



Research Brief

The Commonwealth's Official Source for Population and Economic Statistics

April 25, 2006

Closing the Earnings Gap in Pennsylvania 2006

MIDDLETOWN, Pa – Equal pay for equal work is the law of the land but a new report, *Closing the Earnings Gap in Pennsylvania 2006*, reveals that a gender-based earnings gap still exists in the Commonwealth. In 2004, Pennsylvania's female-to-male earnings ratio at the median for year-round, full-time workers 16 years and over was 74.5 percent, meaning that the median female worker earned roughly \$0.75 for each dollar earned by the median male worker. The comparable statistic at the national level was 76.2 percent, indicating that Pennsylvania's wage gap is slightly more pronounced than that of the nation as a whole.

The purpose of the report is to provide information that will help create policies and programs to eliminate the wage gap in Pennsylvania. The report is being released today on Equal Pay Day, a day in April symbolic of the time in the year that a woman must work to earn the wages paid to a man in the previous year.

The report, sponsored by the Pennsylvania State Data Center (PaSDC) and Center for Survey Research at Penn State Harrisburg, and the Pennsylvania Commission for Women, is an update of similar publications produced by the PaSDC in 1988 and 1994. Utilizing data from the 2004 American Community Survey, *Closing the Earnings Gap in Pennsylvania 2006* highlights the gender earnings disparities that occur at different levels of education, occupation, and race/ethnicity.

The term "earnings gap" refers to the disparity between median annual earnings for women working full-time, year-round, compared to those of men.

