



# Report on The Status of Women in Montgomery County

MONTGOMERY COUNTY  
COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

June 7, 2007



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[www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cfw](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cfw)

The Montgomery County Commission for Women is both a department of county government, and an advisory board. The Commission's primary focus is to identify inequities in laws, policies, practices and procedures and to promote remedies. The Commission itself is an advisory panel, created by an act of law in 1972. Its 15 members are appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Council to serve three-year terms without compensation. The mandate of the Commission for Women is to advise the County Executive, the County Council, the public, and the agencies of the county, state and federal governments on the issues of concern to the women of Montgomery County (Montgomery County Code Sec. 27-29). The department also sponsors a unique combination of direct services to individuals through its Counseling and Career Center (240-777-8300).

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## 2006-2007

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# Introduction

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The agenda of the Montgomery County Commission for Women promotes the well-being of women and ultimately their families and communities. Upon the occasion of the 35th anniversary of the Montgomery County Commission for Women, we are proud to release the 2007 Status of Women in Montgomery County Report.

This report provides a compilation of objective data about the current status of Montgomery County women, with implications for future policies, programs and legislation. It is our intention that the information presented in this report will generate new directions for better policies and brighter futures for all county residents.

In 1997, the Commission undertook the first report of this kind in the county, which was instrumental in educating government, legislators, advocates and the community on issues affecting women in Montgomery County.

During the past two years, the Commission collected, reviewed and synthesized data on women with the purpose of informing policy makers, legislators, service providers, advocates and the public on key indicators of the socioeconomic well-being of Montgomery County women. Throughout this report you will note comparisons of certain pertinent data noting the changes over the last decade.

The 2007 Status of Women in Montgomery County Report describes women's experiences through quantitative data, measuring progress made by women and identifying obstacles and gaps that continue to create challenges for county women.

Divided into six domains, the Report presents relevant data, key findings and recommendations. While the Report cannot touch on every issue that affects women, it does address the fundamental subjects. It is our sincere hope this report will serve as both an educational and a social action tool for the public as well as for policy makers.

The Commission for Women thanks the County Executive and the County Council for their support of this project, including the allocation of funds.



Patricia E. Cornish, Commissioner and Chair

2007 Status of Women in Montgomery County



# Executive Summary

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## Summary of Report

The mission of the Montgomery County Commission for Women is to advance women's equal and full participation in the benefits, responsibilities, and opportunities of society, and to enable women to participate as equals in the community through the acquisition of skills and competencies, information and resources. The 2007 Status of Women Report provides a collection of data that creates a snapshot of the current status of Montgomery County women, enabling legislators and the community to form a strategic and informed agenda.

The information for this report was gathered from existing sources of data describing the county's population. The terms used in this report (African-American, black, Latina, Hispanic, for example) necessarily vary. In the interest of accuracy, this report uses the terms in the original data source.

### WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY

The economic data on women in Montgomery County reveal that women have made great strides in business and careers. In fact, over the past decade fewer women have left the workforce than men, despite the continuing disparity in wages. County women's median earnings still lag nearly one-third behind that of the county's male workforce. Women are vastly over-represented among those living in poverty. This is especially true for elderly women and single female heads of households. While the gap is smaller between the median incomes of single male- and single female-headed families, single female-headed families represent a large percentage of families in poverty. Single female-headed households, which are 15 percent of all county families, represent 47 percent of all families living in poverty.

### WOMEN AND EDUCATION

In Montgomery County, girls' high school graduation rates are equal to that of boys, but fewer women earn their college diplomas. Girls outperform boys in school grades but still lag behind them on SAT scores, despite performing better on the new writing section. Women make up the vast majority of public school teachers and now comprise 60 percent of the public school principals. However, 67 percent of all women principals are in the elementary schools while 71 percent of all male principals are in the high schools. Girls also lag significantly in their enrollment in information technology courses in high school and at Montgomery College. The women faculty at Montgomery College earn almost \$3000 less in average salary than the male faculty.

### WOMEN AND HEALTH

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for county women regardless of race or ethnicity. Nonetheless, African-American, white and Latina women face different health issues. White women are more likely to develop breast cancer but black women are more likely to die from this disease. African-American and Latina women are at greater risk of contracting HIV/AIDS and the rate of teen pregnancy among these two populations is higher than that of women of other races. In Montgomery County, 16 of 1,000 babies born to African-American women die before their first birthday. This proportion is higher than the national rate of 14 deaths per 1,000 African-American babies. Women of color, more often than white women, must confront these serious health issues with limited access to health care and without the protection of health insurance.

### WOMEN AND IMMIGRATION

In the decade between 1990 and the year 2000, the immigrant or foreign born population in the U.S. grew from 19.7 million to over 31.1 million, an increase of more than 50 percent. According to the U.S. Census, in 2005, 12 percent of the United States population was foreign born. Of all the intended destinations for immigrants in the country, the state of Maryland ranks tenth. Twelve percent of Maryland's population is foreign born.

In 2005 in Montgomery County, the percentage of foreign born residents was more than double that of the state.

More than half (53%) of the immigrants in the county are women. Immigrant women face similar gender inequities as the general population of women in the county. Immigrant women have the same income gap (34% less than for immigrant men) as for all county women. Immigrant women have equal educational attainment levels as immigrant men and are very likely to be employed, but also have a higher risk of poverty.

### WOMEN AND THE LAW

Women are more often the victims of crime than they are the perpetrators. In 2005 in Montgomery County, women accounted for nearly half (45%) of the victims of murder, rape or aggravated assault. In the same year, of the 9,078 individuals arrested in the county, 17 percent were women. Women who appear before either civil or criminal court, as defendants or as plaintiffs, are likely to face a male-dominated judiciary. The number of women masters and judges serving Montgomery County has increased 7 percent since 1996, yet they still represent only 28 percent of the total.

### WOMEN AND POLITICS

In 2005 and 2006, Maryland had the highest percentage of women serving in the state legislature of any other state in the nation. Since the release of the 1997 Report, the number of women in the Maryland legislature had increased by 6 percent, from 56 (30%) to 67 (36%) women of the 188 members of the Maryland General Assembly. However, the 2006 elections reduced the number of women in the state legislature by almost 10 percent; 62 women now occupy state seats. As a result, Maryland dropped from first to sixth in the ranking of states with the highest percentage of women serving in the state legislature.

While fewer women than men sought elected office in Montgomery County, women consistently had a higher election success rate, winning 79 percent of their races. The number of women on the County Council increased from two to four as a result of the November 2006 elections. Women are the overwhelming majority on the Montgomery County Board of Education.

County data show women are more likely than men to register and vote, yet women remain under-represented in elected offices. They represent only 35 percent of elected officials in Montgomery County.

# Summary of Key Findings

## WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY

- Sixty-five percent of county women participate in the labor force, with African-American women's participation rate the highest, at 71 percent.
- The average income of county women continues to be two-thirds that of men.
- Eighty-two percent of single-headed households are headed by women.
- Single female-headed households, which are 15 percent of county families, represent 47 percent of families living in poverty.
- For single females with children under age five, the risk of poverty is even greater. Nearly 30 percent of these families have incomes below the federal poverty level, compared to less than 3 percent of all families in the county.
- Montgomery County women-owned businesses represent 23 percent (31,964) of women-owned business in the state. These businesses employ 34,571 workers, generate annual payrolls of \$1.1 billion, and generate over \$4.4 billion in revenue.
- Women represent the vast majority (73%) of the office and administrative support occupations. Nineteen percent of women who reported an occupation hold a position in this category. Seven percent of men work in office and administrative support positions.

## WOMEN AND EDUCATION

- Fifty-two percent of county women 25 years and older hold a bachelor's degree or higher, an 8 percent increase since the 1997 Report.
- Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) students continue to outperform the state and national averages on the SAT, but girls continue to receive lower scores than boys.
- Of the 16 MCPS computer maintenance courses, there are nine classes with only boys enrolled. MCPS placed 64 high school students in technology-related internships and all were boys.
- While women are now 60 percent of all principals in MCPS, they are distributed unevenly among the school levels. Less than 30 percent of the MCPS high school principals are women, but 67 percent of elementary school principals and 50 percent of middle school principals are women.
- Of the 41 county public schools bearing an individual's name, only seven of those are named in honor of a woman, and all but one of those are elementary schools.
- Nine of the 14 Montgomery College deans are women, a 16 percent increase since the 1997 report. However, women faculty members earn nearly \$3,000 less in annual income than male faculty.

## WOMEN AND HEALTH

- Heart disease is the leading cause of death for women in Montgomery County.
- More than 27,000 women over 18 years of age in the county had no health insurance coverage at the end of 2004.
- Hispanic and black women have the highest prevalence of single motherhood in the county; 45 percent of Hispanic births and 40 percent of black births are to unmarried mothers.
- Hispanic and black teens are ten times more likely to give birth than white or Asian teens.
- Black women were diagnosed with AIDS at a far greater rate than women of any other race/ethnicity. In fact, in 2004 black women were diagnosed with AIDS at a rate six times that of all other women combined.

- White women are at greater risk of developing breast cancer. Black women are more likely to die from this disease.
- The infant mortality rate for black babies is more than triple that for other races and more than double that for the county as a whole.
- Women die from Alzheimer's disease at triple the rate of men.

### WOMEN AND IMMIGRATION

- There are more than 267,000 immigrants in Montgomery County (29% of the population), the largest proportion in any county in the state. Fifty-eight percent of these immigrants are women.
- Forty-nine percent of the immigrant population 25 years and older have a college or graduate degree. Women make up 50 percent of this group.
- Immigrant women, on average, earn \$10,992 (34%) less per year than immigrant men, a gender-based wage gap similar to that found in the general population.

### WOMEN AND THE LAW

- Women are far more often killed or raped by someone they know than by a stranger.
- In 2005, 17 percent of the assailants in aggravated assault charges were women, yet women represent 31 percent of the aggravated assault victims.
- Of the 4,066 petitions for temporary protective orders filed in 2005, an estimated 85 percent were filed by women. The number of petitions filed has nearly doubled since 1994 (2,101).
- Women were only 17 percent of county adults arrested in 2005. Girls represent more than 30 percent of the youth who become involved in the Juvenile Justice System.
- The number of women masters and judges serving Montgomery County has increased 7 percent since 1996, yet they still represent only 28 percent of the total.

### WOMEN AND POLITICS

- County data show women are more likely than men to register and to vote, but women remain under-represented in elected offices. Women won 23 (35%) of the 65 elected offices on the county ballot in the 2006 elections.
- In the 2006 elections, women won 4 of the 9 seats on the County Council, doubling the number from the previous term.
- Although fewer women than men sought elected office in Montgomery County, women consistently had a higher election success rate. Women won the overwhelming majority of seats on the Montgomery County Board of Education.
- The number of women in Montgomery County registered as Democrats exceeds the total number of registered Republicans, both male and female, by nearly 38,000.
- In the 2006 elections, 21,732 more women than men voted in Montgomery County.
- A higher percentage of women ran for county office than for state office. Thirty-three percent of the candidates for county office were women, while 24 percent of the state office candidates were women.
- The 2006 elections reduced the number of women in the state legislature by almost 10 percent.

# Summary of Recommendations

The Montgomery County Commission for Women (CFW) has carefully reviewed the findings of the 2007 Status of Women in Montgomery County Report and makes the following seventeen recommendations:

- ❖ The CFW recommends the continuance of the Maryland Equal Pay Commission and implementation of its 2006 recommendations, including further research and county-based data collection.
- ❖ The CFW recommends that the Montgomery County Office of Economic Development, the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce and the Alliance for Workplace Excellence continue to work in collaboration to develop incentives that encourage employers in Montgomery County to adopt more family friendly labor practices. (Examples include: flexible schedules, dependent care benefits, telecommuting, paid sick leave, paid sick leave for dependent care, health insurance coverage, and retirement plans.)
- ❖ Given the significant relationship between single female parenthood and poverty, the CFW recommends that a multidisciplinary task force be established with representatives from relevant service providers, advocacy organizations and the public sector, to study the causes of this relationship, evaluate how well current programs identify and address needs, and identify effective methods of intervention.
- ❖ The CFW recommends the implementation of both the recommendations of the August 24, 2006 report of the MCPS Girls in Information Technology Task Force, and the additional recommendations submitted by the CFW to MCPS, to include:
  - Communicate immediately and emphatically to MCPS faculty the priority to be placed on this issue, and insist on educational equity for all students, with particular attention to the lack of enrollment of girls, African-American and Hispanic students in the IT classroom.
  - Begin work immediately on the development of an IT unit/module or course for every student in every grade, K-12, as recommended by the Task Force. It is the only way to ensure that every student has at least a base level of exposure to, access to, and competence in Information Technology. Requiring IT as part of the core curriculum in every grade will eliminate a huge part of the cultural barrier keeping most girls and many students of color out of the IT classroom.
  - Begin work immediately on the Task Force's recommendation to develop comprehensive pathway programs that would integrate core academic classes with technology classes in multi-year programs.
- ❖ The CFW recommends that MCPS assess why girls' SAT scores are lower than boys' and develop measures to eliminate the gender gap.
- ❖ At the next opportunity to name a high school, the CFW recommends that the Board of Education select a deserving woman. The CFW maintains an archive of the biographies of 30 women of historical significance to Montgomery County and would recommend this as a starting point for the selection of such women. The Montgomery County Women's History Archives may be found at [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cfw](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cfw).
- ❖ The CFW recommends that Montgomery County increase efforts to educate the public on the risks of heart disease for women and increase outreach to women.
- ❖ Lack of equitable access to quality and affordable health care services is almost certainly linked to a number of the key findings, including breast cancer mortality, infant mortality, low birth weight infants, and reproductive health care. The CFW urges the Maryland General Assembly to immediately pass health care reform legislation to cover more of the uninsured and to swiftly work toward passage of legislation that would provide health insurance to everyone in the state.

