

# equity+agency | From earning the vote to claiming the power

THE REPORT  
ON THE STATUS  
OF WOMEN  
AND GIRLS  
IN CALIFORNIA™

2020

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*There was never laid a stone in the foundation of this republic but that woman had a part in it. There was never started a movement for cleaner government in American cities but that woman had a part in it. Why should she not have the privileges of the American republic? Men have said that woman should not be dragged into the ‘mire of politics.’ We say that women should lead men out of it.”*

— ELIZABETH LOWE WATSON,  
AUTHOR, PREACHER, PRESIDENT  
OF THE CALIFORNIA EQUAL  
SUFFRAGE ASSOCIATION (1843–1927)

## FOREWORD

The Report on the Status of Women and Girls in California™ has become a vital tool for gender equity advocates in California and across the country. We typically release our Report every year during Women's History Month at a public event where we bring together over 1,000 leaders and professionals to discuss the themes of the Report to inspire positive change. While the COVID-19 pandemic prevented us from gathering this year, it has not stopped us from creating a virtual experience to engage women and men to take action.

We recognize that our world today looks dramatically different than it did when our Report went to press in February in anticipation of its March release. A global pandemic, economic recession and renewed acts of not-at-all new racial injustices, particularly anti-Black racism, have dominated our consciousness.

*There is no doubt that California's women of color—and their allies—absolutely recognize the power we collectively wield. And we don't intend to give it up ever again.*

While we're still eager to share our findings from this year's Report, we also want to make sure that the conversations we have now reflect the reality of this pivotal moment in time. We're going to take on topics such as intersectional feminism and privilege, anti-racism and allyship, and the importance of overcoming voter suppression to help ensure true representation for all. We didn't cover all of these topics in the 2020 Report, but our future Reports and events will explore these issues head-on. Because only through the recognition of systemic injustices can these issues be remediated and resolved.

The 2020 Report reminds us of Alice Walker's wise words—that "the most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any." There is no doubt that California's women of color—and their allies—absolutely recognize the power we collectively wield. And we don't intend to give it up ever again.

**We're here to lift up women and girls of all identities. Join us.**

Emerald M. Archer, PhD  
Director, Center for the Advancement of Women

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



IN 1911, CALIFORNIA became the sixth state to guarantee women the right to vote. The victory here came nine years before the 19th Amendment secured the vote nationwide—the centennial we celebrate in 2020. As the following introduction spells out, agency at the ballot didn't come easily. It took a broad spectrum of women nearly a century of organizing and lobbying, of political defeats and marching feet, to secure the right to vote. We stand on shoulders unbowed.

The same spirit that inspired suffragists back then animates gender justice advocates now. **Every day, women claim the power that comes with full and equitable participation in determining the future of our country, our state, and our communities.** I see women using their voices to advocate for pay equity, paid family leave, and for pipelines to positions of power. And I see women mobilizing communities around issues of economic and social justice, from the fight for a \$15 federal minimum wage to Black Lives Matter, #MeToo, Time's Up, and more.

When teenagers like Greta Thunberg and Emma González speak out about climate change and gun violence, respectively; when Stacey Abrams stands up against voter suppression; when Megan Rapinoe says she and her teammates won't accept anything less than equal pay—these women are claiming space in the public square for a diverse set of voices to be heard. They're empowering others and sparking innovative solutions to problems old and new. They're moving us forward.

We need more of that today. We need the strength and tenacity of the suffragettes. We need male allies to stand with us. And we need to remember that today's rights are not guaranteed tomorrow. The right to vote, the right to speak freely, the right to be a fully engaged citizen in democracy—each has to be continuously asserted, from generation to generation. This is the responsibility that should compel us all to ask ourselves: **What can I do to help ensure California's women and girls—and women and girls across our country and around the world—will be better off 100 years from now?**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ann McElaney-Johnson".

