



# Briefing Paper

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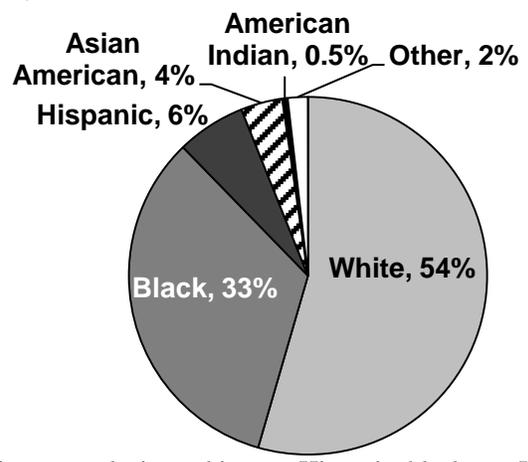
## The Status of Women in Guilford County, North Carolina

Women in Guilford County, and in North Carolina as a whole, have made significant progress in the last few decades. The majority of women work—many in professional and managerial jobs—and women are a mainstay of the economic health of their communities. Yet, there are some ways in which women’s status still lags behind men’s, and not all women are prospering equally. This briefing paper provides basic information about the status of women in Guilford County, focusing on women’s earnings and workforce participation, level of education, poverty, access to child care, and health status. It also provides background demographic information about women in the region.

### Basic Facts About Women in Guilford County

Guilford County has a diverse population of women and girls. Forty-six percent are from a minority racial/ethnic group, compared with 35 percent in the state as a whole (Figure 1 and Table 1). The proportion of women and girls who are foreign-born in Guilford County is similar to the proportion in the state overall (eight percent in the county compared with seven percent in the state; Table 1).

**Figure 1. Distribution of Women and Girls by Race and Ethnicity in Guilford County, All Ages, 2008–2010**



Notes: Racial categories are exclusive: white, not Hispanic; black, not Hispanic; Asian American, not Hispanic; American Indian, not Hispanic. Those whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race. “Other” includes those who chose more than one racial category as well as those who chose a category other than white, black, Hispanic, Asian American, or American Indian.

Source: IWPR analysis of 2008–2010 Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) American Community Survey microdata (Ruggles et al. 2010).

The female population in Guilford County is quite similar in age to the population in North Carolina and the United States as a whole. The median age for all women and girls in the county is 37, which is just one year less than in the state and nation. The proportion of women aged 65 and older in the county is 14 percent, compared with 15 percent in the state and United States. Women aged 18 and older Guilford County are less likely to be married than women of the same age range in the state and nation (Table 1).

<b>Table 1. Basic Demographic Statistics for Women and Girls</b>			
	<b>Guilford</b>	<b>North Carolina</b>	<b>United States</b>
<b>Total Population</b>	484,040	9,561,558	309,349,689
Number of Women and Girls, All Ages	253,835	4,905,216	157,294,247
Median Age of All Women and Girls	37	38	38
Proportion of Women Aged 65 and Older	14%	15%	15%
<b>Distribution of Women and Girls by Race and Ethnicity, All Ages</b>			
White, Not Hispanic	54%	65%	64%
Black, Not Hispanic	33%	22%	13%
Hispanic	6%	8%	16%
Asian American, Not Hispanic	4%	2%	5%
American Indian, Not Hispanic	0.5%	1%	1%
Other, Not Hispanic	2%	2%	2%
<b>Proportion of Women and Girls Who Are Foreign-Born, All Ages</b>	8%	7%	13%
<b>Proportion of Women Who Are Married, Aged 18 and Older</b>	44%	50%	49%

Note: Data for Guilford County are for 2008-2010. Data for North Carolina and the United States are for 2010 only.

Totals may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

Source: IWPR analysis of 2008–2010 and 2010 American Community Survey microdata (Ruggles et al. 2010).

## Work and Earnings

The majority of women aged 16 and older in Guilford County are in the labor force. More than six in ten (61 percent) are either employed or actively looking for work, compared with 59 percent of women in North Carolina. In Guilford County, the proportion of women in the workforce is lower than the proportion of men (61 percent compared with 74 percent; Table 2). Among women in Guilford County, however, participation in the labor force varies by race and ethnicity. Black women have the highest labor force participation rate (66 percent), followed by Hispanic women, white women (58 percent each), and Asian American women (55 percent).<sup>i</sup>

In Guilford County, as in the state overall, the labor force participation rate among women with dependent children (under age 18) is higher than it is among all women (76 percent compared with 61 percent; Table 2), but much lower than it is among men with dependent children. Ninety-six percent of fathers with children under the age of 18 are in the workforce, which suggests that men are much less likely than women to cut back on employment when they are parents.