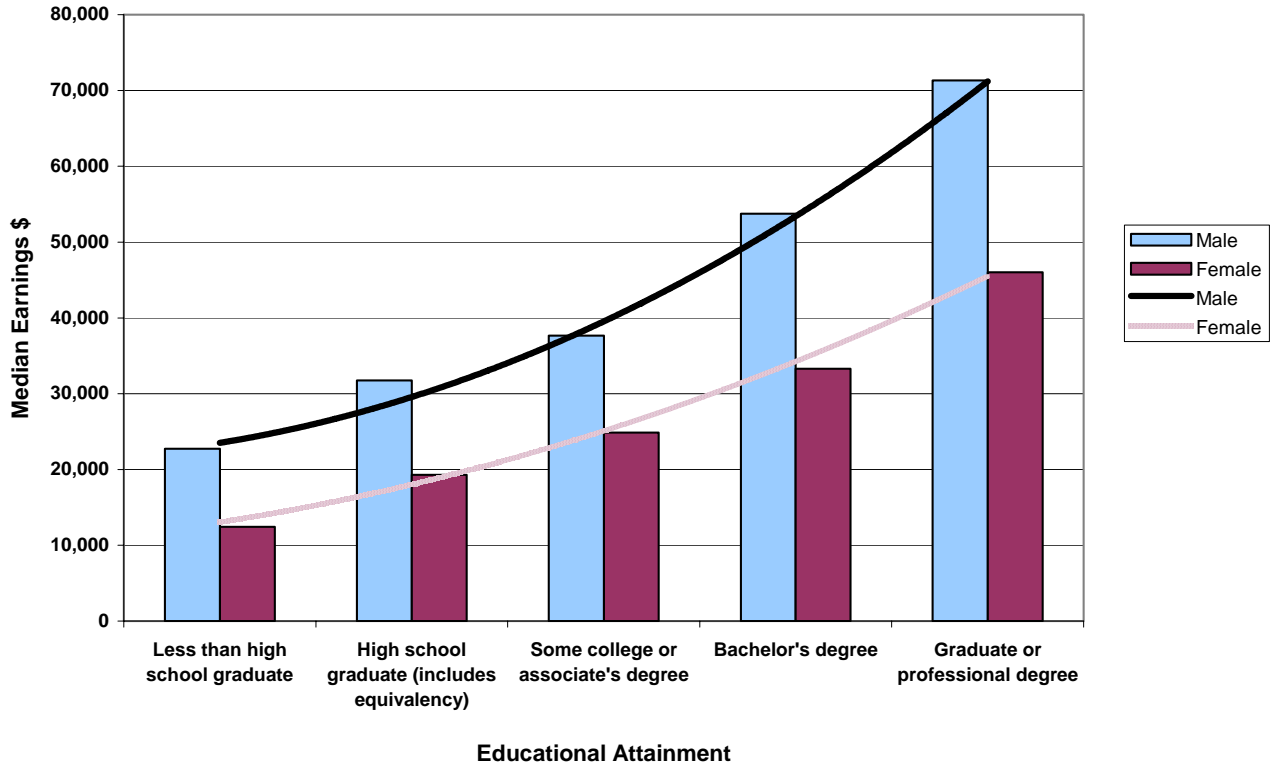
Highlights of the Report

- Median annual earnings for women working year-round, full-time were \$31,197 in 2004. Men with similar effort earned \$41,873.
- Median income for both females and males increases as educational level increases.
- Females who held a graduate or professional degree had median annual earnings of \$46,022, significantly less than males with bachelor's degrees, whose comparable earnings were \$53,750. (Figure 1)
- Women's median earnings are less than half of men's in legal occupations and less than two-thirds of men's in sales and healthcare practitioner/technical occupations. (Table 1)

- New in this report are data on the earnings gap by class of worker, including public- and private- sector workers.

Figure 1.

**Median Earnings by Sex and Educational Attainment,
Pennsylvania: 2004**



Closing the Earnings Gap in Pennsylvania 2006 contains additional information on the gender earnings gap in these areas, as well as an analysis of data by class of worker, earnings gap tables, and policy implications. You may view an electronic version of this report at: http://pasdc.hbg.psu.edu/pasdc/Closing_the_Earnings_Gap_2006.pdf

To order a hardcopy of the report, or for more information about gender-based wage disparities in Pennsylvania, contact the Pennsylvania State Data Center at 717.948.6336.

Source: *Closing the Earnings Gap in Pennsylvania 2006*

The Pennsylvania State Data Center is the commonwealth's official source for population and economic statistics. It is based at Penn State Harrisburg's Institute of State and Regional Affairs. The Pennsylvania State Data Center is part of the U.S. Census Bureau's National State Data Center Program.

Editors: For additional data, contact the Pennsylvania State Data Center's State Capital Office at 717.772.2710 or for faculty comment on this topic, contact Penn State Harrisburg's Public Information Office at 717.948.6029.

Table 1. Median Earnings by Sex and Occupation

Occupation	Median earnings (dollars)			Women's earnings as a percentage of men's earnings
	Total	Male	Female	
Full-time, year-round civilian workers 16 years and over with earnings (universe)	37,021	41,995	31,305	74.5
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	40,149	40,146	40,210	100.2
Community and social-service occupations	31,695	33,986	31,223	91.9
Construction and extraction occupations	36,160	36,553	32,898	90.0
Life, physical, and social-science occupations	48,040	51,862	45,714	88.1
Healthcare-support occupations	24,657	28,354	24,039	84.8
Computer and mathematical occupations	63,147	66,305	55,876	84.3
Architecture and engineering occupations	58,272	59,285	49,490	83.5
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media occupations	40,976	42,397	35,244	83.1
Protective service occupations	45,275	45,931	38,126	83.0
Food preparation and serving related occupations	18,885	21,285	17,155	80.6
Office and administrative-support occupations	29,842	35,389	28,114	79.4
Education, training, and library occupations	43,204	50,296	38,828	77.2
Transportation and material-moving occupations	31,867	32,953	25,063	76.1
Business and financial operations occupations	47,599	55,885	41,161	73.7
Personal care and service occupations	21,011	26,404	19,438	73.6
Management occupations	60,621	66,124	47,955	72.5
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	30,354	31,100	21,839	70.2
Building-and grounds-cleaning and maintenance occupations	23,934	26,407	18,366	69.5
Production occupations	31,578	34,882	24,213	69.4
Sales and related occupations	37,096	46,196	28,803	62.3
Healthcare practitioner and technical occupations	50,318	73,910	45,568	61.7
Legal occupations	71,208	98,120	47,231	48.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2004 American Community Survey