



A Portrait of Women & Girls in the Washington Metropolitan Area **Alexandria Fact Sheet**

A Portrait of Women & Girls in the Washington Metropolitan Area (the Portrait Project) is an unprecedented collaboration. Led by the Washington Area Women's Foundation, the project utilized the time, data, and expertise of 24 leading research organizations to document the issues affecting the lives of women and girls in the region. The Foundation embarked upon the Portrait Project 18 months ago to examine the roles of education, economics, health, safety, and leadership in the lives of the region's 1.8 million women and girls in the District of Columbia; Prince George's and Montgomery Counties in Maryland; Alexandria, Arlington and Fairfax Counties in Virginia.

Alexandria Strengths:

African-American Infant Mortality: Alexandria has the 2nd lowest African-American infant-mortality rate in the region at 4.5 deaths per 1,000 births. This is below the national rate of 6.9 per 1,000 births for all infants and 13.5 per 1,000 births for African-American infants.

Earnings: Women's median annual earnings in Alexandria are higher than women's earnings in the nation and the 3rd highest in the region. Women in Alexandria earn \$41,254 compared to \$27,194 nationally.

Education: Alexandria women have the 2nd highest educational attainment levels in the region. Fifty-four percent (54%) of all women in the county hold some sort of a college degree compared to 28% of women nationally. Twenty percent (20%) of women in Alexandria hold advanced degrees.

Leadership: Women comprise 43% of Alexandria's city counsel. Women are well represented in local governments in our area overall.

- Alexandria has the 2nd highest percentage of women representatives in local government. Virginia is among the few states to have both a commissions for women and formal women's caucus in each house of the state legislature.

Key Facts on the Washington Metropolitan Area:

Regional Strengths:

- For each county in the region, the women's median annual earnings outpace the national median income, from a low of \$8,500 above the national median in Prince George's County to a high of \$14,000 above the national median in Arlington County. However, women still earn less than their male counterparts by as much as \$18,700.
- The Washington region ranks 4th among the top 50 metropolitan areas for women's business ownership.
- Women head 34% of the top 100 foundations (by assets) and 28% of the largest foundations established in the region since 1996. Women-led foundations oversaw more than \$141.2 million in giving in 2001.

Key Facts on the Washington Metropolitan Area:

Regional Weaknesses:

- Women-headed households make up 58% of families in poverty in our region. In the District, women-headed households make up 74% of all families living in poverty. In Prince George's County they represent 59% of all families in poverty.
- Key family supports such as affordable childcare and housing are difficult to access for those who need them most. Women-headed families at the median income level (\$26,500) in the District can afford to purchase only 8% of the homes there; those at the median income level in Arlington (\$41,100) can afford to purchase only 14% of that county's homes.
- The incidence of infant mortality in the District and in Prince George's County (12 and 9.8 per 1,000 births, respectively) is higher than the national average (6.9 per 1,000 births).
- The rate of new AIDS cases among adolescent and adult women in the District is ten times the national rate (92 vs. 9 per 100,000, respectively).
- One hundred thirty-eight new foundations, with assets of at least \$1 million, have been created in the region since 1996. Only \$1.97 million of the \$68.8 million in grants made by these foundations went to women's and girls' programs or activities.

Alexandria Strengths (cont.):

Unemployment: Female unemployment in Alexandria is the 3rd lowest in the region (at 3.3%) compared to 4.9% regionally and 5.8% nationally.

Alexandria Weaknesses:

Education: Not all women in the county are achieving educationally putting themselves at a critical disadvantage in the labor market. Alexandria has the 3rd highest percentage of Latinas without a high school diploma, tied with Arlington County. Forty-three percent (43%) of Latinas do not have a high school diploma, compared with 21% of African-American women and 4.4% of white women.

Family Supports: In Alexandria, women-headed households at the median income of \$33,324 can only afford 17% of the homes in the city. Alexandria ranks third in terms of homes affordable to women-headed families.

Health: State estimates show that 14% of adult women (ages 18-64) in Virginia lack insurance. These figures are below the national average of 17%. However some women in the region, especially low income and minority women, are even more likely to be uninsured.

- The lack of health insurance is a major barrier affecting the health of many in the county, including working families, minority populations and low waged workers.

Heart Disease: Alexandria has the 2nd highest mortality rate from heart disease for women in the region (at 370 per 100,000 people).

Infant Mortality Rates: Alexandria has the 3rd highest infant mortality rate in the region at 6.8 deaths per 1,000 births.