While the majority of employed women in Guilford County work full-time (71 percent), women are much more likely than men to work part-time (29 percent of employed women work part-time compared with

17 percent of employed men).<sup>ii</sup> The reasons for women's higher rates of part-time work vary. In North Carolina (data are not available for Guilford County), 20 percent of women (and 3 percent of men) say they choose to work part-time because they are either unable to find child care or they have other family-care related issues.<sup>iii</sup> As a result of the Great Recession, many women and men have moved into part-time work in the last few years; however, women are more likely than men to work in sectors and occupations in which jobs are only available on a part-time basis (Shaefer 2009). While part-time work may allow for greater flexibility, it also provides less access to paid leave, healthcare, and employer-supported pensions (Society for Human Resource Management 2011).

In addition to differences in hours worked, women and men in Guilford County tend to work in different occupations. Nearly four in ten women in Guilford County work in professional and managerial jobs, a higher proportion than men (38 percent compared with 32 percent), but just 8 percent of women work in management positions, which a slightly lower proportion than men in the county (12 percent).<sup>iv</sup> Men in Guilford County are more likely than women to work in computer and mathematical occupations (3 percent compared with 1 percent), while women are almost three times as likely as men to work in education and in healthcare practitioner and technical support occupations (17 percent compared with 6 percent). The differences between women's and men's employment in non-professional positions are substantial as well. Women in Guilford County are considerably more likely than men to work in office and administrative support occupations (22 percent compared with 8 percent), while men are much more likely to work in transportation and material moving occupations (10 percent compared with 2 percent) and in construction, installation, and repair occupations.<sup>v</sup>

Despite their higher representation in professional jobs, women in Guilford County have lower median annual earnings than men. In 2008–2010, women's median annual earnings in Guilford County for full-time, year-round work were \$32,525, compared with \$41,929 for men, which means that women earned only 78 cents for every dollar earned by a man (Table 2). Women in Guilford County earn slightly less than women in the state as a whole (where women's median annual earnings are \$33,000), but men in Guilford County earn more than men in North Carolina (where men's median annual earnings are \$40,000). The comparatively high earnings of men in the county causes the gender wage gap in Guilford to be larger than in the state overall; the county's earnings ratio of 78 percent results in a gender wage gap of 22 percent, compared with 17 percent for the state as a whole. This gender wage gap of 22 percent is similar to the gender wage gap in the nation (21 percent; Table 2).<sup>vi</sup>

## **Educational Attainment**

Many women in Guilford County are well-educated. One-third of women (32 percent) aged 25 years and older in Guilford County have a bachelor's degree or higher, which is a similar proportion to men in the county (33 percent) and a much higher proportion than women in the state overall (27 percent).

Yet, nearly four in ten women in Guilford County have only a high school diploma or less (38 percent, or an estimated 64,331 women aged 25 years and older).<sup>vii</sup> Proportionately more men have such low educational attainment (41 percent compared with 38 percent; Table 2), but women with this level of education are less likely than men to have jobs that pay wages sufficient to sustain a family. Median annual earnings for women in Guilford County who are employed full-time, year-round with a high school diploma or the equivalent are only \$26,535, whereas for comparable men they are \$33,000. In

Guilford County, women with some college education or an associate's degree earn less than men with only a high school diploma (\$30,492 compared with \$33,000; men with some college education or an associate's degree earn \$40,511).<sup>viii</sup> Such earnings for women are well below the income a family of one adult and two children needs to cover basic living expenses in Guilford County (Table 3).

In Guilford County, as in the state and nation as a whole, having a college education raises the level of earnings for both women and men, but it does not reduce the gender gap in earnings. The difference in earnings between men and women in Guilford County is even larger when only those with a bachelor's degree or higher are compared. Median annual earnings for college-educated women in Guilford County are \$44,620 compared with \$66,066 for college-educated men, resulting in a gender wage gap of 68 percent, which is a larger gap than when women and men of all education levels are compared (Table 2).

