

# Re-thinking Workforce Training for Low-Income Moms

National Women's Law Center  
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# Presenters

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# **Bridging the Gap: The Intersection Between Workforce Development and Child Care**

**Presentation By: Gina Adams**



# Overview

- Project background
- Findings on:
  - The “need”
  - Challenges at parent level
  - Challenges and opportunities at the system level
  - Strategies to explore

# About Bridging the Gap

- Supported by the Ford Foundation and the Annie E. Casey Foundation
- Goal to elevate and address the child care needs of low-income parents needing education and training
  - Workforce development includes both education and training services
  - Child care includes a range of child care and early education programs and policies
- Cross-disciplinary team with experts from both domains

# About Bridging the Gap (continued)

- Broad data gathering through interviews and data analysis
- Publications to date focusing on understanding:
  - The two “systems” and their intersection for families
  - The problem and need
  - Key policy systems (CCDF, WIOA, and TANF) and opportunities
  - Strategies employed by local programs
- Supporting dialogue and elevating the issue

All *Bridging the Gap* publications can be found at

<https://www.urban.org/bridging-gap>

# Why It Matters

- Education and training critical to economic security and mobility for low-income women and their families
- Child care major barrier to enrollment/completion of education and training
- Quality child care/early education essential for children's healthy development and success
- Quality child care/early education for parents seeking education and training is central to economic security and mobility – key two-generation strategy

# Findings about the Need

- Of 21 million low-income parents, 58% have a high school credential or less
- One in six US adults has basic or lower levels of literacy; almost a third possess basic or lower levels of numeracy
- 1 in 10 low-income parents are enrolled in education and training
  - Half of these parents work
  - 60% single, 51% single mothers, 69% have child younger than 6, 42% have child younger than 3
  - Of those parents who work full time, 46.7% also attend school full time



# Findings about the Need (continued)

- Parents underrepresented in education and training programs
  - Out of the 50 million parents ages 18-50 who have children under the age of 12, 10 million are low income
  - Only 1 in 10 low-income parents enrolled in education or training
- Low-income parents not in education and training and not working have even lower levels of education
  - 2/3 have a high school degree or less education

# Challenges: Parent Level

- Complexity of arranging child care for education and training activities (often coupled with work)
- Limited information about child care options
- Financial constraints and limited access to child care subsidies or low-cost/free care options
- Limited supply of good quality care overall, and for particular populations

# Challenges: System-level

Workforce development and child care “systems” have overlapping goals and target populations – yet also have:

- Inadequate funding to serve those who are eligible
- Do not prioritize low-income parents who seek education and training (except TANF)
- Have policies/incentives that create barriers to access
- Are complex – multiple sectors, actors, agencies
- Operate separately
- Are devolved in complex ways within and across systems



# Opportunities and Challenges: The Child Care Development Fund (CCDF)

- Eligibility rules and services
- Relevant opportunities/challenges under reauthorization of CCDF -- focus on:
  - family friendly policies
  - continuity of care
  - cross-system linkages
  - consumer education
  - strengthening the supply to meet the needs of special populations

# **Opportunities and Challenges: The Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA)**

- Opportunities under WIOA – focus on:
  - parents with barriers to employment
  - young parents
  - career pathway models
  - individualized assessment and career plan development,
  - special initiatives
  - opportunities for partnering with child care

# Remaining Challenges for Both CCDF and WIOA

- States are overwhelmed with demands of new legislation
- Both systems still underfunded and face competing priorities
- Both systems still have disincentives to serve this population
- Continued challenges with the inadequacy of child care market (cost, supply, quality)

# Other opportunities

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education and Training (SNAP E&T)
- Strengthening Working Families Initiative (DOL)
- Interest in two-generation programming

# **Strategies to Meet the Needs of Families**

Step 1: Assess needs and identify partners

Step 2: Design education and training services to facilitate access to child care

Step 3: Assess participants' child care needs as part of intake and planning, and provide on-going support



# **Strategies to Meet the Needs of Families (continued)**

Step 4: Help parents understand and find child care options in their community

Step 5: Help parents access child care subsidies to offset the cost of care

Step 6: Facilitate access to a supply of affordable care



# Coupling Child Care with Pathways to Nontraditional, Higher-Paying Work for Mississippi Women



Presentation by: Carol Burnett



## **COUPLING CHILD CARE WITH PATHWAYS TO NONTRADITIONAL, HIGHER PAYING WORK: BRIDGING MISSISSIPPI'S SKILLS AND WAGE GAP**