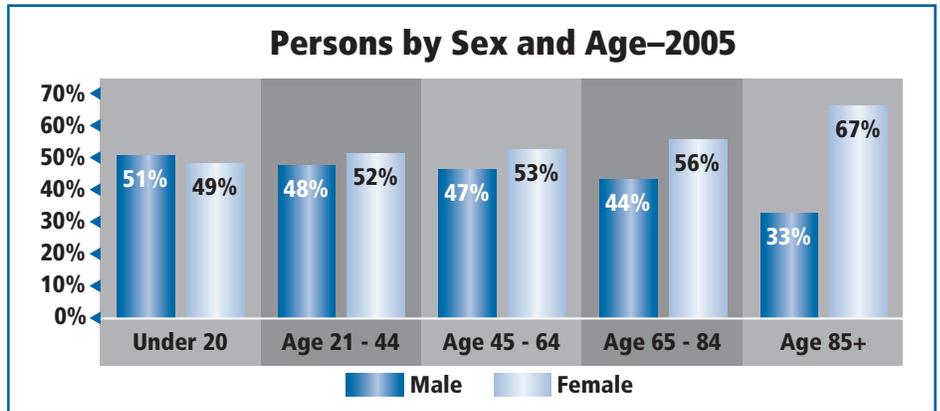
- ❖ The CFW recommends that Montgomery County strengthen public education programs on the dangers of unprotected sex, especially targeting teens.
- ❖ The CFW urges strengthening collaborative efforts between appropriate county agencies and community organizations to ensure that adequate resources are available to provide high quality, comprehensive and effective AIDS prevention, diagnosis, and treatment programs to county residents.
- ❖ Inoculation for the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) should be strongly encouraged and made available to every girl in the county, regardless of ability to pay.
- ❖ Montgomery County has the largest population of immigrant women in the state. Because these women make enormous contributions but also face specific problems, the CFW should continue its focus on the needs of immigrant women.
- ❖ During the data collection process, the CFW noted the lack of comprehensive information on the foreign born population. The CFW urges the U.S. Census Bureau to expand data collection on ethnicity and nationality to include data on foreign born individuals in all major categories and at the county level.
- ❖ The CFW urges the Governor of Maryland to make a concerted effort to increase the number of women serving on the bench.
- ❖ The CFW recommends that MCPS increase its education and prevention efforts addressing the issue of relationship violence, specifically targeting both adolescent boys and girls.
- ❖ The county has recently established a Domestic Violence Coordinating Council (DVCC) charged with coordinating the county's services to victims of domestic violence and intimate partner violence. The CFW encourages the DVCC to add the key findings of the Women and Health chapter to its agenda, including an examination of the need to increase coordination of sexual and domestic violence prevention and intervention efforts, and the recent state findings of a relationship between homicide and pregnancy.
- ❖ The CFW urges all political parties to increase efforts to recruit women candidates for office at every level, to educate candidates on the issues affecting women, and to involve women in every aspect of the political process.

# Women in Montgomery County

According to the U.S. Census' 2005 American Community Survey, 918,046 people reside in Montgomery County. This represents an increase of more than 122,000 since 1994. The population of Montgomery County is the largest of any county in Maryland and accounts for 17 percent of the state's population.

## POPULATION OF WOMEN

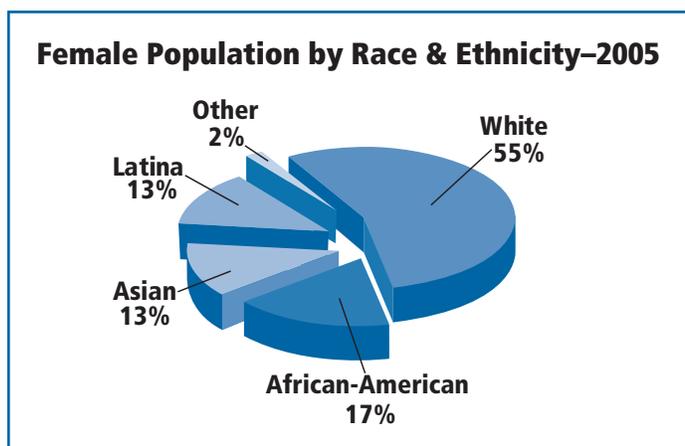
In 2005, there were 2,830,892 women and girls in Maryland, comprising 52 percent of the total state population. The statistics for Montgomery County mirror the state with women and girls accounting for 475,677 (52%) of the county population, outnumbering men and boys by 33,308.



The age breakdown of women and girls in the county is similar to that of county men and boys, but there are more women than men above 65 years of age. Girls 20 years and younger comprise 27 percent of the female population. Thirty-three percent are between the ages of 21 and 44; 28 percent are between the ages of 45 and 64; and 11 percent are between the ages of 65 and 84. Two percent of the county's women are 85 years and older. The median age for county women is 39.5, 5.6 years older than in 1990.

## OLDER WOMEN

Persons age 65 and older represent 11 percent of the county population. This proportion echoes that of the state and remains relatively unchanged since 1994, when people 65 and older represented 12 percent of the county population. Women comprise the majority (58%) of this age group with nearly 60,000 women age 65 and older, 15,509 more than men. By age 85, women outnumber men two to one. There are 8,873 women who are 85 years and older living in Montgomery County.



## POPULATION BY RACE AND ETHNICITY

The foreign born<sup>1</sup> population (male and female) represent 29 percent of the county's total population. This is a significant increase since 1990 when the foreign born represented 17 percent of the county population.

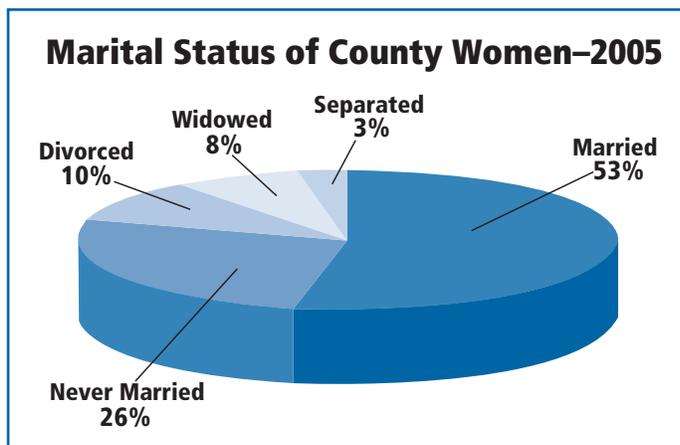
Among Montgomery County women, 55 percent are white, 17 percent are African-American, 13 percent are Asian and 13 percent are Latina. Since 1990, the Asian and Latina female populations nearly doubled, from 8 percent and 7 percent respectively. The proportion of African-American women increased by 5 percent, while the proportion of white women decreased by 25 percent.

1 According to the U.S. Census, the **foreign born** population includes all people who were not U.S. citizens at birth. Foreign born people are those who indicated they were either a U.S. citizen by naturalization or they were not a citizen of the United States.

## MARITAL STATUS AND CHILDBEARING PATTERNS

Fifty-three percent of county women 15 years and older are married; 26 percent have never been married; 10 percent are divorced; 8 percent are widowed and 3 percent are separated. There has been virtually no change in women's marital status pattern since 1990.

In 2004, there were 13,546 births in Montgomery County. Approximately 4 percent (531) were born to teen mothers, a decrease of almost 1 percent since 1994. Unmarried mothers represent 22 percent of women who gave birth in 2004, indicating that one in five babies was born into a single parent family.



## LESBIAN POPULATION

There is limited data systematically collected on the county's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. According to the Census Bureau's 2005 American Community Survey, there are 2,910 same-sex households in the county. Of these households, 1,491 are lesbian couple households.

## WOMEN AND DISABILITIES<sup>2</sup>

In Montgomery County, there are 82,392 people classified as disabled by the U.S. Census Bureau. Women represent 56 percent of these individuals. Of the 441,164 women and girls above the age of five, 45,889 (10%) have some form of disability.

## HOUSEHOLDS<sup>3</sup> AND FAMILIES<sup>4</sup>

In 2005, there were 344,038 households and 238,293 families in Montgomery County. Single-headed families represent 15 percent of all county households and 21 percent of county families. Single women head 10 percent of county households and 15 percent of county families. Of the 50,007 families headed by a single householder, 35,507 (71%) are headed by single women, and 14,500 (29%) are headed by single men.

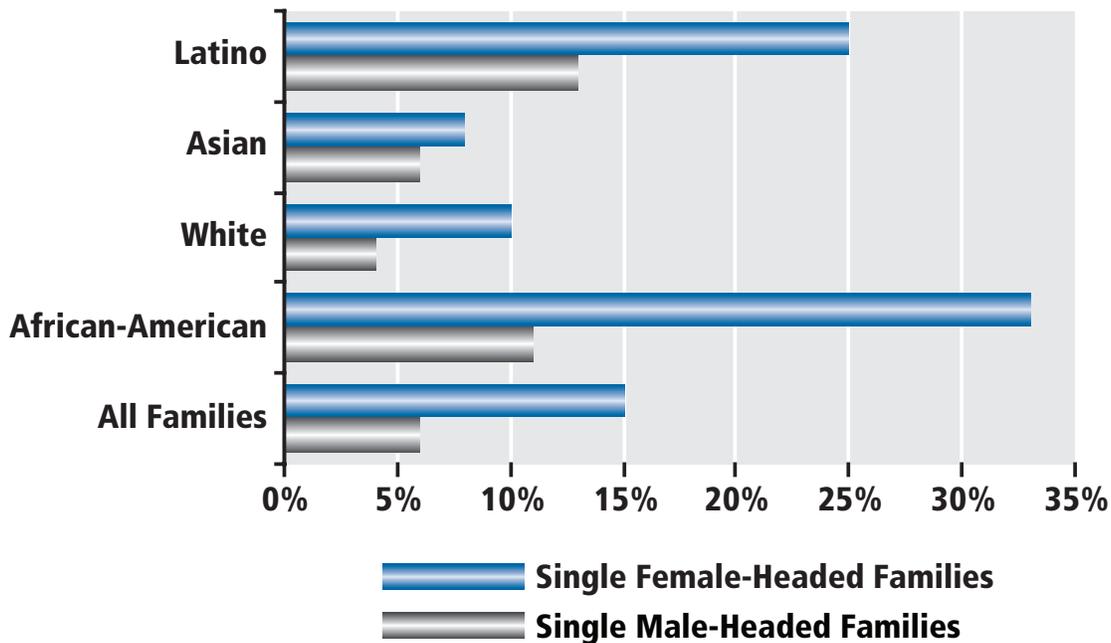
One in three African-American families is headed by a single woman, the highest proportion of single female-headed families (33 percent). This is double the rate of the county as a whole. The Asian community has the lowest prevalence of single female-headed families, with 8 percent of families headed by single women. Ten percent of all white families and 25 percent of Latino families are headed by single women.

2 In the 2005 American Community Survey, the U.S. Census Bureau determined a person's disability status by one of six disability conditions: sensory, physical, mental, self-care, go-outside-home and employment disability. Disability status was determined for all civilian non-institutionalized people over the age of five. People between 16 and 64 years of age were classified as disabled if they reported any of the six disabilities listed above. People age 5 to 15 were classified as disabled if they reported either a sensory, physical, mental or self-care disability. People 65 and over were classified as disabled if they reported any of the disabilities except employment disability.

3 According to the U.S. Census Bureau, a household includes all people who occupy a housing unit, regardless of relationship.

4 According to the U.S. Census Bureau, a family consists of a householder and one or more other people living in the same household who are related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption.

