



## CHAPTER 2 | Employment & Earnings

### Introduction

As is true with women across the nation, southern women's earnings are critical to the economic well-being and security of their families. Women in the South, compared with the rest of the country, tend to have less favorable employment and earnings outcomes, despite the fact that they make up a large share of the workforce. In 2014, women were 47.1 percent of all workers in the southern United States (Appendix Table B2.7).<sup>1</sup>

Both women's and men's earnings in the South are lower than for workers in the rest of the country. Wages declined between 1999-2014 in the South as a whole for all workers except Asian/Pacific Islander workers and white women (Figure 2.3). As is true in the nation as a whole, Hispanic, black, and Native American women in the South who work full time, year-round, earn much less than women of other racial/ethnic groups (Figure 2.2).

The wage gap for women in the South is slightly larger than in the rest of the country. Women in the southern states working full-time, year-round earn just 79.5 percent of men's earnings (Table 2.1), compared with a gap of 80.5 percent in the rest of the country.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to experiencing a larger gender wage gap, women in the South are less likely than women elsewhere to be employed or to work in managerial and professional occupations (Table 2.1).

Across the key indicators scored in this report, nine southern states saw an overall worsening in women's employment and earnings between 2002 and 2014, three states saw improvements and two experienced little change (Caiazza et al. 2004; Table 2.1).

While women in the South face critical barriers to improving their economic status, they also encounter important opportunities, such as those afforded by access to higher education and by union membership. In the South, having a bachelor's degree brings an even larger boost in percent income to black, Hispanic, and Asian/Pacific Islander women than it does in the rest of the country.

Unionized women in the South have higher wages than those who aren't in unions, and among black and Hispanic women workers, the union wage advantage is greater in the South than in the rest of the country. Eleven of the 14 southern states, however, have right-to-work laws that limit the ability of unions to bargain (Table 2.5).

<sup>1</sup>In this report, southern states include Alabama, Arkansas, the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia. Throughout the report, the District of Columbia will be referred to as a state, although it is technically a jurisdiction.

<sup>2</sup>For data on men's earnings, see Appendix Table B2.1.

This chapter focuses on the employment and earnings of women in the southern United States with an emphasis on the employment and earnings of women from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. It compares states based on the Employment & Earnings Composite, designed to capture differences between states on key aspects of women's equality and economic security. It examines women's earnings and the gender wage gap, the union wage advantage for women, labor force participation rates, and the share of employed women in professional and managerial jobs, highlighting where women in the South are making progress and where challenges remain.

## The Employment & Earnings Composite Score

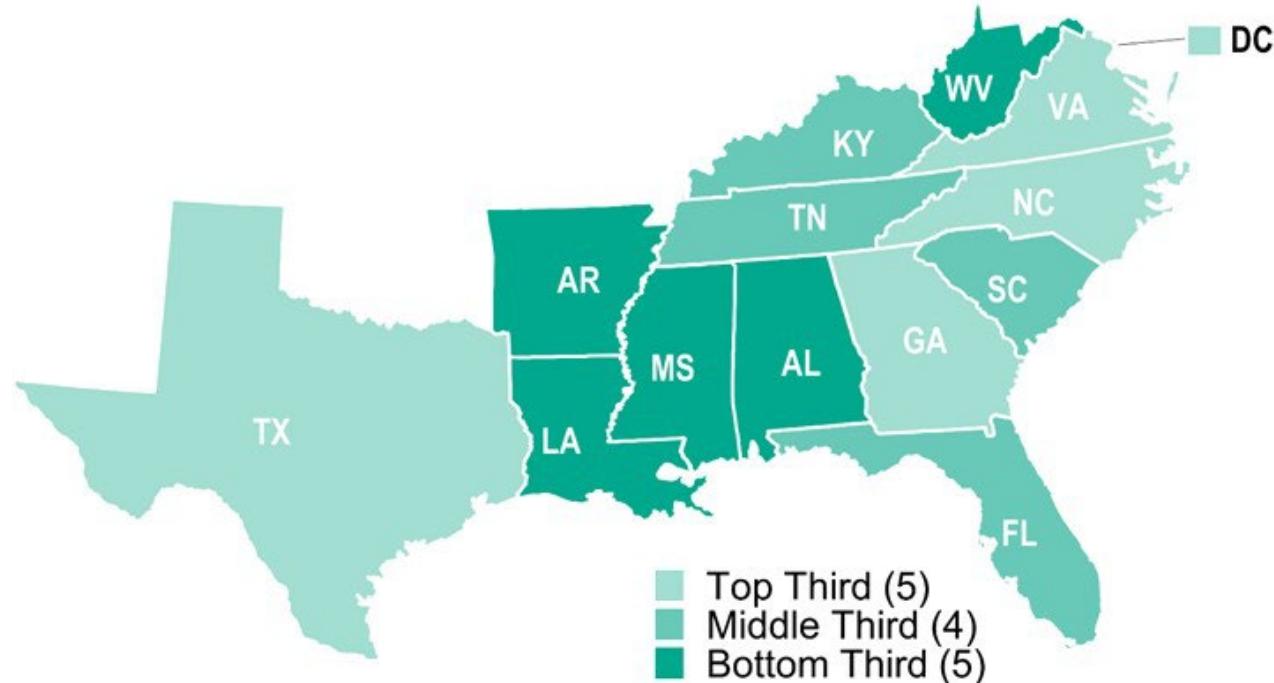
The Employment & Earnings Composite Index compares the states' performance on four key component indicators of women's status in the domain of employment and earnings: median annual earnings for women who work full-time, year-round; the gender earnings ratio among full-time, year-round workers; women's labor force participation; and the percent of employed women who work in managerial or professional occupations. Composite scores across the

South range from a high of 5.51 to a low of 3.47, with higher scores reflecting a stronger performance in the area of employment and earnings (Table 2.1; Map 2.1; for information on how scoring was determined, see Appendix A2).

- The District of Columbia has the highest score of all southern states on the Employment & Earnings Composite Index, ranking number one on all four component indicators, with Virginia coming in second. More than six in ten employed women in the District work in managerial or professional occupations and women's median earnings are more than 80 percent higher than the median for all southern states. In Virginia over 60 percent of women are in the labor force (compared with 56.3 percent for the South as a whole) and 45 percent of these women work in managerial or professional jobs (compared with 39.6 percent for all southern states).
- West Virginia has the lowest rank on the Employment & Earnings Composite Index both in the South and the nation. West Virginia ranks last regionally for the percent of women in the labor force, second to last on the gender earnings ratio, and in the bottom third for women's median earnings.

Map 2.1.

### Employment & Earnings Composite Index—South



Note: For methodology and sources, see Appendix A2.  
Calculated by the Institute for Women's Policy Research.

- Among the southern states, the District of Columbia is the only jurisdiction to receive an A on the Employment & Earnings Composite Index and Virginia is the only state to receive a B. Five states—Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and West Virginia—received an F while the remaining seven states received C's and D's (for information on how grades were determined, see Appendix A2).

## Trends in Employment & Earnings

Progress on women's employment and earnings in southern states can be tracked by comparing current composite scores to those of a decade ago (Caiazza et al. 2004). This comparison shows:

- Only three of the states in Table 2.1 had an improvement in their overall composite score between 2004 and 2014—the District of Columbia, North Carolina, and Tennessee. All three states improved on the gender earnings ratio and the share of employed women in managerial and professional occupations.

- Two states showed no change (South Carolina and Texas) in their composite scores, and nine states showed a decline in their scores. Of the states whose composite score declined, the largest declines were in Arkansas and Mississippi, with both states showing declines in women's labor force participation and in the gender earnings ratio.

Table 2.1.

How the South Measures Up: Women's Status on the Employment & Earnings Composite Index and Its Components, 2014

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	National Rank	Regional Rank	Grade	Dollars	National Rank	Regional Rank	Percent	National Rank	Regional Rank	Percent	National Rank	Regional Rank	Percent	National Rank	Regional Rank
Alabama	3.55	46	10	F	\$32,000	42	10	72.7%	43	12	52.5%	50	13	37.2%	45	12
Arkansas	3.55	46	10	F	\$30,000	49	13	75.0%	38	10	52.6%	49	12	38.1%	40	8
District of Columbia	5.51	1	1	A	\$64,000	1	1	95.5%	1	1	67.2%	1	1	61.1%	1	1
Florida	3.83	34	7	D+	\$34,500	37	6	86.3%	6	3	54.1%	46	10	37.8%	43	10
Georgia	3.94	25	4	C	\$36,000	24	3	81.8%	15	5	57.5%	34	4	40.7%	20	4
Kentucky	3.76	38	8	D+	\$34,000	39	7	79.1%	27	8	54.2%	45	9	39.2%	32	7
Louisiana	3.50	49	13	F	\$31,200	46	11	65.0%	51	14	55.8%	42	8	37.3%	44	11
Mississippi	3.55	46	10	F	\$30,000	49	13	75.0%	38	10	53.9%	47	11	37.2%	45	12
North Carolina	3.99	20	3	C+	\$35,000	29	5	87.5%	4	2	57.2%	35	5	40.8%	19	3
South Carolina	3.72	41	9	D	\$33,000	41	9	78.6%	29	9	56.4%	39	6	37.2%	45	12
Tennessee	3.84	31	6	C-	\$34,000	39	7	85.0%	8	4	56.1%	40	7	37.9%	42	9
Texas	3.89	28	5	C	\$35,900	28	4	79.8%	25	7	57.8%	33	3	39.5%	28	5
Virginia	4.26	9	2	B	\$42,000	8	2	80.8%	16	6	61.3%	16	2	45.0%	7	2
West Virginia	3.47	51	14	F	\$31,200	46	11	69.3%	48	13	48.3%	51	14	39.3%	31	6
Southern States					\$35,000			79.5%			56.3%			39.6%		
All Other States					\$40,000			80.0%			59.2%			41.5%		
United States					\$38,400			80.0%			58.2%			40.9%		

Note: Aged 16 and older.

Source: IWPR analysis of American Community Survey Microdata (Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Version 6.0). For methodology, see Appendix A2.

# Earnings and the Gender Wage Gap

## Median Annual Earnings

Nationally, in 2014 the median annual earnings of women working full-time, year-round were \$38,400 (Table 2.1), with women in the southern states earning less than those living in other regions (\$35,000 and \$40,000, respectively). There is considerable variation in women's earnings across the states, including the southern states (Table 2.1; Map 2.2).

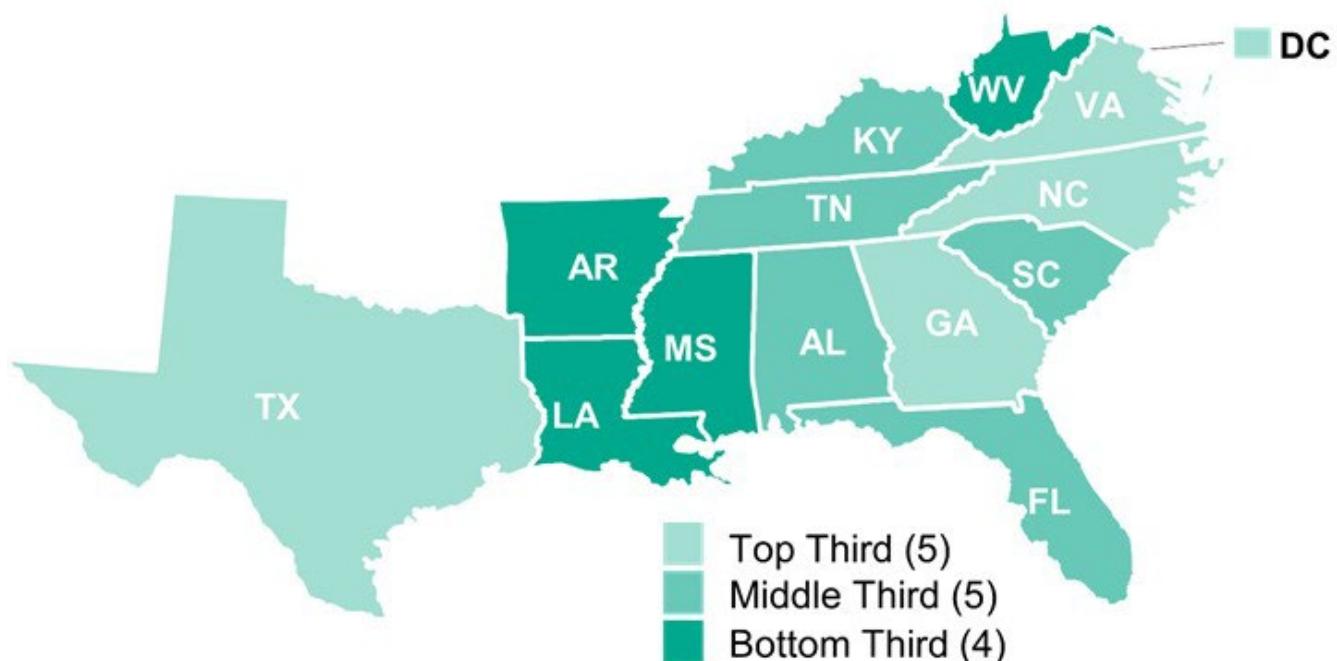
- Women working full-time, year-round in the District of Columbia had median annual earnings of \$64,000 in 2014, the highest of women in any other jurisdiction in the South or in the United States. Women in Virginia had median annual earnings of \$42,000, the second highest among the southern states.
- In Arkansas and Mississippi women had median annual earnings of \$30,000, the lowest in the nation. Women in West Virginia and Louisiana had

the second lowest median annual earnings among the southern states, at \$31,200.

