
By Sarah Blugis, Communications Intern and Rachel Linn, Communications Associate

On May 20, IWPR released the Status of Women in the States: 2015 comprehensive full report, providing national and state-level data on women's progress in 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the United States overall. IWPR designated the best and worst states based on scores on composite indices developed by IWPR—Employment & Earnings, Poverty & Opportunity, Health & Well-Being, Reproductive Rights, Political Participation, and on Work & Family, a new composite index for the 2015 edition. The report also features national and state data on Violence & Safety. Minnesota received the top ranking, while Mississippi and Alabama tied for worst. Since the first Status of Women in the States release in 1996, the reports have been used to inspire community and private investment in programs and policies that improve women’s lives throughout the United States.

The report and 51 state fact sheets are available for download on the project’s interactive website, www.statusofwomen-data.org. Each topic section on the website includes data by race and ethnicity, making the website the most accessible, comprehensive source of state-level data on women of color in the United States.

In March, IWPR released the first report in the series, Employment & Earnings, which included first-ever projections for when the gender wage gap will close in each state. The report found that if current trends continue, women in the United States will not achieve equal pay until 2058, and in five states women will not see equal pay until the next century. Overall, the best place for women's employment and earnings is the District of Columbia, while the worst is West Virginia. The grades take into account women’s earnings, the (cont’d on p. 3)

How Partners are Using IWPR’s Status of Women in the States Data

By Sarah Blugis, Communications Intern and Rachel Linn, Communications Associate

IWPR partnered with over 50 local, state, and national organizations for Status of Women in the States: 2015. Using Status of Women data, policymakers and advocates reach out to the media and raise awareness about women’s needs in the states and communities to advance the interest of women and their families.

The Seattle-based Women’s Funding Alliance is using findings from the Status of Women in the States to focus attention on women’s leadership and economic opportunity in Washington State. In addition to giving interviews to NPR affiliate KPLU and The Seattle Times, Women’s Funding Alliance staff traveled throughout Washington to share the data with employers, policymakers, program providers, funders, and advocates.

The Women’s Fund of Southeastern Massachusetts localized IWPR’s data for counties in their area, highlighting poverty rates in nearby cities, and held a press conference with the Mayor of New Bedford, MA. The group also sat down with local editorial boards to present data from the Status of Women in the States report, resulting in stories (cont’d on p. 6)
At IWPR's May 20th release event for *The Status of Women in the States: 2015, Achieving Gender Equality in our Lifetimes: A Bold Vision for Advancing the Status of Women,* I made closing remarks that I would like to share with you here. I began by thanking our Board Chair, Holly Fechner, who not only gave me a generous introduction but emceed the entire event superbly; our fantastic speakers; our many Board members who were present; and the financial supporters of this important project, including the Ford Foundation, the American Federation of Teachers, and the Women's Funding Network. I also acknowledged NOW and OWL, two national women's organizations that also supported this project.

This report marks IWPR'S first comprehensive national report on the Status of Women in the States (SWS) since 2004. Between 1996 and 2004 IWPR produced 5 national reports and 51 reports on every state in the nation and the District of Columbia. While that series ended in 2004, IWPR has continued to produce dozens of individual reports for states, localities, and regions commissioned by various organizations and foundations. This is the first time in 11 years that IWPR has had the opportunity to produce a comprehensive national report on the status of women in the United States.