**An Opportunity to Rethink Workforce Training for Low-Income Moms**



**A POLICY BRIEF**  
June 2017

You can find a copy of this policy brief here: <http://www.mschildcare.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/child-care-and-work-training-FINAL.pdf>

# **Seizing a Workforce Training Opportunity for Low-Income Moms**

- Mississippi has a Middle Skills Gap and Low Workforce Participation
- Single Moms in Mississippi participate in the labor force at a higher rate than the population overall
- But many are stuck in low-wage jobs and need child care and training for higher paying work
- To disrupt occupational segregation and gender wage disparity, women need higher paying jobs
- Nontraditional work in which women are drastically underrepresented pays more

# **Bridging the Wage and Skills Gap by Disrupting Occupational Segregation**

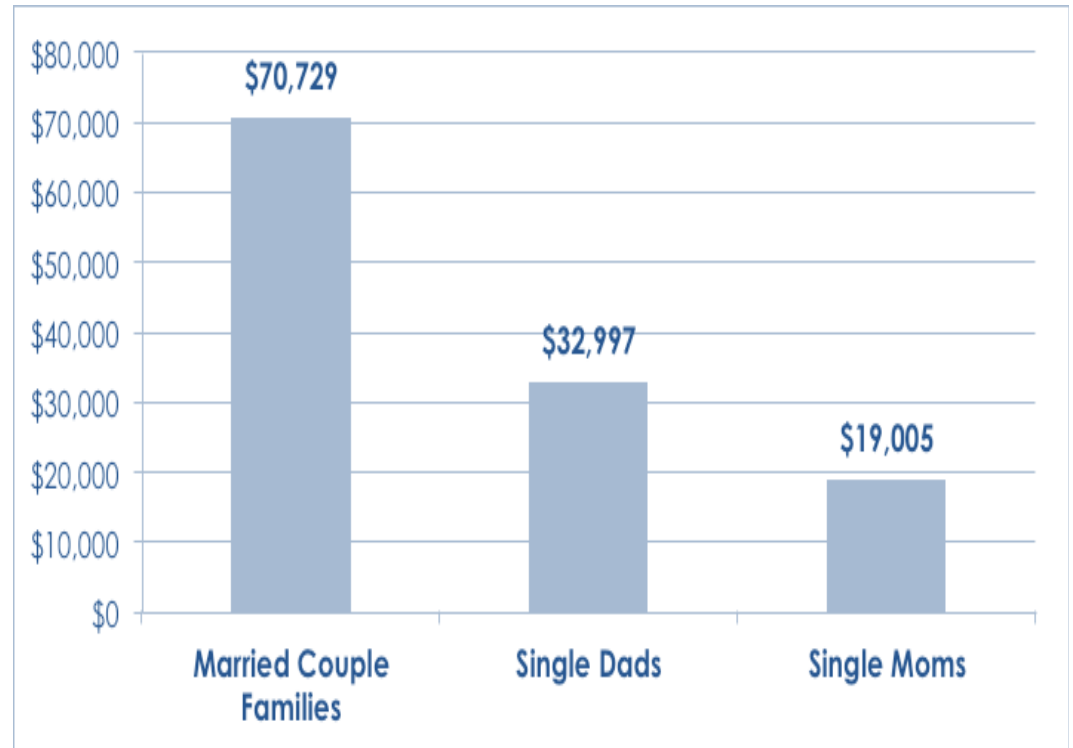
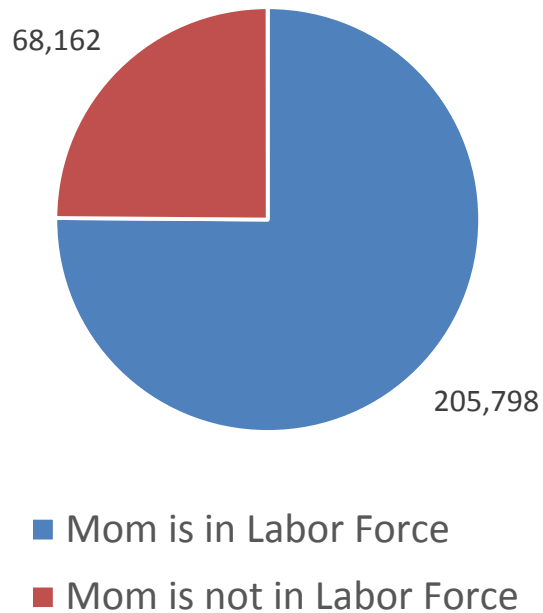
- If moms are only receiving training that will lead back to low-wage work, even if child care is provided, the training will only reinforce patterns of gender wage disparity and occupational segregation
- In the realm of middle-skill occupations, higher paying work for women means nontraditional work in which women are drastically underrepresented, but better paid