There are considerable differences across states in the degree to which women's and men's earnings have increased or declined (Hess et al. 2015). Between 1999 and 2014 the real median earnings of women increased in five southern states—Arkansas, the District of Columbia, Kentucky, Virginia, and West Virginia—while men's increased in only two southern states (Appendix Table B2.4). Women's real earnings declined in nine states, with the largest percentage declines in Georgia (6.2 percent), Mississippi (3.2 percent) and South Carolina (3.2 percent).<sup>3</sup> Of these nine states, eight either have no state minimum wage (five states) or have a state minimum wage lower than or equal to the federal minimum wage (three states; United States Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division 2016). Changes in the real earnings of workers between 1999 and 2014 reflect wage laws, the decline in unionized jobs, and a slack labor market during the recession that reduced workers' ability to negotiate higher wages (Gould 2015; Wisman 2013).

Map 2.2.

Median Annual Earnings for Women in the South Employed Full-Time, Year-Round, 2014



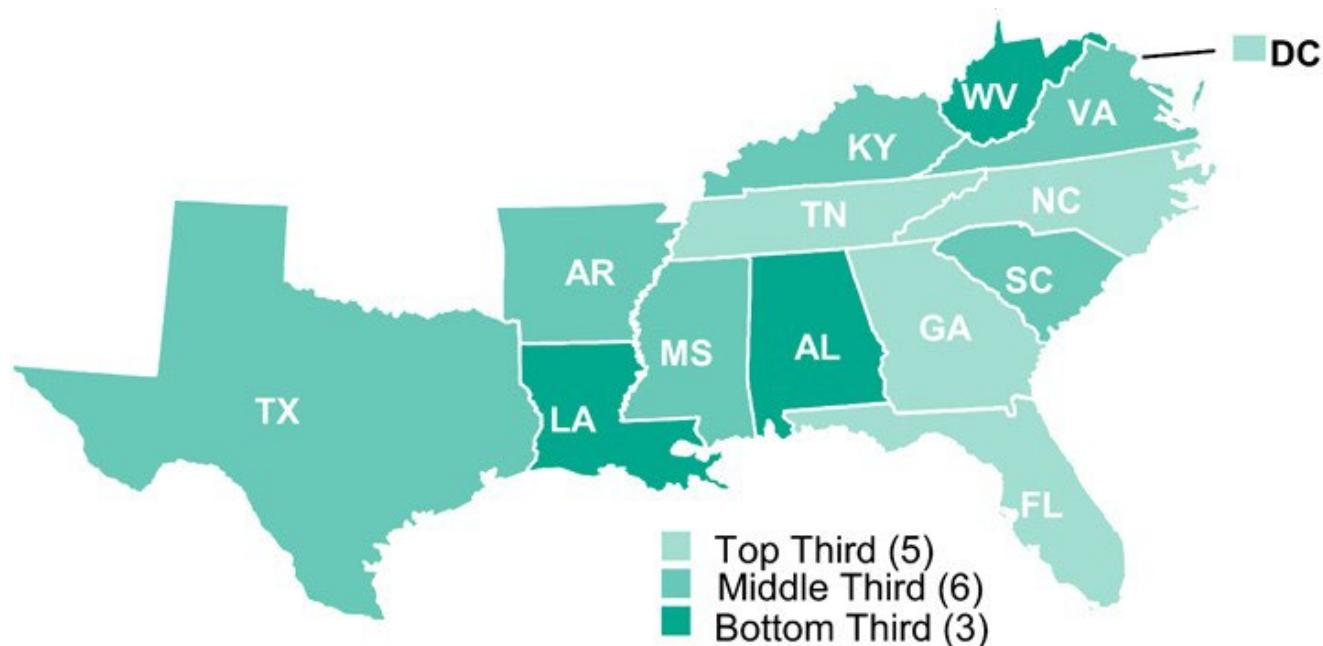
Note: Median annual earnings for full-time, year-round workers aged 16 and older.

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

<sup>3</sup> The nine southern states in which women's median annual earnings declined were Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas. For the amount of declines for women and men in dollar amounts and percentages, see Appendix Table B2.4.

Map 2.3.

### Earnings Ratio Between Women and Men in the South Employed Full-Time, Year-Round, 2014



Note: Ratio of women's to men's median annual earnings (full-time, year-round workers) aged 16 and older.

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

### ***The Gender Earnings Ratio***

As is true in every state in the nation, women earn less than men in all fourteen southern jurisdictions (Table 2.1; Map 2.3). Nationally, the gender earnings ratio narrowed between 1980 and 2014, with 40 percent of the decline attributed to the stagnation of men's wages (Davis and Gould 2015). Important factors contributing to the maintenance of the gender earnings gap are women's and men's continued concentration in different occupations and industries, women's greater caregiving responsibilities (and consequent workforce interruptions), and discrimination in the labor market (Blau and Kahn 2016; Appendix Table B2.7).

- In 2014, the District of Columbia had the highest gender earnings ratio, at 95.5 percent, followed by three states with gender earnings ratios of 85 percent or higher (87.5 percent in North Carolina,

86.3 percent in Florida, and 85.0 percent in Tennessee; Table 2.1).

- In Louisiana, where the gender earnings ratio is the lowest, women earned just 65.0 percent of what men earned, and in West Virginia, they earned just 69.3 cents for every dollar men earned.

### ***Equal Pay and the Economy***

Closing the gender wage gap would help many women and families, and particularly single women and mothers, achieve economic security. If all working women in the South aged 18 and older were paid the same as comparable men—men of the same age, level of education, and urban/rural residence, and who work the same number of hours—women's average annual

earnings would increase from \$35,788 to \$42,180 (an increase of \$6,392 or 17.9 percent; Table 2.2). Added up across all working women in the South, this would amount to an earnings increase of \$155.4 billion, or 2.8 percent of the southern states' combined gross domestic product (GDP) in 2014 (see Figure 2.1 for state-by-state data).<sup>4</sup>

Closing the gender wage gap would increase women's earnings and the family incomes of working women living in various household formations.

- If married working women in the South aged 18 and older were paid the same as comparable men, their average annual earnings would increase from \$40,359 to \$46,913, or 16.2 percent. This translates into an average of \$6,554 more in earnings

per year for each family, which would raise the average annual family income for married couples in the South from \$110,540 to \$117,356. This increase would result in \$77.6 billion in total income gains across the southern states.<sup>5</sup>

- For southern single mothers aged 18 and older, receiving equal pay would amount to an average annual increase in earnings of \$6,592 (or 21.8 percent), from \$30,200 to \$36,792. Average annual incomes for families headed by single mothers would increase from \$37,009 to \$44,004.
- If southern women aged 18 and older who are single and live independently were paid the same as comparable men, they would earn 15.4 percent more, or an average of \$6,016 per year. Their

Table 2.2

### Mean Annual Earnings and Family Income if Working Women in the South Earned the Same as Comparable Men, 2014 Average

	All Working Women	Single Mothers	Single, Living Independently	Married Women
Population Size in the South	24,307,331	2,632,994	4,979,833	11,837,652
Annual Hours Worked	1,760	1,752	1,847	1,805
<b>Women's Annual Earnings in the South</b>				
Current	\$35,788	\$30,200	\$39,129	\$40,359
After Pay Adjustment	\$42,180	\$36,792	\$45,145	\$46,913
Percent Adjusted	60.3%	66.2%	55.2%	57.3%
Average Increase (including zeros)	\$6,392	\$6,592	\$6,016	\$6,554
Percent Increase	17.9%	21.8%	15.4%	16.2%
<b>Annual Family Income in the South</b>				
Current	\$80,914	\$37,009	\$43,470	\$110,540
After Pay Adjustment	\$88,105	\$44,004	\$49,486	\$117,356
<b>Total Income Gains in the South</b>				
Total Income Gains (\$ billions)	\$155.4	\$17.4	\$30.0	\$77.6
Increase in Income as Percentage of 2014 GDP	2.8%	0.3%	0.5%	1.4%

Notes: Includes zeros for women who currently earn more than if they were paid in the same way as men. Family income includes not only earnings from jobs held by women and any other family members but also income from other sources, such as investments, retirement funds, Social Security, and government benefits. Because some families may have more than one female earner, the average change in family income may be greater than the average change in women's earnings. Not all women are represented in the three family types shown.

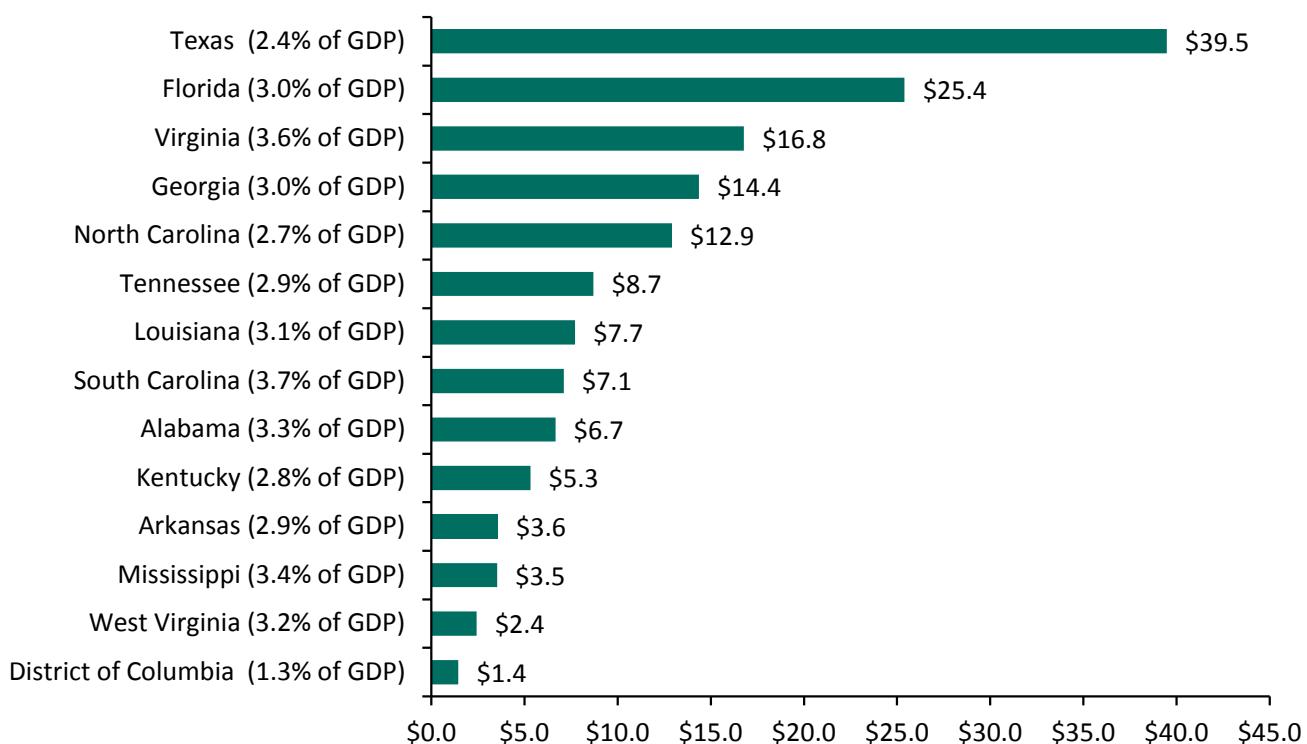
Source: IWPR calculations based on the Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic supplements based on Flood et al., 2013–2015 (for calendar years 2012–2014), Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Version 4.0. (Flood et al. 2015; Institute for Women's Policy Research 2015a). GDP data are from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis (2015).

