



A Portrait of Women & Girls in the Washington Metropolitan Area Arlington County 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.

Arlington County Strengths:

Earnings: Women's median annual earnings in Arlington are higher than women's earnings in the nation and are the 2nd highest for women in the region overall. Women in the Arlington County earn \$41,552 compared to \$27,194 nationally.

Education: Sixty percent (60%) of women in the county hold a college degree compared to 27% of women nationally.

- Arlington County ranks first in the region for women's higher educational attainment.
- Arlington County has the highest percentage of women with advanced degrees (25%) and has the 3rd lowest percentage of women without a high school diploma.

Infant Mortality: Arlington County has the lowest infant mortality rate in the region at 2.2 per 1,000 births, lower than the national rate of 6.9 per 1,000 births.

Leadership: Virginia is among the few states to have both a commission for women and a formal women's caucus in each house of the state legislature.

- Arlington County also has a local commission on the status of women.

Unemployment: Female unemployment in Arlington is the 2nd lowest in the region at 2.9%, compared to 4.9% regionally and 5.8% nationally.

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.

Arlington County Weaknesses:

African-American Infant Mortality: Arlington has the lowest African-American infant-mortality rate.

Education: Not all women in the county are achieving educationally putting them at a critical disadvantage in the labor market.

- Arlington County has the 3rd highest percentage of Latinas without a high school diploma in the region, tied with Alexandria. Forty-three percent (43%) of Latinas 18 and over in the county are without a high school diploma, compared with 19.2% of African-American women and 3.4% of white women.

Family Supports: In Arlington, women-headed households at the median income level of \$41,107 can only afford 14% of the homes in the county. Arlington ranks the 2nd lowest in terms of the percentage of homes affordable to women-headed families.

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

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

Heart Disease: Arlington has the lowest women's mortality rate from heart disease in the region, tied with Montgomery County, at 348 per 100,000 people.

Leadership: Women are well represented in local governments in our area; however only 20% of the local board of supervisors in Arlington County are women.

Poverty: Arlington has the third lowest poverty rate for all women in the region at 8.2%, tied with Prince George's County. However, the county has the 2nd highest percentage of Asian women in poverty in the region (16%). Arlington has the 3rd highest percentage of African-American women in poverty (13%) and the 4th highest percentage of Latinas in poverty (15%) in the region.

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Women in Arlington County 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	1.6%	77%	4%	3.4%	303
African-American Women	5.4%	110%	13.4%	19.2%	478
Hispanic Women	7.3%	86%	14.5%	43%	105
Asian Women	3.2%	79%	15.7%	20.3%	204
All Women	2.9%	81%	8.2%	12.6%	348

In the region, Arlington County has:

- The 2nd lowest women's unemployment rate.
- The 3rd largest wage gap for median earnings (% of women's earnings to men's).
- The 3rd lowest women's poverty rate, tied with Prince George's County.
- The 3rd lowest percentage of women without a high school diploma.
- The lowest women's mortality rate from heart disease, tied with Montgomery County.

Women in Arlington County 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
50.9% married couples	39% married couples	3.7% Associates degree	8 per 100,000 (in Virginia)	21.9 per 1,000	20%
11.7% male-headed families (no wife present)	14% male householders (no wife present)	31.4% Bachelor's degree			
37.3% women-headed families (no husband present)	14% women-headed families (no husband present)	24.5% Masters or Professional degree			

In the region, Arlington County has:

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

Arlington County Weaknesses (cont.):

Teen Pregnancies: Arlington has the 3rd lowest teen birth rate in the region at 21.9 per 1,000 girls ages 15 to 17.

Wage Gap: Arlington has the 3rd largest wage gap between all women and men at 81%. Women's median earnings are \$41,552 compared to \$51,011 of men's earnings. African-American women and Hispanic women experience the smallest wage gaps with their male counterparts. In fact, African-American women earn 10% more than African-American men. White and Asian women experience the largest wage gaps between themselves and their male counterparts.

- White women earn 77% of white men's earnings in the county (\$47,188 vs. \$61,206).
- Asian women earn 79% of Asian men's earnings in the county (\$35,244 vs. \$44,386).
- African-American women earn 110% of African American men's earnings in the county (\$34,583 vs. \$31,524).
- Hispanic women earn 86% of Hispanic men's earnings in the county (\$21,888 vs. \$25,488).
- While there is more equality in earnings between African-American and Hispanic women and their male counterparts, this is due to relatively lower wages earned compared to white women and men.

Women-headed families: Arlington County has a relatively low percentage of families in poverty headed by women (37.3%), which is the second-lowest in the region. The median annual earnings for women-headed families in Arlington County is \$41,107 compared to \$90,844 for married-couple families, and \$45,575 for male-headed families.

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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