I must acknowledge the many contributions of IWPR'S staff, especially the outstanding leadership of Dr. Cyndi Hess, a super competent and completely unflappable Study Director who coordinated the many moving parts of this project over a period of 18 months, writing much of the report herself, mobilizing a team of staff members and interns who put in tremendous effort to analyze and fact check data, present the data in tables and graphics, and meet the many deadlines this project required. The oversight of my right-hand person, Dr. Barbara Gault, IWPR'S Vice President & Executive Director, was instrumental in bringing the work to its fruition. Senior Communications Manager Jennifer Clark, who led a small, very able Communications team, worked tirelessly to ensure the extensive coverage of each SWS chapter as it was released. While the reports typically receive wide-ranging media coverage, this year marks the first time that popular culture has been so in tune with the work that we do at IWPR. The employment chapter was featured on “The Daily Show” in a very creative ‘newscast’ by Kristin Schaal, as well as “Inside Amy Schumer!” I’m almost afraid to watch the Schumer episode “Not cool with it,” let alone “Sexy Rodeos,” both of which linked directly to our web page on pay equity, crashing the IWPR website in the middle of the night!

The times, they really are a changing! When we see these kinds of issues being raised at the Academy Awards and on “The Daily Show,” it illustrates something special going on in our society—a new, pervasive awareness of the injustice faced by women coupled with the presence of women in a position to do something about it. Glamour, another popular culture vehicle, kicked off the media blitz of IWPR’S work in their spring fashion issue, which hit the stands in February. Glamour featured IWPR'S customized research on millennial women and also designed a fabulous U.S. map in hot pink (see cover), capturing something unique about the status of young women in each state with just a few words.

This raised consciousness and heightened visibility indicate to me that we are likely to see a lot more organizing and activity around these issues in the U.S, as our speaker and MacArthur Fellow Ai-Jen Poo called for, making women's issues likely to see a lot more organizing and activity around these issues in the U.S, as our speaker and MacArthur Fellow Ai-Jen Poo called for, making women's issues central to the upcoming elections.

While the issue of unequal pay has been discussed by politicians for several decades without resolution, we are starting to see new tools being introduced to achieve pay equity. One is employer disclosure of the gender pay gap, which is now required in some states and localities for businesses to compete for city and state contracts. Non-retaliation for talking about pay, while a federal right already, is most honored in the breach, so new tools are being developed to make that right real in practice. Several states have now passed non-retaliation laws, and since last year federal contractors are now explicitly forbidden from retaliating when workers share pay information.

And remember IWPR has calculated that if women were to get equal pay with comparable men, the poverty rate for families with a working woman would be cut in half, not even counting the likelihood that higher wages would induce women to work more hours. (con’t on p. 3)
The map above on the IWPR Work & Family Composite Index is an example of the many maps that can be found in the full report, highlighting geographic trends on the status of women in the United States.

Map 3.1. Work & Family Composite Index

access to abortion and contraception, same-sex couples’ parental rights, infertility coverage, and sex education. Overall, the report found that reproductive rights are strongest in the Northeast and West.

IWPR released the last two Status of Women in the States reports—Work & Family and Political Participation—on May 20 at an event in Washington, DC (see page 4 for more about the event). These reports found that most states fall short on work and family policies and women’s political leadership, with no state receiving an A in either category.

Women are more likely than men to vote in almost every state, but most states scored poorly on the Women in Elected Office Index, which indicates a wide gap between women’s political participation and political leadership. Although the number of women in the U.S. Congress is at an all-time high, women will not hold an equal share of seats until 2117, if current trends continue.

The new Work & Family Composite Index found that half of all families with children in the United States now have a breadwinner mother, but no state provides adequate child care supports. The report also found that women are nine times more likely than men to work part-time for family care reasons. In the Spring of 2016, IWPR release a report on the Status of Women in the U.S. South.

President’s Message continued from p. 2

There is almost no lever that you can push that cuts the poverty rate by half, making equal pay a significant policy priority for the nation, if we are serious about increasing economic mobility, decreasing inequality, and strengthening economic growth.

If a set of pro-women and pro-family public policies (especially equal pay and paid family leave) is championed in this election season, that will go a long way toward building the public support necessary to achieving overdue policy changes in the United States.