# The MCH WinC Model ...

- One of the major workforce challenges revealed by Mississippi WIOA implementation teams is the lack of affordable child care as a major barrier to employment for single parents in poverty and deep poverty
- Moore Community House Women in Construction (MCH WinC) is working to address this challenge with an integrated, innovative program design enabled by the Strengthening Working Families Initiative (SWFI) grant and TANF
- MCH WinC couples nontraditional job training with child care assistance to enable low-income mothers to participate and succeed

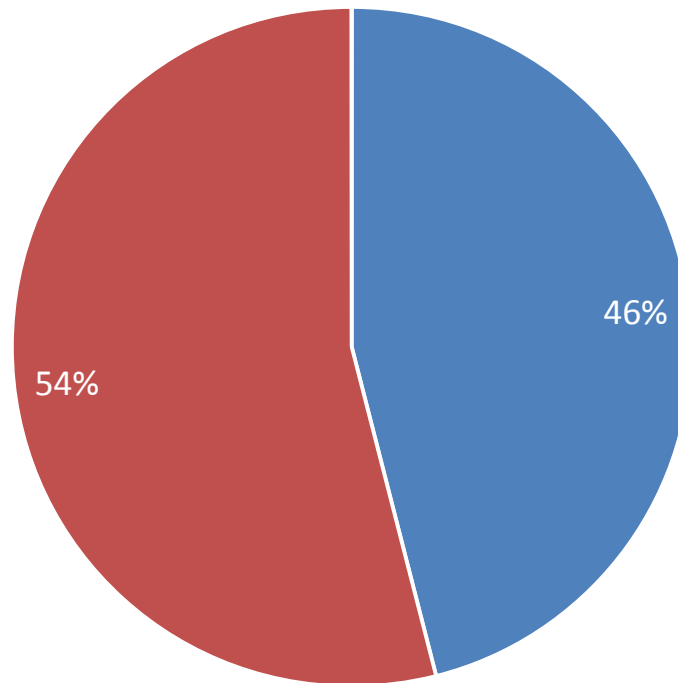
# Single Moms in MS Work, but are Stuck in Low-Wage Jobs

