



THE STATUS OF  
**Women**  
in Hawai'i

The Institute for Women's Policy Research  
and Women's Fund of Hawai'i | November 2017

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**Women**  
in Hawai'i

Julie Anderson, MA | Emma Williams-Baron

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# About This Report

## ABOUT THE INSTITUTE FOR WOMEN'S POLICY RESEARCH

The Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR) conducts rigorous research and disseminates its findings to address the needs of women, promote public dialogue, and strengthen families, communities, and societies. The Institute's research strives to give voice to the needs of women from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds across the income spectrum and to ensure that their perspectives enter the public debate on ending discrimination and inequality, improving opportunity, and increasing economic security for women and families. The Institute works with policymakers, scholars, and public interest groups to design, execute, and disseminate research and to build a diverse network of individuals and organizations that conduct and use women-oriented policy research. IWPR's work is supported by foundation grants, government grants and contracts, donations from individuals, and contributions from organizations and corporations. IWPR is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization that also works in affiliation with the women's studies and public policy and public administration programs at The George Washington University.

## ABOUT WOMEN'S FUND OF HAWAI'I

Women's Fund of Hawai'i (WFH) focuses on making lasting social change through empowering women and girls in Hawai'i. Through grants to innovative, grassroots programs that empower women and girls, WFH addresses issues such as financial security, safety, self-esteem, adolescent pregnancy, physical and mental health, substance abuse, prostitution, incarceration, immigration status, sexual orientation, inadequate child care, and sports inequalities.

**The Status of Women in Hawai'i** was commissioned by Women's Fund of Hawai'i to explore factors related to women's access to opportunity, employment and earnings, economic security, and personal safety. The report builds on the Institute for Women's Policy Research's long-standing report series, **The Status of Women in the States**, which has provided data on the status of women nationally and for all 50 states plus the District of Columbia since 1996. **The Status of Women in the States** publications use data from U.S. government and other sources to analyze women's status across multiple issue areas. These reports have been used to highlight women's progress and the obstacles they continue to face and to encourage policy and programmatic changes that can improve women's opportunities.

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## Introduction

Women in Hawai'i have a distinct history, culture, and identity that shapes their status in ways that differ from other states. In the United States overall, the largest racial and ethnic groups are White, Hispanic, and Black, accounting for over 90 percent of the population of women of all ages in the country (Institute for Women's Policy Research 2017a). In Hawai'i, only 29.1 percent of women identify as White, Hispanic, or Black, while 60.3 percent identify as Asian/Pacific Islander (compared with 5.6 percent of women in the United States overall; Appendix Table 3). The state is also one of only seven states where men outnumber women (Institute for Women's Policy Research 2017b).

Like many women in the United States, women in Hawai'i have made great progress over the past several decades—more women are graduating from college and moving into higher-paying jobs than ever before, and the gender wage gap is narrowing. Despite these improvements, however, women in Hawai'i and across the country continue to be paid less than men and are more likely than men to live in poverty, suffer from poor mental health, and experience intimate partner and sexual violence.



The state is one of only seven states where men outnumber women

A closer look at women's economic security and access to opportunity also reveals that not all women are benefitting equally from the progress that has been made; wide disparities by race and ethnicity persist.

**The Status of Women in Hawai'i** provides data to identify areas where women in Hawai'i have progressed and areas where further improvement and intervention are required. The report includes composite indices on **Employment & Earnings and Poverty & Opportunity**, which capture women's status in these domains and are used as a basis to rank and grade each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The report also provides data on women's mental health and victimization from violence, explores trends over time and, whenever possible, examines differences by race and ethnicity.

In recognition of Hawai'i's unique racial and ethnic context, this report analyzes, when sample sizes permit, data for eleven groups: White, Native Hawaiian, Filipino, Japanese, Hispanic, Chinese, Pacific Islander, Korean, Black, and those who identify with another Asian group or with another race or two or more races (Appendix Table 6). As a resource for advocates, philanthropists, policymakers, and other stakeholders, the report provides the research and analysis necessary to make data-driven decisions about how to prioritize investments, programs, and public policies. It concludes with recommendations to ensure that all women in Hawai'i can thrive.

# Employment & Earnings



Across the United States, families and communities increasingly rely on women's earnings. In Hawai'i, nearly 60 percent of women aged 16 and older are in the labor force, a growing share of women are in managerial or professional occupations, and women are breadwinners in nearly half of households with children under the age of 18 (Hess et al. 2015).<sup>1</sup> Despite their contributions to the state and national economy, women in Hawai'i who work full-time, year-round earn just 81 cents for every dollar earned by their male counterparts (Table 1). For many women of color, the wage gap is even wider (Table 3).

<sup>1</sup> Breadwinner mothers are those with children under the age of 18 who are either single mothers or married mothers who contribute at least 40 percent of the couple's joint earnings.



## The Employment & Earnings Composite Score

The Employment & Earnings Composite Index is comprised of four indicators used to compare, rank, and grade states: median annual earnings for women aged 16 and older who work full-time, year-round; the earnings ratio between women and men employed full-time, year-round; the percent of women in the labor force; and the percent of employed women who work in managerial or professional occupations. States' scores on the Employment & Earnings Composite Index range from 3.50 to 5.35, with higher scores indicating better performance in this domain and corresponding to better letter grades (Table 2; see the Methodology for an explanation of how the Index is calculated and grades are assigned).

- Hawai'i earns a grade of B- and a national ranking of 17th on the Employment & Earnings Composite Index (Table 2).
- Hawai'i ranks in the best third in the nation for women's median annual earnings (ranking 16th), and in the middle third for the gender earnings ratio, the percent of women in the workforce, and the share of employed women in managerial or professional occupations (Table 2).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The comparatively high earnings of women in some states are, to some extent, offset by higher costs of living in these areas. In general, places such as Hawai'i, Alaska, the West Coast, and the Northeast have higher costs of living than the Midwestern and Southern states (Missouri Economic Research and Information Center 2017).

## Trends for Women's Employment & Earnings in Hawai'i

Since IWPR published the 2004 *Status of Women in the States*, Hawai'i's rank on the Employment & Earnings Composite Index has dropped slightly, from 16th to 17th in the nation (Caiazza et al. 2004: Table 2).<sup>3</sup> Hawai'i has improved on two of the component indicators, and declined on two (Table 2):

- The median annual earnings for women employed full-time, year-round rose slightly from \$39,500 in 2003, adjusted for inflation, to \$40,000 in 2015. This near stagnation aligns with the national trend; women's wages have remained fairly constant since the early 2000s (Hess et al. 2015).
- The gender wage ratio widened from 83.4 percent in the 2004 publication to 81.0 percent in 2015, meaning that women working full-time, year-round earned 81 cents for every dollar that men employed full-time, year-round earned.
- The percent of women in the labor force decreased between 2002 and 2015, from 60.8 percent to 59.6 percent.
- The percent of employed women in managerial or professional occupations grew by nearly 10 percentage points, from 30.3 percent of employed women in 2001 to 40.2 percent in 2015.

<sup>3</sup> The 2004 *Status of Women in the States* used Current Population Survey earnings data from 2001-2002, the labor force participation rate in 2002, and occupational data from 2001.

**TABLE 1**

Hawai'i's Progress on Key Indicators of Women's Employment & Earnings

	2004 Status of Women in the States	2017 Status of Women in Hawai'i	Has the State Made Progress?
Median Annual Earnings for Women Employed Full-Time, Year-Round	\$39,500	\$40,000	Yes
Earnings Ratio Between Women and Men Employed Full-Time, Year-Round	83.4%	81.0%	No
Percent of Women in the Labor Force	60.8%	59.6%	No
Percent of All Employed Women in Managerial or Professional Occupations	30.3%	40.2%	Yes

Note: Aged 16 and older. Median annual earnings from the 2004 report are adjusted for inflation to 2015 dollars.

Source: 2004 data are from Caiazza et al. (2004). All other data are IWPR analysis of American Community Survey microdata (Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Version 6.0).

**TABLE 2**

How Hawai'i Measures Up: Women's Status on the Employment & Earnings Composite Index and Its Components, 2015