<sup>4</sup>This estimated growth in GDP is likely an underestimate, since women's work hours, educational achievement, and occupation attainment were not increased in the statistical model producing this estimate; higher wages would likely increase women's work hours and educational and occupational attainment. Women's higher wages and the resulting increase in family income would also have multiplier effects, also omitted from the estimate model, including an increase in demand for goods and services and a subsequent increase in production. Equal pay would also dramatically decrease poverty among women (see the Poverty and Opportunity Chapter).

<sup>5</sup>Family income includes not only earnings from jobs held by women and any other family members but also income from other sources, such as investments, retirement funds, Social Security, and government benefits. Because some families may have more than one female earner, the average change in family income may be greater than the average change in women's earnings.

Figure 2.1

### Increase in GDP if Working Women in the South Had Equal Pay with Comparable Men, by State, 2014 (in billions)



Notes: Includes zeros for women who currently earn more than if they were paid in the same way as men. Family income includes not only earnings from jobs held by women and any other family members but also income from other sources, such as investments, retirement funds, Social Security, and government benefits. Because some families may have more than one female earner, the average change in family income may be greater than the average change in women's earnings.

Source: IWPR calculations based on the Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic supplements based on Flood et al., 2013–2015 (for calendar years 2012–2014), Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Version 4.0. (Flood et al. 2015; Institute for Women's Policy Research 2015a). GDP data are from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis (2015).

earnings would increase from \$39,129 to \$45,145, and their average annual family incomes would rise from \$43,470 to \$49,486, resulting in a total income gain for the South of \$30 billion.

### ***Earnings and the Gender Wage Gap for Women of Color***

Women's earnings in the South, and nationally, differ considerably by race and ethnicity. Women in states outside the South earn, on average, about \$5,000 more per year than women in the South (Table 2.1). The largest difference between the South and the rest of the country among racial and ethnic groups, is for black women, whose earnings outside the South are \$8,000 higher than black women living in southern states. Native American women and white women living outside the South have the smallest earnings ad-

vantage over their same-race southern counterparts (\$1,200 and \$3,000, respectively; Figure 2.2).

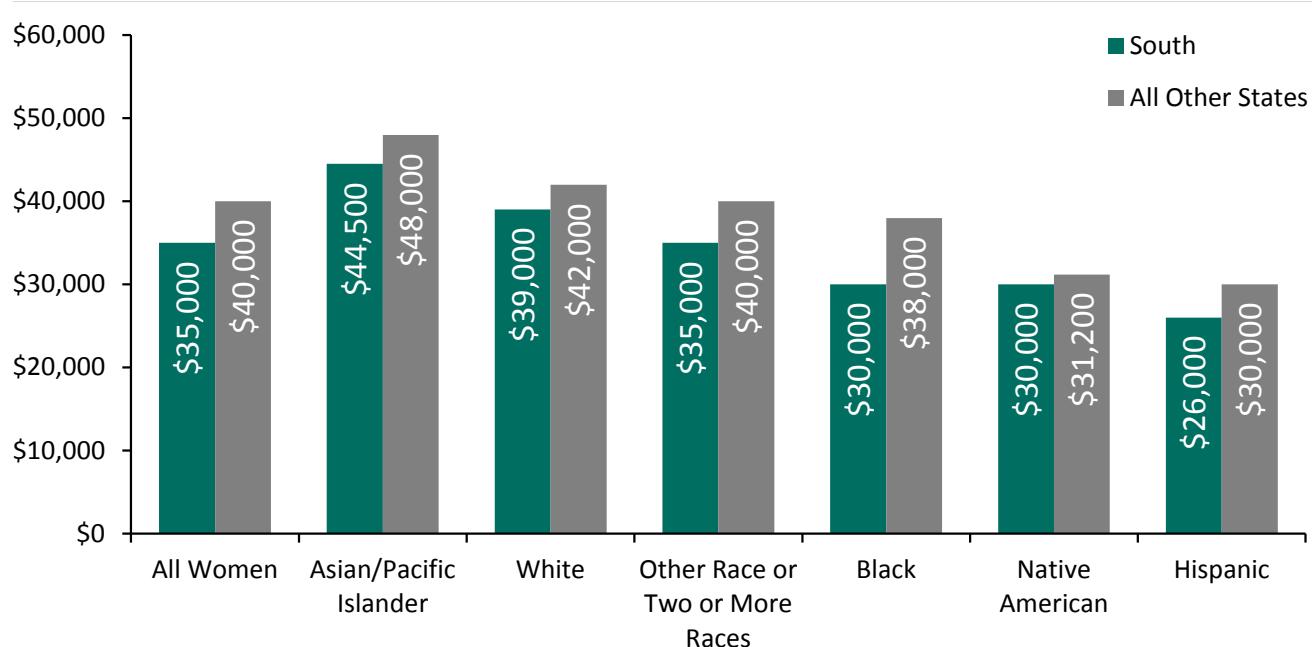
Within the larger racial and ethnic groups, there are further differences in women's earnings. Among Asian/Pacific Islander women in the South, for example, the median annual earnings of Indian women are \$60,000, while Cambodian and Laotian women in the South have annual earnings of \$28,000 and \$29,000, respectively, less than half that of their Indian counterparts. Among Hispanic women in the South, women of Spanish descent have median earnings of \$39,000, while women from Guatemala and Honduras each have earnings of just \$20,000 (Appendix Table B2.6).<sup>6</sup>

There is considerable variation across the southern states in women's earnings by race and ethnicity (Ap-

<sup>6</sup> Although data are available for many additional races and ethnicities nationally (see Hess et al. 2015), sample sizes for those residing in southern states are inadequate for several groups.

Figure 2.2.

### Median Annual Earnings for Women Employed Full-Time, Year-Round, by Race/Ethnicity and South/Non-South, 2014



Note: Earnings are for full-time, year-round women workers aged 16 and older. Racial categories are non-Hispanic. Hispanics may be of any race or two or more races.

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

pendix Table B2.2). The highest earnings for women from all of the largest racial and ethnic groups are in the District of Columbia (\$64,000 for all women), but there is great variability between groups within the states with the lowest median earnings. Of the 14 southern states in Appendix Table B2.2, Hispanic women have the lowest median earnings of any group in 12 states; African American women have the lowest earnings of women (compared with all groups) in one state—Louisiana.

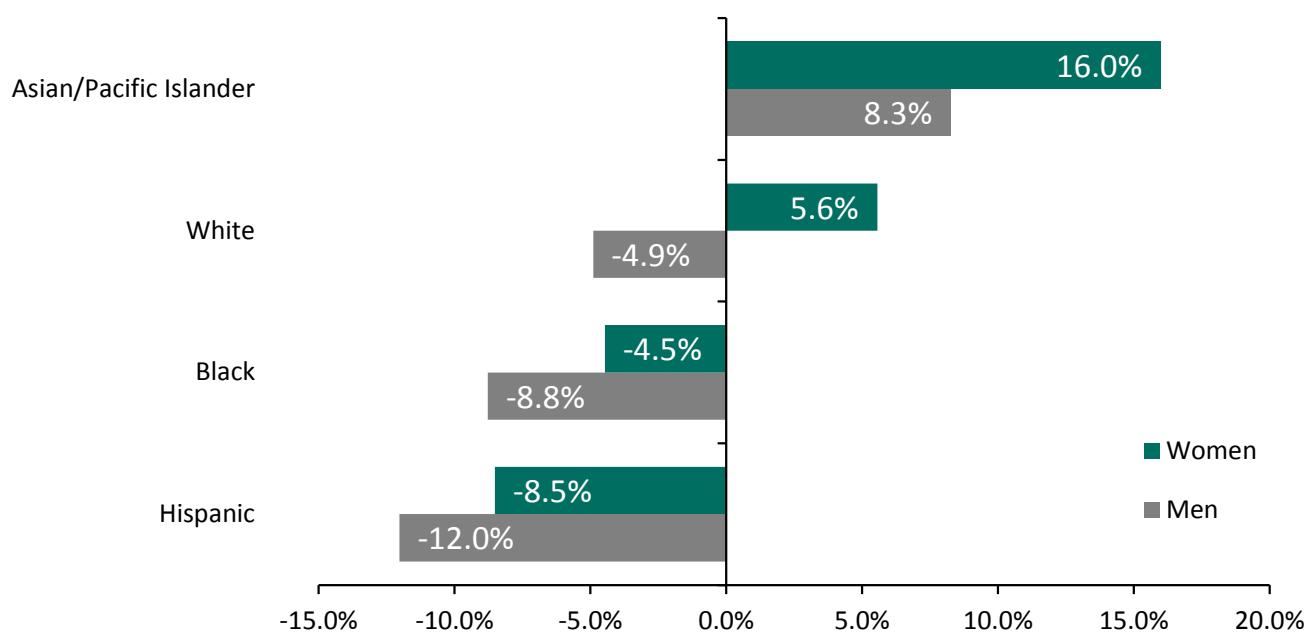
- Hispanic women's median earnings are highest in the District of Columbia (\$47,000) and Virginia (\$30,000) and lowest in Alabama (\$21,000) and Arkansas (\$22,000).
- Black women have the highest earnings in the District of Columbia (\$48,000), with Texas and Virginia tied for the second highest earnings at \$35,000. Louisiana and Mississippi, where black women's earnings are \$25,000, tied for the lowest earnings for black women.
- Asian/Pacific Islander women's earnings are highest in the District of Columbia (\$60,000) and Virginia (\$50,000); their earnings are lowest in Arkansas (\$29,000) and Mississippi (\$30,000).

- White women's median earnings were highest in the District of Columbia (\$74,000) and Virginia (\$45,000) and they were lowest in West Virginia (\$30,000) and Arkansas (\$32,000). White women's median earnings were highest of all racial/ethnic groups in eight of the 14 states (Appendix Table B2.2).

Between 1999 and 2014, women's and men's earnings fell across a number of southern states, with men's earnings falling at a faster pace than women's (Appendix Table B2.4). There were substantial differences by race and ethnicity, however. Hispanic and black men and women experienced declines in median earnings in the southern states overall and across most jurisdictions in the South. The drop in Hispanic and black men's earnings outpaced the decline in Hispanic and black women's earnings, narrowing the corresponding pay gaps between Hispanic and black men and women. White women's real earnings increased but white men's fell, and both Asian/Pacific Islander women and Asian/Pacific Islander men had increased real earnings, but Asian/Pacific Islander women's earnings outpaced those of Asian/Pacific Islander men (Figure 2.3).

Figure 2.3.

### Change in Real Median Annual Earnings for Full-Time, Year-Round Workers in the South, by Gender and Race/Ethnicity, 1999-2014



Note: Earnings are for full-time, year-round workers aged 16 and older. Racial categories are non-Hispanic. Hispanics may be of any race or two or more races.

Source: IWPR Analysis of 2000 Decennial Census (for calendar year 1999) in 2014 dollars and 2014 American Community Survey micro-data (Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Version 6.0).

Table 2.3.