Going forward, IWPR hopes to continue its SWS work by hosting regional meetings as well as hosting meetings for the business community. Early in 2016, IWPR will roll out its Status of Women in the South report, on women in 11 southern states plus the District of Columbia. It will feature more data on race and ethnic differences among women, as well as income and other differences. The SWS website (statusofwomendata.org) also presents data disaggregated by race and ethnicity, as well as by age and income level. Class, race, and gender come together in the SWS and many other IWPR projects, as well as on our SWS website. We hope you will visit our website often as we continue to build upon this foundational project by updating the data periodically.

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A Bold Vision for Advancing the Status of Women

To mark the culmination of the Status of Women in the States: 2015 series, IWPR hosted a May 20, 2015 event "Achieving Gender Equality in our Lifetimes: A Bold Vision for Advancing the Status of Women." The release event focused on two chapters of the report on women's leadership & engagement, and work family issues, and featured expert panelists, speakers, and guests.

Speakers included Heidi Shierholz, Chief Economist for the U.S. Department
of Labor, Barbara Gault, Vice President and Executive Director of IWPR, Randi Weingarten, President of the American Federation of Teachers, Heidi Hartmann, President of IWPR, and Congresswoman Debbie Dingell from Michigan's 12th Congressional District.

The event also included two panels, the first of which on political participation and moderated by Avis Jones-DeWeever, founder of the Exceptional Leadership Institute for Women. On that panel were Congresswoman Gwen Moore, Sue Carroll from the Center for American Women and Politics, and Wendy Naugle, Executive Editor of Glamour Magazine. The second panel covered issues around work and family and was moderated by Kavitha Cardoza from WAMU. Panelist included IWPR Study Director Ariane Hegewisch, Ai-jen Poo, Director of the National Domestic Workers Alliance, Barbara Krumsiek, Former CEO of Calvert Investments, and Adriana Kugler, Vice-Provost for Faculty at Georgetown University.

The event concluded with closing remarks by IWPR President Heidi Hartmann and a reception with remarks from Congresswoman Debbie Dingle.

Captions
Media Highlights

**Employment & Earnings**
A Wall Street Journal article, “Where Women May Wait More Than 100 Years to Close the Wage Gap,” quoted IWPR Vice President and Executive Director Barbara Gault on the need to take action to close the wage gap (March 12).

The Washington Post Workblog cited the IWPR projection on when the wage gap will close in “At this rate, American women won’t see equal pay until 2058 (March 16).”

Newsweek quoted IWPR Study Director Ariane Hegewisch on occupational segregation and discrimination (March 16).

Fast Company cited gender wage gap findings in “The Gender Wage Gap is Much More Complex Than We Thought” (March 17).

Joining the CBS This Morning hosts in a segment “It Will Take Decades to Close the Gender Wage Gap, study Shows,” CBS News business analyst Jill Schlesinger detailed findings from IWPR’s study on the gender wage gap by state (March 13).

The Daily Show ran a segment “The Future of Gender Wage Equality” focused on IWPR research (March 24). The segment was later referenced in articles from Salon, Vogue, Refinery29, Elle, and Vox (March 25).

**Poverty & Opportunity**
MarketWatch cited IWPR research showing that men out earn women at the same levels of education and quoted Vice President Barbara Gault (April 8).

IWPR Study Director Cynthia Hess discussed findings from the Status of Women Poverty & Opportunity report in a Washington Post article, “Closing the Gender Wage Gap Could Pull Half of Working Single Moms Out of Poverty (April 8).”

The Daily Beast cited IWPR research on the economic status of women, and quoted IWPR President Heidi Hartmann in an article, “Women are Poorer Than Men in Every State (April 9).”

The Nation cited IWPR research on closing the gender wage gap nationwide (April 14).

The Atlantic cited IWPR research on the economic status of women, and quoted Senior Research Associate Jessica Milli on younger women of color founding businesses (April 17).

**Work & Family**
Think Progress cites IWPR data on child care access in the states in “The Best and Worst States to Raise Kids” (May 20)

Fortune discussed IWPR data on child care access and the best and worst states for working mothers (May 20).