State	Composite Index			Median Annual Earnings for Women Employed Full-Time, Year-Round		Earnings Ratio Between Women and Men Employed Full-Time, Year-Round		Percent of Women in the Labor Force		Percent of All Employed Women in Managerial or Professional Occupations	
	Score	Rank	Grade	Dollars	Rank	Percent	Rank	Percent	Rank	Percent	Rank
Alabama	3.63	46	D-	\$33,700	45	74.9%	42	52.3%	50	38.9%	35
Alaska	4.17	13	B	\$44,200	8	80.4%	23	63.9%	5	39.1%	33
Arizona	3.83	32	D+	\$37,000	24	82.2%	13	54.1%	46	38.5%	41
Arkansas	3.65	45	D-	\$32,000	47	80.0%	24	53.2%	49	38.1%	44
California	4.13	15	B-	\$43,000	11	86.0%	6	56.9%	38	40.7%	23
Colorado	4.23	10	B	\$41,000	15	82.0%	14	62.5%	11	45.1%	8
Connecticut	4.46	4	B+	\$50,000	2	82.0%	15	61.9%	15	45.9%	5
Delaware	4.34	6	B+	\$45,000	6	90.0%	1	58.3%	28	44.6%	10
District of Columbia	5.35	1	A	\$62,000	1	88.6%	2	68.1%	1	62.4%	1
Florida	3.83	32	D+	\$35,000	33	87.5%	3	54.2%	44	37.9%	46
Georgia	3.89	26	C	\$36,000	27	80.0%	24	58.0%	30	40.6%	24
Hawai'i	4.02	17	B-	\$40,000	16	81.0%	21	59.6%	22	40.2%	26
Idaho	3.57	49	F	\$31,600	50	71.8%	48	57.6%	35	36.3%	50
Illinois	4.00	19	C+	\$40,000	16	76.9%	35	60.0%	19	41.2%	20
Indiana	3.73	41	D	\$35,000	33	75.1%	40	58.5%	26	37.3%	47
Iowa	3.82	35	D+	\$35,000	33	72.9%	46	63.0%	10	38.9%	35
Kansas	3.88	27	C	\$35,600	32	73.4%	44	61.9%	15	41.3%	17
Kentucky	3.77	40	D+	\$35,000	33	81.4%	19	54.2%	44	38.7%	39
Louisiana	3.59	47	D-	\$33,000	46	66.0%	50	55.9%	41	40.0%	27
Maine	3.94	24	C+	\$36,400	26	79.1%	28	59.7%	21	41.3%	17
Maryland	4.57	2	B+	\$50,000	2	83.3%	9	63.1%	8	48.7%	2
Massachusetts	4.55	3	B+	\$50,000	2	82.0%	15	63.1%	8	48.6%	3
Michigan	3.81	37	D+	\$37,800	23	75.6%	39	56.9%	38	38.5%	41
Minnesota	4.27	8	B	\$42,000	13	80.8%	22	66.1%	2	43.7%	12
Mississippi	3.50	51	F	\$30,000	51	75.0%	41	53.4%	48	36.6%	49
Missouri	3.83	32	D+	\$35,000	33	77.8%	33	58.5%	26	40.0%	27
Montana	3.86	28	C	\$34,100	42	75.8%	38	58.0%	30	43.6%	13
Nebraska	4.01	18	C+	\$36,000	27	80.0%	24	64.9%	3	40.6%	24
Nevada	3.72	43	D	\$36,000	27	85.7%	8	58.0%	30	30.8%	51
New Hampshire	4.27	8	B	\$43,200	10	78.5%	31	63.2%	7	46.0%	4
New Jersey	4.42	5	B+	\$50,000	2	83.3%	9	60.0%	19	44.9%	9
New Mexico	3.85	29	C	\$35,000	33	87.5%	3	53.5%	47	39.2%	32
New York	4.30	7	B	\$45,000	6	86.5%	5	58.7%	25	44.3%	11
North Carolina	3.92	25	C	\$35,000	33	83.3%	9	57.0%	37	41.8%	16
North Dakota	3.96	23	C+	\$38,000	21	76.0%	37	64.8%	4	38.8%	37
Ohio	3.84	30	C-	\$37,000	24	74.0%	43	59.1%	24	39.7%	30
Oklahoma	3.59	47	D-	\$32,000	47	73.2%	45	55.1%	43	38.0%	45
Oregon	3.99	21	C+	\$39,000	20	81.3%	20	57.7%	34	41.2%	20
Pennsylvania	4.00	19	C+	\$40,000	16	80.0%	24	57.8%	33	41.3%	17
Rhode Island	4.23	10	B	\$43,000	11	86.0%	6	60.6%	18	42.3%	15
South Carolina	3.78	39	D+	\$34,000	43	81.7%	17	55.4%	42	39.1%	33
South Dakota	3.82	35	D+	\$34,000	43	79.1%	29	62.3%	12	37.2%	48
Tennessee	3.81	37	D+	\$35,000	33	81.6%	18	56.3%	40	38.5%	41
Texas	3.84	30	C-	\$36,000	27	78.3%	32	57.5%	36	39.7%	30
Utah	3.72	43	D	\$35,000	33	70.0%	49	59.3%	23	38.8%	37
Vermont	4.20	12	B	\$39,500	19	82.3%	12	62.2%	14	45.4%	7
Virginia	4.17	13	B	\$42,000	13	76.4%	36	60.9%	17	45.8%	6
Washington	4.13	15	B-	\$44,000	9	78.6%	30	58.2%	29	42.7%	14
West Virginia	3.54	50	F	\$32,000	47	72.7%	47	48.2%	51	41.0%	22
Wisconsin	3.99	21	C+	\$38,000	21	77.6%	34	63.4%	6	40.0%	27
Wyoming	3.73	41	D	\$36,000	27	65.5%	51	62.3%	12	38.6%	40
United States				\$39,900		79.8%		58.1%		41.1%	

Note: Aged 16 and older. Sources: IWPR analysis of American Community Survey microdata (Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Version 6.0).

## Women's Earnings

Families in Hawai'i depend on women's earnings for economic security. Nearly half (48.9 percent) of all Hawai'i households with children under 18 have a breadwinner mother; almost two in five (39.3 percent) of those households are headed by a single mother (Hess et al. 2015).<sup>4</sup>

In 2015, the earnings of women in Hawai'i aged 16 and older who worked full-time, year-round were similar to the national average (\$40,000 compared with \$39,900; Table 2). Women in Hawai'i earn much less, however, than women in the highest-earning jurisdictions of the District of Columbia (\$62,000) and Connecticut, Maryland, Massachusetts, and New Jersey (\$50,000; Table 2). To put earnings into perspective, it is important to consider the local cost of living; Hawai'i has the highest cost of living of any state in the nation (Missouri Economic Research and Information Center 2017). The Basic Economic Security Tables (BEST) Index calculates that a single worker in Hawai'i with employer-provided benefits, such as health insurance and a retirement plan, would require \$44,451 annually to meet their basic needs. In other words, women's median annual earnings of \$40,000 are not enough for a single woman in Hawai'i without dependents to cover basic necessities (Institute for Women's Policy Research 2017b).<sup>5</sup> For a single worker with an infant, the BEST Index is \$68,875, and for two workers with a preschooler it is \$86,716.

Women's earnings in Hawai'i, as in the United States overall, vary widely by race and ethnicity. Among the largest racial and ethnic groups in Hawai'i, Japanese, White, and Korean women all have earnings well above the average for women (\$48,000, \$46,000, and \$43,800, respectively; Table 3). Filipinas and Native Hawaiian women have the lowest earnings (\$33,000 and \$37,000).

<sup>4</sup> In households with children under 18, a breadwinner mother is defined as a single mother who is the main householder, irrespective of earnings, or a married mother who earns at least 40 percent of the couple's joint earnings; single mothers who live in someone else's household (such as with their parents) are not included.

<sup>5</sup> Developed as an alternative to the poverty measure, the Basic Economic Security Tables (BEST) Index is designed to better reflect a conservative estimate of the income required to meet basic needs without public or private assistance. BEST budgets include two types of basic savings that promote long-term and intergenerational economic security: monthly emergency savings, which protect families from unforeseen expenses, and retirement savings, which help workers achieve economic security in retirement. The BEST budget includes state or county costs for housing, utilities, food, transportation, child care, personal and household items, health care, emergency savings, retirement savings, taxes, and tax credits. There are no "extras," such as vacations, entertainment, electronics, gifts, or dining out included in the BEST budget. Costs are based on the number of workers in a household, factoring in whether or not they receive employer-sponsored benefits (health insurance, retirement plan, and access to unemployment insurance), as well as the number and ages of children. Data are adjusted to 2015 dollars.

## The Gender Wage Gap

Despite women's growing presence in the labor force, the gap between women and men's earnings persists and has remained mostly stagnant since 2000 (Hess et al. 2015). In the United States, women working full-time and year-round earn 79.8 cents for every dollar earned by men employed full-time, year-round (Table 2). The gender earnings ratio in Hawai'i is similar, with women employed full-time, year-round earning 81.0 percent of the amount men earn; Hawai'i ranks 21st in the nation on the wage gap measure (Table 2). If progress toward pay equity continues at the same pace it has since 1959, the gender wage gap in Hawai'i will not close until 2051 (Institute for Women's Policy Research 2017c).

The size of the wage gap in Hawai'i, as in every state, varies by race and ethnicity. When compared with the earnings of White men in Hawai'i, the largest group in the state's labor force, Japanese women have the narrowest wage ratio (92.2 percent), followed by White women (88.4 percent) and Korean women (84.1 percent; Table 3). Filipinas in the state earn only 63.4 percent of the amount White men earn, Native Hawaiian women earn 71.1 percent, and Hispanic women earn 74.9 percent of White men's earnings.



**TABLE 3**

Median Annual Earnings by Race/Ethnicity and the Gender Earnings Ratio, Hawai'i, 2015

	Median Annual Earnings for Women Employed Full-Time, Year-Round	Median Annual Earnings for Men Employed Full-Time, Year-Round	Earnings Ratio Between Women and White Men Employed Full-Time, Year-Round
White	\$46,000	\$52,050	88.4%
Native Hawaiian	\$37,000	\$45,000	71.1%
Filipino	\$33,000	\$38,200	63.4%
Japanese	\$48,000	\$56,000	92.2%
Other Race or Two or More Races	\$40,000	\$50,000	76.8%
Hispanic	\$39,000	\$40,000	74.9%
Chinese	\$41,000	\$50,000	78.8%
Other Asian	\$40,000	\$45,000	76.8%
Pacific Islander	N/A	\$28,800	N/A
Korean	\$43,800	N/A	84.1%
Black	N/A	\$44,700	N/A
			All Women to All Men
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$40,000</b>	<b>\$49,400</b>	<b>81.0%</b>

Notes: Aged 16 and older. Data for all women and men are from 2015; data by race and ethnicity are calculated using three years of data (2013-2015). Racial groups except Native Hawaiian are non-Hispanic. Those who identify as Native Hawaiian in combination with another race or ethnicity are included in Native Hawaiian. Those of two or more Asian races are included in "Other Asian."

Source: IWPR analysis of American Community Survey microdata (Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Version 6.0).

If women were paid the same as comparable men the total earnings increase added up across all working women in the state would be \$2.4 billion

### The Economic Impact of Equal Pay

The lower earnings of women relative to men not only results in lower lifetime pay for women and less income for them and their families, but also affects state and national economies. If working women in Hawai'i aged 18 and older were paid the same as comparable men—men who are of the same age, have the same level of education, work the same number of hours, and have the same urban/rural status—the average earnings increase would be \$7,249, which translates to an 18.6 percent raise (Institute for Women's Policy Research 2017d). When added to Hawai'i women's median annual earnings of \$40,000, the additional earnings would be enough for single women without children to more than cover their basic living expenses of \$44,451.<sup>6</sup> The total earnings increase added up across all working women in the state would be \$2.4 billion, which is equivalent to 2.8 percent of Hawai'i's gross domestic product in 2016.

<sup>6</sup> Basic living expenses as calculated by the Basic Economic Security Tables (BEST) Index. See footnote 5 for details.



### Women's Participation in the Labor Force

Between 1950 and 2015, the share of American women aged 16 and older who were either employed or actively looking for work increased from one-third (33.9 percent) to nearly three out of five women (Fullerton 1999; Table 2). In Hawai'i, women are less likely than men to be in the labor force (59.6 percent of women compared with 71.0 percent of men; Table 2; Appendix Table 1). Nearly one in four (23.3 percent) women in Hawai'i who work part-time do so because of child care problems or other personal or family obligations, suggesting that caregiving curtails women's participation, or full-time participation, in the labor force (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2015).<sup>7</sup> Like most states, Hawai'i does not have paid leave legislation, and few low-wage workers receive benefits such as paid family and medical leave, paid sick days, or predictable schedules (Klerman, Daley, and Pozniak 2014; Lambert, Fugiel, and Henly 2014; O'Connor, Hayes, and Gault 2014; Watson and Swanberg 2011). The lack of policies to support those balancing work with caregiving, the majority of whom are women, can undermine women's efforts to remain in the workforce.