## Percent of Families Headed by Single Males and Females within each Race/Ethnicity–2005



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# Women and the Economy

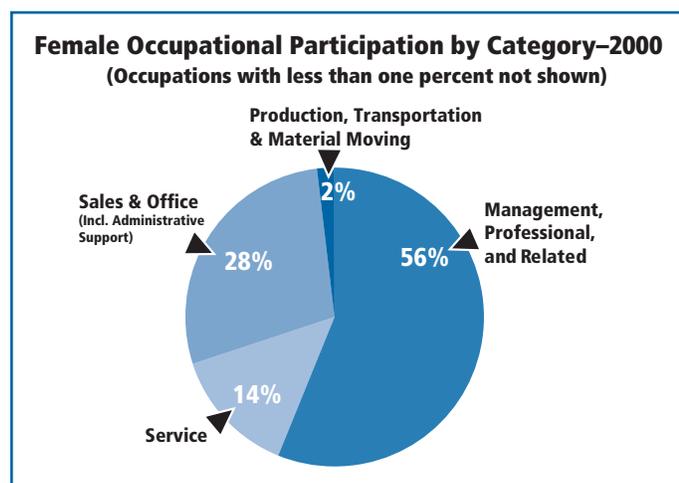
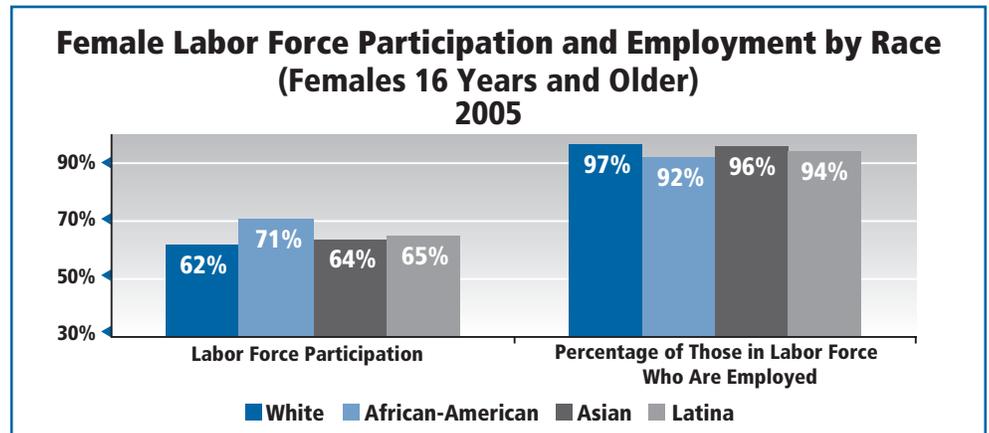
The economic data on women in Montgomery County reveal that women have made great strides in business and careers. In fact, over the past decade fewer women have left the workforce than men, despite the continuing disparity in wages. County women's median earnings still lag nearly one-third behind that of the county's male workforce. Women are vastly over-represented among those living in poverty. This is especially true for elderly women and single female heads of households. While the gap is smaller between the median incomes of single male- and single female-headed families, single female-headed families represent a large percentage of families in poverty. Single female-headed households, which are 15 percent of all county families, represent 47 percent of all families living in poverty.

## WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE

Over the past decade, women have consistently represented nearly half of the labor force<sup>5</sup> in the county. The 2005 American Community Survey reports that 48 percent of the labor force (16 years and older) in Montgomery County is female. Of women 16 years and older in Montgomery

County, 65 percent are in the labor force, a 3 percent decrease since 1990. The proportion of men in the labor force has decreased by 5 percent, from 84 to 79 percent in this same time period. In 2005, 4 percent of Montgomery County's labor force was unemployed; women represented 48 percent of that population.

The African-American and Latino communities in the county have the highest labor force participation rates among females 16 years and older. In 2005, 71 percent of the African-American female population and 65 percent of the Latina population 16 years and older was in the labor force. Labor force participation rates for Asian and white females were 64 and 62 percent respectively.



## OCCUPATIONS

Not surprisingly, from 1990 to 2000, the occupations identified in the Decennial Census have changed significantly. For example, the 1990 Census did not include many of the computer and technology related occupations that the 2000 Census captured. While some comparisons can be made among occupational categories, it is important to note that these comparisons do not take into account the changes in specific occupations included in each category. For this reason, this section will focus on comparing gender related data within each data set and only compare trends between data sets. In this section, the data set refers to the Decennial Census (1990 and 2000).

<sup>5</sup> According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the **labor force** includes all people (16 years and older) classified as employed or unemployed, including members of the U.S. Armed Forces. Individuals considered **not in the labor force** are individuals (16 years and older) who are not looking for work. This includes students, retired workers, people taking care of home or family, and seasonal workers surveyed during the off-season.

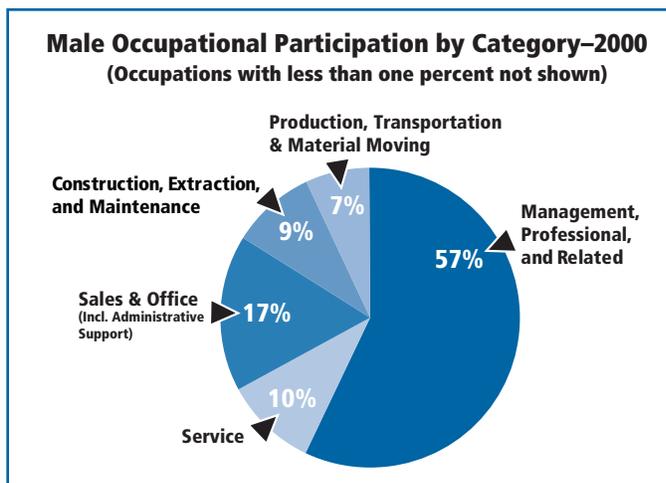
It is also important to note that the data was collected through self-reporting, meaning that individuals identified themselves as holding such occupations.

Both the 1990 and the 2000 Census show that certain occupations are still largely segregated by gender. This is especially true for the office and administrative support occupations where the number of women far exceeds that of men.

This report looks at the following three 2000 Census categories: 1) management, business, and financial operations occupations; 2) professional and related occupations; and 3) office and administrative support occupations. The first category includes business and financial operations occupations, management occupations and farmers and farm managers. Women represent 45 percent of these positions. Twenty percent of women reporting occupations hold these positions. Similarly, 22 percent of men hold the same positions.

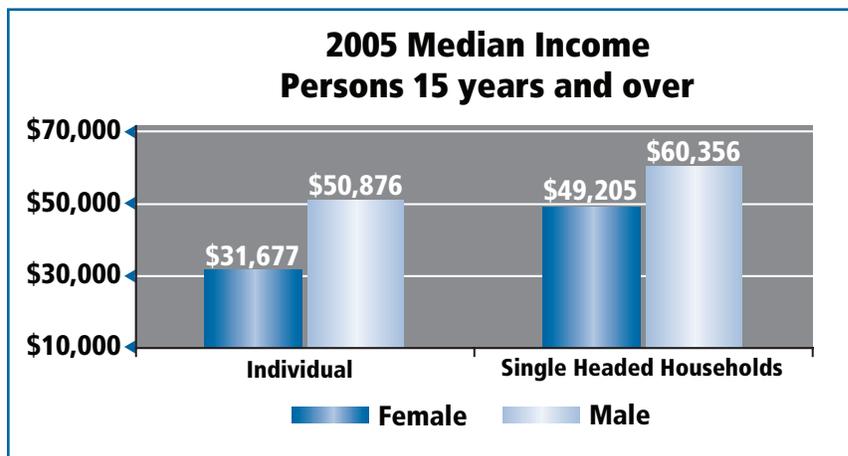
The professional and related occupations category includes the following occupations: computer and mathematical, architecture and engineering, social services, legal, healthcare practitioners, and educational positions. Women hold 45 percent of these occupations. Of the women reporting an occupation, 36 percent are included in this category, 1 percent higher than the proportion of men who hold these positions.

Unlike the first two categories, women represent the vast majority (73%) of the office and administrative support occupations. Nineteen percent of women who reported an occupation hold a position in this category while only 7 percent of men are in office and administrative support positions.



### INCOME AND EARNINGS<sup>6</sup>

A significant income disparity continues between women and men. Whether one is looking at earnings or total income, women bring in far less money than men. The median<sup>7</sup> level for county women's earnings is 31 percent lower than for men. The 2005 American Community Survey reports that the median earnings for women was \$15,798 less than for their male counterparts. The median for women's earnings was \$34,859 while for men it was \$50,657.



<sup>6</sup> According to the U.S. Census Bureau, earnings is defined as the algebraic sum of wage or salary income and net income from self-employment. Earnings represent the amount of income received regularly before deductions for personal income taxes, Social Security, bond purchases, union dues, Medicare deductions, etc. Income is defined as the sum of the amounts reported separately for wages, salary, commissions, bonuses, or tips; self-employment income from own non-farm or farm businesses, including proprietorships and partnerships; interest, dividends, net rental income, royalty income, or income from estates and trusts; Social Security or Railroad Retirement income; Supplemental Security Income (SSI); any public assistance or welfare payments from the state or local welfare office; retirement, survivor, or disability pensions; and any other sources of income received regularly such as Veterans' (VA) payments, unemployment compensation, child support, or alimony.

<sup>7</sup> Median is the point that divides the income or earning distribution into two equal parts, one part having income or earnings above the median and the other having income or earnings below the median. The median is based on the distribution of the total numbers of the income or earnings, including those with no income or earnings and those with negative income.

For total income, the disparity was even greater. In 2005, the median total income from all sources for the female population 15 years and older with income was \$31,677. This is \$19,190 (38%) less than the male median income of \$50,876 - a gap that remains essentially unchanged since 1995. The total income for county women continues to be only two-thirds that for men.

Single women head 10 percent of the households and 15 percent of the families in Montgomery County, more than double that of the single men who head 4 percent of households and 6 percent of families. Families headed by single women have a median income of \$49,205 whereas the median income for the single male-headed families is \$60,356. The difference of \$11,151 (18%) is significant, but it is smaller than the gap between all working men and women.

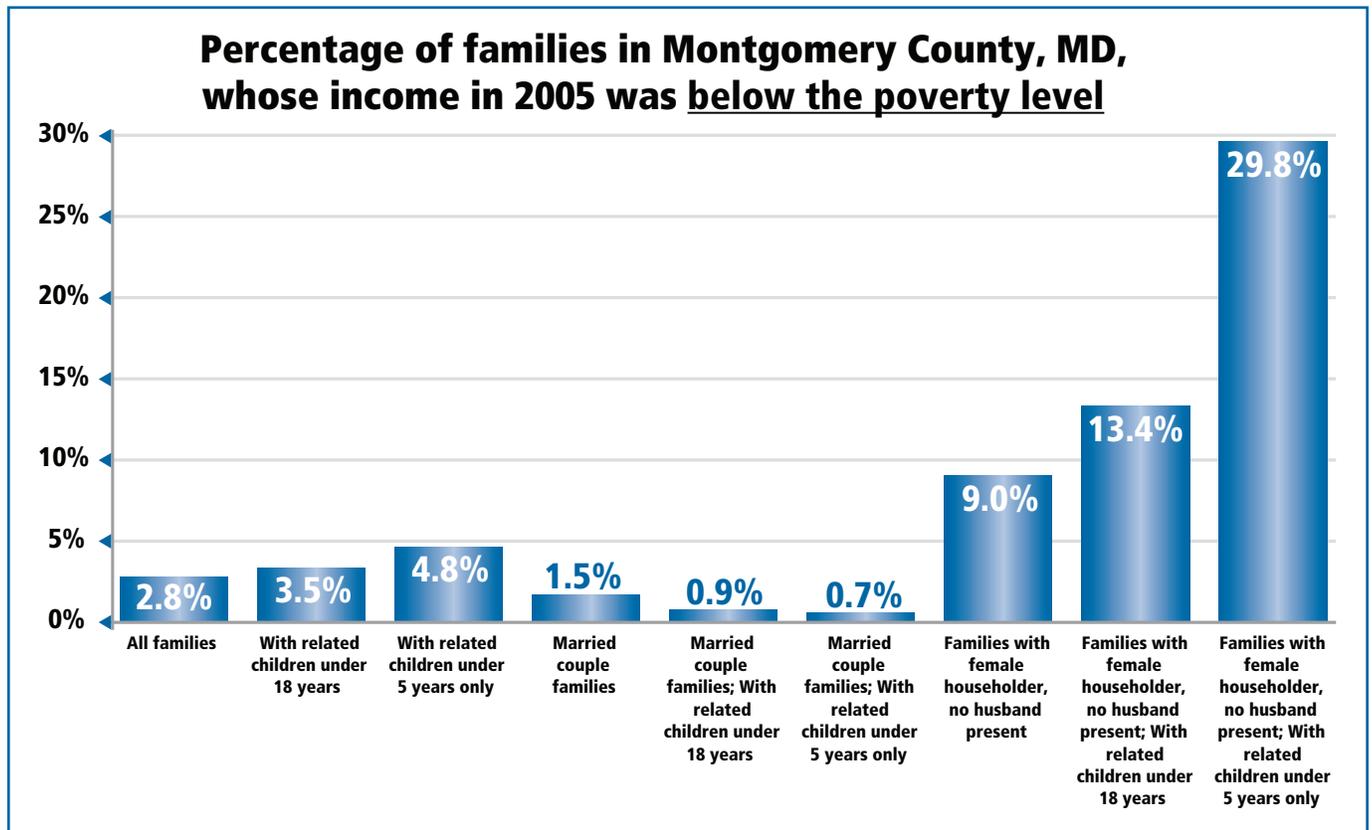
### EMPLOYED MOTHERS

In 2005, there were 238,293 families living in the county. Half (50%) of these families have children under the age of 18. One in five (21%) of these families with children under 18 are headed by single parents. Single female-headed families (with no husband present) constitute 77 percent of all single-headed families with children under 18. Of these women, 86 percent are employed and 5 percent are unemployed. Among the single men who head families with children under 18 and who are in the labor force, all are employed. Nine percent of both male- and female-headed families are not in the labor force.

Of the 29,660 women<sup>8</sup> whose children are under 6 years of age, 60 percent are employed and 5 percent are unemployed. This is a decrease from the 1997 *Status of Women in Montgomery County Report* in which 67 percent of women with children under age six were employed outside the home.