## Poverty

The poverty rate among women in Guilford County is similar to the poverty rate among women in the state overall (16 percent compared with 17 percent, respectively), and slightly higher than the poverty rate among women in the nation as a whole (15 percent; Table 2). Approximately 30,000 women aged 18 and older in the county have incomes below the federal poverty line.<sup>ix</sup> In Guilford County, women are more likely than men to live below the poverty line; 16 percent of women are poor compared with 13 percent of men; Table 2).<sup>x</sup> In 2010, one in ten households in Guilford County received food stamps, a lower proportion than in North Carolina as a whole (10 percent compared with 13 percent; Table 2)

Families headed by single women with children are disproportionately likely to be poor. These families make up 31 percent of all families in Guilford County with dependent children, but 63 percent of all families with children in poverty (Table 3). In North Carolina as a whole, slightly more than one in ten single women with children under five (12 percent) and incomes below the qualifying poverty threshold receives welfare cash assistance.<sup>xi</sup>

## Child Care



The lack of affordable child care is a major burden on families in North Carolina and the United States. In the absence of quality, affordable child care, women may decide to interrupt their tenure in the labor market, reducing their earning potential and undermining their ability to provide for their families, put aside resources for retirement, or save for emergencies. Alternatively, women may have to place their children in low-quality or unreliable care.

In North Carolina, the average annual fees for full-time child care range from \$6,227 (for a four-year-old in a family child care home) to \$9,185 (for an infant in a child care center). By comparison, the average annual tuition and fees for a public four-year college in North Carolina are \$5,685 (Child Care Aware of America 2012). In Guilford County, 18,844 children qualify for child care subsidies because their parents earn too little to afford the fees, yet fewer than one in four eligible children receives any subsidized child care (Table 3).

**Table 2. Overview of Women's and Men's Economic Status**

	<b>Guilford</b>	<b>North Carolina</b>	<b>United States</b>
<b>Labor Force Participation Rate, Aged 16 and Older</b>			
Women	61%	59%	59%
Men	74%	70%	70%
Mothers with Children Under 18 Years	76%	74%	73%
Fathers with Children Under 18 Years	96%	94%	94%
<b>Percent of Employed Women and Men Who Work Full-Time, Aged 16 and Older</b>			
Women	71%	72%	71%
Men	83%	84%	84%
<b>Percent of Employed Women in Professional or Managerial Occupations, Aged 16 and Older</b>			
Women	38%	40%	39%
Men	32%	30%	33%
<b>Median Annual Earnings, Full-Time, Year-Round Workers, Aged 16 and Older</b>			
Women	\$32,525	\$33,000	\$36,000
Men	\$41,929	\$40,000	\$45,500
<b>Gender Earnings Ratio, Aged 16 and Older</b>	78%	83%	79%
<b>Gender Earnings Ratio by Educational Attainment, Aged 25 and Older</b>			
Less Than High School Diploma	N/A	76%	74%
High School Diploma or Equivalent	80%	75%	74%
Some College or Associate's Degree	75%	76%	76%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	68%	70%	71%
<b>Proportion of Women and Men With a Bachelor's Degree or Higher, Aged 25 and Older</b>			
Women	32%	27%	28%
Men	33%	26%	29%
<b>Proportion of Women and Men With a High School Diploma or Less, Aged 25 and Older</b>			
Women	38%	40%	42%
Men	41%	46%	44%
<b>Percent of Women and Men Living Below Poverty, Aged 18 and Older<sup>1</sup></b>			
Women	16%	17%	15%
Men	13%	13%	12%
<b>Percent of All Households Receiving Food Stamps</b>	11%	13%	12%
<b>Percent of Women and Men without Health Insurance Coverage, Aged 18–64<sup>1</sup></b>			
Women	19%	21%	19%
Men	25%	26%	24%

Notes: N/A indicates data not available.

Data for Guilford County are for 2008–2010. Median annual earnings are in 2010 inflation-adjusted dollars.

Data for North Carolina and the United States overall are for 2010 only.

Sources: IWPR analysis of 2008–2010 and 2010 American Community Survey microdata (Ruggles et al. 2010).

<sup>1</sup> IWPR analysis of 2008–2010 and 2010 American Community Survey data accessed through American Fact Finder (U.S. Department of Commerce 2012); data for North Carolina and the United States are for 2010 only.