Hawai'i ranks 22nd among the 50 states and the District of Columbia for women's labor force participation (Table 2). Among women from the largest racial and ethnic groups in the state, labor force participation rates vary (Figure 1). Black women have the highest labor force participation rate (72.0 percent), followed by Filipinas (67.4 percent). Korean women have the lowest labor force participation rate (44.5 percent; Figure 1).

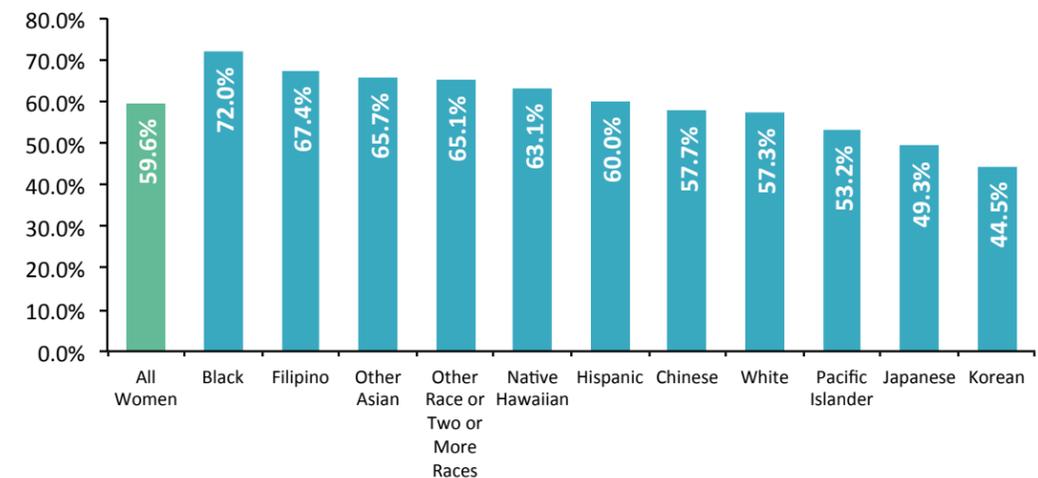
<sup>7</sup> In contrast, only 4.3 percent of men in Hawai'i report working part-time due to childcare problems or personal or family obligations.

The lack of policies to support those balancing work with caregiving, the majority of whom are women, can undermine women's efforts to remain in the workforce



**FIGURE 1**

Women's Labor Force Participation Rate in Hawai'i, by Race/Ethnicity, 2015



Notes: Aged 16 and older. Data for all women are from 2015; data by race and ethnicity are calculated using three years of data (2013-2015). Racial groups except Native Hawaiian are non-Hispanic. Those who identify as Native Hawaiian in combination with another race or ethnicity are included in Native Hawaiian. Those of two or more Asian races are included in "Other Asian."

Source: IWPR analysis of American Community Survey microdata (Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Version 6.0).

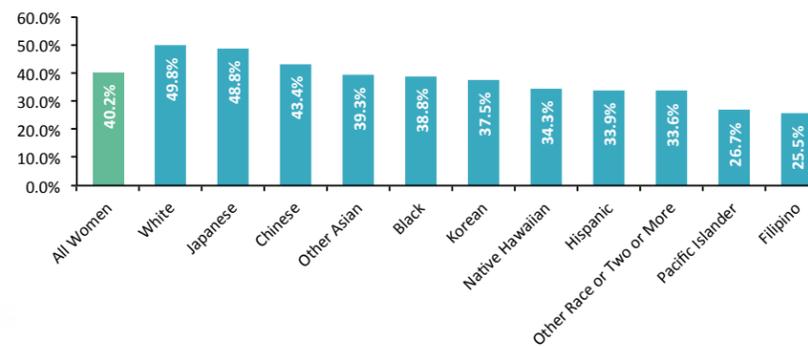
## Women in Managerial and Professional Occupations

Managerial and professional occupations include a wide array of occupations—managers, lawyers, doctors and nurses, teachers, accountants, engineers, and software developers—that generally require at least a bachelor’s degree. Women who work in managerial or professional occupations earn less than men in these occupations, but typically have higher earnings than women employed in other occupations (Hess et al. 2015).

Among employed women in Hawai‘i, 40.2 percent are in managerial and professional occupations, earning the state a rank of 26th in the nation (Table 2). The share of employed women in Hawai‘i in these occupations is slightly below the national average (41.1 percent), but is higher than the share of employed men in Hawai‘i in managerial or professional occupations (29.4 percent; Appendix Table 1). The percentage of employed women in managerial or professional occupations varies by race and ethnicity. About one in four employed Filipina and Pacific Islander women in Hawai‘i hold managerial or professional jobs (25.5 and 26.7 percent, respectively), compared with nearly half of Japanese and White women (48.8 and 49.8 percent, respectively), and nearly half of Japanese and White women (48.8 and 49.8 percent; Figure 2).

**FIGURE 2**

Share of Employed Women in Managerial or Professional Occupations in Hawai‘i, by Race/Ethnicity, 2015



Notes: Aged 16 and older. Data for all women are from 2015; data by race and ethnicity are calculated using three years of data (2013-2015). Racial groups except Native Hawaiian are non-Hispanic. Those who identify as Native Hawaiian in combination with another race or ethnicity are included in Native Hawaiian. Those of two or more Asian races are included in "Other Asian."

Source: IWPR analysis of American Community Survey microdata (Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Version 6.0).



# Poverty & Opportunity

Several factors contribute to women's economic opportunities and ability to maintain economic security. Educational attainment and business ownership are often avenues for upward mobility, and women across the country are completing higher education and venturing into business ownership at higher rates than ever. Health insurance coverage can protect women's economic security by giving women access to health care services that improve their health and reduce health-related expenses. While women are more likely than men to earn a bachelor's degree or higher and to have health insurance, they are also more likely to live in poverty, and too many lack access to health care, education, and support for their entrepreneurial endeavors.



## The Poverty & Opportunity Composite Score

Four indicators are included in the Poverty & Opportunity Composite Index, which is used to rank and grade states: the percent of women aged 18 to 64 with health insurance, the percent of women aged 25 and older who have a bachelor's degree or higher, the percent of businesses that are women-owned, and the percent of women aged 18 and older living above poverty. Scores range from 6.40 to 8.10; as with the Employment and Earnings Index, higher scores indicate a state's better performance in this area and earn a better letter grade (Table 5; the Methodology provides an explanation of how the Index is calculated).

- Hawai'i's grade on the Poverty & Opportunity Composite Index is a B- and its national ranking is 6th (Table 5).
- Hawai'i ranks in the top third in the nation for all four indicators included in the composite index. The state ranks 3rd for the percent of nonelderly women with health insurance, 5th for the percent of women living above the poverty line, 7th for the percent of businesses owned by women, and 13th for the percent of women who have earned a bachelor's or more advanced degree (Table 5).

Women across the country are completing higher education and venturing into business ownership at higher rates than ever

**B-** Composite Index Grade

**33.5%** Women Aged 25 and Older with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher, 2015

**95.3%** Women Aged 18-64 with Health Insurance, 2015

**37.5%** Businesses That Are Women-Owned, 2012

**90.2%** Women Aged 18 and Older Above the Poverty Line, 2015

## Trends for Women's Poverty & Opportunity in Hawai'i

Since the publication of IWPR's 2004 *Status of Women in the States*, Hawai'i's grade of B- on the Poverty & Opportunity Composite Index has stayed the same, while its rank has risen from 14th to 6th in the nation (Caiazza et al. 2004). Hawai'i has improved on all four of the component indicators (Table 4):

- The percent of women aged 18 to 64 with health insurance increased from 88.3 percent in 2001-2002 to 95.3 percent in 2015, after the full implementation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010.<sup>8</sup>
- Among women aged 25 and older, the percent with a bachelor's degree or higher rose from one in four women (25.5 percent) in 2000 to one in three women (33.5 percent) in 2015.
- The share of businesses owned by women grew by 10 percentage points—from 27.5 percent of all businesses in 1997 to 37.5 percent in 2012.
- A smaller percentage of women 18 and older lived in poverty in 2015 (9.8 percent) than in 2001-2002 (12.2 percent).

<sup>8</sup> The 2004 *Status of Women in the States* used Current Population Survey health insurance and poverty data from 2001-2002, educational attainment Census data from 2000, and business ownership from the 1997 Economic Census.

**TABLE 4**  
Hawai'i's Progress on Key Indicators of Women's Poverty & Opportunity

	2004 Status of Women in the States	2017 Status of Women in Hawai'i	Has the State Made Progress?
Percent of Women Aged 18-64 with Health Insurance, 2015	88.3%	95.3%	Yes
Percent of Women Aged 25 and Older with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher, 2015	25.5%	33.5%	Yes
Percent of Businesses That Are Women-Owned, 2012	27.5%	37.5%	Yes
Percent of Women Aged 18 and Older Above the Poverty Line, 2015	87.8%	90.2%	Yes

Source: 2004 data are from Caiazza et al. (2004). Current data on women-owned businesses are from the U.S. Department of Commerce's 2012 Survey of Business Owners accessed through American Fact Finder and remaining data are based on IWPR analysis of American Community Survey microdata (Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Version 6.0).