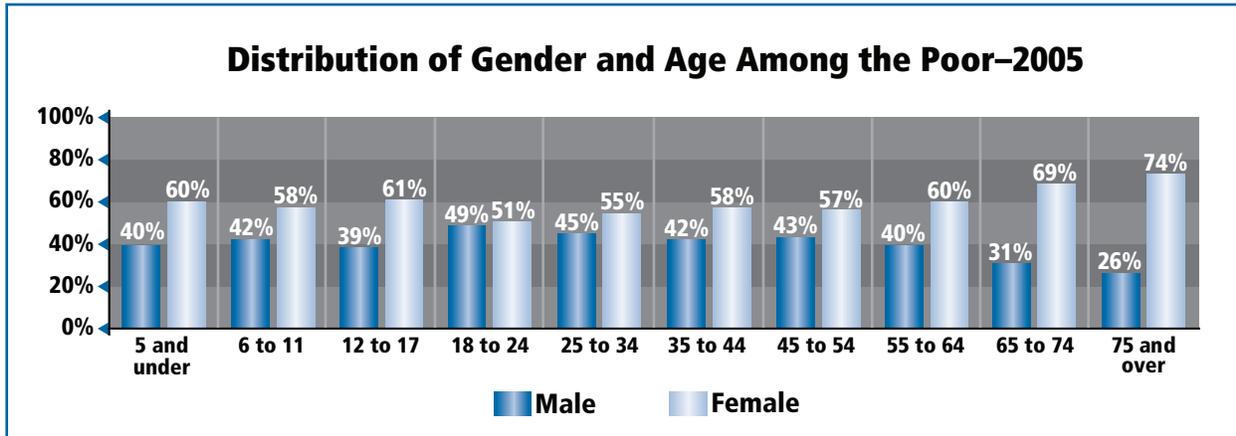
### POVERTY

According to the U.S. Census' 2005 American Community Survey, 5 percent of Montgomery County's population lives below the federally established poverty level. This is nearly double the percentage reported (3%) in the 1997 Report. People between the ages of 18 and 44 represent nearly half (48%) of the poor in the county. Almost an equal proportion

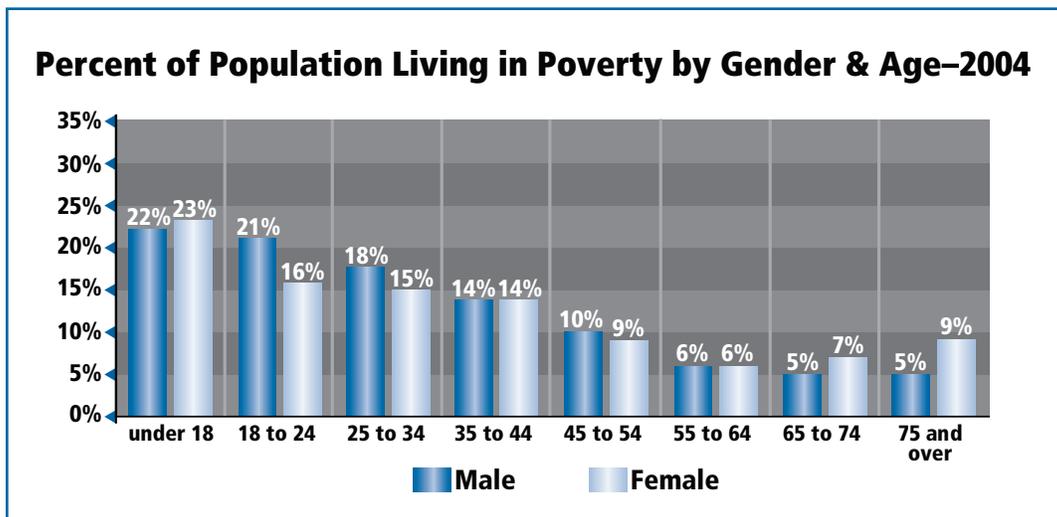


<sup>8</sup> This only includes women between 20 and 64 years of age.

of the female and male populations live in poverty, 5 and 4 percent respectively, yet women represent 59 percent of the poor. Single-headed families represent 21 percent of county families, but they are 57 percent of county families living in poverty. Women head the majority (82%) of these households.



Data from the Montgomery County 2006 Self Sufficiency Standard, published by the Montgomery County Community Action Board, emphasizes the significant risk of poverty faced by single mothers, especially those with young children. Female-headed households with young children (under age five only) represent almost 30 percent of the families living in poverty in Montgomery County. Less than 3 percent of county families have incomes below the federal poverty level. Among the older population, women become the overwhelming majority of the poor. Women represent 57 percent of the population living in poverty between the ages of 45 and 54; 60 percent of those between 55 and 64; 69 percent of those between 65 and 74; and 74 percent of the population 75 and older.



### WOMEN BUSINESS OWNERS

In 2002, there were 31,964 women-owned businesses in Montgomery County. This figure represented firms<sup>9</sup> with paid employees and firms with no paid employees. These women-owned businesses employed 34,571 workers and generated annual payrolls of \$1.1 billion dollars. Montgomery County women-owned businesses produced more than \$4.4 billion dollars in revenue. According to the 2002 Economic Census, female-owned businesses or firms comprised 31 percent of businesses in Maryland. Montgomery County women-owned businesses represented 23 percent (31,964) of women-owned business in the state and 7 percent of Maryland businesses.

<sup>9</sup> The Census defines a firm or company as a business consisting of one or more domestic establishments that the reporting firm specified under its ownership or control at the end of 2002.

## Key Findings

- Sixty-five percent of county women participate in the labor force, with African-American women's participation rate the highest, at 71 percent.
- The average income of county women continues to be two-thirds that of men.
- Eighty-two percent of single-headed households are headed by women.
- Single female-headed households, which are 15 percent of county families, represent 47 percent of families living in poverty.
- For single females with children under age five, the risk of poverty is even greater. Nearly 30 percent of these families have incomes below the federal poverty level, compared to less than 3 percent of all families in the county.
- Montgomery County women-owned businesses represent 23 percent (31,964) of women-owned business in the state. These businesses employ 34,571 workers, generate annual payrolls of \$1.1 billion, and generate over \$4.4 billion in revenue.
- Women represent the vast majority (73%) of the office and administrative support occupations. Nineteen percent of women who reported an occupation hold a position in this category. Seven percent of men work in office and administrative support positions.

## Recommendations

- ❖ The CFW recommends the continuance of the Maryland Equal Pay Commission and implementation of its 2006 recommendations, including further research and county-based data collection.
- ❖ The CFW recommends that the Montgomery County Office of Economic Development, the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce and the Alliance for Workplace Excellence continue to work in collaboration to develop incentives that encourage employers in Montgomery County to adopt more family friendly labor practices. (Examples include: flexible schedules, dependent care benefits, telecommuting, paid sick leave, paid sick leave for dependent care, health insurance coverage, and retirement plans.)
- ❖ Given the significant relationship between single female parenthood and poverty, the CFW recommends that a multidisciplinary task force be established with representatives from relevant service providers, advocacy organizations and the public sector, to study the causes of this relationship, evaluate how well current programs identify and address needs, and identify effective methods of intervention.

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# Women and Education

In Montgomery County, girls' high school graduation rates are equal to that of boys, but fewer women earn their college diplomas. Girls outperform boys in school grades but still lag behind them on SAT scores, despite performing better on the new writing section. Women make up the vast majority of public school teachers and now comprise 60 percent of the public school principals. However, 67 percent of all women principals are in the elementary schools while 71 percent of all male principals are in the high schools. Girls also lag significantly in their enrollment in information technology courses in high school and at Montgomery College. The women faculty at Montgomery College earn almost \$3000 less in average salary than the male faculty.

## LEVEL OF EDUCATION

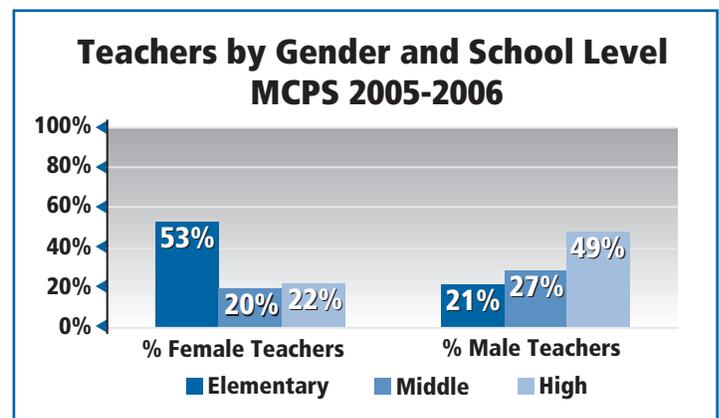
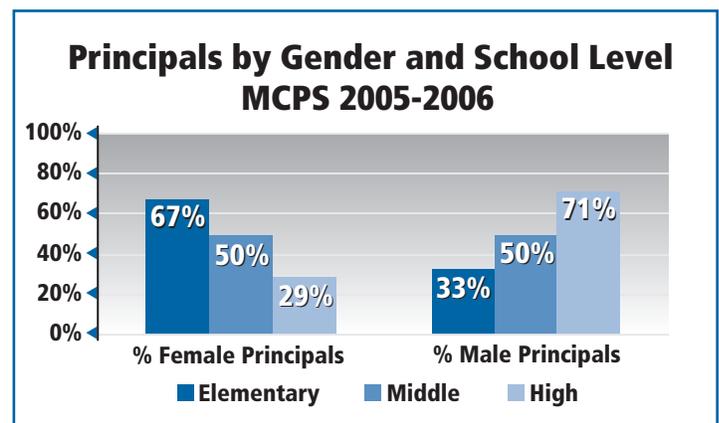
The 2005 American Community Survey shows that of the female and male population 25 years and older in Montgomery County, 9 and 8 percent respectively have not graduated from high school. Women and men are almost equal in their high school graduation rates, but fewer women than men have earned a bachelor's degree. Of county women 25 years and older, 52 percent have a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 61 percent of men. This does, however, represent an 8 percent increase for women since the 1997 Report.

## WOMEN WORKING IN EDUCATION- MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Women are six (75%) of the eight members of the Montgomery County Board of Education, representing the overwhelming majority. During the 2005-2006 school year, the Montgomery County Public School (MCPS) System had 15,842 employees; 78 percent were women. Women occupy 79 percent of the professional positions (administrators, supervisors and teachers) and 75 percent of the supportive service positions (instructional/administrative support and building maintenance).

For the 2005-2006 school year, there were 203 principals in the system. Sixty percent were women. The highest concentration of women principals is in elementary schools. Less than 30 percent of the high school principals were women, a noticeable disproportion as compared to the elementary (67%) and middle schools (50%). This trend was also evident in the 1997 Status of Women in Montgomery County Report with little change over the last ten years.

A similar discrepancy is apparent between teacher gender and school level. Fifty-three percent of female teachers are at the elementary school level, 20 percent at the middle school level and 22 percent at the high school level. A significant drop is apparent in the upper school levels. The inverse trend is seen in the male teachers with nearly half (49%) of the male teachers at the high school level, 27 percent in middle school and 21 percent in elementary school levels. In the elementary schools, women are 91 percent of the faculty. In the middle schools, women are 74 percent of the faculty and at the high school level, women are 64 percent of the faculty.



In April of 2006, Montgomery County Public School teacher Ms. Kimberly Oliver, was named the 2006 National Teacher of the Year. She is the first Maryland teacher to receive this prestigious award for her extraordinary performance as an elementary school teacher.

### ***Race and Gender***

Montgomery County Public Schools data reveal that 58 percent of the 2005-2006 MCPS student body was classified as a racial minority (23% African-American, 20% Hispanic, 15% Asian, and less than 1% American Indian). For the same year, only 20 percent of the faculty was classified as a racial minority (12% African-American, 4% Hispanic, 4% Asian and less than 1% American Indian). Although African-American students made up 23 percent of the students in the system, only 12 percent of all teachers and 12 percent of female teachers are African-American. This was a slight increase since the 1997 Report in which African-American females represented 10 percent of the female faculty. MCPS 2005-2006 data show that 79 percent of the female teachers were white and the remaining 9 percent consisted of Hispanic, Asian, and American Indian women. The statistics are similar for the male faculty.

### ***School Names***

The names of schools in Montgomery County send a message to both the students and the community about the stature and prestige associated with the individuals for whom they are named. A review of the schools listed on the MCPS website found a gender-based disparity in the naming of our public schools. Not only are there far more schools named for men, but when the school board has named a school for a woman, even a woman of extraordinary and internationally recognized accomplishment, it is, with only one exception, an elementary school. In Montgomery County Public Schools, there are at least 11 high schools named after men (this does not include those named after the area in which they are located which is also often named for a man). Not one of the county's 26 high schools is named for a woman. Only one of the 38 public middle schools bears a woman's name; 14 are named for men. Of the county's 129 public elementary schools, nine are named for men and six for women. Of the 41 schools bearing an individual's name, only seven of those are named in honor of a woman, and all but one of those are elementary schools.