Poverty: Alexandria has the 2nd highest poverty rate for all women in the region at 9.3% and the 2nd highest poverty rates for African-American and Hispanic women in the region (15.9% and 16.1%, respectively). Asian and African-American elderly women suffer the most from poverty in the city, with 42.1% of Asian and 20.1% of African-American elderly women living in poverty. These are among the highest poverty figures for these demographic groups in the region.

Teen Pregnancies: Alexandria has the second highest rate of teen birth rates in the region at 31.2 per 1,000 girls, ages 15 to 17.

(Continued on Pg. 4)

Women in Alexandria Key Statistics by Race & Ethnicity

| | Unemployment Rates | Wage Gap (% of Women's Median Earnings to Men's) | Poverty Rates | Educational Attainment (% of women with less than a high school diploma) | Heart Disease Mortality Rates (per 100,000) |
|------------------------|--------------------|---|---------------|---|--|
| White Women | 1.7% | 83% | 4.3% | 4.4% | 314 |
| African-American Women | 5% | 89% | 15.9% | 21% | 488 |
| Hispanic Women | 6.3% | 86% | 16.1% | 43% | 122 |
| Asian Women | 7% | 71% | 13.9% | 17.3% | 216 |
| All Women | 3.3% | 87% | 9.3% | 13.7% | 370 |

In the region, Alexandria has:

- The 3rd lowest women's unemployment rate.
- The 3rd smallest wage gap for median earnings (% of women's earnings to men's).
- The 2nd highest women's poverty rate.
- The 3rd highest percentage of women without a high school diploma.
- The 2nd highest women's mortality rate from heart disease.

Women in Alexandria Key Statistics for All Women in the County

| Families in Poverty (by Family Type) | % of Homes Affordable to Families for purchase | Women's Higher Educational Attainment | Women and AIDS Incidence Rates (new cases) | Teen Birth Rates for Girls (ages 15-17) | Women in Local Government |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|--|---|---------------------------|
| 39.6% married couples | 49% married couples | 4.3% Associates degree | 8 per 100,000 (in Virginia) | 31.2 per 1,000 | 43% |
| 10% male-headed families (no wife present) | 27% male householders (no wife present) | 30.3% Bachelor's degree | | | |
| 50.4% women-headed families (no husband present) | 17% women-headed families (no husband present) | 19.7% Masters or Professional degree | | | |

In the region, Alexandria has:

- The 3rd highest percentage of families in poverty headed by women.
- The 3rd highest percentage of homes affordable to women-headed families (at the median income level).
- The 2nd highest percentage of women with some sort of college degree.
- The lowest AIDS incidences rates (new cases) for women (by state).
- The 2nd highest teen birth rate for girls (ages 15-17).
- The 2nd highest percentage of women's representation in local government.

Please note: Regional comparisons include the District of Columbia; Montgomery and Prince George's Counties in Maryland and Alexandria, Arlington and Fairfax Counties in Virginia. Comparisons for AIDS incidence rates include the District of Columbia, Virginia and Maryland.

Alexandria Weaknesses (cont.):

Unemployment: Alexandria has the highest unemployment rate in the region for Asian women at 7%.

Wage Gap: Alexandria has the 3rd smallest wage gap between all women and men at 87%. Women's median earnings are \$41,254 compared to men's earnings of \$47,514. White women and Asian women experience the largest wage gaps with their male counterparts. African American and Hispanic women experience the smallest wage gaps with their male counterparts.

- White women earn 83% of white men's earnings in the city (\$49,930 vs. \$60,014).
- Asian women earn 71% of Asian men's earnings in the city (\$29,804 vs. \$41,875).
- African-American women earn 89% of African-American men's earnings in the city (\$31,253 vs. \$35,004).
- Hispanic women earn 86% of Hispanic men's earnings in the city (\$21,649 vs. \$25,099).
- While there is more equality in earnings among African-American and Hispanic men and this is due in part to the lower median earnings compared to whites.

Women-headed families: Alexandria has the 2nd highest percentage of women-headed families in the region at 18%. Out of all families living in the city 50% are women-headed families. The median annual earnings for women-headed families in Alexandria is \$33,324 compared to \$82,567 for married-couple families and \$41,214 for male-headed households.

Established in 1997, the Washington Area Women's Foundation is the only public foundation dedicated to increasing resources and opportunities for women and girls in the Washington Metropolitan Area. Our mission is to foster a powerful wave of philanthropy to improve the lives of all women and girls in the Washington region. Since 1998, Foundation grants to 47 local organizations have helped more than 30,000 women, girls, and their families achieve economic and physical security, escape violence and physical abuse, maintain health and well-being, and secure education and leadership opportunities. Visit www.wawf.org to view the full report.



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