**TABLE 5**

How Hawai'i Measures Up: Women's Status on the Poverty & Opportunity Composite Index and Its Components

State	Composite Index			Percent of Women Aged 18-64 with Health Insurance, 2015		Percent of Women Aged 25 and Older with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher, 2015		Percent of Businesses That Are Women-Owned, 2012		Percent of Women Aged 18 and Older Above the Poverty Line, 2015	
	Score	Rank	Grade	Percent	Rank	Percent	Rank	Percent	Rank	Percent	Rank
Alabama	6.58	45	D-	86.1%	40	24.3%	45	36.8%	9	81.7%	48
Alaska	7.10	15	C	83.4%	46	29.5%	28	32.5%	32	92.5%	1
Arizona	6.82	35	D+	87.1%	35	27.7%	37	36.5%	13	84.4%	39
Arkansas	6.44	50	F	88.0%	29	22.5%	49	32.7%	29	81.9%	47
California	7.09	16	C	89.8%	25	32.3%	17	37.2%	8	85.9%	30
Colorado	7.46	4	B-	90.8%	23	40.1%	4	35.5%	22	89.1%	10
Connecticut	7.38	7	B-	93.1%	12	38.0%	6	32.7%	29	90.0%	6
Delaware	7.04	19	C	93.3%	10	31.6%	20	32.6%	31	87.3%	20
District of Columbia	8.10	1	A-	96.7%	2	56.3%	1	42.7%	1	85.9%	30
Florida	6.89	30	D+	82.7%	48	28.1%	34	38.5%	5	85.5%	35
Georgia	6.94	27	C-	82.1%	49	30.3%	24	40.5%	2	83.9%	43
Hawai'i	7.40	6	B-	95.3%	3	33.5%	13	37.5%	7	90.2%	5
Idaho	6.59	44	D-	84.6%	44	24.3%	45	30.8%	46	85.9%	30
Illinois	7.18	13	C+	91.4%	21	33.4%	14	36.8%	9	86.8%	24
Indiana	6.74	41	D	87.9%	30	25.2%	43	34.0%	25	85.6%	34
Iowa	6.90	29	C-	94.1%	7	27.9%	35	31.8%	39	87.1%	23
Kansas	7.02	21	C	87.8%	32	31.7%	19	32.3%	33	88.3%	14
Kentucky	6.55	47	D-	93.3%	10	23.7%	48	32.0%	37	82.6%	46
Louisiana	6.56	46	D-	83.5%	45	24.8%	44	36.5%	13	81.7%	48
Maine	6.96	23	C-	89.8%	25	31.6%	20	30.1%	48	87.9%	16
Maryland	7.62	2	B	92.7%	15	39.4%	5	39.3%	3	90.3%	4
Massachusetts	7.49	3	B	97.0%	1	41.7%	2	32.8%	28	88.8%	12
Michigan	6.95	26	C-	93.0%	13	28.4%	32	36.8%	9	85.0%	38
Minnesota	7.33	8	B-	95.0%	5	35.7%	11	32.2%	34	90.5%	3
Mississippi	6.40	51	F	82.9%	47	22.4%	50	37.9%	6	79.1%	51
Missouri	6.85	33	D+	87.6%	33	28.9%	30	33.1%	27	86.1%	28
Montana	6.82	35	D+	85.0%	42	29.7%	26	31.5%	41	86.4%	25
Nebraska	6.96	23	C-	89.9%	24	30.6%	22	31.7%	40	87.6%	19
Nevada	6.76	38	D	84.9%	43	24.0%	47	36.3%	15	86.2%	26
New Hampshire	7.31	10	B-	92.3%	18	36.1%	9	29.3%	50	92.2%	2
New Jersey	7.30	11	B-	89.5%	27	37.5%	7	31.9%	38	90.0%	6
New Mexico	6.76	38	D	86.4%	37	27.9%	35	39.0%	4	81.6%	50
New York	7.18	13	C+	92.1%	19	35.9%	10	36.1%	18	85.5%	35
North Carolina	6.87	31	D+	85.6%	41	30.4%	23	35.6%	20	84.4%	39
North Dakota	6.97	22	C-	91.3%	22	32.7%	16	29.8%	49	87.2%	22
Ohio	6.86	32	D+	92.7%	15	26.7%	39	33.9%	26	86.0%	29
Oklahoma	6.54	48	D-	81.2%	50	25.5%	42	32.1%	36	84.0%	42
Oregon	7.08	18	C	91.6%	20	32.1%	18	36.3%	15	85.9%	30
Pennsylvania	6.96	23	C-	92.9%	14	29.6%	27	31.2%	42	87.8%	18
Rhode Island	7.09	16	C	94.6%	6	33.0%	15	32.2%	34	87.3%	20
South Carolina	6.73	42	D	86.2%	39	26.5%	41	35.9%	19	83.9%	43
South Dakota	6.72	43	D	86.3%	38	28.6%	31	29.2%	51	86.2%	26
Tennessee	6.76	38	D	87.4%	34	26.6%	40	35.6%	20	84.2%	41
Texas	6.78	37	D	78.0%	51	28.3%	33	36.8%	9	85.2%	37
Utah	6.91	28	C-	87.0%	36	29.5%	28	30.3%	47	88.7%	13
Vermont	7.45	5	B-	95.3%	3	41.0%	3	30.9%	44	90.0%	6
Virginia	7.33	8	B-	88.4%	28	36.8%	8	36.2%	17	88.9%	11
Washington	7.21	12	C+	92.5%	17	34.2%	12	34.7%	23	87.9%	16
West Virginia	6.52	49	D-	93.5%	9	20.5%	51	34.1%	24	82.8%	45
Wisconsin	7.04	19	C	93.6%	8	30.0%	25	30.9%	44	89.3%	9
Wyoming	6.83	34	D+	87.9%	30	27.1%	38	31.0%	43	88.0%	15
United States				88.4%		30.9%		35.8%		86.1%	

Sources: Data on women-owned businesses are from the U.S. Department of Commerce's 2012 Survey of Business Owners accessed through American Fact Finder. Remaining data are based on IWPR analysis of American Community Survey microdata (Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Version 6.0).

## Women's Access to Health Insurance

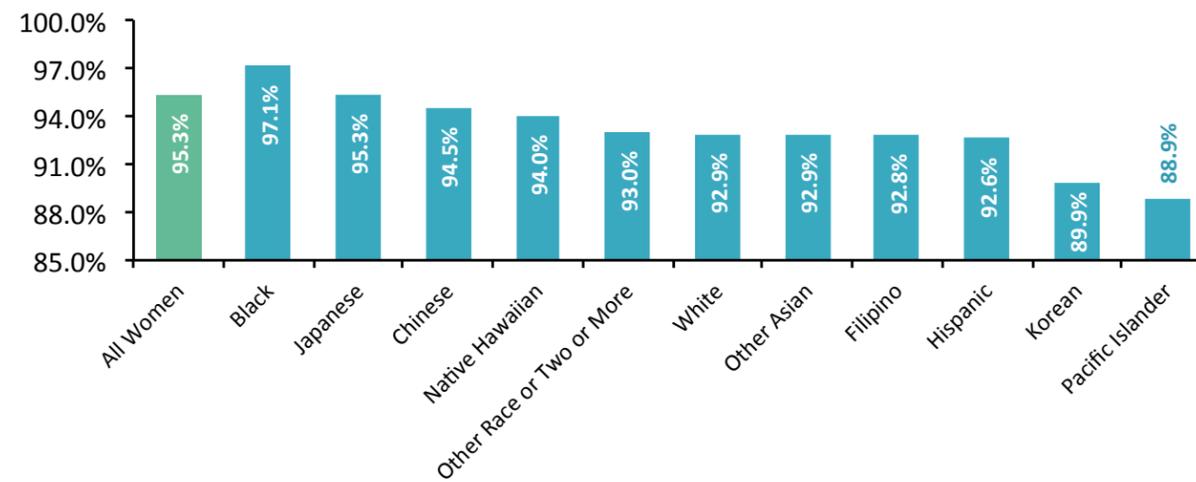
Health insurance coverage is essential for women to maintain their well-being and economic security. Hawai'i has a history of innovation in its efforts to achieve universal health coverage: in 1966 the state was one of the first to implement Medicaid and in 1974 it mandated that most employers offer health insurance to employees working 20 hours a week or more (Norris 2016). When Hawai'i decided to adopt the Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act, 74 percent of the nonelderly uninsured population became eligible for coverage; between 2013 and 2016, nearly 53,000 more adults and children gained Medicaid coverage (Kaiser Family Foundation 2014; Ku et al. 2017).

In Hawai'i, 95.3 percent of nonelderly women (aged 18-64) have health insurance, which is well above the national average of 88.4 percent and also above the percent of men in Hawai'i of this age range with coverage (93.4 percent; Table 5 and Appendix Table 1). Hawai'i is surpassed only by Massachusetts and the District of Columbia for the share of women covered by health insurance (Table 5).

There is some variation in women's health insurance coverage in Hawai'i by race and ethnicity (Figure 3). Black women are the most likely to have coverage (97.1 percent), while less than 90 percent of Pacific Islander and Korean women in the state have coverage (88.9 and 89.9 percent, respectively).

**FIGURE 3**

Percent of Women in Hawai'i Aged 18-64 with Health Insurance, by Race/Ethnicity, 2015



Notes: Data for all women are from 2015; data by race and ethnicity are calculated using three years of data (2013-2015). Racial groups except Native Hawaiian are non-Hispanic. Those who identify as Native Hawaiian in combination with another race or ethnicity are included in Native Hawaiian. Those of two or more Asian races are included in "Other Asian."

Source: IWPR analysis of American Community Survey microdata (Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Version 6.0).

## Women's Educational Attainment

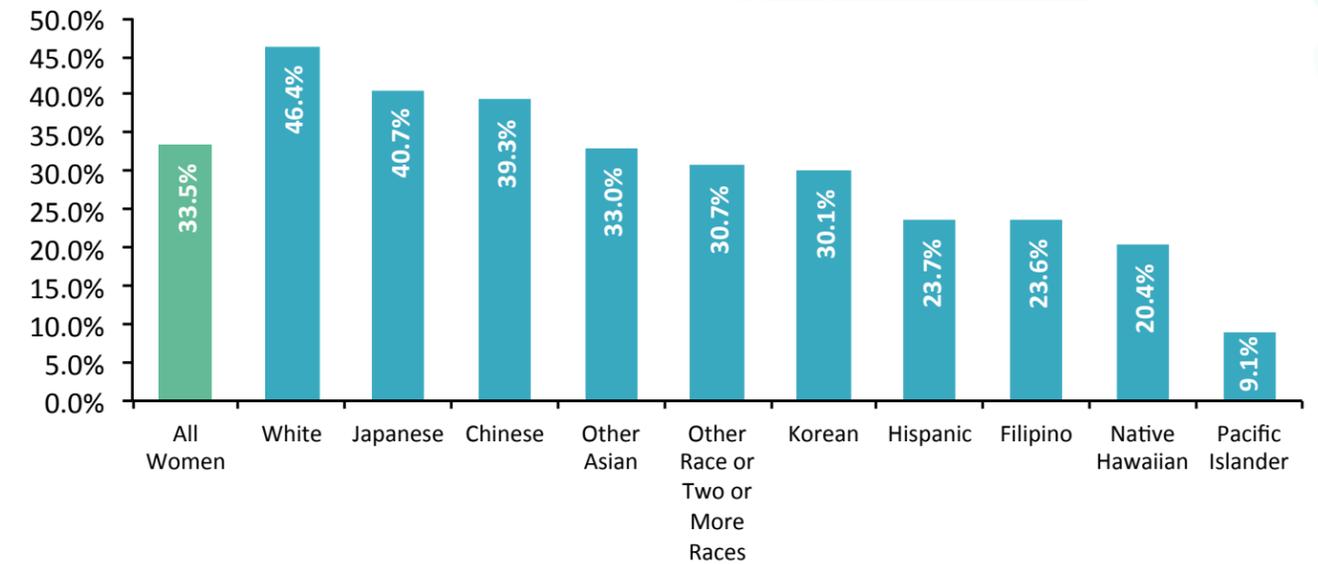
Higher educational attainment is associated with higher earnings and provides a buffer against unemployment during economic downturns (Hess et al. 2015, 49).<sup>9</sup> Women in Hawai'i are more likely to have earned a bachelor's or more advanced degree than either women in the United States overall or men in Hawai'i: 33.5 percent of women in Hawai'i aged 25 and older have this level of education, compared with 29.4 percent of men in Hawai'i and 30.9 percent of women in the nation (Table 5; Appendix Table 1).