**Table 3. The Status of Children: Family Income, Poverty, and Child Care**

	<b>Guilford</b>	<b>North Carolina</b>
<b>Annual Living Income Standard<sup>1</sup></b>		
Annual Income a Family of One Adult and Two Children Needs to Afford Essential Living Expenses, 2010	\$41,497	\$41,920
Median Annual Income of Married-Couple Families With Children Under 18 Years, 2008–2010	\$76,136	\$70,124
Median Annual Income of Single Men With Children Under 18 Years, 2008–2010	\$30,020	\$29,874
Median Annual Income of Single Women With Children Under 18 Years, 2008–2010	\$22,242	\$20,393
<b>Poverty</b>		
Number of Families in Poverty With Children Under 18 Years, 2008–2010 <sup>2</sup>	11,255	254,650
Share of Families in Poverty With Children Under 18 That Are Headed by Single Women, 2008–2010 <sup>2</sup>	63%	61%
Share of All Families with Children Under 18 That Are Headed by Single Women, 2008–2010 <sup>2</sup>	31%	29%
<b>Child Care</b>		
Children Eligible for Child Care Subsidy, SFY 2010–2011 <sup>3</sup>	18,844	391,549
Budget Currently Available to Serve Eligible Children, SFY 2010–2011 <sup>3</sup>	\$21,225,092	N/A
Percent of Eligible Children Receiving Subsidized Child Care Services, SFY 2010–2011 <sup>3</sup>	24%	N/A
Budget Per Child Eligible for Child Care Subsidy, SFY 2010–2011	\$1,126.36	N/A
Total Number of Children Aged 0 to 5 Enrolled in Child Care Centers, 2011 <sup>4</sup>	12,211	207,953

Note: N/A indicates data are not available.

Sources: <sup>1</sup>Sirota and McLenaghan 2010.

<sup>2</sup>IWPR analysis of 2008–2010 American Community Survey data accessed through American Fact Finder.

<sup>3</sup>North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education 2012.

<sup>4</sup>The Annie E. Casey Foundation Data Center Kids Count 2012.

## Health

Health is an important component of women’s and girls’ overall well-being that contributes to their economic stability, educational attainment, and employment opportunities. While many women in Guilford County experience good health, others face poor health outcomes, suggesting that women’s health care needs remain an important part of their status that must be examined and addressed.

The proportion of women aged 18–64 without some form of health insurance coverage in Guilford County is similar to the proportion of uninsured women in the state and nation as a whole. One in five women (19 percent) in Guilford County do not have any form of health insurance coverage, compared with 21 percent in North Carolina and 19 percent in the United States (Table 2). Women without coverage lack the resources for basic wellness and check-up visits, as well for health care to address serious medical problems.

When using an age-adjusted mortality rate, which accounts for distributional age differences among population groups, women in Guilford County have lower rates of mortality from heart disease, stroke and other cerebrovascular diseases, and diabetes than in the state as a whole.<sup>xii</sup> The female population in Guilford County also has a slightly lower mortality rate from breast, cervical, uterine, and ovarian cancers than in the state and nation as a whole. In addition, the pregnancy rate among teens aged 15–19 in Guilford County falls below the statewide rate (41.7 per 1,000 compared with 49.7 per 1,000; Table 4).

**Table 4. Overview of Women's Health Status**

	<b>Guilford County</b>	<b>North Carolina</b>	<b>United States</b>
<b>Total Number of Teen Pregnancies Aged 15–19, 2010<sup>1</sup></b>	792	15,957	N/A
<b>Pregnancy Rate (per 1,000) Among Teens Aged 15–19, 2010<sup>1</sup></b>	41.7	49.7	N/A
<b>Average Annual Mortality Rates Among All Women (per 100,000)<sup>2</sup></b>			
Breast Cancer, 2005–2009	21.2	23.5	23.0
Cervical Cancer, 2005–2009	1.7	2.3	2.4
Uterine Cancer, 2005–2009	3.7	4.0	4.2
Ovarian Cancer, 2005–2009	7.2	7.9	8.2
<b>Heart Disease Mortality Rate, All Ages, 2005–2009<sup>3</sup></b>	135.7	153.6	161.0
<b>Mortality Rate from Stroke and Other Cerebrovascular Diseases, All Ages, 2005–2009<sup>3</sup></b>	46.2	50.4	42.7
<b>Diabetes Mortality Rate, All Ages, 2005–2009<sup>3</sup></b>	15.6	20.8	19.8

Notes: N/A indicates data is not available.