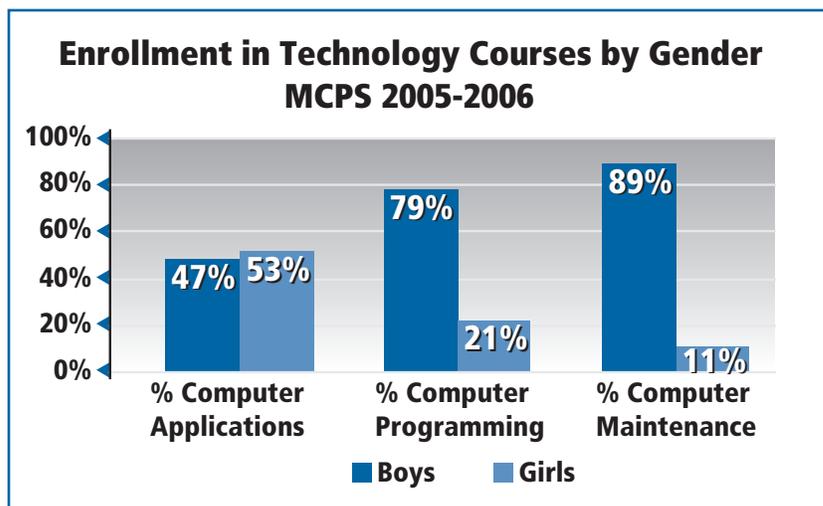
## WOMEN AND GIRLS IN TECHNOLOGY

### ***Montgomery County Public Schools***

Course enrollment data for the 2005-2006 MCPS school year indicate that girls were significantly under-represented in information technology classes. Technology courses offered at the high school level, including Computer Programming and Website Development, had an average female enrollment of 41 percent. Girls represented 53 percent of the students in computer application courses, but 21 percent of students in programming courses, 31 percent of students in website development courses and 11 percent of

students in computer maintenance courses. Of the 16 computer maintenance courses, there were nine classes with only boys enrolled. Of the 64 students placed in high school technology-related internships, all were boys.

The under-representation of girls in technology courses at the high school level is of longstanding concern to MCPS administrators and the Montgomery County Commission for Women. As a result, in 2005, MCPS established a task force to examine the issue and develop a strategic plan to address the lack of girls in information technology courses in the public school system. The Commission for Women served as a member of the task force.



From 1999 until the establishment of the MCPS task force in 2005, the Montgomery County Commission for Women made the issue of girls in technology one of its priorities, advocating girls' participation in information technology courses. Its advocacy included supporting county and state efforts that address the lack of girls preparing for careers in information technology and establishing a partnership with Montgomery College to offer special summer information technology camps for girls. Designed for girls in grades six to nine, the camps offer both programming and web design instruction. Over the past eight years (1999-2006), the camp has served 431 girls and introduced them to the world of information technology. The Commission continues to offer scholarships for the technology summer camps and advocate for girls' participation in technology.

### ***Montgomery College***

Montgomery College offers a wide variety of information technology majors, including everything from Graphic Design to Network Engineering. For the purpose of this report examining women's participation, we have identified 34 such majors directly relating to computer science, computer programming, and computer applications<sup>10</sup>.

In the Fall 2005, there were 1117 students who declared one of these majors. Among those students, 231 (31%) are women. Discounting the 232 students majoring in Computer Applications, only 26 percent of the students in the remaining 25 majors were women.

### **GIRLS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE**

On the Maryland School Assessment Proficiency Tests administered by MCPS for grades three through eight, girls outperformed boys by a few points in both math and reading in the 2004-2005 school year. In reading, girls outperformed boys by an average of six points, while in math the margin was slightly lower, with an average difference of two points. (There was an exception in fifth grade where girls scored below boys in math by two points. This year was not calculated in the average.) However, by the time they reach high school the trend has changed.

### ***SAT (Scholastic Assessment Test)***

Eighty percent of the girls in the MCPS graduating Class of 2005 took the SAT, higher than the 74 percent participation rate for their male counterparts. MCPS reports that Hispanic and African-American females, historically under-represented populations, increased their participation rate that year.

For the Class of 2005, the female mean combined SAT score was 1084 and the male mean combined score was 1121, a 37 point difference. The previous four years showed a similar relationship between female and male combined scores (girls scored an average of 33 points lower than boys). For the Class of 2005, there was little difference between the male and female verbal scores (average scores of 543 and 540 respectively). However, females on average scored 34 points below males in math. The average female math score was 544; the average male math score was 578. The 1997 Report noted similar gaps in SAT scores.

During the 2004-2005 school year and for the past 20 years, Montgomery County Public Schools students, both male and female, have outperformed their national and state counterparts on the SAT. However, between 2004 and 2005 MCPS girls' performance on the SAT actually dropped by four points, a statistically significant decrease, while boys' scores improved by one point. Among the female SAT test takers, both white and Hispanic females showed statistically significant increases in their scores, with an increase of 11 and six points respectively in this time. White males had a similar increase in their scores while Hispanic males' scores dropped by nine points.

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<sup>10</sup> Information technology majors examined include those in Computer Operator, Computer Programming, Computer Science, Computer Applications, A+ Microcomputer Certification, Network Engineering and Web Careers.

## ***New SAT***

In March of 2005 the new SAT was implemented. There are three main differences between the old and new SAT. The new SAT has added a writing section, worth the same 800 points as each of the existing verbal and math sections. The new SAT also replaced the old verbal test with a critical reading test that added shorter reading passages and eliminated the analogies. The new math section was expanded to include Algebra 2 and eliminated quantitative comparisons. The new SAT has a total possible score of 2400.

The Class of 2006 was the first graduating class to take the new SAT. MCPS students continue to outperform the state and national averages. The Class of 2006 mean combined score of 1634 is significantly higher than the mean combined scores for Maryland (1511) and the country (1518). Similar to the Class of 2005, girls from the Class of 2006 participated at a higher rate than boys in the new SAT. Seventy-eight percent of girls took the new SAT compared to 73 percent of boys. The female mean combined score of 1621 was 27 points lower than the male mean combined score of 1648. African-American girls were the only racial/ethnic group with a combined mean score higher than their male counterpart - 21 points higher. The average score for girls in each racial/ethnic group was higher than for boys on the new writing section, but this was not enough to bring their total scores up to the same level as the boys.

## ***Advanced Placement (AP)/International Baccalaureate (IB)***

During the 2004-2005 school year, of the 66 percent of MCPS students enrolled in at least one AP course, 49 percent were female. Data for the same year show 72 percent of girls were enrolled in an AP course, compared to a 61 percent enrollment rate for boys. Since the 2000-01 school year, the enrollment of both female and male students in AP courses has increased 9 percent. Students enrolled in AP courses do not necessarily take the AP exams. In 2004-2005, 56 percent of the students who took at least one AP exam were female. While the participation among both males and females taking the AP exams has increased, the number of girls has increased at a greater rate than boys. Since the 2000-2001 school year, girls have increased participation by 10 percent while boys have increased by 7 percent.

While girls participate at a greater rate than boys in taking the AP exams, they do not outperform boys. In fact, for the 2004-2005 school year, 81 percent of boys scored a 3 or higher on at least one AP exam compared to 77 percent of girls who did. (Students must score at least a 3 in order to qualify for college credit or advanced placement in college courses.) For the past five school years, this difference has remained the same.

Another MCPS advanced education curriculum program is the International Baccalaureate (IB) program. This series of college-level liberal arts courses and exams are offered in five MCPS high schools. Among the 646 IB exam takers in 2004-2005, 58 percent were female.

## **WORKING WOMEN IN EDUCATION - MONTGOMERY COLLEGE**

In 1999, Dr. Charlene Nunley became Montgomery College's first woman President – 53 years after it opened its doors in 1946. Of the 16 community college presidents in Maryland, seven are women. Dr. Nunley retired in 2006 after seven years of widely acclaimed achievement.

Across all three campuses, the College employs 2,382 people; 56 percent are women (compared to 78% at MCPS). Women make up 66 percent of the professional positions and half of the administrators. Nine of the 14 college deans are women, a 16 percent increase since the 1997 report. Women continue to make up nearly half (46%) of the Academic Department Chairs. Women full-time faculty, however, continue to earn less than their male counterparts. The average male full-time faculty salary for the 2005-2006 school year was \$68,363, while women earned an average of \$2,963 (4%) less at \$65,400. The salary gap has not changed significantly since the 1997 report.

## Key Findings

- Fifty-two percent of county women 25 years and older hold a bachelor's degree or higher, an 8 percent increase since the 1997 Report.
- Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) students continue to outperform the state and national averages on the SAT, but girls continue to receive lower scores than boys.
- Of the 16 MCPS computer maintenance courses, there are nine classes with only boys enrolled. MCPS placed 64 high school students in technology-related internships and all were boys.
- While women are now 60 percent of all principals in MCPS, they are distributed unevenly among the school levels. Less than 30 percent of the MCPS high school principals are women, but 67 percent of elementary school principals and 50 percent of middle school principals are women.
- Of the 41 county public schools bearing an individual's name, only seven are named in honor of a woman, and all but one of those are elementary schools.
- Nine of the 14 Montgomery College deans are women, a 16 percent increase since the 1997 report. However, women faculty members earn nearly \$3,000 less in annual income than male faculty.

## Recommendations

- ❖ The CFW recommends the implementation of the recommendations of the August 24, 2006 report of the MCPS Girls in Information Technology Task Force, and the additional recommendations submitted by the CFW to MCPS, to include:
  - Communicate immediately and emphatically to MCPS faculty the priority to be placed on this issue, and insist on educational equity for all students, with particular attention to the lack of enrollment of girls, African-American and Hispanic students in the IT classroom.
  - Begin work immediately on the development of an IT unit/module or course for every student in every grade, K-12, as recommended by the Task Force. It is the only way to ensure that every student has at least a base level of exposure to, access to, and competence in Information Technology. Requiring IT as part of the core curriculum in every grade will eliminate a huge part of the cultural barrier keeping most girls and many students of color out of the IT classroom.
  - Begin work immediately on the Task Force's recommendation to develop comprehensive pathway programs that would integrate core academic classes with technology classes in multi-year programs.
- ❖ The CFW recommends that MCPS assess why girls' SAT scores are lower than boys' and develop measures to eliminate the gender gap.
- ❖ At the next opportunity to name a high school, the CFW recommends that the Board of Education select a deserving woman. The CFW maintains an archive of the biographies of 30 women of historical significance to Montgomery County and would recommend this as a starting point for the selection of such women. The Montgomery County Women's History Archives may be found at [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cfw](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cfw).

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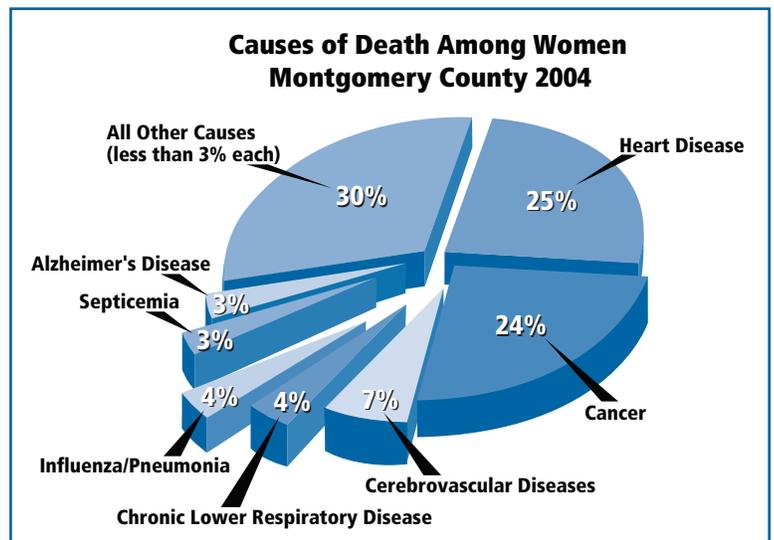
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# Women and Health

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for county women regardless of race or ethnicity. Nonetheless, African-American, white and Latina women face different health issues. White women are more likely to develop breast cancer but black women are more likely to die from this disease. African-American and Latina women are at greater risk of contracting HIV/AIDS and the rate of teen pregnancy among these two populations is higher than that of women of other races. In Montgomery County, 16 of 1,000 babies born to African-American women die before their first birthday. This proportion is higher than the national rate of 14 deaths per 1,000 African-American babies. Women of color, more often than white women, must confront these serious health issues with limited access to health care and without the protection of health insurance.

## CAUSES OF DEATH

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women in Montgomery County and across the nation. In 2004, according to the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the top five causes of death for county women were: 1) heart disease (includes heart attack); 2) malignant neoplasm (cancer); 3) cerebrovascular diseases (includes stroke); 4) chronic lower respiratory diseases (includes chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and emphysema); and 5) influenza and pneumonia. County men and women share the top three causes of death and

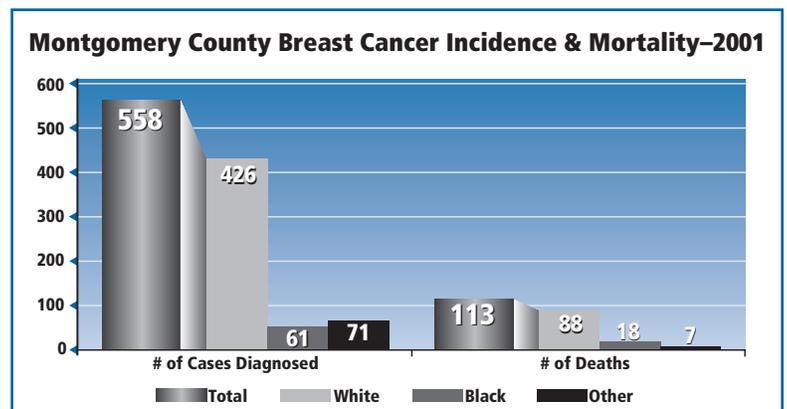


far fewer men die from chronic respiratory diseases than women. Instead, women are half as likely to die from accidents as men, with 56 female deaths versus 111 male accident related deaths in 2004.