Access to education is unequally distributed across racial and ethnic groups. About one in five Chinese, Filipino, and Pacific Islander women in Hawai'i aged 25 and older have less than a high school diploma (21.0, 19.9, and 19.7 percent, respectively), while 96.0 percent of White women exceed this level of educational attainment (Appendix Table 2). Between one-third and one-half of White, Japanese, Chinese, and other Asian women in Hawai'i have received a bachelor's or advanced degree, while only 9.1 percent of Pacific Islander women have this level of education (Appendix Table 2; Figure 4).

<sup>9</sup> Between 2007, the year the Great Recession began, and 2016, unemployment for those aged 25 and older with a high school diploma but no college education peaked at 11.0 percent in October 2009 and March 2010. During the same timeframe, the highest unemployment rate for those with a bachelor's degree or higher was 5.0 percent in September 2009 and November 2010 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2017a; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2017b).

**FIGURE 4**

Percent of Women in Hawai'i with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher, by Race/Ethnicity, 2015



Notes: Aged 25 and older. Data for all women are from 2015; data by race and ethnicity are calculated using three years of data (2013-2015). Racial groups except Native Hawaiian are non-Hispanic. Those who identify as Native Hawaiian in combination with another race or ethnicity are included in Native Hawaiian. Those of two or more Asian races are included in "Other Asian."

Source: IWPR analysis of American Community Survey microdata (Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Version 6.0).





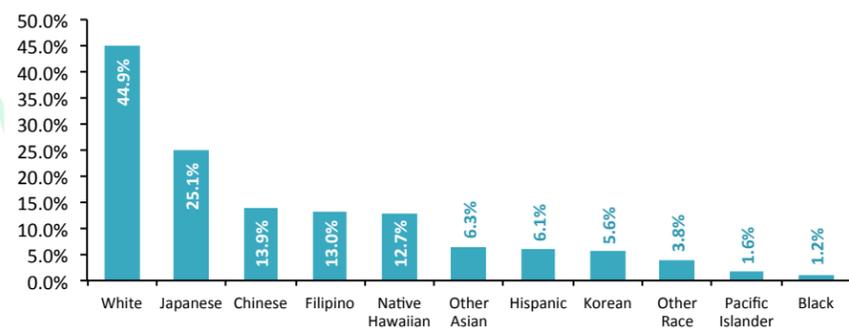
## Women-Owned Businesses

A growing number of women are pursuing business ownership for the personal fulfillment, potential financial opportunities, and greater control over their work lives it can offer. Between 2007 and 2012, the share of businesses in the United States that are owned by women grew from 28.8 percent to 35.8 percent (Institute for Women's Policy Research 2015a; Institute for Women's Policy Research 2015b). In Hawai'i, between 2007 and 2012, the number of women-owned firms increased by 18.9 percent (from 37,373 firms to 44,453) and sales from women-owned firms grew from \$5 billion to \$7 billion (Womenable 2016).

In 2012, over a third of all businesses in Hawai'i (37.5 percent) were women-owned, earning the state a ranking of 7th in the country (Table 5).<sup>10</sup> Men in Hawai'i own 51.0 percent of businesses. Women's business ownership varies by race and ethnicity. White women in Hawai'i own 44.9 percent of all women-owned businesses and Japanese women own one quarter (25.1 percent; Figure 5). Chinese, Filipino, and Native Hawaiian women each own about 13 percent of women-owned businesses, with all other racial and ethnic groups of women owning smaller shares.

<sup>10</sup> Data on women's business ownership are from the Survey of Business Owners, which is conducted every five years, most recently in 2012. Percentages of women- and men-owned businesses sum to less than 100 because some businesses are owned by both women and men.

**FIGURE 5**  
Percent of Businesses in Hawai'i Owned by Women, by Race/Ethnicity, 2012



Notes: Includes firms with paid employees and firms with no paid employees. Excludes publicly-held, foreign-owned, and not-for-profit establishments. Percentages sum to more than 100 because business owners could select more than one race. Racial groups include Hispanic. Up to four owners per business could report their race and ethnicity.

Source: IWPR analysis of data from the 2012 U.S. Census Bureau Survey of Business Owners (2015b).

## Poverty & Economic Security

In Hawai'i, as in the United States overall, more women than men live in poverty. Nearly one in ten (9.8 percent) women in Hawai'i aged 18 and older have family incomes below the federal poverty threshold, compared with 8.4 percent of men (Table 5; Appendix Table 1). Poverty is higher in the United States as a whole: 13.9 percent of women and 10.4 percent of men are poor. The poverty threshold, however, is a federal standard that does not factor in highly variable expenses such as housing. Given the exceptionally high cost of living in Hawai'i, 9.8 percent is likely an underestimation of the share of women experiencing economic hardship and struggling to make ends meet.

There are striking disparities in poverty among women in Hawai'i by race and ethnicity (Figure 6). More than one-third (37.1 percent) of Pacific Islander women in the state live in poverty—a rate that is more than triple the average for women overall and nearly six times the rate among Filipino and Japanese women, the two racial and ethnic groups least likely to be poor (6.2 and 6.3 percent, respectively; Figure 6).

The poverty rate among women in Hawai'i decreases as they age. Among women aged 16-34, 14.5 percent live in poverty, compared with 9.3 percent of women aged 35-64 and 8.7 percent of women aged 65 and older (Institute for Women's Policy Research 2017a).<sup>11</sup> Further, for women in Hawai'i aged 65 and older, poverty varies by marital status; single older women have poverty rates three times that of married older women (Williams-Baron et al. 2017).<sup>12</sup>

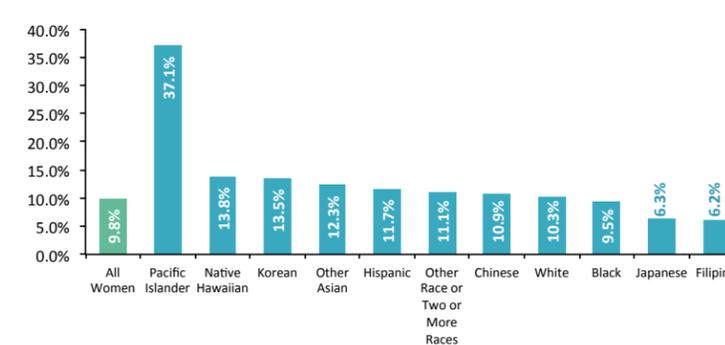
Those with higher education also have lower levels of poverty. Among women in Hawai'i aged 25 and older who do not have a high school diploma or the equivalent, the poverty rate is 19.4 percent. For women who earn a diploma or equivalent, the rate is 13.9 percent, and it drops to 9.9 percent for those who attend some college or earn an associate's degree. Women with a bachelor's degree or higher have the lowest poverty rate at 4.8 percent (Institute for Women's Policy Research 2017a).

<sup>11</sup> The trend is similar for women in the United States overall. Poverty is 21.2 percent among women aged 16-34, 12.7 percent among women aged 35-64, and 10.8 percent among women aged 65 and older.

<sup>12</sup> Appendix Table 5 has the distribution of women and men in Hawai'i aged 15 and older by marital status and race/ethnicity.

## Given the exceptionally high cost of living in Hawai'i, 9.8 percent is likely an underestimation of the share of women experiencing economic hardship

**FIGURE 6**  
Percent of Women in Hawai'i in Poverty, by Race/Ethnicity, 2015



Notes: Aged 18 and older. Data for all women are from 2015; data by race and ethnicity are calculated using three years of data (2013-2015). Racial groups except Native Hawaiian are non-Hispanic. Those who identify as Native Hawaiian in combination with another race or ethnicity are included in Native Hawaiian. Those of two or more Asian races are included in "Other Asian."

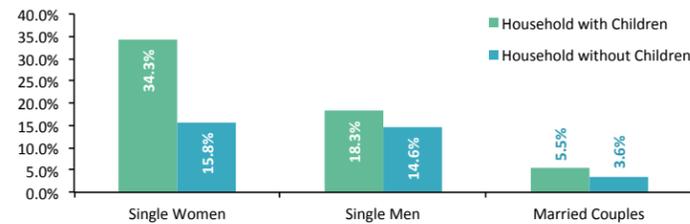
Source: IWPR analysis of American Community Survey microdata (Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Version 6.0).



Poverty also varies considerably by household type.<sup>13</sup> In Hawai'i, households with children under 18 that are headed by single mothers are the most likely to live in poverty—more than one in three (34.3 percent) are poor—followed by households with children that are headed by a single father (18.3 percent; Figure 7). Single women and men without children are more likely to live in poverty than are married couple households with or without children.

**FIGURE 7**

**Percent of Households with Income Below Poverty by Household Type, Hawai'i, 2015**



Notes: Calculated using three years of data (2013-2015). Households with children are those with children under age 18. Single women and men include those who are never married, married with an absent spouse, widowed, divorced, or separated. Households headed by women and men can consist of unmarried women and men living with relatives, other unrelated individuals, or alone.

Source: IWPR analysis of American Community Survey microdata (Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Version 6.0).

<sup>13</sup> For the number of households and the distribution of households in Hawai'i by household type, the presence or absence of children under the age of 18, and the race/ethnicity of the head of household, see Appendix Table 4.