### Median Annual Earnings and the Gender Earnings Ratio for Women and Men Employed Full-Time, Year-Round, by Race/Ethnicity, Southern States and United States, 2014

	Southern States				United States			
	Women	Men	Ratio of Women's Earnings to Men's of the Same Racial/Ethnic Group	Ratio of Women's Earnings to White Men's Earnings	Women	Men	Ratio of Women's Earnings to Men's of the Same Racial/Ethnic Group	Ratio of Women's Earnings to White Men's Earnings
All Women	\$35,000	\$44,000	79.5%	70.0%	\$38,400	\$48,000	80.0%	72.5%
White	\$39,000	\$50,000	78.0%	78.0%	\$40,000	\$53,000	75.5%	75.5%
Hispanic	\$26,000	\$30,000	86.7%	52.0%	\$28,600	\$32,000	89.4%	54.0%
Black	\$30,000	\$35,000	85.7%	60.0%	\$34,000	\$38,000	89.5%	64.2%
Asian/Pacific Islander	\$44,500	\$60,000	74.2%	89.0%	\$47,000	\$60,000	78.3%	88.7%
Native American	\$30,000	\$40,000	75.0%	60.0%	\$31,000	\$38,000	81.6%	58.5%
Other Race or Two or More Races	\$35,000	\$45,000	77.8%	70.0%	\$38,400	\$45,000	85.3%	72.5%

Notes: For women and men aged 16 and older. Racial categories are non-Hispanic. Hispanics may be of any race or two or more races.  
Source: IWPR analysis of American Community Survey microdata (Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Version 6.0).

Across all racial and ethnic groups in the South and in the country as a whole, women earned less than their male counterparts (Table 2.3, Appendix Table B2.6). In the South, this disparity was even greater. Only white workers had a smaller gender earnings gap in the South than in the nation as a whole.

In the South, the gender wage gap within racial and ethnic groups is smallest for Hispanic (86.7) and black (85.7 percent) workers, due in part to the lower relative earnings of Hispanic and black men. Asian/Pacific Islander (74.2 percent) and Native American women (75.0 percent) have the largest wage gap with same-race men.

The gender wage gap for women of color and white men was larger than the wage gap with same race men for all groups of women except Asian/Pacific Islander women and white women. Hispanic, Native American, and black women experience the largest gaps with white men; women of all three groups have median earnings 60 percent or less of white men's earnings in the South (Table 2.3).<sup>7</sup> Asian/Pacific Islander women have the smallest earnings gap with white men but still earned only 89.0 percent of white men's earnings in the South (Table 2.3).

## ***Educational Attainment and Earnings***

Education increases women's earnings and educational attainment and is an important factor in earnings differences between groups of workers in the United States. In 2014, women in the South aged 25 and older with at least a bachelor's degree working full-time, year-round, earned almost twice as much as women with only a high school diploma (\$50,000 compared with \$27,000), a difference in earnings of \$23,000 per year (Table 2.4, Figures 2.4 and 2.5).

Among Hispanic, black, and Asian/Pacific Islander women, bachelor's degrees bring greater relative earnings gains in the South than in other regions (Table 2.4).

- White women living in states outside the South had greater returns to their education than did white women living within the southern states.

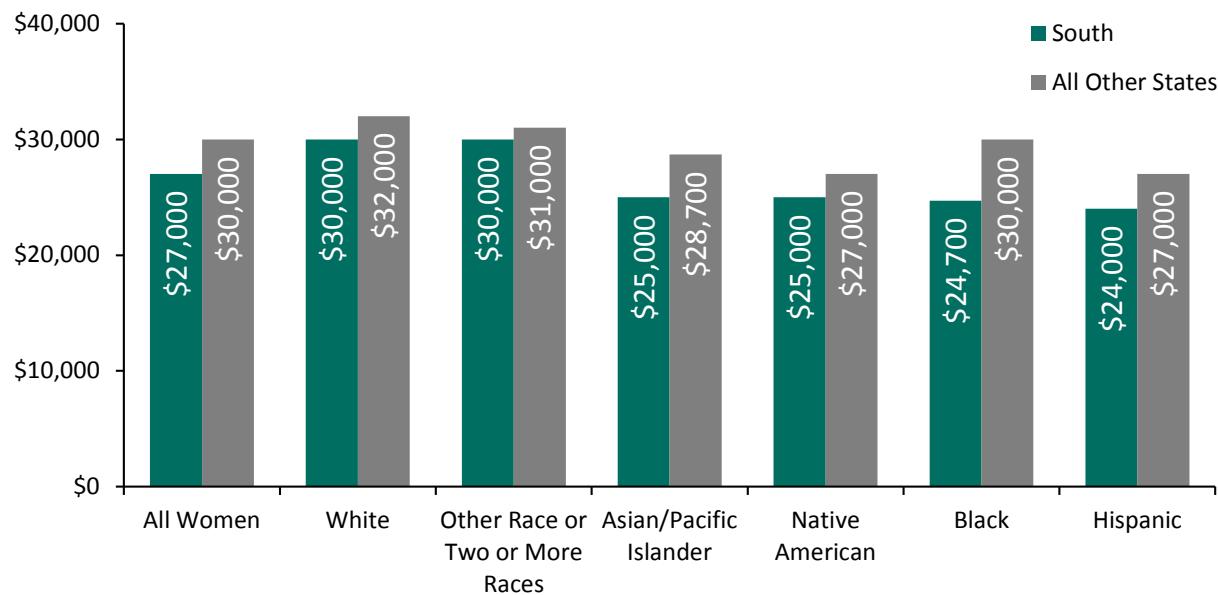
Southern white women with only a high school diploma had annual earnings of \$30,000, while those with at least a bachelor's degree had earnings of \$52,000, a difference of 73.3 percent. For white women living outside the South a bachelor's degree or more raised earnings by 87.5 percent.

- Hispanic women in the South had greater returns to their education than their counterparts in the rest of the country. Southern Hispanic women with only a high school diploma had median earnings of \$24,000, the lowest of any group of women. Those with at least a bachelor's degree, however, had earnings that were 95.8 percent higher. For Hispanic women outside the South, the increased earnings associated with a bachelor's degree was smaller, at 85.2 percent (Table 2.4).
- Black women with only a high school diploma living in the South also had very low earnings, at \$24,700, while southern black women with at least a bachelor's degree had earnings that were 94.3 percent higher (\$48,000). Black women outside the South with a bachelor's degree or more had an earnings increase of 83.3 percent over black women with a high school diploma (Table 2.4).
- Asian/Pacific Islander women who attained a bachelor's degree or more had even larger earnings increases over their high-school only counterparts in the South than in states outside the South. Asian/Pacific Islander women with a bachelor's degree or more had earnings that were 130 percent higher than their high school only counterparts in states outside the South, and their earnings were 160 percent higher in the southern states (Table 2.4).
- Native American women experience the benefits of higher education equally both in the South and in states outside the South. The earnings increase associated with going from a high school diploma only to a bachelor's degree or more was 78.0 percent in the South and 77.8 percent in all other states (Table 2.4).

<sup>7</sup>See Appendix Table B2.3 for comparisons by southern state, for the South and all other states, and the United States.

Figure 2.4.

### Median Annual Earnings for Women Employed Full-Time, Year-Round with a High School Diploma Only, by Race/Ethnicity and South/Non-South, 2014

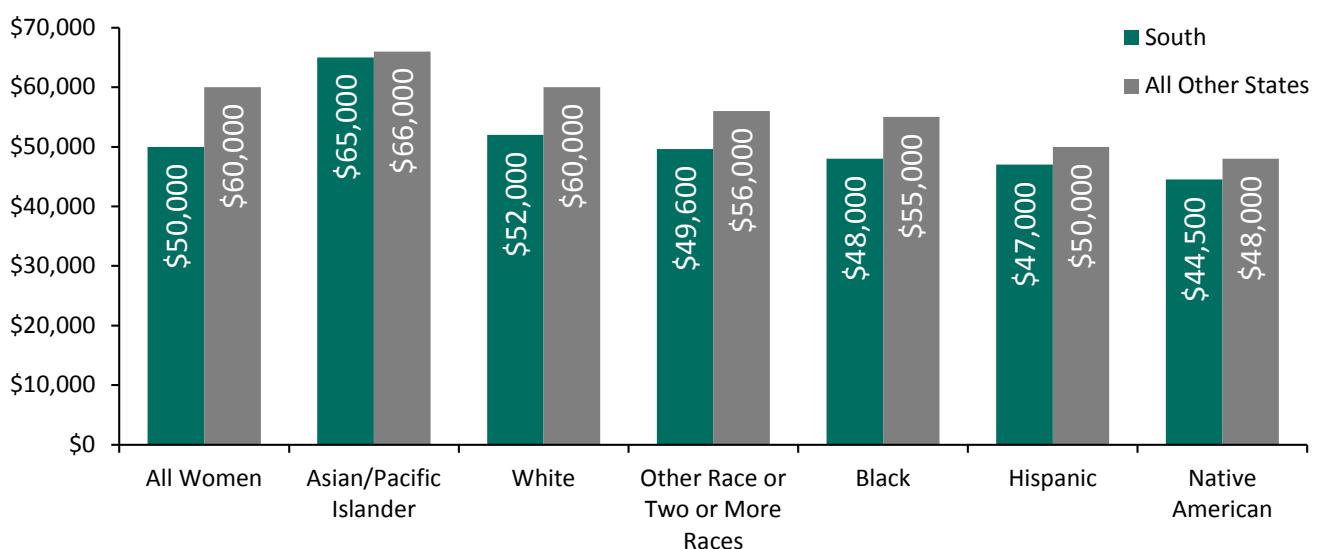


Note: Earnings are for full-time, year-round women workers aged 25 and older. Racial categories are non-Hispanic. Hispanics may be of any race or two or more races.

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

Figure 2.5.

### Median Annual Earnings for Women Employed Full-Time, Year-Round with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher, by Race/Ethnicity and South/Non-South, 2014



Note: Earnings are for full-time, year-round women workers aged 25 and older. Racial categories are non-Hispanic. Hispanics may be of any race or two or more races.

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

Table 2.4.

### Differences in Median Annual Earnings for Women Employed Full-Time, Year-Round with a High School Only and Women with a Bachelor's Degree or More, by Race/Ethnicity and South/Non-South, 2014

State	Women's Median Earnings by Education and Region				Earnings Differences for Women with Only a High School Diploma and Women with a Bachelor's Degree or more, in Dollars		Earnings Difference for Women with Only a High School Diploma and Women with a Bachelor's Degree or more, in Percent	
	South		All Other States		South	All Other States	South	All Other States
	High School Only	Bachelor's Degree or Higher	High School Only	Bachelor's Degree or Higher				
All Women	\$27,000	\$50,000	\$30,000	\$60,000	\$23,000	\$30,000	85.2%	100.0%
White	\$30,000	\$52,000	\$32,000	\$60,000	\$22,000	\$28,000	73.3%	87.5%
Hispanic	\$24,000	\$47,000	\$27,000	\$50,000	\$23,000	\$23,000	95.8%	85.2%
Black	\$24,700	\$48,000	\$30,000	\$55,000	\$23,300	\$25,000	94.3%	83.3%
Asian/Pacific Islander	\$25,000	\$65,000	\$28,700	\$66,000	\$40,000	\$37,300	160.0%	130.0%
Native American	\$25,000	\$44,500	\$27,000	\$48,000	\$19,500	\$21,000	78.0%	77.8%
Other Race or Two or More Races	\$30,000	\$49,600	\$31,000	\$56,000	\$19,600	\$25,000	65.3%	80.6%

Note: Earnings are for full-time, year-round women workers aged 25 and older. Racial categories are non-Hispanic. Hispanics may be of any race or two or more races.

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

### The Union Advantage for Women in the South

Women across the South have a union representation rate that is half that of the nation as a whole (5.7 percent compared with 11.5 percent).<sup>8</sup> Union representation is important because it helps ensure that employers set wages based on objective criteria, such as skill, effort, and responsibility. Research shows that workers represented by labor unions tend to have better wages and benefits, especially among those in the middle and at the bottom of the wage distribution, where workers are disproportionately female (Jones, Schmitt, and Woo 2014). Among full-time workers aged 16 and older across the country, women represented by labor unions earn a weekly average of \$217, or 31.3 percent, more than women in nonunion jobs (Table 2.5).<sup>9</sup>

Southern states are more than twice as likely as states in other regions to have “right-to-work” laws in place

that make it harder for unions to negotiate contracts on behalf of workers. Eleven of the 14 southern states have “right-to-work” laws. These laws are associated with lower wages for all workers, whether or not they are unionized, but especially women (Gould and Shierholz 2011). In right-to-work states, wages are about 4.4 percent lower for full-time, year round female workers and 1.7 percent lower for full-time, year-round male workers than in non-right-to-work states (Gould and Shierholz 2011),<sup>10</sup> suggesting that right-to-work legislation is particularly detrimental to women.