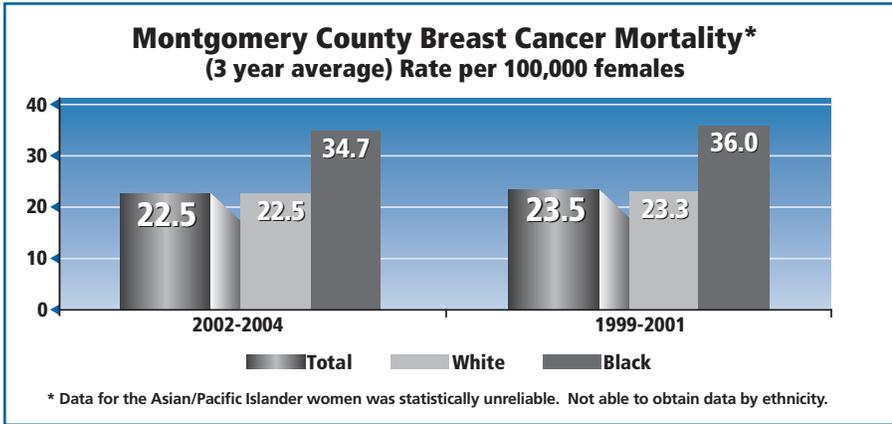
There is also a significant gender disparity in the numbers of deaths as a result of Alzheimer's and suicide. The number of women who die from Alzheimer's disease is more than triple the number of men. In 2004, 101 female and 27 male deaths were attributed to Alzheimer's disease. The inverse is true for suicide -- the number of men who died by suicide is more than triple the number of women. In 2004, 14 women died by suicide while 45 men died by suicide in Montgomery County.

## CANCER OF THE BREAST AND FEMALE REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM

In Montgomery County in 2001, 113 women died of breast cancer. Among the 24 counties in Maryland, Montgomery County ranked 18<sup>th</sup> in the rate of breast cancer incidence. The Maryland Cancer Registry reported that in 2001, of every 100,000 Montgomery County women, 114 were diagnosed with breast cancer.



Breast cancer affects white women at a higher rate than women of other races. However, black women are more likely to die from this disease. In 2001, white women had a breast cancer incidence rate of 112 per 100,000, and 95 of every 100,000 black women were diagnosed with breast cancer. Of the 113 breast cancer deaths that same year, 88 (78%) were white women, reflecting the larger percentage they represent of the female population.



An average of 23 per 100,000 females in the county died of breast cancer between 2002 and 2004. Over the same time period, the mortality rate for white women was equal to the county average for women (22.5) while black women had a higher average of 34.7 deaths per 100,000.

In 2005, 63 women died of cervical, uterine or ovarian cancer. In 2001, there were 36 women in the county

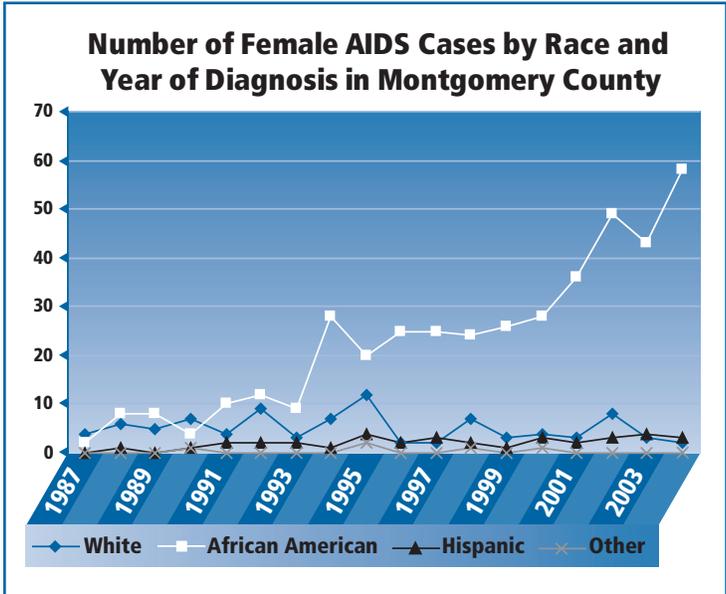
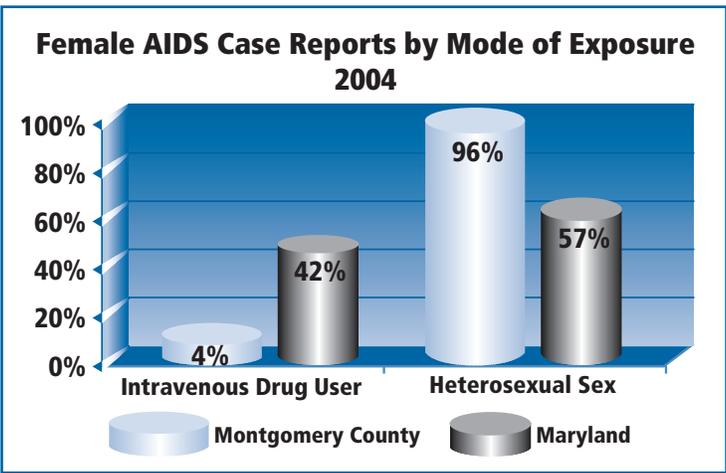
diagnosed with cervical cancer. That same year, nine women died of this disease. The cervical cancer incidence rate for the county is 7.1 per 100,000 women, about the same as the state (7.0) and slightly lower than the national rate (7.9).

### HIV/AIDS AND SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES

At the end of 2005, Montgomery County represented 17 percent of the state population. Eight percent (2,253) of the Marylanders living with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) or Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) reside in Montgomery County. According to Montgomery County health officials, in 2003, AIDS was the seventh leading cause of death in Montgomery County and disproportionately affected the African-American community.

In 2004, 201 county residents were diagnosed with HIV and 137 were diagnosed with AIDS. These county cases represent 9 percent of the HIV state incidence total and 10 percent of the AIDS state total. Of the 201 individuals diagnosed with HIV, 89 were women. In every year since 1991, the number of black women diagnosed with AIDS has increased considerably while the number has stayed steady and far lower for women of other races. By 2004, the difference was dramatic with 55 black women diagnosed with AIDS compared to fewer than 10 for all other races combined.

The county's HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Diseases Program estimates that close to half (50%) of its clients are female. Serving low-income county residents, the program offers clinical and educational services to this community. Almost all (96%) Montgomery County women with HIV contracted the virus through heterosexual contact. This differs sharply from women elsewhere in the state. Only 4 percent of Montgomery County women contracted the disease through intravenous drug use, while 42 percent of Maryland women with HIV contracted the disease this way.



The state reports that in 2005, Montgomery County’s chlamydia incidence rate was 90.2 per 100,000 population. This is below the state incidence rate of 326.9. The national Office on Women’s Health reports that the rate for county women in 2003 was 175.5 per 100,000 women, below the rate for state (486) and national (463.6) women.

No county data was located on the incidence of Human Papilloma Virus (HPV); however the relationship between HPV and the risk of cervical cancer is well documented in medical literature. A vaccine for HPV has been developed and according to information from county health officials, the private sector cost is estimated at \$120 per dose (three doses needed).

**OSTEOPOROSIS**

According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), osteoporosis is a “major public health threat” to millions of Americans. NIH lists gender as a major risk factor for developing osteoporosis. Caucasian and Asian women are at a higher risk of developing osteoporosis than women of other races. Of the 10 million Americans with osteoporosis, 8 million (80%) are women.

While no county data on osteoporosis is available, in 2002 approximately 750,800 Maryland residents were living with a diagnosis of osteoporosis or low bone mass. By 2010 this number is expected to grow 19 percent to 891,600. Osteoporosis has been identified as one of the leading causes of hip fractures. The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene reports that 73 percent of the 2004 Montgomery County hospital discharges for hip fractures were women.

**MENTAL HEALTH**

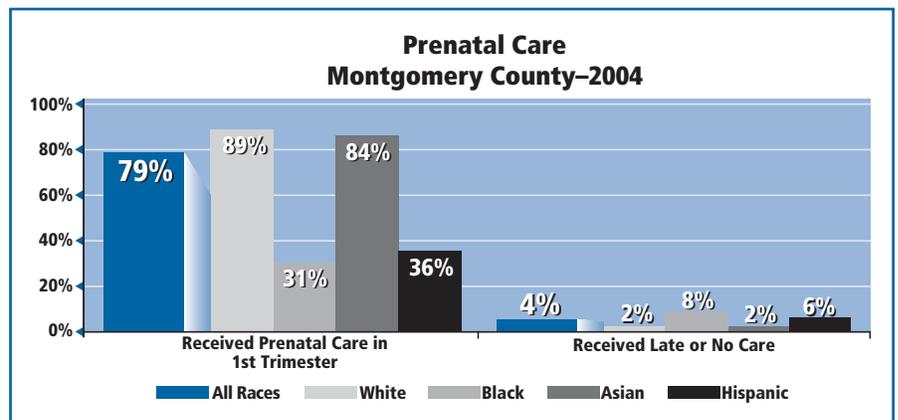
According to the Census Bureau, of the non-institutionalized county population ages five and older, 32,126 people reported having a mental disability. Women represent 51 percent of these individuals.

According to the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, in Fiscal Year 2006 (July 1, 2005 – June 30, 2006), 3,342 county women were in treatment in the Public Mental Health System, representing 48 percent of those (6,964) treated in the system.

**REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH**

***Prenatal Care***

In 2004, 79 percent of the pregnant women in the county sought prenatal care during their first trimester and 4 percent received late (third trimester) or no prenatal care. Asian/Pacific Islander and white women both have higher rates of prenatal care during the first trimester, 84 and 89 percent



respectively, compared to the county average and women of other races. Thirty-six percent of Hispanic women and 31 percent of black women did not receive prenatal care during their first three months of pregnancy.

***Maternity***

Births to unmarried mothers in the county have increased 4 percent since 1993. Births to teen mothers have slightly decreased. Births to unmarried mothers and teen motherhood are more prevalent among women of color. In 1994, white women represented half of the unmarried mothers in the county. Ten years later, the percentage of unmarried mothers who were white had dramatically decreased. White women now represent 16 percent of all unmarried women giving birth in the county.

In 2004 there were 13,546 births in Montgomery County. Approximately 531 (4%) were born to teen mothers, a decrease of almost 1 percent since 1994. Unmarried mothers represented 22 percent of women who gave birth in 2004. Hispanic women have the highest prevalence of teen and single motherhood; 10 percent of Hispanic births are to teen

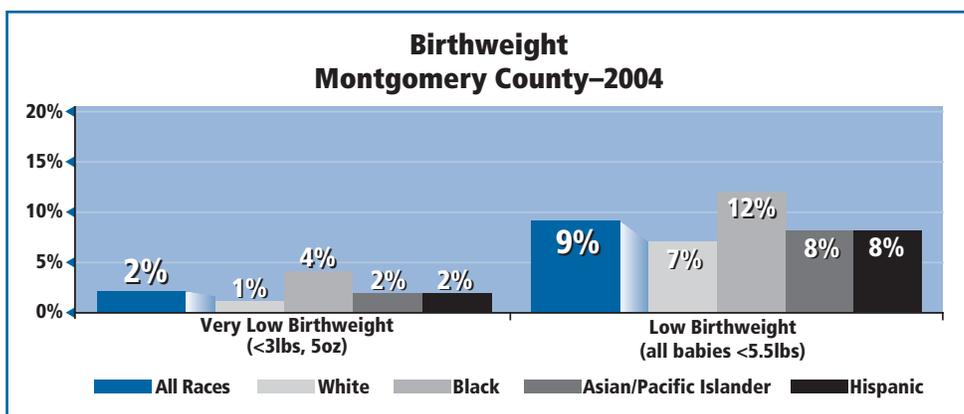
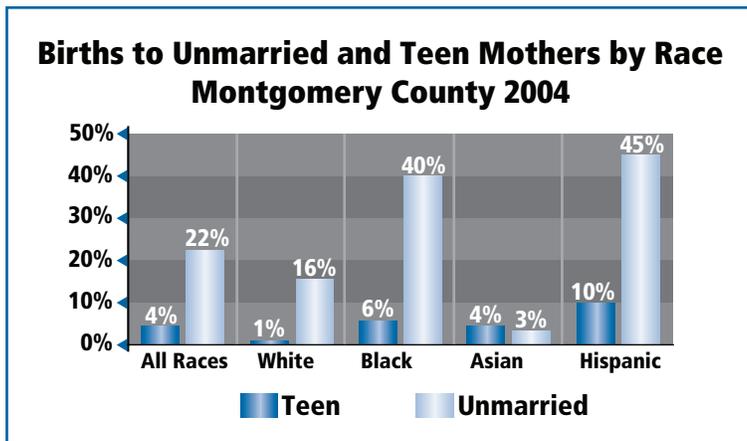
mothers and 45 percent are to unmarried mothers. Black women rank second with 6 percent of births born to teens and 40 percent of births born to unmarried women. Hispanic and black teens are ten times more likely to give birth than white and Asian teens. Likewise, the probability of not being married at the time of giving birth for Hispanic and black women is double that of white women and nearly quadruple that of Asian women.

### ***Birth weight and Infant Mortality***

According to the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (MDHMH), “infants weighing less than 5 lbs. 5oz. (low birthweight, LBW) and particularly those under 3 lbs. 5oz. (very low birthweight, VLBW) contribute disproportionately to cases of fetal and infant death.” The MDHMH also notes that infants born at such low birthweights face myriad long-term health problems that impact development and productivity.