## The Impact of Equal Pay on Poverty

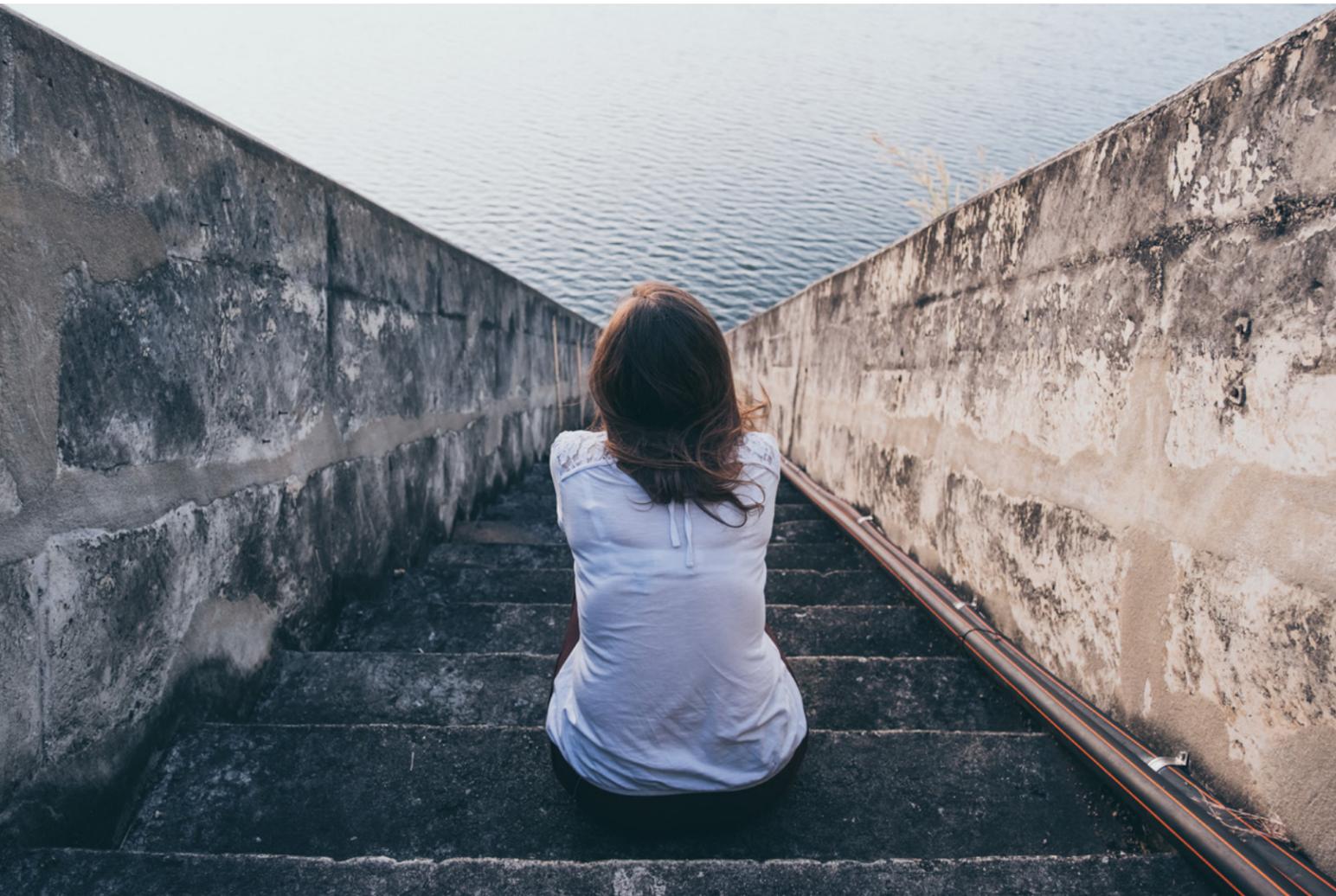
If women earned the same as comparable men, not only would their pay increase, but poverty for working women and their children would fall.<sup>14</sup> The poverty rate among working women in Hawai'i would decrease by more than half—from 5.4 to 2.5 percent (Institute for Women's Policy Research 2017d). For families headed by working single mothers, the poverty rate would drop from 21.3 to 10.7 percent. If working women in Hawai'i received equal pay, 61.2 percent of working mothers would have increased earnings and the poverty rate among children of working mothers would fall from 10.9 percent to 4.5 percent (Institute for Women's Policy Research 2017d).

<sup>14</sup> The analysis compares working women and men aged 18 and older who are of the same age, have the same level of education, work the same number of hours, and have the same urban/rural status.



# Violence & Mental Health

Poor mental health and experiences of violence or bullying can undermine women and girls' economic security, employment, education, and general well-being. Women are more likely than men to experience depression and anxiety (Eaton et al. 2012), a disparity that may be attributed to their higher rates of poverty and trauma from violence (Heflin and Iceland 2009; Rees et al. 2011).



## Poor Mental Health

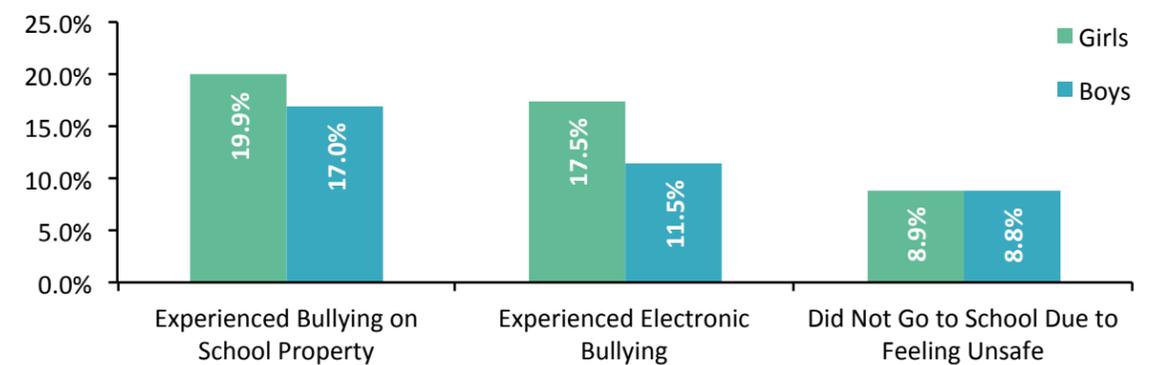
The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System survey asks respondents aged 18 and older to think about their mental health, including stress, depression, and emotional problems, and to report the average number of days in the past 30 days on which their mental health was not good. Hawai'i is the only state where women and men report the same number of days per month on which their mental health was not good (2.9 days); in all other states, women report more days per month of poor mental health (Institute for Women's Policy Research 2017e). Hawai'i is tied with South Dakota as the states where women have the fewest average days per month of poor mental health, which is well below the national average of 4.2 days.

## Violence Against High School Girls

Violence against women and girls takes many forms (Smith et al. 2017). The Youth Risk Behavior Survey collects data from high school students on their well-being and experiences of bullying and dating violence. Nearly one in five high school girls (19.9 percent) and more than one in six boys (17.0 percent) in Hawai'i reported having experienced bullying on school property at least once in the 12 months prior to the survey (Figure 8). Girls are also more likely than boys to report being bullied through electronic means (17.5 percent compared with 11.5 percent, respectively; Figure 8). About nine percent of high school girls and boys reported that they did not attend school at least once in the previous 30 days because they felt unsafe at school or as they travelled to or from school (Figure 8).

**FIGURE 8**

Percent of High School Students Feeling Unsafe or Experiencing Bullying by Gender, Hawai'i, 2015



Notes: For students in grades 9-12. The percent of those who experienced bullying are for the 12 months prior to the survey; the percent of those who did not go to school is for the 30 days prior to the survey.

Source: IWPR compilation of data from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2017).



## Prevalence of Violence Against Women

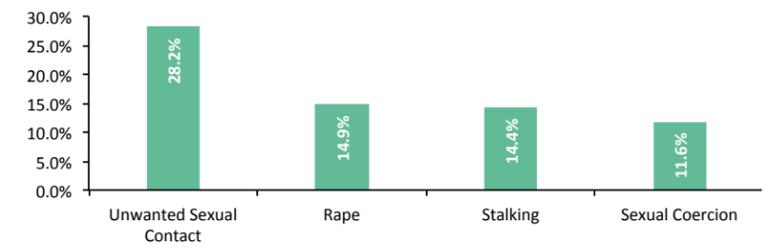
In Hawai'i, 11.6 percent of women aged 18 and older have been coerced into sex, 14.9 percent have been raped, and 28.2 percent report unwanted sexual contact (Smith et al. 2017). Stalking is another common and serious threat to women. A majority of stalking victims receive unwanted phone calls or text messages, threats of physical harm, damage to their personal property, and are either approached by their perpetrator or the perpetrator shows up unexpectedly (Smith et al. 2017). In Hawai'i; 14.4 percent of women have experienced stalking (Figure 10).

A substantial share of women experience violence and intimidation by an intimate partner in their lifetime. More than two in five women in Hawai'i (43.5 percent) experience psychological aggression from an intimate partner, including name calling or attempting to control or monitor their actions or behavior, an aspect of intimate partner abuse that is particularly harmful (Stark 2012). Nearly a third of women in Hawai'i (31.0 percent) face physical violence and 13.5 percent face sexual violence by an intimate partner. A smaller share, 9.8 percent, are stalked by an intimate partner (Smith et al. 2017).

To gain a better understanding of the effects of intimate partner violence, the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey asked survivors about experiences they may have had as a result of the violence, including fear or concern for their safety; symptoms of post-traumatic stress; injury, sexually transmitted infection, pregnancy, or a need for medical attention; a need for housing, legal, or victim's advocate services; and missing days of school or work (Smith et al. 2017). Among women survivors of intimate partner violence in Hawai'i, more than three-quarters (78.7 percent) report one or more negative effects; a majority reported that they were fearful (69.2 percent), concerned for their safety (58.2 percent), and/or had post-traumatic disorder symptoms (51.5 percent). About 30 percent of women (29.5 percent) were injured and nearly one-quarter (24.6 percent) missed at least one day of school or work as a result (Smith et al. 2017).

**FIGURE 10**

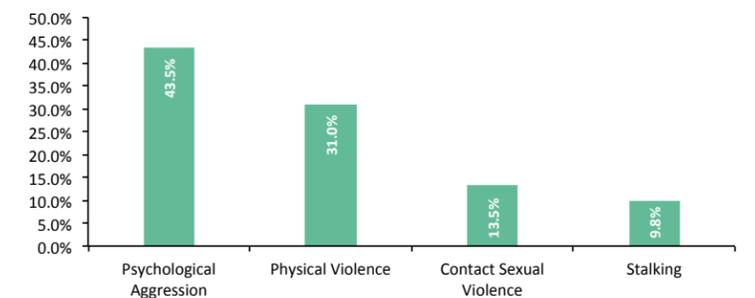
Lifetime Prevalence of Stalking and Sexual Violence Victimization by Any Perpetrator Among Women, Hawai'i, 2010-2012



Notes: Women aged 18 and older. Includes completed or attempted rape.  
Source: Smith et al. 2017.

**FIGURE 11**

Lifetime Prevalence of Stalking and Sexual Violence Victimization by an Intimate Partner Among Women, Hawai'i, 2010-2012



Notes: Women aged 18 and older. Contact sexual violence includes rape, being made to penetrate someone else, sexual coercion, and/or unwanted sexual contact perpetrated by an intimate partner.  
Source: Smith et al. (2017).