Children Living with a Single Mom



# Nearly half of all Mississippi's children live with a single parent, most of whom are moms.

Children by Family Type

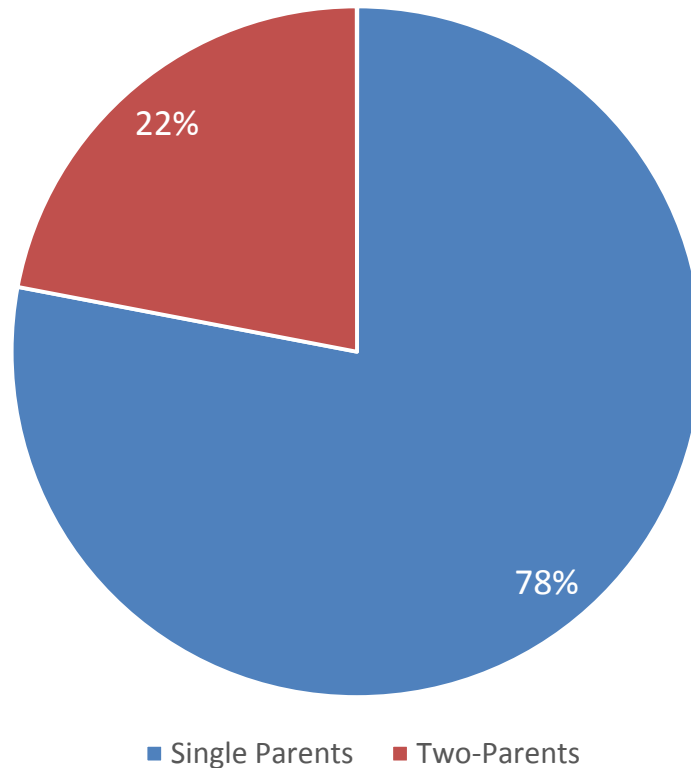


- Children Living with a Single Parent
- Children Living with Two Parents