Nine percent of infants born in Montgomery County in 2004 were born at LBW or VLBW, and 12 percent of infants born to black women were classified as LBW or VLBW. Black infants were 20 percent of the children born in Montgomery County in 2004, but they were 29 percent of those classified as LBW or VLBW. By contrast, white infants were 44 percent of the children born in the county but they were 38 percent of those classified as LBW or VLBW.

The infant mortality rate for black babies is more than triple that for other races and more than double that for the county. For every 1,000 births in the black community, approximately 16 babies die before their first birthday, more than double the incidence rate for the county (seven out of 1,000).



### **HEALTH INSURANCE<sup>11</sup>**

According to the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, over 54,000 people, or 8 percent of the county population over 18 years old, had no health insurance coverage at the end of 2004. This proportion applied almost equally to men and women but not to people of color. Twenty percent of Hispanic women have no health insurance. Seventeen percent of black women and 10 percent of women of other races are uninsured while only 5 percent of white women are uninsured.

<sup>11</sup> Data pertaining to health insurance coverage in the county is reported by the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services and is based on a four year average covering the period from 2001 to 2004.

## Key Findings

- Heart disease is the leading cause of death for women in Montgomery County.
- More than 27,000 women over 18 years of age in the county had no health insurance coverage at the end of 2004.
- Hispanic and black women have the highest prevalence of single motherhood in the county; 45 percent of Hispanic births and 40 percent of black births are to unmarried mothers.
- Hispanic and black teens are ten times more likely to give birth than white or Asian teens.
- Black women were diagnosed with AIDS at a far greater rate than women of any other race/ethnicity. In fact, in 2004 black women were diagnosed with AIDS at a rate six times that of all other women combined.
- White women are at greater risk of developing breast cancer. Black women are more likely to die from this disease.
- The infant mortality rate for black babies is more than triple that for other races and more than double that for the county as a whole.
- Women die from Alzheimer's disease at triple the rate of men.

## Recommendations

- ❖ The CFW recommends that Montgomery County increase efforts to educate the public on the risks of heart disease for women and increase outreach to women.
- ❖ Lack of equitable access to quality and affordable health care services is almost certainly linked to a number of the key findings, including breast cancer mortality, infant mortality, low birth weight infants, and reproductive health care. The CFW urges the Maryland General Assembly to immediately pass health care reform legislation to cover more of the uninsured and to swiftly work toward passage of legislation that would provide health insurance to everyone in the state.
- ❖ The CFW recommends that Montgomery County strengthen public education programs on the dangers of unprotected sex, especially targeting teens.
- ❖ The CFW urges strengthening collaborative efforts between appropriate county agencies and community organizations to ensure that adequate resources are available to provide high quality, comprehensive and effective AIDS prevention, diagnosis, and treatment programs to county residents.
- ❖ Inoculation for the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) should be strongly encouraged and made available to every girl in the county, regardless of ability to pay.

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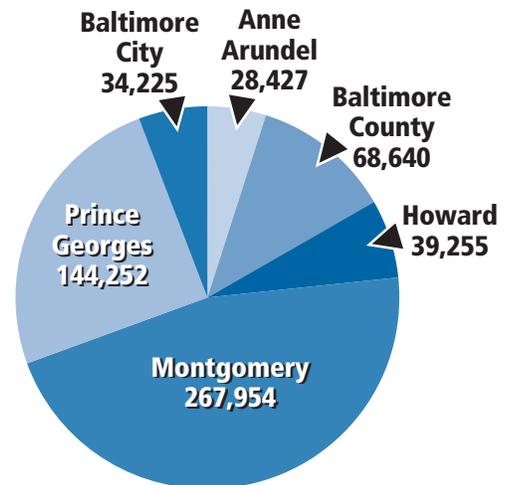
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# Women and Immigration

In the decade between 1990 and the year 2000, the immigrant or foreign born population in the U.S. grew from 19.7 million to over 31.1 million, an increase of more than 50 percent. According to the U.S. Census, in 2005, 12 percent of the United States population was foreign born. Of all the intended destinations for immigrants in the country, the state of Maryland ranks tenth. Twelve percent of Maryland's population is foreign born.

In 2005 in Montgomery County, the percentage of foreign born residents was more than double that of the state. More than half (53%) of the immigrants in the county were women. Immigrant women face similar gender inequities as other women in the county. Immigrant women had the same income gap (34% less than for immigrant men) as county women as a whole. Immigrant women had equal educational attainment levels as immigrant men and were very likely to be employed, but also had a higher risk of poverty.

**Top Six Jurisdictions with the Largest Foreign Born Population—2005**

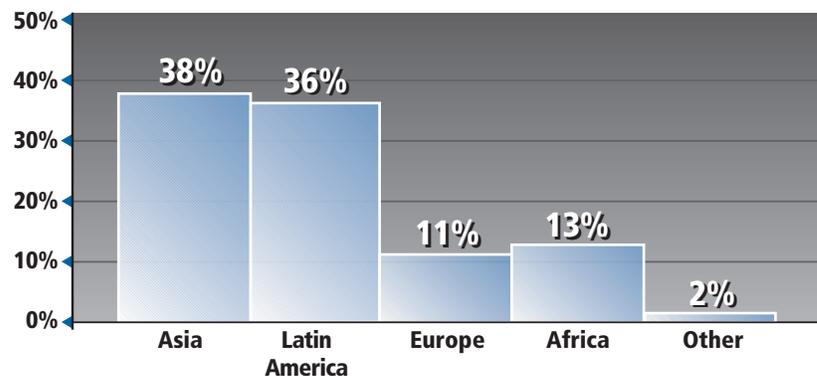


## GENERAL DEMOGRAPHICS

There are more than 267,000 immigrants in Montgomery County, representing 29 percent of the total population, the largest proportion in any county in the state.

The largest immigrant groups hail from Asia and Latin America (38 and 36 percent respectively). African immigrants represent the third largest group (13 percent), followed by European immigrants who represent 11 percent of the foreign born population in the county.

**Place of Birth for Foreign Born Population in Montgomery County—2005**



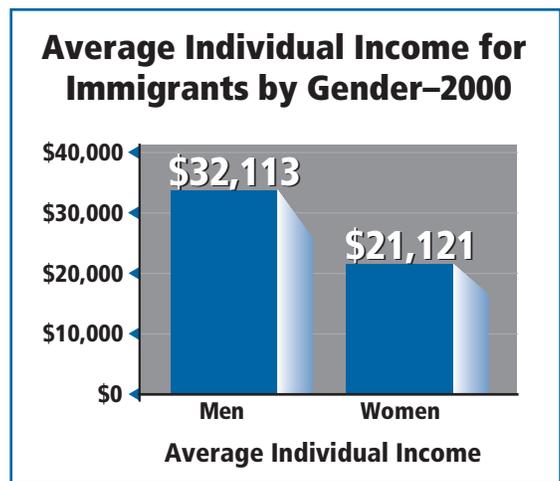
Not surprisingly, 35 percent of Montgomery County residents (five years and older) speak a language other than English at home.

In 2000, Spanish or Spanish Creole ranked as the first language of 40 percent of the immigrant population. Chinese was second, with 10 percent, followed by French and Korean at 6 percent each. The U.S. Census reports that 47 percent of the foreign born population in Montgomery County has difficulty with English.

More than half (53%) of the immigrants in the county are women. Seventy percent of immigrant women are between the ages of 25 and 54. Reflecting the general population's high level of academic achievement in Montgomery County, 49 percent of the immigrant population 25 years and older has a college degree or higher and women make up 50 percent of this group.

The average annual household income for the foreign born population in Montgomery County is \$62,438. The native born population in the county has an average household income of \$77,779, a difference of \$15,341 (20%). Immigrant women’s average individual annual income is \$21,121 while immigrant men earn \$32,113 a year. Among immigrants, women’s average annual earning is \$10,992 (34%) less than men’s.

Compared to the general county population which has a 4 percent poverty rate, 9 percent of the immigrant population lives in poverty. More than half (58%) of these immigrants are women. This is slightly higher than the general population, where women account for 55 percent of the population living in poverty. Still, the majority (69%) of the immigrant population participates in the labor force. Of these, 64 percent are women. Compared to the general population where women represent 48 percent of the labor force, immigrant women make up a larger percentage of the immigrant labor force.



### Key Findings

- There are more than 267,000 immigrants in Montgomery County (29% of the population), the largest proportion in any county in the state. Fifty-eight percent of these immigrants are women.
- Forty-nine percent of the immigrant population 25 years and older have a college or graduate degree. Women make up 50 percent of this group.
- Immigrant women, on average, earn \$10,992 (34%) less per year than immigrant men, a gender-based wage gap similar to that found in the general population.

### Recommendations

- ❖ Montgomery County has the largest population of immigrant women in the state. Because these women make enormous contributions but also face specific problems, the CFW should continue its focus on the needs of immigrant women.
- ❖ During the data collection process, the CFW noted the lack of comprehensive information on the foreign born population. The CFW urges the U.S. Census Bureau to expand data collection on ethnicity and nationality to include data on foreign born individuals in all major categories and at the county level.

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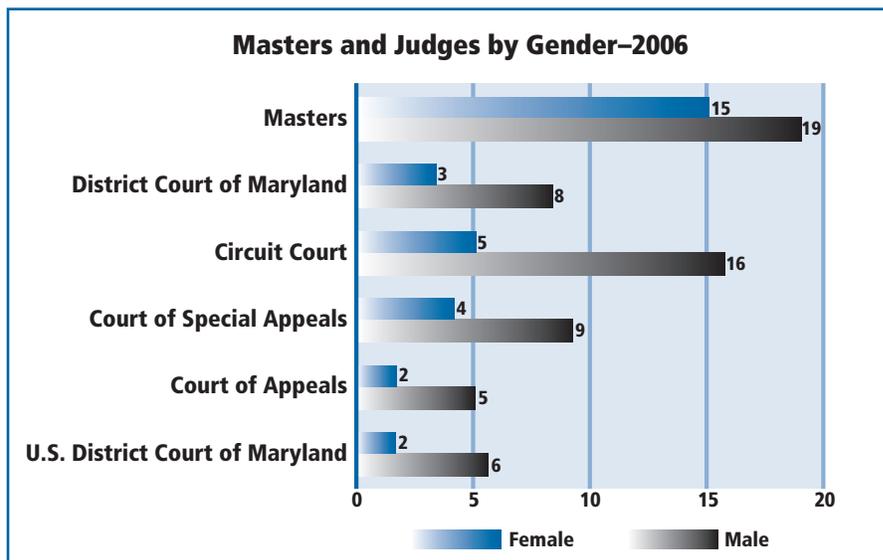
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# Women and the Law

Women are more often the victims of crime than they are the perpetrators. In 2005 in Montgomery County, women accounted for nearly half (45%) of the victims of murder, rape or aggravated assault. In the same year, of the 9,078 individuals arrested in the county, 17 percent were women. Women who appear before either civil or criminal court, as defendants or as plaintiffs, are likely to face a male-dominated judiciary. The number of women masters and judges serving Montgomery County has increased 7 percent since 1996, yet they still represent only 28 percent of the total.

## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

Montgomery County has 65 judges and masters in the family, circuit and district courts and 18 (28%) are women. Since 1996, the number of women masters and judges has increased 7 percent. The Maryland Court of Special Appeals has the highest percentage of female judges with four (out of 13) women judges serving the court. The Montgomery County Circuit Court has the lowest percentage of women judges with 24 percent (five of 21). Over one-third (40%) of the Montgomery County Family Division Masters are women.



More than half of the lawyers on staff at both the County Attorney's Office and the Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office are women. There are 67 attorneys at the Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office and 37 (55%) are women, a significant increase since 1996 when 44 percent of the attorneys were women. The County Attorney's Office has 48 attorneys and 25 (52%) are women.

## VIOLENT CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN

In 2005, 353 Montgomery County women were documented victims of rape, murder or aggravated assault, accounting for nearly half (45%) of the victims of these crimes. Eighteen people were murdered in Montgomery County in 2005 and 4 of the victims were women. At least three of the four women who were murdered knew their assailants.<sup>12</sup>

There is a higher probability that a woman is killed or raped by someone she knows than by a stranger. Of the 165 women who reported rape, 112 (68%) knew their attacker. For 51 of these women, their attacker was their father, husband, boyfriend, ex-boyfriend, friend or other family member. The national Office on Women's Health reports that in 2003 in Montgomery County, the rate of forcible rapes was 31 per 100,000 women. This was well below the state rate of 48 and national rate of 58 per 100,000 women.

The number of reported cases of rape in 2005 was 50 fewer than in 1995. According to the 2003 National Crime Victimization Survey, only one in three rapes and sexual assaults was reported to the police.

### *Pregnancy-Related Homicide*

In 2001, the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene conducted a study on pregnancy-associated mortality in the state. Focusing on deaths between 1993 and 1998, the study investigated 247 pregnancy-associated deaths and concluded that "a pregnant or recently pregnant woman is more likely to be a victim of homicide than to

<sup>12</sup> This does not include one unresolved case. Information about the victim's familiarity with the offender had not been released for this case at the time this report was written.



die of any other cause.” Researchers are collecting more data on this trend and hope to be able to look at county figures in the future.