The union wage advantage is greater for women in the South than outside of the South.

- The median weekly earnings of women in the South employed full-time, year-round and represented by a union are \$861, which is \$205 or 31.3 percent more than full-time employed women who are not represented by a union. In states out-

<sup>8</sup> IWPR analysis of Current Population Survey (CPS) data.

<sup>9</sup> The earnings data in this section are calculated for all workers and do not control for age, education, or industry; when these factors are controlled for, the union advantage is smaller but still significant, especially for women and minorities (Jones, Schmitt, and Woo 2014).

<sup>10</sup> Estimates are controlled for individual demographic and socioeconomic variables (including age, gender, race/ethnicity, marital status, education, urbanicity, union status, industry, occupation, whether a worker is an hourly worker, and whether a worker is a full-time worker), as well as state macroeconomic differences, including cost-of-living measures and the unemployment rate (Gould and Shierholz 2011; see also Gould and Kimball 2015).

Table 2.5.

### Median Weekly Earnings for Women Employed Full-Time, by Union Status, Southern State, South/Non-South, and United States, 2014

State	Union	Nonunion	Union Wage Advantage (dollars)	Union Wage Advantage (in Percent)	Right-to-Work State
Alabama	\$826	\$618	\$208	33.6%	Yes
Arkansas	\$817	\$603	\$214	35.4%	Yes
District of Columbia	\$1,124	\$1,076	\$48	4.4%	No
Florida	\$830	\$688	\$143	20.7%	Yes
Georgia	\$878	\$674	\$204	30.3%	Yes
Kentucky	\$744	\$610	\$134	22.0%	No
Louisiana	\$851	\$599	\$251	42.0%	Yes
Mississippi	\$753	\$599	\$154	25.7%	Yes
North Carolina	\$787	\$657	\$131	19.9%	Yes
South Carolina	\$896	\$613	\$283	46.3%	Yes
Tennessee	\$800	\$621	\$178	28.7%	Yes
Texas	\$896	\$637	\$260	40.8%	Yes
Virginia	\$1,099	\$796	\$304	38.2%	Yes
West Virginia	\$782	\$606	\$176	29.0%	No
<b>Southern States</b>	<b>\$861</b>	<b>\$656</b>	<b>\$205</b>	<b>31.3%</b>	<b>78.6% are Right to Work</b>
<b>All Other States</b>	<b>\$924</b>	<b>\$716</b>	<b>\$208</b>	<b>29.0%</b>	<b>35.1% are Right to Work</b>
<b>United States</b>	<b>\$911</b>	<b>\$694</b>	<b>\$217</b>	<b>31.3%</b>	<b>47.1% are Right to Work</b>

Notes: Data are four-year (2011-2014) averages. Earnings are for full-time women workers aged 16 and older. Racial categories are non-Hispanic. Hispanics may be of any race or two or more races.

Source: IWPR analysis of Current Population Survey Outgoing Rotation Groups data, Version 2.0.1 (Center for Economic Policy Research 2015; Institute for Women's Policy Research 2015b). National Conference of State Legislatures (2015).

side the South, unionized women earn a median of \$924 a week, which is \$208 or 29.0 percent more than non-unionized women (Table 2.5).

The union wage advantage for women is present in all southern states, and varies in size across states.

- Unionized women who work full-time have higher median weekly earnings than their nonunionized counterparts across all southern states (Table 2.5).
- Women in South Carolina, Louisiana, and Texas have the largest union wage advantage compared with their nonunionized counterparts, with weekly earnings that are 46.3, 42.0, and 40.8 percent higher, respectively.
- The jurisdictions with the smallest union wage advantage are the District of Columbia (4.4 percent),

North Carolina (19.9 percent), and Florida (20.7 percent).

Across all racial and ethnic groups in Table 2.6, unionized women earn more than non-unionized women. The union advantage does differ, however, by race, ethnicity, and region.<sup>11</sup>

- White women have a larger union advantage in states outside the South, with unionized white women earning 27.5 percent higher weekly earnings than their nonunion counterparts. In southern states, unionized white women's earnings are 24.7 percent higher than their nonunion counterpart (Table 2.6).
- Hispanic women experience greater benefits of unionization in the South, where unionized Hispanic women's earnings are 59.5 percent greater

<sup>11</sup> Sample size for southern Asian/Pacific Islander women in unions was too small to allow calculation of reliable estimates of earnings.

Table 2.6.

### Median Weekly Earnings for Women by Race/Ethnicity and Union Status, South/Non-South, and United States, 2014

Region	All Women			White Women			Hispanic Women			Black Women		
	Union	Nonunion	Union Advantage (Percent)	Union	Nonunion	Union Advantage (Percent)	Union	Nonunion	Union Advantage (Percent)	Union	Nonunion	Union Advantage (Percent)
Southern States	\$861	\$656	31.3%	\$904	\$725	24.7%	\$815	\$511	59.5%	\$779	\$579	34.5%
All Other States	\$924	\$716	29.0%	\$978	\$767	27.5%	\$766	\$531	44.4%	\$796	\$621	28.2%
United States	\$911	\$694	31.3%	\$963	\$753	27.9%	\$774	\$522	48.3%	\$790	\$598	32.2%

Notes: Data are four-year (2011-2014) averages. Earnings are for full-time women workers aged 16 and older. Racial categories are non-Hispanic. Hispanics may be of any race or two or more races. Sample sizes for southern Asian/Pacific Islander women too small to allow reliable calculation of earnings, so they are omitted from table 2.6.

Source: IWPR analysis of Current Population Survey Outgoing Rotation Groups data, Version 2.0.1 (Center for Economic Policy Research 2015; Institute for Women's Policy Research 2015b).

than nonunionized southern Hispanic women. The difference in earnings between unionized and nonunionized Hispanic women outside the South was a smaller, yet still notable, 44.4 percent.

- Black women also experience a substantial earnings boost from unionization which is also more pronounced in the South. Unionized southern black women's earnings were 34.5 percent greater than nonunionized southern black women (the difference for states outside the South was 28.2 percent).

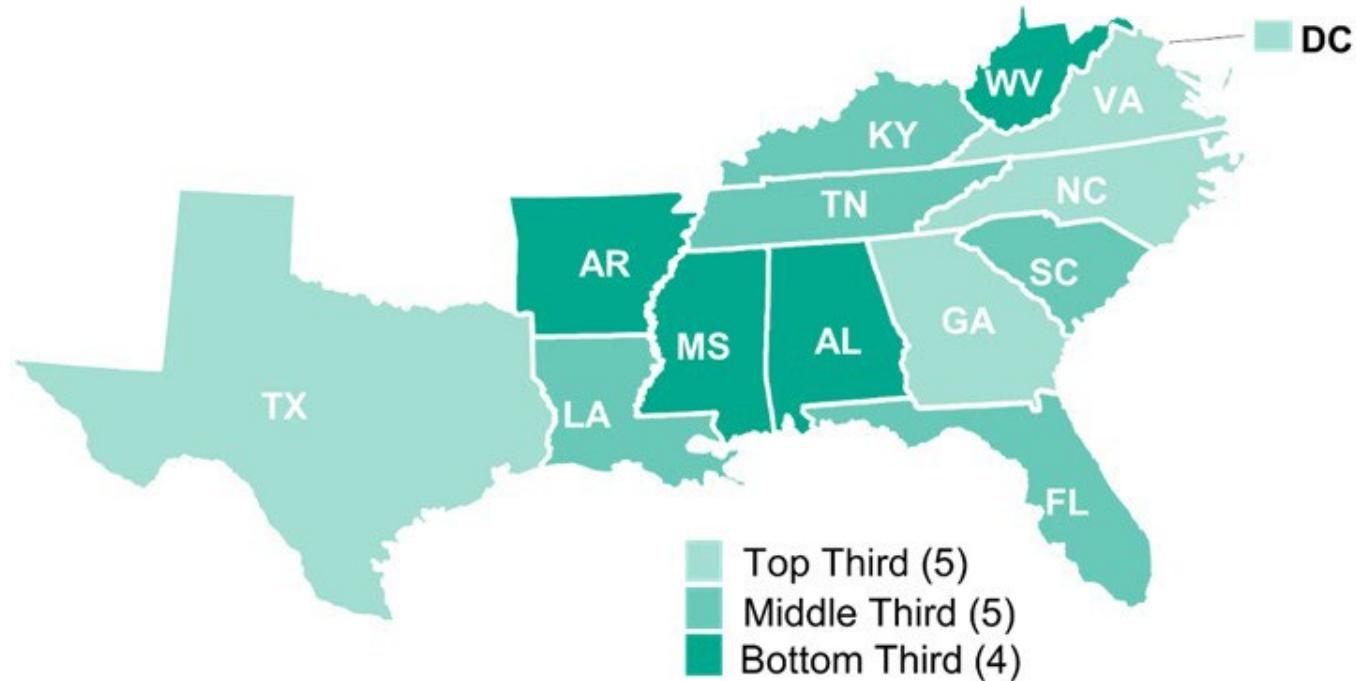
## Women's Labor Force Participation

Women's increased labor force participation represents a significant change in the U.S. economy since 1950. In 1950 only one in three women aged 16 and older was in the labor force. By 2014, almost six in ten women aged 16 and older were in the labor force (57.0 percent, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2015), and women made up almost half (46.8 percent) of the total U.S. workforce (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2015). There are, however, substantial differences in women's labor force participation rates by state, and by race and ethnicity, between the South and all other states (Map 2.4; Table 2.1; Appendix Table B2.5).

- Women in states outside of the South have a labor force participation rate that is 2.9 percentage points higher than the overall rate for all southern states (59.2 percent compared with 56.3 percent, respectively; Table 2.1).
- Across jurisdictions in the South, women's labor force participation rates are highest in the District of Columbia (67.2 percent), Virginia (61.3 percent), and Texas (57.8 percent; Table 2.1). Women's labor force participation rates are lowest in West Virginia (48.3 percent), Alabama (52.5 percent), and Arkansas (52.6 percent).
- Among women from the largest racial and ethnic groups in the South, black women have the highest labor force participation rate (62.4 percent), followed by women of another race or two or more races (60.1 percent), then Asian/Pacific Islander women (58.8 percent). Native American women have the lowest labor force participation rate (50.4 percent), followed by white women (54.3 percent; Appendix Table B2.5).
- Outside the South the labor force participation rates of white (59.2 percent), Native American (54.7 percent), and women another race or two or more races (62.9 percent) are considerably higher than their same-race counterparts in the South (Appendix Table B2.5).

Map 2.4.

### Labor Force Participation of Women in the South, 2014



Note: Percent of all women aged 16 and older who were employed or looking for work in 2014.

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

## Women in Managerial or Professional Occupations

Professional and managerial occupations include occupations such as managers, lawyers, doctors, nurses, teachers, accountants, and engineers. These occupations generally require at least a college degree and provide opportunities for higher earnings (Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, The Economics Daily 2011). Nationally, the percentage of employed women in these occupations has increased from 33.2 percent of working women in 2001 (Caiazza et al. 2004), to 40.9 percent in 2014 (Appendix Table B2.8).