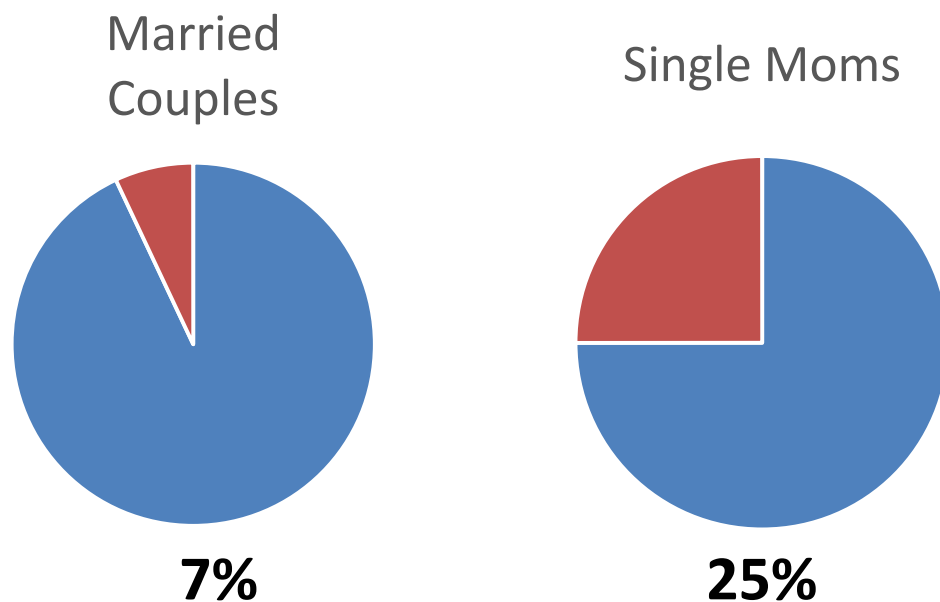
**Of children living in poverty, 78% of them are in a single parent household.**

Children Below Poverty by Family Type



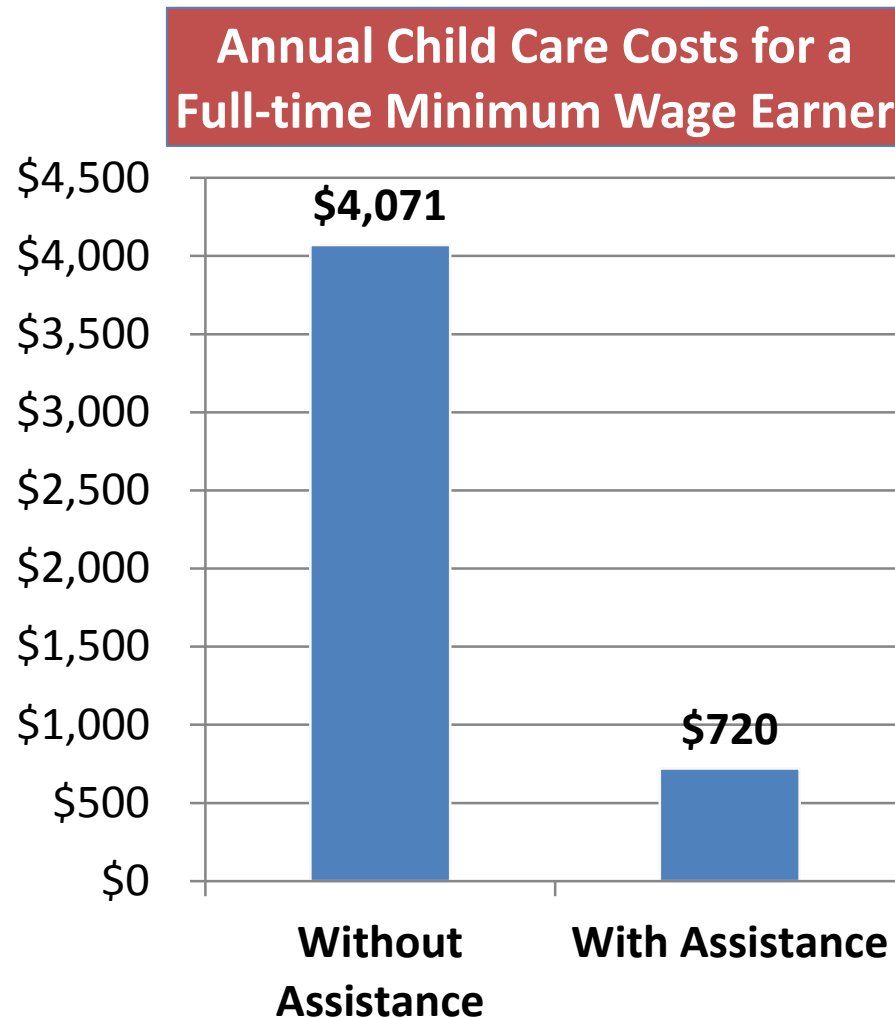
# Child Care is not affordable for Single Parents in Mississippi, Particularly Moms