### *Intimate Partner Violence*

There are two ways in which the county accounts for domestic violence victims: the Uniform Crime Report produced by the Maryland State Police and the Montgomery County Abused Persons Program. According to the state Uniform Crime Report, in 2005 there

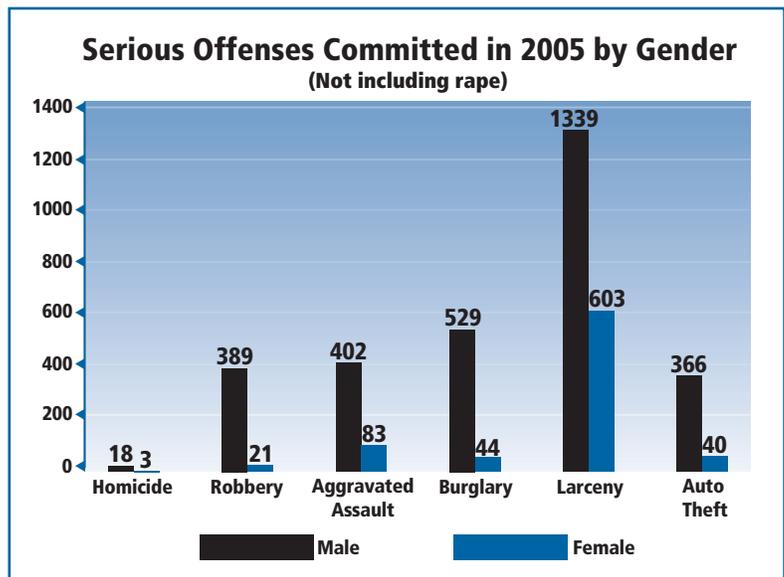
were 1,625 reported victims of domestic violence in Montgomery County. The county’s Abused Persons Program served 1,532 new women victims of domestic violence during FY 2006 (July 1, 2005 – June 30, 2006). These 1,532 women were not necessarily the same victims reported by the Maryland State Police.

The U.S. Department of Justice estimates that 25 percent of domestic violence incidents are reported to police officials. Accordingly, 75 percent of the victims of domestic violence are not reflected in the judicial system records.

An indicator of domestic violence is the existence of an order of protection. The Montgomery County Sheriff’s Office reports that there were 4,066 petitions for temporary protective orders filed in 2005 and estimates that 85 percent were filed by women. The number of petitions filed has nearly doubled since 1994 when there were 2,101.

### CRIMES COMMITTED BY WOMEN

While the type of crimes most frequently committed are similar for both men and women, far fewer women than men are charged with these crimes. In 2005, 9,078 people were arrested in Montgomery County; 17 percent were women. These numbers reflect the number of people arrested, not necessarily those convicted. Of the 1,515 women who were arrested, 795 (52%) were arrested for serious offenses. Serious offenses, as classified by the Montgomery County Department of Police, include: homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny and auto theft, and account for 43 percent of the total arrests in the county. Women were most often arrested for larceny, with 603 arrests. Women comprise 17 percent of the assailants in aggravated assault charges. Thirty-one percent of the victims of aggravated assault are women.



### JUVENILE OFFENSES

The majority of county youth brought in to the juvenile justice system are boys. The Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) reports that in Fiscal Year 2006 (July 1, 2005 – June 30, 2006) 1,551 county youth received behavioral health screens; 447 (31%) were girls.

The Montgomery County Police Department Family Crimes Division referred 782 youth for diversion services, in which first time offenders and minor second offenders are eligible to voluntarily agree to receive behavioral health assessment and complete recommended services. Of the 782 youth referred for diversion services, 305 (39%) were girls.

## INCARCERATED WOMEN

Between August 2005 and June 2006, the Montgomery County Correctional Facility's average daily population (ADP) was 694. Of these inmates, 57 (8%) were women. The Montgomery County Detention Center, for short term incarcerations, had an ADP of 61 during FY 2006. Approximately 10 inmates (6%) were women.

### **Key Findings**

- Women are far more often killed or raped by someone they know than by a stranger.
- In 2005, 17 percent of the assailants in aggravated assault charges were women, yet women represent 31 percent of the aggravated assault victims.
- Of the 4,066 petitions for temporary protective orders filed in 2005, an estimated 85 percent were filed by women. The number of petitions filed has nearly doubled since 1994 (2,101).
- Females were only 17 percent of county adults arrested in 2005. Girls represent more than 30 percent of the youth who become involved in the Juvenile Justice System.
- The number of women masters and judges serving Montgomery County has increased 7 percent since 1996, yet they still represent only 28 percent of the total.

### **Recommendations**

- ❖ The CFW urges the Governor of Maryland to make a concerted effort to increase the number of women serving on the bench.
- ❖ The CFW recommends that MCPS increase its education and prevention efforts addressing the issue of relationship violence, specifically targeting both adolescent boys and girls.
- ❖ The county has recently established a Domestic Violence Coordinating Council (DVCC) charged with coordinating the county's services to victims of domestic violence and intimate partner violence. The CFW encourages the DVCC to add the key findings of the Women and Health chapter to its agenda, including an examination of the need to increase coordination of sexual and domestic violence prevention and intervention efforts, and the recent state findings of a relationship between homicide and pregnancy.

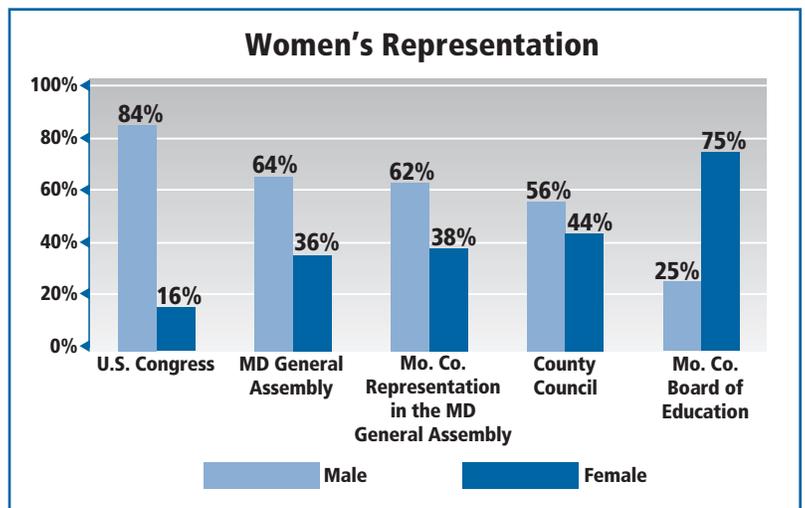
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# Women and Politics

In 2005 and 2006, Maryland had the highest percentage of women serving in the state legislature of any other state in the nation. Since the release of the 1997 Report, the number of women in the Maryland legislature had increased by 6 percent, from 56 (30%) to 67 (36%) women of the 188 members of the Maryland General Assembly. However, the 2006 elections reduced the number of women in the state legislature by almost 10 percent; 62 women now occupy state seats. As a result, Maryland dropped from first to sixth in the ranking of states with the highest percentage of women serving in the state legislature.



While fewer women than men sought elected office in Montgomery County, women consistently had a higher election success rate, winning 79% of their races. The number of women on the County Council increased from two to four as a result of the November 2006 elections. Women are the overwhelming majority on the Montgomery County Board of Education.

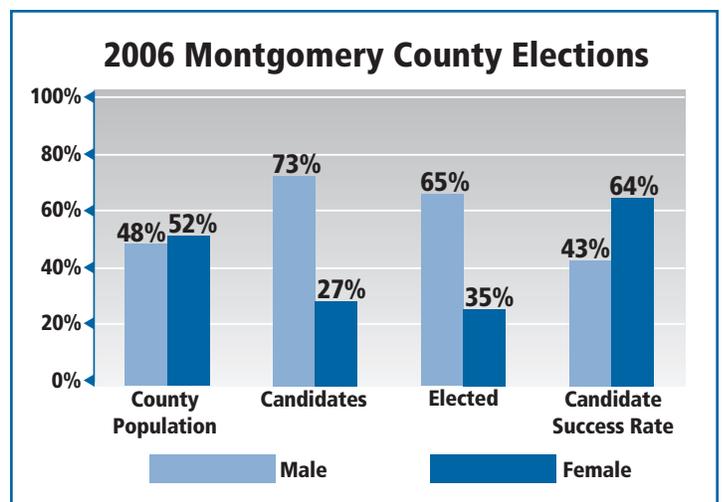
County data show women are more likely than men to register and vote, yet women remain under-represented in elected offices. They represent only 35 percent of elected officials in Montgomery County.

## WOMEN RUNNING FOR OFFICE

In the 2006 election, of the 133 candidates running for local and state offices on the Montgomery County ballot, 36 (27%) were women. Among the women candidates, 64 percent were elected while 43 percent of the male candidates won the office they sought.

A higher percentage of women ran for county offices than for state offices. There were 43 candidates for local offices and 14 (33%) were women. Of the 91 candidates vying for state offices, 22 (24%) were women. Women consistently had a higher election success rate, with a larger percentage of women winning their races than men. Fifty-five percent of the women running for state and federal offices (Lt.

Governor, Comptroller, U.S. Senator, State Senator, and House of Delegates) won their race. Men had a success rate of 41 percent in the same races. Seventy-nine percent of the women running for county offices (including County Council, Court Judge, Clerk of the Circuit Court and Board of Education) won; men had a success rate of 48 percent in their campaigns for county offices.



## WOMEN ELECTED

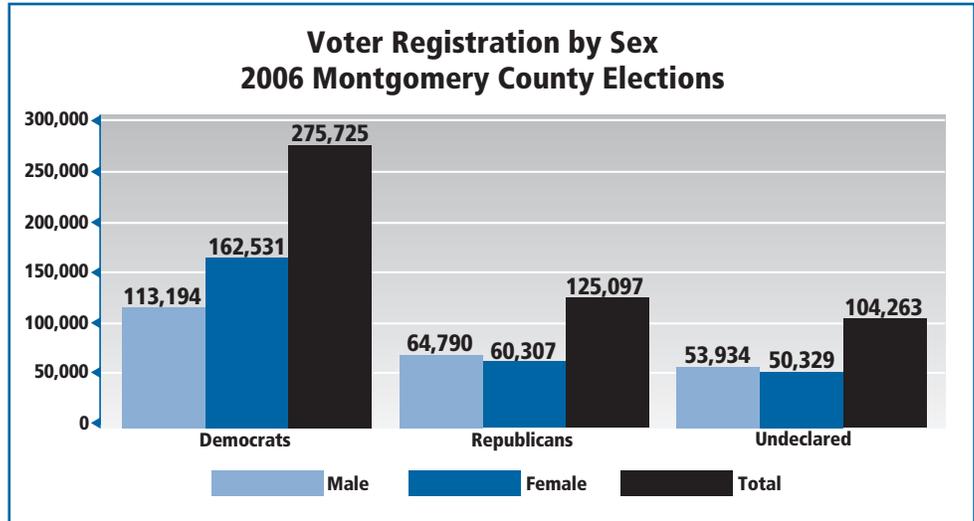
Women won 23 (35%) of the 65 elected offices on the county ballot in the 2006 election. Of the 32-member Montgomery County delegation to the Maryland General Assembly, 12 (38%) are women. (It was 50% before this election.) Women won four of the nine seats on the County Council, doubling the number from the previous term.

Three of the six Council Committees are chaired by women, including the Management and Fiscal Policy Committee, Planning, Housing and Economic Development Committee and the Transportation and Environment Committee. In 2007, the president of the County Council is a woman, The Honorable Marilyn Praisner.

Women represent three-quarters of the members of the Montgomery County Board of Education (six of the eight seats including the appointed student member).

**REGISTERED VOTERS  
AND TURNOUT**

In 2006, women represented 52 percent of the population and 54 percent of the registered voters, a proportion unchanged since 1996. There were 40,823 more women registered voters than men in the 2006 elections. The majority (59%) of women in the county are registered Democrats, 18 percent are registered as Republicans, 18 percent are Undeclared and the



remaining women are registered under another party. Registered male voters in the county were 48 percent Democrat, 28 percent Republican, 23 percent Undeclared and less than 1 percent under another party. Over the past 10 years the proportion of women registered as Republicans dropped 10 percent and the proportion of men registered as Republicans decreased by 6 percent. The proportion of male and female registered Democrats has remained the same or slightly increased over the same period of time. There are close to 38,000 more registered women Democrats than there are total registered Republicans.

Of the 508,511 registered voters, 300,198 (60%) county residents voted in the 2006 elections. Fifty-four percent of the voters were women. This means 21,732 more women than men voted in Montgomery County in the 2006 elections.

## Key Findings

- County data show women are more likely than men to register and to vote, but women remain under-represented in elected offices. Women won 23 (35%) of the 65 elected offices on the county ballot in the 2006 elections.
- In the 2006 elections, women won four of the nine seats on the County Council, doubling the number from the previous term.
- Although fewer women than men sought elected office in Montgomery County, women consistently had a higher election success rate. Women won the overwhelming majority of seats on the Montgomery County Board of Education.
- The number of women in Montgomery County registered as Democrats exceeds the total number of registered Republicans, both male and female, by nearly 38,000.
- In the 2006 elections, 21,732 more women than men voted in Montgomery County.
- A higher percentage of women ran for county office than for state office. Thirty-three percent of the candidates for county office were women, while 24 percent of the state office candidates were women.
- The 2006 elections reduced the number of women in the state legislature by almost 10 percent.

## Recommendation

- ❖ The CFW urges all political parties to increase efforts to recruit women candidates for office at every level; to educate candidates on the issues affecting women; and to involve women in every aspect of the political process.

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