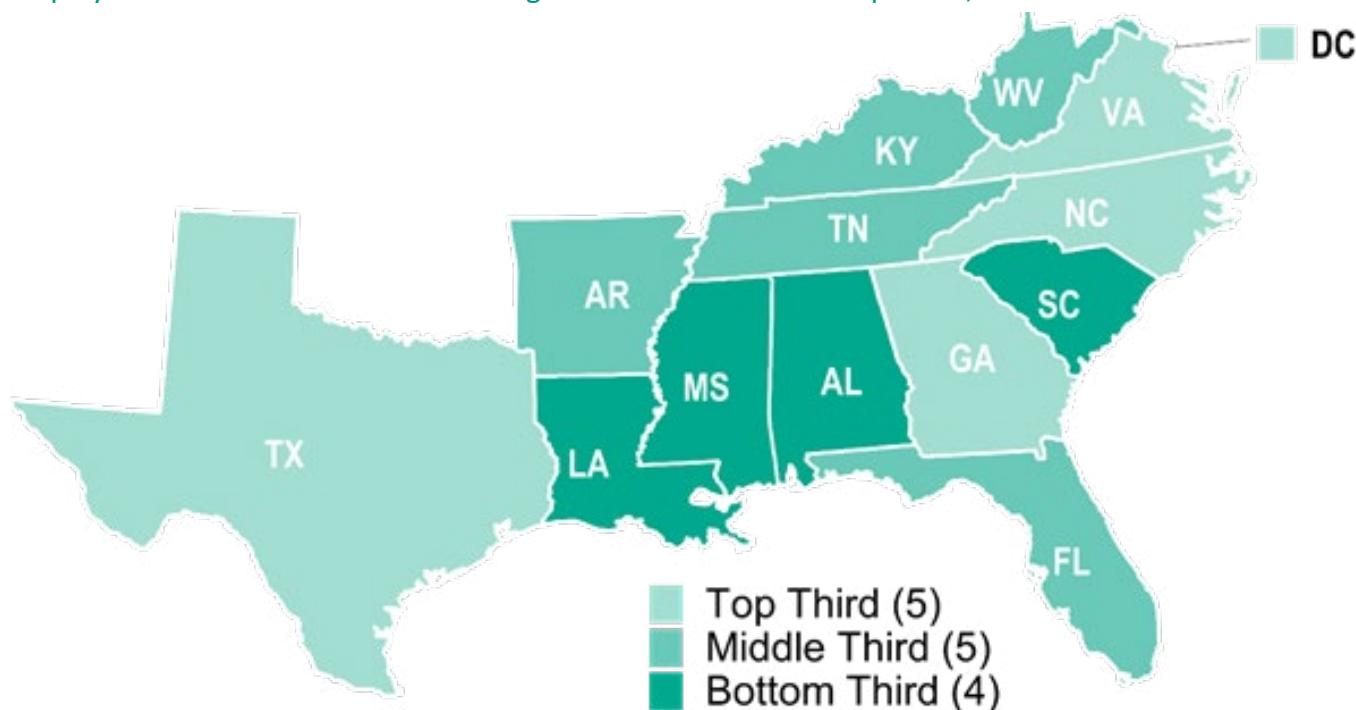
- Among the southern states, the District of Columbia has the highest percentage of employed women working in managerial or professional occupations, with nearly three-fifths of working women in these occupations (61.1 percent; Table 2.1; Map 2.5). Virginia ranks second in the South, with

45.0 percent of working women in managerial or professional occupations. Alabama, Mississippi, and South Carolina have the smallest percentages of managerial and professional women (all at 37.2 percent; Appendix Table B2.8).

- In the South, as is true in the nation as a whole, Asian/Pacific Islander women are more likely than women of other racial/ethnic backgrounds to work in management and professional occupations (47.7 percent), followed closely by white women (45.0 percent; Figure 2.6). Just over one-third of southern Native American (34.5 percent) and black (32.5 percent) women work in professional and management occupations. Southern Hispanic women are least likely, among the largest racial/ethnic groups, to work in management and professional occupations (26.4 percent), although they are more likely to work in such positions in the South than they are elsewhere in the country (Figure 2.6).

Map 2.5.

### Employed Women in the South in Managerial or Professional Occupations, 2014

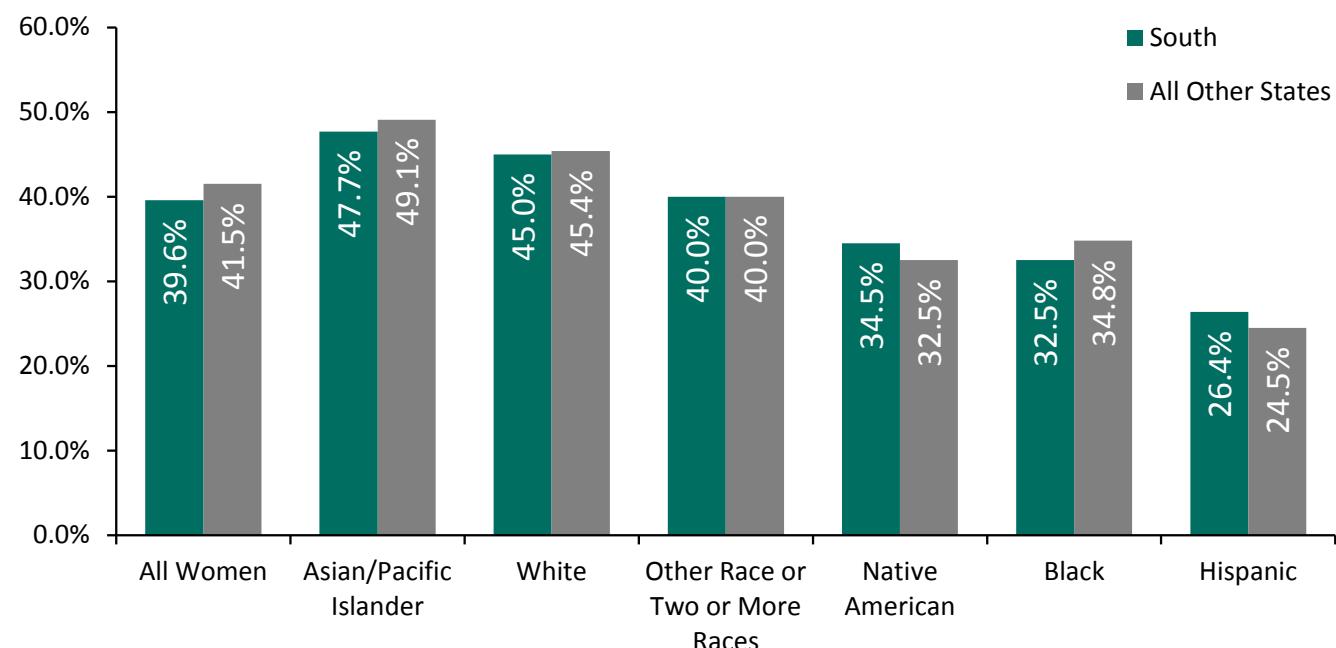


Note: Percent of all employed women aged 16 and older who were in executive, administrative, managerial, or professional specialty occupations in 2014.

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

Figure 2.6.

### Share of Employed Women in Managerial or Professional Occupations, by Race/Ethnicity and South/Non-South, 2014



Note: Aged 16 and older.

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

## Conclusion

In the American South women continue to lag behind women in all other states in terms of labor force participation, earnings, the wage gap, union rights, and the share of women working in professional and managerial jobs. Black, Hispanic, and Native American women in the South feel these disparities even more intensely, with earnings that fall considerably below those of white and Asian/Pacific Islander women. While college education brings significant earnings gains to southern women, racial/ethnic disparities persist among college-educated women as well.

Economic inequalities by race and ethnicity, and between the South and the rest of the nation highlight the need for policies and practices that improve the quality of jobs and that provide all women in the South, and especially women of color, access to education and to jobs that pay family-sustaining wages. Increases in the minimum wage, pay equity legislation, the right and ability to form unions, and anti-discrimination laws, can all help to improve employment and economic opportunity for women across the South.



## Appendix A2:

# Methodology

To analyze the status of women, IWPR selected indicators that highlight key issues that are integral to women's lives and that allow for comparisons between each state and the United States as a whole. Selection of indicators was based on published research, available data, and advice from a committee of topical and social indicators experts. The data in IWPR's *Status of Women in the South* report come from federal government agencies and other sources; 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 (IPUMS; Institute for Women's Policy Research 2015c; Ruggles et al. 2015).

The tables and figures 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. People who identify as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race; to prevent double counting, IWPR's analysis of American Community Survey microdata separates Hispanics from racial categories—including white, black (which includes those who identified as black or African American), Asian/Pacific Islander (which includes those who identified as Chinese, Japanese, and Other Asian or Pacific Islander, including Native Hawaiians), or Native American (which includes those who identified as American Indian or Alaska Native). The ACS also allows respondents to identify with more specific racial categories and/or Hispanic origins. Detailed racial/ethnic information is available for American Indians and Alaska Natives, Asian/Pacific Islanders, and Hispanics, but not for blacks or whites. IWPR conducted analysis of selected indicators for the groups for which detailed information is available (when sample sizes were not large enough, detailed races/ethnicities were combined into "other" categories based on their corresponding major racial or ethnic group).

When analyzing state- and national-level ACS microdata, IWPR used 2014 data, the most recent available, for most indicators. When disaggregating data by race and ethnicity and analyzing the employment

and earnings of women by detailed racial and ethnic group, IWPR combined three years of data (2012, 2013, and 2014) to ensure sufficient sample sizes.

In a few places in this chapter, current data for 2014 based on the American Community Survey (ACS) are compared with data from IWPR's 2004 *Status of Women in the States* report, which relied on the Current Population Survey (CPS). The differences between the ACS and CPS and their impact on measures of employment and earnings are described in detail in Hess et al. (2015). The data on current union status are available only in the Current Population Survey (CPS).

When combining multiple years of data, dollar values for each data set are adjusted to their 2014 equivalents using the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, and averaging the sample weights to represent the average population during the three-year period.

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

## ***Calculating the Composite Index***

To construct the Employment & Earnings Composite Index, each of the four component indicators (see below) 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, as if women earned as much as men; women's labor force participation was set at the national number for men; and 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 2014. The sample size for women ranged from 1,317 in the District of Columbia to 34,867 in Texas. Source: Calculations of 2014 American Community Survey microdata as provided by the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) 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 2014 divided by the median annual earnings of men aged 16 and older who worked full-time, year-round in 2014. Sample sizes ranged from 1,317 in the District of Columbia to 34,867 in Texas for women's earnings and from 1,341 in the District of Columbia to 48,195 in Texas for men's earnings. Source: Calculations of 2014 American Community Survey microdata as provided by the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) 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 2014. This includes those employed full-time, those employed part-time, and those who are unemployed but looking for work. Source: Calculations of 2014 American Community Survey microdata as provided by the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) at the Minnesota Population Center.

**WOMEN IN MANAGERIAL AND PROFESSIONAL OCCUPATIONS:** Percent of women aged 16 and older who were employed in executive, administrative, managerial or professional specialty occupations in 2014. Source: Calculation of 2014 American Community Survey microdata as provided by the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) at the Minnesota Population Center.

### ***Calculating Other Indicators***

**UNION WAGE ADVANTAGE:** When analyzing data on the median weekly earnings of women by union status for the South and all other states, the Current Population Survey is used and four years of data (2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014) are combined, to ensure sufficient sample size. IWPR constructed multi-year files by selecting the relevant datasets (2012, 2013, and 2014 for state level analyses and racial ethnic analyses; 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 for analysis of earnings by union status).

**EQUAL PAY AND GDP ESTIMATES:** This analysis uses the Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic supplements based on Flood et al., 2013-2015 (for calendar years 2012-2014). GDP data are from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis (2015). 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. This model controls for many factors that contribute to wage differences and then corrects women's earnings as if the unexplained portion of the wage gap did not exist. An ordinary least squares (OLS) model is run separately for each southern state and is used to control for differences between men and women in age, education, annual hours of work, metropolitan residence, and region of the country.

Appendix B2:

## Employment & Earnings Tables

Appendix Table B2.1.