**Average Annual Infant Care Costs for One Child as a Percent of Annual Median Family Income**

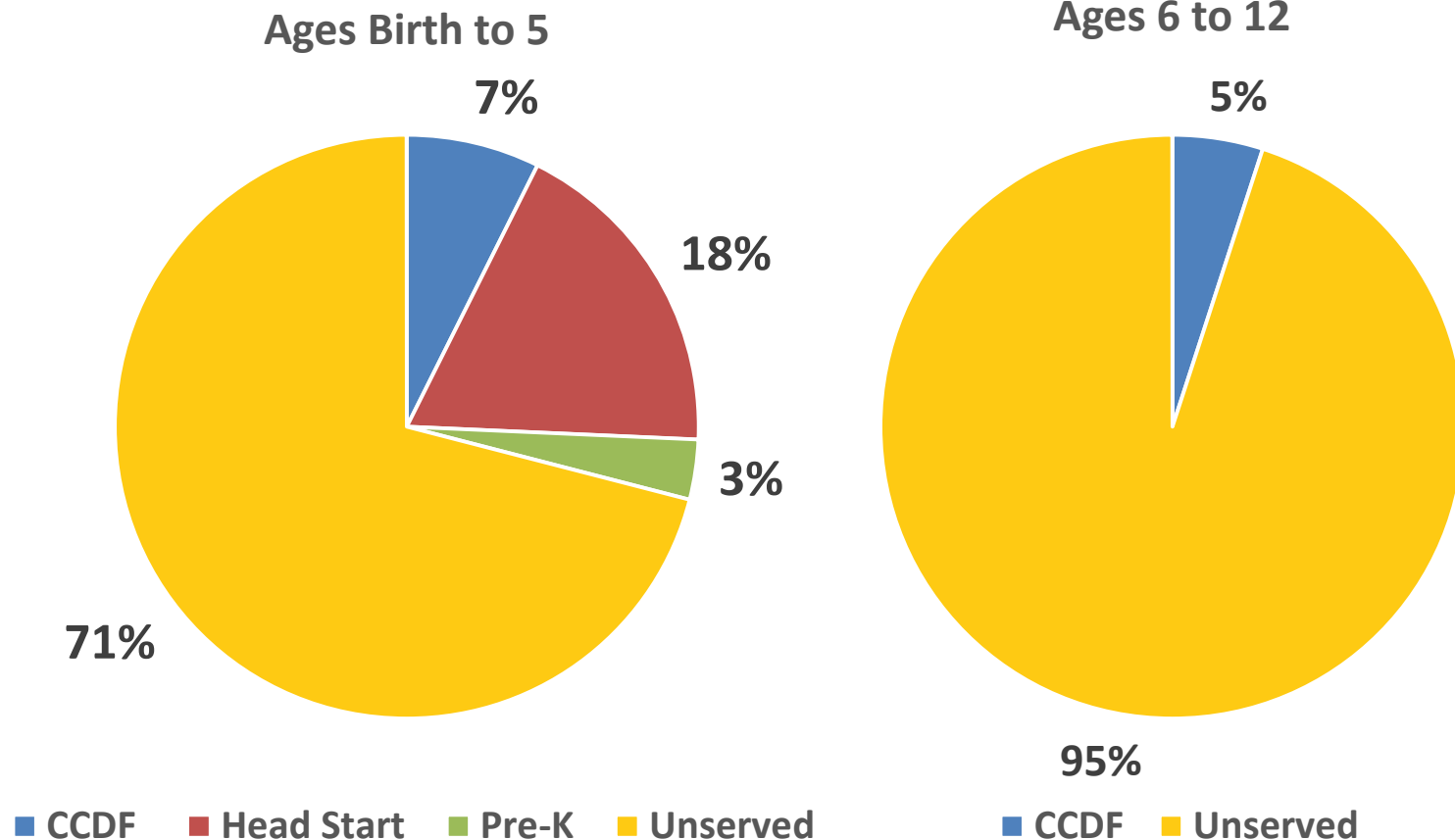


Source: 2015 American Community Survey 5-year, Table B19126 for median family income data and Economic Policy Institute data for cost of infant care in Mississippi

# Child Care Assistance Reduces Child Care Costs for Mississippi Families



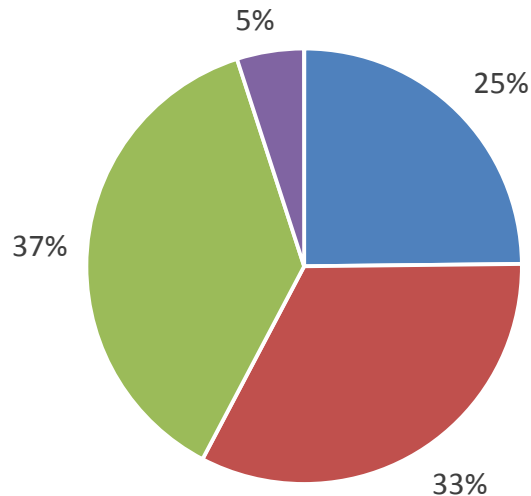
# Child Care Assistance Reaches Too Few Working Families



Source: MLICCI calculations of U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services data, MS Department of Education data, National Center for Children in Poverty, 2015 American Community Survey 1-year data

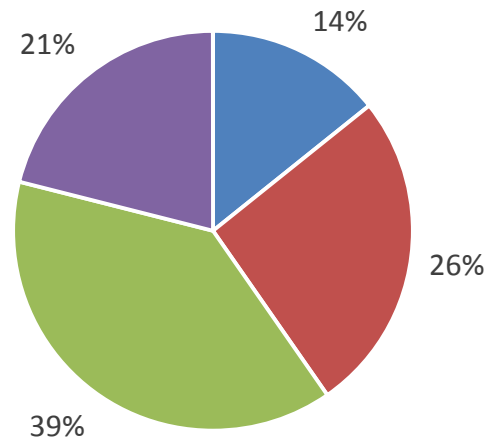
# Mississippi Single Moms Need a Pathway to Family Economic Security

Education of Single Female  
Heads of Families  
Below Poverty



- Less than High School
- High School or Equivalency
- Some College
- Bachelor's or Higher