All mortality rates are per 100,000 and age-adjusted to the total U.S. population in 2000.

Sources: <sup>1</sup> North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services 2012.

<sup>2</sup> IWPR compilation of data from the National Cancer Institute State Cancer Profiles 2012.

<sup>3</sup> IWPR compilation of data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2012.

## Conclusion

Although many women in Guilford County are doing well, the data reviewed in this briefing paper highlight a number of areas of concern, including the gender wage gap, substantial rates of poverty, the high cost of child care, and the lack of basic health insurance coverage for many women and men. Policy recommendations to address these challenges include

- promoting quality flexible working practices to make it easier for parents to combine paid work with care giving;
- ensuring that employers are aware of their obligations under the federal anti-discrimination statutes;
- providing training to employers on best practices for recruiting and retaining female employees, particularly in sectors where they are now under-represented;
- increasing career counseling and financial supports—including child care—for women with low levels of education;

- monitoring workforce development to ensure that women and men have equal access to training in high-growth, well-paid careers;
- supporting more targeted teen pregnancy prevention programs and increasing support for teens who are already pregnant and parenting; and
- ensuring that all families, if they need, receive cash assistance from “Work First,” North Carolina’s Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program.

## Methodological Notes

This briefing paper presents data for Guilford County. Demographic and economic data are based on IWPR analysis of the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series version of the American Community Survey (Ruggles et al. 2010) and on American Community Survey data accessed through American Fact Finder. IWPR used estimates that combine several years of data (2008–2010) for Guilford County; these estimates ensure sufficient sample sizes that allow for reliable reporting. Data for the state and nation as a whole are based on one-year (2010) data. Data on child care come from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Child Care Aware of America, and the North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education. Data on women’s health status are from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Cancer Institute, and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services.

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## Notes

<sup>i</sup> IWPR analysis of 2008–2010 IPUMS American Community Survey microdata (Ruggles et al. 2010). Sample size is insufficient to reliably estimate the labor force participation rate of American Indian women in Guilford.

<sup>ii</sup> IWPR analysis of 2008–2010 IPUMS American Community Survey microdata (Ruggles et al. 2010).

<sup>iii</sup> IWPR calculations based on U.S. Department of Labor (2011). Table 23: States: Persons at Work 1 to 34 Hours by Sex, Age, Race, Hispanic or Latino Ethnicity, and Hours of Work, 2010 Annual Averages.

<sup>iv</sup> IWPR analysis based on IWPR analysis of 2008–2010 IPUMS American Community Survey microdata (Ruggles et al. 2010).

<sup>v</sup> IWPR analysis of 2008–2010 IPUMS American Community Survey microdata (Ruggles et al. 2010).

<sup>vi</sup> Because these estimates are based on the American Community Survey, they are not strictly comparable to IWPR's standard calculation of the gender wage gap for the United States, which is based on the Current Population Survey (CPS). In 2010, the national earnings gap based on the CPS was 23 percent (Hegewisch and Williams 2011).

<sup>vii</sup> IWPR analysis based on IWPR analysis of 2008–2010 IPUMS American Community Survey microdata (Ruggles et al. 2010).

<sup>viii</sup> IWPR analysis based on IWPR analysis of 2008–2010 IPUMS American Community Survey microdata (Ruggles et al. 2010).

<sup>ix</sup> IWPR analysis of 2008–2010 American Community Survey data accessed through American Fact Finder (U.S. Department of Commerce 2012).

<sup>x</sup> IWPR analysis of 2008–2010 American Community Survey data accessed through American Fact Finder (U.S. Department of Commerce 2012).

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<sup>xi</sup> IWPR analysis of 2010 IPUMS American Community Survey microdata (Ruggles et al. 2010).

<sup>xi</sup> Heart disease includes acute and chronic rheumatic fever and heart disease, hypertensive heart and renal disease, ischaemic heart disease, pulmonary heart disease and diseases of pulmonary circulation, and other forms of heart disease. Cerebrovascular disease includes cerebral haemorrhages, cerebral infraction, stroke, and other cerebrovascular disease. Diabetes includes diabetes mellitus.

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