## Data and Rankings on Employment &amp; Earnings Among Men in the South, 2014

State	Median Annual Earnings for Men Employed Full-Time, Year-Round			Percent of Men in the Labor Force			Percent of Employed Men in Managerial and Professional Occupations		
	Dollars	National Rank	Regional Rank	Percent	National Rank	Regional Rank	Percent	National Rank	Regional Rank
Alabama	\$44,000	37	6	63.4%	48	11	28.1%	43	8
Arkansas	\$40,000	46	10	63.9%	47	10	27.4%	46	10
District of Columbia	\$67,000	1	1	72.3%	12	1	60.1%	1	1
Florida	\$40,000	46	10	63.3%	49	12	30.9%	35	6
Georgia	\$44,000	37	6	67.4%	32	5	31.8%	28	3
Kentucky	\$43,000	41	8	64.6%	44	9	27.3%	48	12
Louisiana	\$48,000	22	3	65.4%	42	8	27.4%	46	10
Mississippi	\$40,000	46	10	62.3%	50	13	24.9%	50	14
North Carolina	\$40,000	46	10	67.7%	30	4	31.2%	34	5
South Carolina	\$42,000	43	9	65.6%	41	7	28.0%	44	9
Tennessee	\$40,000	46	10	65.8%	40	6	29.0%	40	7
Texas	\$45,000	29	4	71.6%	17	2	31.7%	29	4
Virginia	\$52,000	9	2	71.3%	18	3	40.1%	4	2
West Virginia	\$45,000	29	4	58.6%	51	14	25.2%	49	13
<b>Southern States</b>	<b>\$44,000</b>			<b>67.1%</b>			<b>31.2%</b>		
<b>All Other States</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>			<b>69.4%</b>			<b>34.3%</b>		
<b>United States</b>	<b>\$48,000</b>			<b>68.6%</b>			<b>33.3%</b>		

Note: Aged 16 and Older.

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

Appendix Table B2.2.

## Median Annual Earnings for Women Employed Full-Time, Year-Round, by Race/Ethnicity, Southern State, South/Non-South, and United States, 2014

State	All Women	White	Hispanic	Black	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Native American	Other Race or Two or More Races
Alabama	\$32,000	\$35,000	\$21,000	\$28,000	\$38,000	N/A	\$40,000
Arkansas	\$30,000	\$32,000	\$22,000	\$27,900	\$29,000	N/A	\$28,000
District of Columbia	\$64,000	\$74,000	\$47,000	\$48,000	\$60,000	N/A	N/A
Florida	\$34,500	\$38,000	\$28,000	\$30,000	\$36,000	\$33,700	\$33,300
Georgia	\$36,000	\$40,000	\$24,000	\$32,000	\$38,000	N/A	\$35,000
Kentucky	\$34,000	\$34,000	\$26,000	\$29,000	\$31,200	N/A	\$39,000
Louisiana	\$31,200	\$36,000	\$28,000	\$25,000	\$32,000	N/A	\$35,000
Mississippi	\$30,000	\$34,000	\$24,000	\$25,000	\$30,000	N/A	N/A
North Carolina	\$35,000	\$37,000	\$23,000	\$30,000	\$35,000	\$28,000	\$32,000
South Carolina	\$33,000	\$36,000	\$26,000	\$27,000	\$34,000	N/A	\$31,000
Tennessee	\$34,000	\$35,000	\$22,800	\$30,000	\$38,000	N/A	\$30,000
Texas	\$35,900	\$42,000	\$25,100	\$35,000	\$47,500	\$35,000	\$37,500
Virginia	\$42,000	\$45,000	\$30,000	\$35,000	\$50,000	N/A	\$40,000
West Virginia	\$31,200	\$30,000	N/A	\$30,000	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Southern States</b>	<b>\$35,000</b>	<b>\$38,000</b>	<b>\$26,000</b>	<b>\$30,000</b>	<b>\$42,000</b>	<b>\$30,000</b>	<b>\$35,000</b>
<b>All Other States</b>	<b>\$40,000</b>	<b>\$41,000</b>	<b>\$30,000</b>	<b>\$37,500</b>	<b>\$46,100</b>	<b>\$31,500</b>	<b>\$39,000</b>
<b>United States</b>	<b>\$38,400</b>	<b>\$40,000</b>	<b>\$28,000</b>	<b>\$33,600</b>	<b>\$45,000</b>	<b>\$31,000</b>	<b>\$38,000</b>

Notes: Data for all women are 2014 data; data by race/ethnicity are three-year (2012-2014) averages. Aged 16 and older. Racial categories are non-Hispanic. Hispanics may be of any race or two or more races. N/A=insufficient sample size.

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

Appendix Table B2.3.

### Ratio of Women's Earnings to White Men's Earnings, by Race/Ethnicity, Southern State, South/Non-South, and United States, 2014

State	All Women	White	Hispanic	Black	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Native American	Other Race or Two or More Races
Alabama	65.3%	71.4%	42.9%	57.1%	77.6%	71.4%	81.6%
Arkansas	73.2%	78.0%	53.7%	68.0%	70.7%	68.3%	68.3%
District of Columbia	69.0%	85.1%	54.0%	55.2%	69.0%	92.0%	69.0%
Florida	70.8%	79.2%	58.3%	62.5%	75.0%	70.2%	69.4%
Georgia	70.0%	80.0%	48.0%	64.0%	76.0%	64.0%	70.0%
Kentucky	73.3%	75.6%	57.8%	64.4%	69.3%	55.6%	86.7%
Louisiana	58.3%	66.7%	51.9%	46.3%	59.3%	61.1%	64.8%
Mississippi	66.7%	75.6%	53.3%	55.6%	66.7%	48.9%	61.8%
North Carolina	74.5%	78.7%	48.9%	63.8%	74.5%	59.6%	68.1%
South Carolina	69.8%	76.6%	55.3%	57.4%	72.3%	55.3%	66.0%
Tennessee	73.3%	77.8%	50.7%	66.7%	84.4%	64.4%	66.7%
Texas	58.3%	70.0%	41.8%	58.3%	79.2%	58.3%	62.5%
Virginia	68.9%	75.6%	50.4%	58.8%	84.0%	63.9%	67.2%
West Virginia	66.7%	66.7%	59.7%	66.7%	91.1%	72.9%	71.1%
<b>Southern States</b>	<b>70.0%</b>	<b>76.0%</b>	<b>52.0%</b>	<b>60.0%</b>	<b>84.0%</b>	<b>60.0%</b>	<b>70.0%</b>
<b>All Other States</b>	<b>74.1%</b>	<b>75.9%</b>	<b>55.6%</b>	<b>69.4%</b>	<b>85.4%</b>	<b>58.3%</b>	<b>72.2%</b>
<b>United States</b>	<b>73.1%</b>	<b>76.9%</b>	<b>53.8%</b>	<b>64.6%</b>	<b>86.5%</b>	<b>59.6%</b>	<b>73.1%</b>

Notes: Data are three-year (2012-2014) averages. Data include full-time, year-round workers aged 16 and older. Racial categories are non-Hispanic. Hispanics may be of any race or two or more races. N/A=insufficient sample size.

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

Appendix Table B2.4.

### Change in Real Median Annual Earnings for Full-Time, Year-Round Workers in the South, by Gender, by Southern State, South/Non-South, and United States, 1999-2014

State	Median Annual Earnings, 1999 (in 2014 dollars)		Median Annual Earnings, 2014		Change in Median Annual Earnings, 1999 to 2014 (Dollars)		Change in Median Annual Earnings, 1999 to 2014 (Percent)	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Alabama	\$32,683	\$46,893	\$32,000	\$44,000	-\$683	-\$2,893	-2.1%	-6.2%
Arkansas	\$29,841	\$42,630	\$30,000	\$40,000	\$159	-\$2,630	0.5%	-6.2%
District of Columbia	\$52,576	\$56,839	\$64,000	\$67,000	\$11,424	\$10,161	21.7%	17.9%
Florida	\$35,525	\$46,893	\$34,500	\$40,000	-\$1,025	-\$6,893	-2.9%	-14.7%
Georgia	\$38,367	\$49,735	\$36,000	\$44,000	-\$2,367	-\$5,735	-6.2%	-11.5%
Kentucky	\$33,677	\$46,893	\$34,000	\$43,000	\$323	-\$3,893	1.0%	-8.3%
Louisiana	\$31,262	\$48,314	\$31,200	\$48,000	-\$62	-\$314	-0.2%	-0.6%
Mississippi	\$30,978	\$42,630	\$30,000	\$40,000	-\$978	-\$2,630	-3.2%	-6.2%
North Carolina	\$35,525	\$45,472	\$35,000	\$40,000	-\$525	-\$5,472	-1.5%	-12.0%
South Carolina	\$34,104	\$45,472	\$33,000	\$42,000	-\$1,104	-\$3,472	-3.2%	-7.6%
Tennessee	\$34,104	\$46,893	\$34,000	\$40,000	-\$104	-\$6,893	-0.3%	-14.7%
Texas	\$36,946	\$49,735	\$35,900	\$45,000	-\$1,046	-\$4,735	-2.8%	-9.5%
Virginia	\$39,788	\$54,424	\$42,000	\$52,000	\$2,212	-\$2,424	5.6%	-4.5%
West Virginia	\$29,841	\$44,548	\$31,200	\$45,000	\$1,359	\$452	4.6%	1.0%
<b>Southern States</b>	<b>\$35,525</b>	<b>\$48,314</b>	<b>\$35,000</b>	<b>\$44,000</b>	<b>-\$525</b>	<b>-\$4,314</b>	<b>-1.5%</b>	<b>-8.9%</b>
<b>All Other States</b>	<b>\$41,209</b>	<b>\$56,839</b>	<b>\$40,000</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>	<b>-\$1,209</b>	<b>-\$6,839</b>	<b>-2.9%</b>	<b>-12.0%</b>
<b>United States</b>	<b>\$38,935</b>	<b>\$53,429</b>	<b>\$38,400</b>	<b>\$48,000</b>	<b>-\$535</b>	<b>-\$5,429</b>	<b>-1.4%</b>	<b>-10.2%</b>

Notes: Aged 16 and older. Data from 1999 are in 2014 dollars.

Source: IWPR analysis of 2000 Decennial Census (for calendar year 1999) and 2014 American Community Survey microdata (Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Version 6.0).

Appendix Table B2.5.

### Labor Force Participation Among Women, by Race/Ethnicity, Southern State, South/Non-South, and United States, 2014

State	All Women	White	Hispanic	Black	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Native American	Other Race or Two or More Races
Alabama	52.5%	50.7%	49.8%	58.2%	51.4%	47.2%	51.6%
Arkansas	52.6%	52.2%	57.2%	59.3%	57.6%	43.6%	54.5%
District of Columbia	67.2%	76.6%	72.1%	56.7%	74.1%	N/A	64.2%
Florida	54.1%	50.6%	58.5%	63.3%	57.6%	48.0%	63.3%
Georgia	57.5%	54.7%	58.5%	63.0%	55.7%	57.0%	58.7%
Kentucky	54.2%	53.8%	60.8%	62.7%	57.7%	55.1%	57.2%
Louisiana	55.8%	54.2%	60.5%	59.7%	57.1%	42.8%	55.5%
Mississippi	53.9%	51.2%	54.3%	59.2%	59.4%	54.2%	50.8%
North Carolina	57.2%	56.1%	59.5%	62.7%	58.9%	49.8%	61.0%
South Carolina	56.4%	54.7%	58.7%	60.6%	60.0%	50.5%	59.4%
Tennessee	56.1%	54.6%	55.9%	63.4%	58.0%	51.8%	56.6%
Texas	57.8%	56.8%	56.7%	65.2%	58.9%	53.8%	60.9%
Virginia	61.3%	59.3%	68.8%	65.1%	62.5%	59.6%	63.9%
West Virginia	48.3%	48.9%	50.1%	52.6%	49.4%	N/A	47.9%
<b>Southern States</b>	<b>56.3%</b>	<b>54.3%</b>	<b>57.9%</b>	<b>62.4%</b>	<b>58.8%</b>	<b>50.4%</b>	<b>60.1%</b>
<b>All Other States</b>	<b>59.2%</b>	<b>59.2%</b>	<b>59.7%</b>	<b>62.2%</b>	<b>58.7%</b>	<b>54.7%</b>	<b>62.9%</b>
<b>United States</b>	<b>58.2%</b>	<b>57.6%</b>	<b>59.1%</b>	<b>62.3%</b>	<b>58.7%</b>	<b>53.9%</b>	<b>62.2%</b>

Notes: Data for all women are for 2014; data by race/ethnicity are three-year (2012-2014) averages. Aged 16 and older. Racial categories are non-Hispanic. Hispanics may be of any race or two or more races. N/A=insufficient sample size.

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

Appendix Table B2.6.

