group often lack important benefits such as paid sick days.⁴

Finances

- Eight out of ten (80.6 percent) Black mothers are breadwinners, who are either the sole earner or earn at least 40 percent of household income.⁴

Childcare

- In all but two states in the country, the average costs of child care exceed 20 percent of Black women's median annual earnings.⁴

Health

- While health insurance coverage rates have increased substantially due to the implementation of the 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA), 16.5 percent of nonelderly Black women in the United States still lacked coverage as of 2014.⁴

⁴ Status of Black Women 2017



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- Black women's average annual heart disease mortality rate declined by 38.5 percent between 1999 and 2013, although at 177.7 per 100,000 it remains the highest rate among the largest racial and ethnic groups of women.⁴
- Black women have the second highest lung cancer mortality rate among the largest racial and ethnic groups of women (35.7 per 100,000), behind White women (39.9 per 100,000), while having the highest breast cancer mortality rate among all racial and ethnic groups of women (30.2 per 100,000).⁴
- Black women's average incidence of AIDS is five times higher than any other racial and ethnic group of women.⁴
- However, incidence of AIDS among Black women decreased by 45.1 percent between 2000 and 2013.⁴

Education

- Between 2004 and 2014, the share of Black women with a bachelor's degree or higher increased by 23.9 percent, making Black women the group of women with the second-largest improvement in attainment of higher education during the decade.⁴
- In 2014, about 22 percent of Black women aged 25 and older had bachelor's degrees or higher. Black women had higher levels of education than Black men (17 percent), but lower levels of education than Asian/Pacific Islander men and women, men and women of another race or two or more races, and White men and women.⁴
- Black girls composed 45 percent of girls suspended from K-12 schools between 2011 and 2012.⁴

Entrepreneurs

- The number of businesses owned by Black women increased by 178 percent between 2002 and 2012, the largest increase among all racial and ethnic groups of women and men.⁴
- In 2012, Black women owned 15.4 percent of all women owned businesses in the United States, a larger share than their share of the female population (12.7 percent). In the District of Columbia, Mississippi, and Georgia, Black women own more than 40 percent of all women owned businesses. Yet, nationwide, businesses owned by Black women had the lowest average sales per firm among all racial and ethnic groups of women and men, at \$27,753.⁴

Poverty

- Black women experience poverty at higher rates than Black men and women from all other racial/ethnic groups except Native American women.⁴
- A quarter of Black women in the United States live in poverty (24.6 percent), compared with 18.9 percent of Black men and 10.8 percent of White women, who have the lowest poverty rate among women.⁴

Abuse

- More than 40 percent of Black women experience physical violence by an intimate partner during their lifetimes (41.2 percent), compared with 31.5 percent of all women.⁴

Incarceration



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- Black women of all ages were twice as likely to be imprisoned as White women in 2014 (109 per 100,000 Black women were imprisoned in state and federal prisons compared with 53 per 100,000 White women).⁴
- Among young women, the disparity is especially pronounced: Black women aged 18-19 are four times as likely to be imprisoned as White women of the same age (32 per 100,000 compared with 8 per 100,000).⁴