Wage Gap Will Cost Millennial Women $1 Million Over their Careers

Millennial women are the most educated generation of women in the United States and are now more likely than men to have a college degree. At the same time, progress on closing the gender wage gap has stalled for nearly two decades, indicating that unequal pay continues to be a challenge to new generations of women workers.

Figure 1. Earnings for College-Educated Millennials Projected to Age 60

Note: Data reflect the difference between the median annual earnings of women and men who worked full-time, year-round. Earnings are presented in 2017 dollars.
For the Millennials (born 1980-1984) with Bachelor’s degrees or higher, who work full-time, year-round:

- At age 25, women were earning $44,119 and men were earning $49,050. (Female-to-male ratio = .90 or 10 percent gender wage gap.)

- By age 37, women were earning $61,278 and men were earning $83,747. (Female-to-male ratio = .73 or 27 percent gender wage gap.) Between the ages of 25 and 37, college-educated Millennial women would have lost $172,728, compared with men, if they had worked full-time, year-round in every year.

- Projected to age 60, assuming the college-educated Millennials experience earnings growth similar to similarly educated women and men that came before them, women would be earning $73,136 at age 60 and men would be earning $121,061. (Female-to-male ratio = .60 or 40 percent gender wage gap.) Between the ages of 25 and 60, college-educated Millennial women, compared with men, would have lost more than a million dollars—$1,066,721—if they work full-time, year-round in every year.

Table 1. Cumulative Losses from Gender Wage Gap for College-Educated Millennial Women Born 1980-1984

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Men’s Median Annual Earnings</th>
<th>Women’s Median Annual Earnings</th>
<th>Female-Male Earnings Ratio</th>
<th>Cumulative Lifetime Earnings Losses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At age 25</td>
<td>$49,050</td>
<td>$44,119</td>
<td>89.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At age 37</td>
<td>$83,747</td>
<td>$61,278</td>
<td>73.2%</td>
<td>-$172,728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projected to age 60</td>
<td>$121,061</td>
<td>$73,136</td>
<td>60.4%</td>
<td>-$1,066,721</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Data reflect the difference between the median annual earnings of women and men who worked full-time, year-round. Earnings are presented in 2017 dollars.


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