Refinery29 discusses IWPR’s ranking of best & worst states for women on work & family issues in “These are The Worst States for Working Moms” (May 20).

The Atlantic cited IWPR data on elder and dependent care (May 21).

A review of the Status of Women series findings was published in another Washington Post article, “The Best and Worst States for Women in America, in 11 Maps and Charts” (May 20).

**Health & Well-Being, Reproductive Rights, and Violence & Safety**
LGBT Weekly cited IWPR research on women’s experiences with violence (May 9).

The Washington Post GovBeat used IWPR research on reproductive rights in the states to create a series of informational maps in “Where Reproductive Right Stand in the States, in 6 Maps (May 7).”

The Atlantic discussed IWPR data on reproductive rights in the state of South Dakota in an article, “The Worst State for Reproductive Rights (May 12).”

The Washington Post cites IWPR research on health and well-being in “Six Alarming Health Trends Every Woman Needs to Know,” quoting Study Director Cynthia Hess (May 7).

**Political Participation**
The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette cited IWPR’s data on political participation in the state of Pennsylvania (May 20).

MSNBC cited IWPR research on political participation and recapped IWPR’s Status of Women in the States event in “How State Policies Help or Hinder Women’s Equality (May 21).”

Partners continued from p. 1 about the gender wage gap in the Fall River Herald and an interview with WBZ News Radio.

In Utah, the localYWCA issued a press release that generated media coverage on local TV, the local NPR affiliate KUER Utah, and in the Salt Lake Tribune. The Permanent Commission on the Status of Women in Connecticut has also used the data to attract coverage from the Hartford Business Journal, WTNH TV, FoxCT.com, and CTnews.com.

In Pittsburgh, the Women and Girls Foundation of Southwest Pennsylvania uses the Status of Women in the States report to inform their advocacy and grantmaking strategy. Their annual GirlGov program is designed to provide local girls with the opportunity to learn, first hand, about civics, government, philanthropy, community involvement, women’s history, and leadership. IWPR’s data on women in political leadership in the state was used to contextualize the importance of the program in a segment on WESA, Pittsburgh’s NPR affiliate.

The Women and Girls Foundation have also presented findings to their board of directors and donors and hosted briefings for members of the media, policymakers, and advocates to increase investment in women and girls’ health, education, and economic security in the region.

IWPR hopes that its partners across the country will continue using the Status of Women in the States report and accompanying interactive website (statusofwomendata.org) to inform their own advocacy, educate their communities, and advance the status of women in their states and the country overall.
**IWPR General and Project Support**

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- Women’s Funding Network
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- U.S. Department of Labor Employment & Training Administration
- U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice

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- Women’s Funding Network
- Community Foundation of Southern Wisconsin
- Covington & Burling LLP
- Fairfield County’s Community Foundation
- Montana Community Foundation
- National Air Traffic Controllers Association
- National Organization for Women
- New York Women’s Foundation
- OWL - The Voice of Women 40+
- The Foundation for Enhancing Communities
- United Automobile Workers International Union
- United Mine Workers of America
- United Steelworkers of America
- University of Louisville, Women’s & Gender Studies Department
- University of Memphis, Center for Research on Women
- University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Women + Girls Research Alliance
- University of Pennsylvania, Women’s Studies
- Washington State University, Women’s Resource Center
- YWCA of Rochester and Monroe County

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**In Honor/Memorial**
- Peter Bullen made a gift in memory of Joyce Cornell Bullen.
- Anne Draznin made a gift in memory of Yaffa Claire Draznin.
- Sarah Gotbaum made a gift in memory of Sue Whitman, a DC leader on behalf of aging women.
- Carol Mukhopadhyay made a gift in memory of Rose Z. Chapnick.
- Susan Strauss made a gift in memory of Justine Phillips.

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