## Employment and Earnings Among Women in the South, by Detailed Racial and Ethnic Groups, 2014

	Median Annual Earnings for Women and Men Employed Full-Time, Year-Round		Ratio of Women's Earning to Men's Earnings of the Same Racial/Ethnic Group	Ratio of Women's Earning to White Men's Earnings	Women in the Labor Force	Employed Women in Managerial or Professional Occupations
Racial/Ethnic Group	Women	Men	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
<b>WHITE</b>	\$38,000	\$50,000	76.0%	76.0%	54.3%	44.2%
<b>HISPANIC</b>						
Mexican	\$25,000	\$30,000	83.3%	50.0%	56.1%	23.6%
Spaniard	\$39,000	\$50,000	78.0%	78.0%	55.1%	45.5%
Caribbean						
Cuban	\$30,000	\$33,300	90.1%	60.0%	55.5%	33.2%
Dominican	\$28,000	\$33,000	84.8%	56.0%	63.7%	26.0%
Puerto Rican	\$31,000	\$36,000	86.1%	62.0%	60.5%	34.3%
Central America						
Costa Rican	\$32,000	\$42,000	76.2%	64.0%	55.3%	34.1%
Guatemalan	\$20,000	\$22,000	90.9%	40.0%	57.7%	15.8%
Honduran	\$20,000	\$25,000	80.0%	40.0%	63.5%	12.9%
Nicaraguan	\$25,000	\$30,000	83.3%	50.0%	64.9%	23.9%
Panamanian	\$34,000	\$45,000	75.6%	68.0%	63.5%	31.7%
Salvadoran	\$22,000	\$28,000	78.6%	44.0%	66.6%	11.5%
South America						
Argentinean	\$35,000	\$45,000	77.8%	70.0%	63.1%	44.2%
Bolivian	\$32,400	\$37,000	87.6%	64.8%	73.8%	26.3%
Colombian	\$30,000	\$38,000	78.9%	60.0%	63.2%	34.3%
Ecuadorian	\$30,000	\$36,400	82.4%	60.0%	61.2%	31.6%
Peruvian	\$28,000	\$36,000	77.8%	56.0%	68.2%	30.1%
Venezuelan	\$36,000	\$48,000	75.0%	72.0%	61.6%	39.4%
Other South American		\$39,000	74.6%	58.2%	60.7%	32.8%
Other Hispanic	\$30,000	\$36,000	83.3%	60.0%	56.9%	31.3%
<b>ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER</b>						
East Asia						
Chinese	\$50,000	\$63,000	79.4%	100.0%	58.6%	59.2%
Japanese	\$46,000	\$68,000	67.6%	92.0%	44.3%	53.8%
Korean	\$40,000	\$50,000	80.0%	80.0%	50.3%	44.0%
South Central Asia						
Indian	\$60,000	\$80,000	75.0%	120.0%	55.0%	66.7%
Pakistani	\$43,000	\$49,500	86.9%	86.0%	44.3%	50.8%
South East Asia						
Cambodian	\$28,000	\$35,000	80.0%	56.0%	69.0%	24.7%
Filipino	\$45,000	\$50,000	90.0%	90.0%	66.4%	50.8%
Laotian	\$29,000	\$36,000	80.6%	58.0%	68.1%	26.9%
Thai	\$33,000	\$40,000	82.5%	66.0%	59.5%	32.5%
Vietnamese	\$30,000	\$37,000	81.1%	60.0%	65.7%	27.3%

Appendix Table B2.6. Continued

**Employment and Earnings Among Women in the South, by Detailed Racial and Ethnic Groups, 2014**

Other Asian	\$29,300	\$35,700	82.1%	58.6%	58.0%	31.5%
Pacific Islander	\$30,000	\$35,000	85.7%	60.0%	67.4%	28.9%
Two or More Asian/Pacific Islander Races	\$40,300	\$50,000	80.6%	80.6%	61.4%	47.1%
<b>NATIVE AMERICAN</b>						
Cherokee	\$32,000	\$43,000	74.4%	64.0%	47.6%	36.2%
Other American Indian Tribe	\$30,000	\$39,000	76.9%	60.0%	50.8%	33.0%
Two or More American Indian and/or Alaska Native Tribes	\$32,000	\$40,000	80.0%	64.0%	55.6%	33.8%

Notes: Data are three-year (2012-2014) averages. Aged 16 and older. Racial categories are non-Hispanic; Hispanics may be of any race.

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

Appendix Table B2.7.

**Distribution Across Broad Occupational Groups, by Gender and South/Non-South, 2014**

Occupational Group	Women (# in thousands)		Men (# in thousands)		Women's Share of All Workers		Share of Employed Women		Share of Employed Men	
	South	All Other States	South	All Other States	South	All Other States	South	All Other States	South	All Other States
Management, business, and financial	3,129	6,710	3,899	8,352	44.5%	44.6%	13.5%	14.2%	15.0%	15.9%
Professional and related	6,021	12,892	4,220	9,664	58.8%	57.2%	26.0%	27.3%	16.2%	18.4%
Service	5,008	10,190	3,884	7,921	56.3%	56.3%	21.6%	21.6%	14.9%	15.1%
Sales and related	2,851	5,106	2,640	5,229	51.9%	49.4%	12.3%	10.8%	10.1%	9.9%
Office and administrative support	4,563	9,205	1,811	3,674	71.6%	71.5%	19.7%	19.5%	7.0%	7.0%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance	201	442	4,561	8,058	4.2%	5.2%	0.9%	0.9%	17.5%	15.3%
Production, transportation, and material moving	1,333	2,668	4,785	9,444	21.8%	22.0%	5.8%	5.6%	18.4%	18.0%
Armed Forces	29	28	217	226	11.9%	11.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.8%	0.4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>23,135</b>	<b>47,241</b>	<b>26,017</b>	<b>52,568</b>	<b>47.1%</b>	<b>47.3%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Note: Workers aged 16 and older.

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

Appendix Table B2.8.

**Percentage of Employed Women in Managerial or Professional Occupations, by Race/Ethnicity, Southern State, South/Non-South, and United States, 2014**

State	All Women	White	Hispanic	Black	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Native American	Other Race or Two or More Races
Alabama	37.2%	41.3%	21.2%	29.2%	45.8%	N/A	43.5%
Arkansas	38.1%	39.3%	20.3%	32.5%	N/A	N/A	N/A
District of Columbia	61.1%	79.2%	42.4%	43.1%	71.8%	N/A	N/A
Florida	37.8%	41.9%	29.1%	31.0%	44.5%	33.0%	36.0%
Georgia	40.7%	45.8%	20.7%	33.5%	45.8%	N/A	35.1%
Kentucky	39.2%	39.2%	25.5%	27.0%	45.1%	N/A	39.7%
Louisiana	37.3%	42.5%	29.9%	28.3%	36.6%	N/A	38.0%
Mississippi	37.2%	42.0%	25.3%	29.4%	N/A	N/A	N/A
North Carolina	40.8%	45.2%	20.2%	32.2%	46.3%	32.1%	36.1%
South Carolina	37.2%	42.1%	23.2%	26.9%	39.3%	N/A	28.5%
Tennessee	37.9%	40.4%	22.1%	30.8%	45.5%	N/A	35.2%
Texas	39.5%	47.9%	25.5%	36.5%	51.8%	37.6%	42.6%
Virginia	45.0%	49.6%	27.1%	34.8%	50.1%	N/A	45.0%
West Virginia	39.3%	37.9%	N/A	33.8%	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Southern States</b>	<b>39.6%</b>	<b>44.2%</b>	<b>26.2%</b>	<b>32.2%</b>	<b>48.1%</b>	<b>33.6%</b>	<b>38.8%</b>
<b>All Other States</b>	<b>41.5%</b>	<b>44.3%</b>	<b>24.0%</b>	<b>34.0%</b>	<b>47.9%</b>	<b>32.6%</b>	<b>38.5%</b>
<b>United States</b>	<b>40.9%</b>	<b>44.2%</b>	<b>24.8%</b>	<b>33.0%</b>	<b>47.9%</b>	<b>32.8%</b>	<b>38.6%</b>

Notes: Data for all women are 2014 (1-year) data. Data by race and ethnicity are three-year (2012-2014) averages. Percent of all employed women aged 16 and older who were in executive, administrative, managerial, or professional specialty occupations in 2014. Racial categories are non-Hispanic; Hispanics may be of any race. N/A=insufficient sample size.

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



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# Older Women

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Due to women's longer average lifespan compared with men, the majority of older people (aged 65 and above) in the United States are women. Women are at a distinct disadvantage in retirement relative to men because of their unequal earnings as well as their concentration in jobs that do not offer retirement plans, factors that also heighten their risk of poverty (ERISA Advisory Council 2010). For women of color, these disparities are even more formidable (ERISA Advisory Council 2010). Since the Great Recession, the economic prospects of women over 65 in retirement have worsened. According to one IWPR survey, only 37 percent of women over age 60 believe that their retirement savings will be adequate to maintain their current standard of living (Hess, Hayes, and Hartmann 2011).

In the South, almost one in five women (19.9 percent) are aged 65 or older (Appendix Table 8.1).<sup>1</sup> White women are the racial/ethnic group with the largest proportion of women over 65 in the South (24.5 percent), followed by Native American women (16.5 percent), and black women (14.4 percent). Only 12.0 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander women and 11.3 percent of Hispanic women in the South are 65 or older, and 10.2 percent of women of another race or two or more races.

- Older women in the South participate in the labor force at a lower rate (12.9 percent) compared with older women in the rest of the country (14.2 percent). This is true for all racial and ethnic groups except Asian/Pacific Islander women aged 65 and older in the South, who participate in the labor force at a higher rate (14.3 percent) compared with their counterparts in the rest of the country (13.3 percent).
- Older women in the South working full-time, year-round, earn 68.0 cents on the dollar compared with their male counterparts in the South. In comparison, older women in other states earn 72.7 cents for every dollar earned by an older man.
- Among southern women aged 65 and older working full-time, year-round, Hispanic women have the lowest median annual earnings (\$25,000) while women who are of another race or two or more races have the highest earnings (\$38,500).
- Older women in the South have a higher poverty rate (11.8 percent) than older women in all other states (10.2 percent). However, older women in the South have a lower poverty rate compared with women of all ages in the South (16.4 percent). Among older women in the South, more than one in five Native American, Hispanic, and black women live in poverty (22.1, 21.7, and 21.5 percent, respectively). Southern white women aged 65 and older have the lowest poverty rate (8.8 percent).
- Because older Americans have access to Medicare coverage, they have high rates of health insurance coverage. Nearly 99 percent of older women in the South have health insurance coverage (98.8 percent) compared with 80.6 percent of southern women aged 18-64.
- In terms of health status, older women in the South are more likely to have been told they have diabetes (22.5 percent) compared with older women in all other states (19.9 percent). This is true for older white and black women, but older Hispanic, Native American, and women of another race or two or more races have lower rates of diabetes in the South than in the rest of the country. The rates of diabetes among Asian/Pacific Islander women are similar in both regions. Among older southern women, black women are the most likely to have been told they have diabetes (36.9 percent), followed by Hispanic women (30.9 percent), and Native American women (28.5 percent). Older white women are the least likely to have been told they have diabetes (18.4 percent).

<sup>1</sup> In this report, southern states include Alabama, Arkansas, the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia. Earnings, labor force participation, poverty, and health insurance are IWPR calculations based on 2014 American Community Survey microdata. Health data are IWPR analysis of 2014 and, for data by race/ethnicity, 2012-2014 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System microdata.

- Older women in the South report fewer average days of poor mental health compared with women overall in the South (2.8 days per month compared with 4.4 days per month). Among southern women aged 65 and older, Asian/Pacific Islander women report the fewest number of days per month with poor mental health (1.0 day), while Native American and Hispanic women report the most (3.8 and 3.7 days, respectively).
- Southern women aged 65 and older report an average 6.1 days per month when their activities are limited by poor mental or physical health; older women in other states report limited activities an average of 5.5 days per month. Older Asian/Pacific Islander women in the South report the fewest number of days that mental or physical health limited their activities (3.6 days per month), while women aged 65 and older who identified as of another race or two or more races reported the most days (8.0 days per month).

Finally, while data on the prevalence of violence against older women are limited, evidence suggests that older women are at risk of experiencing physical, emotional, and financial abuse at the hands of caretakers (Lachs and Pillemer 2015), as well as spouses and other family members (Dunlop et al. 2005).

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