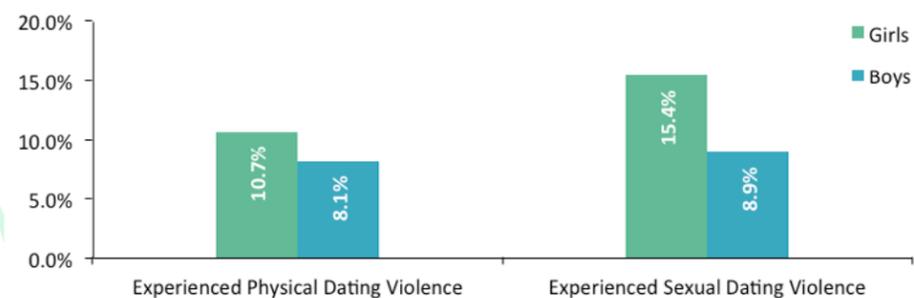
Civil protection orders are one avenue that survivors of violence can pursue for their security and recovery. Hawai'i could improve several aspects of civil protection orders to better support survivors such as including provisions requiring perpetrators to move out, surrender firearms, and pay restitution for expenses and losses incurred due to the violence; extending the same protections offered to survivors of domestic/family violence to those who experience sexual assault, stalking, or trafficking; and allowing minors to obtain protection orders without a parent petitioning on their behalf (American Bar Association Commission on Domestic & Sexual Violence 2016).

Among high school students in Hawai'i who dated or went out with someone in the 12 months preceding the survey, 10.7 percent of girls and 8.1 percent of boys reported that they experienced physical dating violence, including being hit, slammed into something, or intentionally injured (Figure 9).

Sexual dating violence, including unwanted kissing, touching, or forced sexual intercourse, was even more common; 15.4 percent of girls and 8.9 percent of boys reported these experiences (Figure 9).

**FIGURE 9**

Percent of High School Students Experiencing Dating Violence in the Past 12 Months by Type of Violence and Gender, Hawai'i, 2015



Notes: For students in grades 9-12. Includes the percent of students among those who dated or went out with someone in the 12 months prior to the survey who experienced physical or sexual dating violence during this time.  
Source: IWPR compilation of data from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2017).

# Policy Recommendations

In many ways, women in Hawai'i are prospering and thriving, but stagnant wages, a widening wage gap, persistent poverty, and threats to women's safety and well-being are challenges that must be addressed. There are also large disparities by race and ethnicity, revealing that not all women enjoy equal access to opportunity and economic security. Policymakers, advocates, philanthropists, and employers can implement policies and programs with the potential to ensure that all women, men, and children in Hawai'i have the opportunity to realize their full potential.



- Closing the gender wage gap would not only increase women's earnings in Hawai'i, but would also significantly lower poverty rates among working women and their children. Hawai'i can take several steps to reduce the gender wage gap and the larger wage gaps experienced by some women of color: fully enforce legislation to address fair labor standards and laws regarding pay transparency that allow women to determine if they are being underpaid relative to comparable men without fear of retaliation; bar employers from requiring potential employees to submit previous salary history (which can perpetuate wage inequality); and hold employers accountable for their hiring, compensation, and promotion practices to identify gender and racial disparities.
- Hawai'i's minimum wage is above the federal minimum wage, and will gradually increase to \$10.10 beginning in 2018. Increases in the minimum wage particularly improve economic security for women, who are disproportionately represented among low-wage workers. To ensure that the minimum wage is adequate to cover the exceptionally high cost of living in Hawai'i, state legislators should continually compare the state's minimum wage with a living-wage index and increase as necessary.
- Hawai'i passed legislation to provide vouchers to defray the costs of those who are working full-time while caring for an elderly family member (Kupuna Caregivers Act 2017). Like the vast majority of states, however, Hawai'i has not passed paid leave legislation. Work-life supports such as paid sick days, paid family and medical leave, and schedule predictability are benefits few low-wage workers receive, but they are vitally important to help women, who are more likely than men to have unpaid caregiving responsibilities, remain in the workforce. Since nearly half of Hawai'i's families with children under 18 have a breadwinner mother (who is either a sole earner or earns 40 percent or more of the household income), policies that help women stay in their jobs and advance have the potential to increase earnings and reduce poverty for women and their families.
- To address disparities in educational attainment, Hawai'i can facilitate access to higher education by providing supports for those who face financial and other barriers to completing a degree. Philanthropists and state and local government should make educational opportunities for Pacific Islander, Native Hawaiian, Filipino, and Hispanic women in Hawai'i a particular focus of investment in scholarship and grant programs.
- To capitalize on the recent growth in women's business ownership, Hawai'i can ensure that state and local government contracts are accessible to women-owned and minority-women-owned businesses. Women's entrepreneurship can also be encouraged through public and private sector investments in loan and entrepreneurship programs, and through technical assistance to women entrepreneurs to help them to identify sound business and financing opportunities to start or grow their business.
- Compared with businesses owned by men, businesses owned by women are far more likely to have no start-up or expansion capital and, among those that do, most use their own personal or family savings. Addressing the lack of access to financing options could mitigate some of the risk of business ownership and encourage women, especially low-income women, to pursue business ownership as a path to financial stability.
- Hawai'i's civil protection orders could be improved to better support survivors of violence in several ways: by strengthening civil protection orders through the inclusion of provisions that require the respondent to move out, surrender firearms, and pay restitution for economic expenses and losses suffered as a result of abuse; granting survivors of sexual assault, stalking and trafficking the same protections available to survivors of domestic/family violence; and by allowing minors to obtain a protection order without requiring a parent to petition on their behalf.

# Appendix I:

## Methodology

To analyze the status of women in Hawai'i, IWPR selected indicators that prior research and experience have shown illuminate issues that are integral to women's lives and that allow for comparisons between the state and the United States as a whole. The data come from several sources, which are noted in the text. Much of the analysis relies on data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS), from the Minnesota Population Center's Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, or IPUMS (Institute for Women's Policy Research 2017b; Ruggles et al. 2015). The ACS is a large annual survey of a representative sample of the entire resident population in the United States, including both households and group quarter (GQ) facilities. GQ facilities include places such as college residence halls, residential treatment centers, skilled nursing facilities, group homes, military barracks, correctional facilities, workers' dormitories, and facilities for people experiencing homelessness. GQ types that are excluded from ACS sampling and data collection include domestic violence shelters, soup kitchens, regularly scheduled mobile vans, targeted nonsheltered outdoor locations, commercial maritime vessels, natural disaster shelters, and dangerous encampments.

The tables and figures generally present data for individuals, often disaggregated by race and ethnicity. In general, race and ethnicity are self-identified; the person providing the information on the survey form determines the group

to which he or she (and other household members) belongs. Racial groups except Native Hawaiian are non-Hispanic; Native Hawaiian includes those indicating they are Native Hawaiian alone or in combination with any other racial or ethnic group(s), including Hispanic. The group Other Asian includes those identifying with one or more of the following: Taiwanese, Asian Indian, Vietnamese, Mongolian, Nepalese, Cambodian, Hmong, Laotian, Thai, Burmese, Indonesian, Sri Lankan, "all other Asian, not elsewhere classified," Chinese and Japanese, Chinese and Filipino, Chinese and Vietnamese, Chinese and Korean, Chinese and Asian write-in, Japanese and Filipino, Asian Indian and Asian write-in, and "other Asian race combinations."

When analyzing state- and national-level ACS microdata, IWPR used 2015 data, the most recent available, for most indicators. When analyzing data by race and ethnicity, IWPR combined three years of data (2013, 2014, and 2015) to ensure sufficient sample sizes. For analysis of households by type, five years of data (2011-2015) were combined.

In the discussion of trends for the Employment & Earnings and Poverty & Opportunity Composite Indices, 2015 data from the ACS are compared with data from IWPR's 2004 **Status of Women in the States** report, which relied on the Current Populations Survey (CPS). The differences between the ACS and CPS and their potential impact on measures of employment, earnings, health insurance coverage, and poverty are discussed at length in Hess et al. (2015).

IWPR used personal weights to obtain nationally-representative statistics for person-level analyses, and household weights for household-level analyses. Weights included with the IPUMS ACS data adjust for the mixed geographic sampling rates, nonresponse rates, and individual sampling probabilities. Estimates from IPUMS ACS samples may not be consistent with summary table ACS estimates due to the additional sampling error and the fact that, across time, the Census Bureau changes the definitions and classifications for some variables. The IPUMS project provides harmonized data to maximize comparability across time; updates and corrections to the microdata released by the Census Bureau and IPUMS may result in minor variations in future analyses.

### Calculating the Employment & Earnings Composite Index

To construct the Employment & Earnings Composite Index, each of the four component indicators was first standardized. For each of the indicators, the observed value for the state was divided by the comparable value for the entire United States. The resulting values were summed for each state to create a composite score. Each of the four component indicators has equal weight. The states were ranked from the highest to the lowest scores.

To grade the states on this composite index, values for each of the components were set at desired levels to provide an "ideal score." Women's

earnings were set at the median annual earnings for men in the United States overall; the wage ratio was set at 100 percent, signifying women earned as much as men; women's labor force participation was set at the national rate for men; and share of women in managerial or professional occupations was set at the highest score for all states. Each state's score was compared with the ideal score to determine the state's grade.

**WOMEN'S MEDIAN ANNUAL EARNINGS:** Median annual earnings of women aged 16 and older who worked full-time, year-round (50 or more weeks per year and 35 or more hours per week) in 2015. Source: Calculations of 2015 American Community Survey microdata as provided by the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series at the Minnesota Population Center.

**RATIO OF WOMEN'S TO MEN'S EARNINGS:** Median annual earnings of women aged 16 and older who worked full-time, year-round (50 or more weeks per year and 35 or more hours per week) in 2015 divided by the median annual earnings of men aged 16 and older who worked full-time, year-round in 2015. Source: Calculations of 2015 American Community Survey microdata as provided by the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series at the Minnesota Population Center.

**WOMEN'S LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION:** Percent of women aged 16 and older who were employed or looking for work in 2015. This includes those employed full-time, part-time voluntarily, or part-time involuntarily, and

those who are unemployed but looking for work. Source: Calculations of 2015 American Community Survey microdata as provided by the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series) at the Minnesota Population Center.

**WOMEN IN MANAGERIAL AND PROFESSIONAL OCCUPATIONS:** Percent of employed women aged 16 and older who were employed in executive, administrative, managerial, or professional specialty occupations in 2015. Source: Calculations of 2015 American Community Survey microdata as provided by the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series at the Minnesota Population Center.