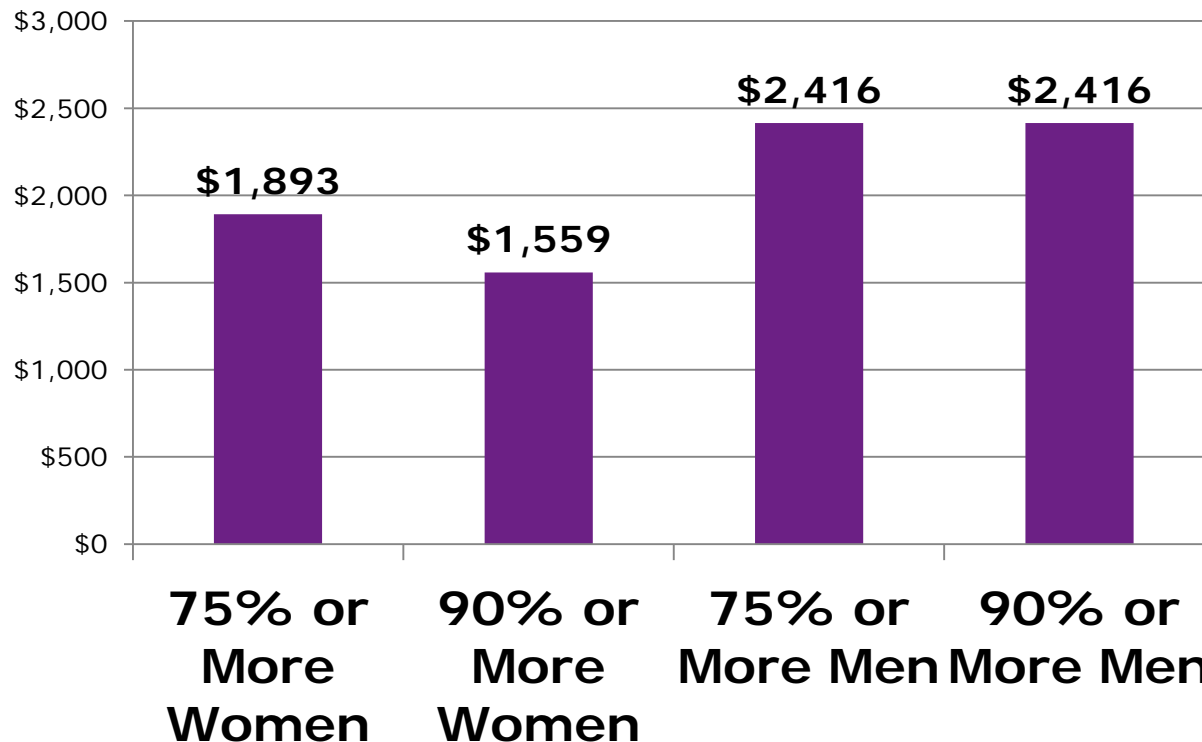
Education of Single Female  
Heads of Families  
At or Above Poverty



- Less than High School
- High School or Equivalency
- Some College
- Bachelor's or Higher

# Training Must Disrupt Patterns of Occupational Segregation & Gender Wage Disparity

Post-Training Average Monthly Earnings: Female vs. Male Dominated Programs





# Traditional versus Nontraditional Work for Women in Mississippi

## Traditional Work

- Office/Administrative Support Occupations in MS employ
- 88,000 women full-time, year-round (**77% of workers**)
  - Earning \$28,600

## Nontraditional Work

- Construction/Extraction Occupations in MS Employ
- 1,220 women full-time, year-round (**2% of workers**)
  - Earning \$40,652

# The Model: MCH WinC

- Child Care:
  - Innovative use of TANF Block Grant funding, DoL job training support, WinC is able to focus on providing real child care to participants throughout training, job search and initial employment, in addition to other work supports unique to student needs
- Nontraditional Training:
  - Prepares women to enter the high growth, higher-paying advanced manufacturing industry, with a focus on the construction skill craft and shipbuilding trades, through providing career and technical training in careers such as welding, pipefitting, ship-fitting and electrical



# Who do we serve?

- Single moms with young children
- Often victims of domestic violence
- Workers, but poor

# MCH WinC Outcomes and Measures of Success

- Successfully places about 70% of women trainees into jobs that pay up to three times more than they previously earned
- Only nontraditional training program for women on the MS Gulf Coast
- Addresses the crucial need for women to gain fair and equitable employment and apprenticeship opportunities and meet industry demands
- Serves the dual purpose of creating self-sufficiency among low-income women and increasing the skilled workforce available to meet industry demands
- Impacts lives of female students not only through job training but also empowers women to improve their overall wellbeing and personal growth

# So How Can this Model be Replicated?

## Target single moms

- How? Recruitment material must reflect images of single moms
- Where? Go where single moms are: Child Care Centers, County Human Services offices, Battered Women Centers
- **Be proactive about getting them into job training that leads to higher paying work**
  - Train front-line workers on interrupting occupational segregation
  - Increase the number of women in nontraditional work
- **Ensure child care will be provided**
  - Identify revenue such as WIOA, CCDF, TANF, SNAP E & T, etc.
  - Advocate that states direct these resources to child care for women in nontraditional training

# For More Information:

- Contact us:
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  - Gina Adams, [gadams@urban.org](mailto:gadams@urban.org)
  - Carol Burnett, [cburnett@mschildcare.org](mailto:cburnett@mschildcare.org)

# Thank you!!

You will receive a follow-up email with more information, resources, the slide show, and a recording of the webinar.