### Calculating the Poverty & Opportunity Composite Index

To construct the Poverty & Opportunity Composite Index, each of the four component indicators was first standardized. For each of the indicators, the observed value for the state was divided by the comparable value for the entire United States. The resulting values were summed for each state to create a composite score. Women's health insurance coverage, educational attainment, and business ownership were given a weight of 1.0 each, while poverty was given a weight of 4.0. The states were ranked from the highest to the lowest scores.

To grade the states on this composite index, values for each of the components were set at desired levels to provide an "ideal score." The percentage of women with health insurance and with

a bachelor's degree or higher were set at the highest values for all states; the percentage of businesses owned by women was set as if 50 percent of businesses were owned by women; and the percentage of women in poverty was set at the national value for men. Each state's score was then compared with the ideal score to determine its grade.

**PERCENT WITH HEALTH INSURANCE:** In 2015, the percent of women aged 18 through 64 who were insured. Source: Calculations of 2015 American Community Survey microdata as provided by the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series at the Minnesota Population Center.

**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT:** In 2015, the percent of women aged 25 and older with a bachelor's degree or higher. Source: Calculations of 2015 American Community Survey microdata as provided by the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series at the Minnesota Population Center.

**WOMEN'S BUSINESS OWNERSHIP:** In 2012, the percent of all firms (legal entities engaged in economic activity during any part of 2012 that filed an IRS Form 1040, Schedule C; 1065; any 1120; 941; or 944) owned by women. The Bureau of the Census 2012 Survey of Business Owners asked the sex of the owner(s); a business is classified as woman-owned based on the sex of those with a majority of the stock or equity in the business. Source: Calculations of data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

**PERCENT OF WOMEN ABOVE POVERTY:** In 2015, the percent of women living above the federal poverty threshold, which varies by family size and composition. In 2015, the poverty threshold for a family of four with two related children under the age of 18 was \$24,036 (U.S. Census Bureau 2016). This report uses the official federal definition of poverty that compares the cash income received by family members to an estimate of the minimum amount the family would need to meet their basic needs. Source Calculations of 2015 American Community Survey microdata as provided by the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series at the Minnesota Population Center.

### Analysis of the Impact of Equal Pay on Women's Earnings and Poverty

To analyze the impact that paying women equally to men would have on Hawai'i's economy and poverty rates for working women, IWPR used 2014-2016 data (for calendar years 2013–2015) from the Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic supplements to measure women's and men's earnings. The analysis of women's and family earnings gains is based on a model that predicts women's earnings as if they were not subject to wage inequality. For a detailed methodology for the analysis, see the Technical Appendix of Milli et al. (Milli et al. 2017).



# Appendix II:

## Tables

**APPENDIX TABLE 1**

Men's Employment & Earnings and Poverty & Opportunity, Hawai'i and the United States, 2015

	Hawai'i	United States
<b>Employment &amp; Earnings</b>		
Median Annual Earnings for Men Aged 16 and Older Employed Full-Time, Year-Round, 2015	\$49,400	\$50,000
Percent of Men Aged 16 and Older in the Labor Force, 2015	71.0%	68.4%
Percent of Employed Men Aged 16 and Older in Managerial or Professional Occupations, 2015	29.4%	33.5%
<b>Poverty &amp; Opportunity</b>		
Percent of Men Aged 18-64 with Health Insurance, 2015	93.4%	84.3%
Percent of Men Aged 25 and Older with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher, 2015	29.4%	30.4%
Percent of Businesses That Are Men-Owned, 2012	51.0%	53.7%
Percent of Men Aged 18 and Older Above the Poverty Line, 2015	91.6%	89.6%

Source: IWPR analysis of American Community Survey microdata (Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Version 6.0) and the 2012 Survey of Business Owners (2015b).

**APPENDIX TABLE 2**

Educational Attainment Among Women in Hawai'i Aged 25 and Older by Race/Ethnicity, 2015

	Less Than a High School Diploma	High School Diploma or the Equivalent	Some College Education or an Associate's Degree	Bachelor's Degree or Higher
White	4.0%	16.7%	32.9%	46.4%
Native Hawaiian	7.2%	38.1%	34.4%	20.4%
Filipino	19.9%	25.4%	31.2%	23.6%
Japanese	5.9%	26.4%	27.0%	40.7%
Other Race or Two or More Races	5.0%	23.6%	40.7%	30.7%
Hispanic	6.8%	29.1%	40.3%	23.7%
Chinese	21.0%	19.7%	20.1%	39.3%
Other Asian	15.8%	23.5%	27.7%	33.0%
Pacific Islander	19.7%	39.5%	31.6%	9.1%
Korean	14.3%	32.2%	23.4%	30.1%
Black	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
All Women	9.2%	25.4%	31.9%	33.5%

Notes: Data for all women are from 2015; data by race and ethnicity are calculated using three years of data (2013-2015). Racial groups except Native Hawaiian are non-Hispanic. Those who identify as Native Hawaiian in combination with another race or ethnicity are included in Native Hawaiian. Those of two or more Asian races are included in "Other Asian."

Source: IWPR analysis of American Community Survey microdata (Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Version 6.0).

**APPENDIX TABLE 3**

Basic Demographics for Women in Hawai'i by Race/Ethnicity, 2015

Race and Ethnicity	Total Population		Percent of Racial/ Ethnic Group That is Female	Proportion of Population Aged 65 and Older	Proportion of Population Under Age 35	Percent Who Are Immigrants
	Number	Share of Population				
White	145,281	20.7%	44.0%	20.4%	38.6%	6.2%
Native Hawaiian	129,142	18.4%	50.3%	11.7%	53.6%	0.6%
Filipino	101,776	14.5%	52.9%	18.8%	37.9%	57.6%
Japanese	96,984	13.8%	55.1%	40.7%	17.2%	16.9%
Other Race or Two or More Races	74,403	10.6%	50.9%	5.7%	68.1%	3.6%
Hispanic	49,330	7.0%	46.3%	5.5%	64.2%	11.3%
Chinese	28,690	4.1%	52.9%	26.8%	26.5%	53.1%
Other Asian	28,420	4.0%	51.8%	10.5%	48.9%	33.5%
Pacific Islander	23,177	3.3%	49.8%	6.3%	64.2%	40.6%
Korean	15,417	2.2%	65.1%	26.6%	25.5%	75.4%
Black	10,111	1.4%	33.3%	3.5%	62.3%	8.0%
Hawai'i	702,731	100.0%	49.7%	18.1%	44.0%	19.9%
United States	161,930,855		51.4%	16.0%	44.9%	13.4%

Notes: Calculated using three years of data (2013-2015). Percent female is of those aged 18 and older. Racial groups except Native Hawaiian are non-Hispanic. Those who identify as Native Hawaiian in combination with another race or ethnicity are included in Native Hawaiian. Those of two or more Asian races are included in "Other Asian."

Source: IWPR analysis of American Community Survey microdata (Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Version 6.0).

**APPENDIX TABLE 4**

Distribution of Households in Hawai'i by Type and Race/Ethnicity of Head of Household, 2015

	Total Number of Households	Households Headed by Married Couples		Households Headed by Single Females		Households Headed by Single Males	
		With Children	Without Children	With Children	Without Children	With Children	Without Children
White	141,281	18.7%	33.9%	3.0%	20.8%	1.4%	22.1%
Japanese	78,509	12.1%	37.6%	2.1%	28.6%	0.5%	19.2%
Native Hawaiian	63,973	20.5%	27.3%	9.1%	22.0%	3.1%	17.9%
Filipino	46,331	26.8%	33.6%	5.9%	19.4%	1.9%	12.4%
Other Race or Two or More Races	28,500	25.2%	25.3%	8.9%	21.2%	3.6%	15.7%
Hispanic	25,676	26.8%	24.2%	7.8%	17.5%	3.1%	20.7%
Chinese	22,039	16.6%	37.7%	1.8%	26.8%	1.6%	15.5%
Other Asian	14,849	26.4%	24.3%	5.6%	21.3%	2.2%	20.3%
Black	10,149	31.2%	21.5%	7.3%	13.8%	4.1%	22.2%
Pacific Islander	9,591	35.4%	17.0%	10.5%	14.5%	6.5%	16.2%
Korean	9,552	17.0%	31.3%	3.0%	33.6%	0.7%	14.4%
All Households in Hawai'i	450,450	20.3%	31.7%	4.9%	22.3%	2.0%	18.8%
All Households in the U.S.	116,925,354	19.2%	29.0%	7.2%	24.0%	2.3%	18.3%

Notes: Calculated using five years of data (2011-2015). Households with children are defined as those with resident biological, adopted, or step-children under the age of 18. Racial groups except Native Hawaiian are non-Hispanic. Those who identify as Native Hawaiian in combination with another race or ethnicity are included in Native Hawaiian. Those of two or more Asian races are included in "Other Asian."

Source: IWPR analysis of American Community Survey microdata (Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Version 6.0).

**APPENDIX TABLE 5**

Distribution of Women and Men Aged 15 and Older in Hawai'i by Marital Status and Race/Ethnicity, 2015

	Total Number		Married		Separated, Divorced, Widowed		Never Married	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
White	127,169	160,363	52.3%	54.7%	24.0%	13.6%	23.8%	31.7%
Native Hawaiian	98,988	98,674	39.7%	39.9%	20.0%	13.9%	40.3%	46.2%
Japanese	87,813	78,384	52.4%	55.6%	29.3%	13.5%	18.3%	30.9%
Filipino	91,938	75,400	53.6%	53.6%	20.8%	10.4%	25.6%	36.0%
Other Race or Two or More Races	46,771	44,872	39.2%	39.2%	16.5%	7.5%	44.3%	53.3%
Hispanic	34,017	39,313	49.7%	44.7%	15.9%	10.7%	34.4%	44.6%
Chinese	26,509	23,494	55.2%	62.4%	21.7%	12.7%	23.1%	24.9%
Other Asian	22,788	20,957	47.1%	45.2%	18.8%	9.3%	34.1%	45.4%
Pacific Islander	16,738	16,876	43.0%	49.4%	16.3%	9.5%	40.7%	41.1%
Black	14,499	7,784	52.8%	51.9%	14.5%	10.2%	32.7%	37.9%
Korean	7,878	15,425	56.8%	57.8%	28.1%	11.9%	15.1%	30.3%
Hawai'i	575,108	581,542	48.9%	50.1%	22.0%	12.1%	29.1%	37.8%
United States	132,111,735	125,661,324	46.1%	49.4%	23.7%	14.0%	30.2%	36.5%

Notes: Calculated using three years of data (2013-2015). Data are for those aged 15 and older. Racial groups except Native Hawaiian are non-Hispanic. Those who identify as Native Hawaiian in combination with another race or ethnicity are included in Native Hawaiian. Those of two or more Asian races are included in "Other Asian."

Source: IWPR analysis of American Community Survey microdata (Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Version 6.0).

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