Ann McElaney-Johnson, PhD  
President, Mount Saint Mary's University

## REFLECTION: 100 years with the vote

*“The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.”*

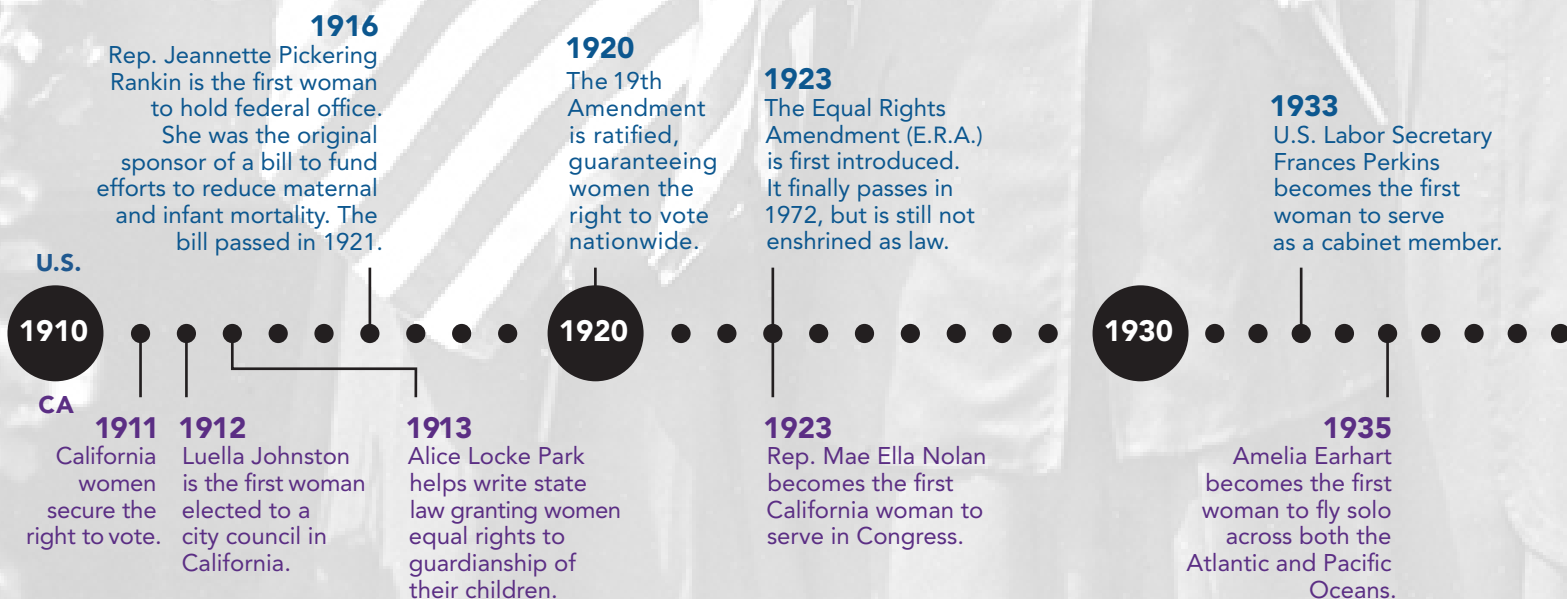
— 19TH AMENDMENT TO THE U.S. CONSTITUTION, RATIFIED AUG. 18, 1920

While nothing in the U.S. Constitution explicitly bars women or persons of color from voting, the men who framed the document in 1787 understood the right to vote was restricted to people like themselves: white, male, property owners. It would take 83 more years — and a civil war — before men of color were granted the right to vote. (And much longer to see that right enforced throughout the country.) Another half century passed before women secured the vote.

The battle for women’s suffrage began with reform movements in the 1820s, led by women who often sought temperance and the abolition of slavery, along with the vote. In 1848, 100 women and men signed a Declaration of Sentiments in Seneca Falls, New York. Modeled after the Declaration of Independence, the statement asserted the equality of women in the political, economic, and cultural arenas. It began: “We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men and women are created equal ... .”

Following the Seneca Falls convention, activism continued through turbulent times that included the Civil War and the U.S. labor movement. The fight for the vote was rarely inclusive, and racist arguments — both in favor of, and against, women’s suffrage — weren’t uncommon.

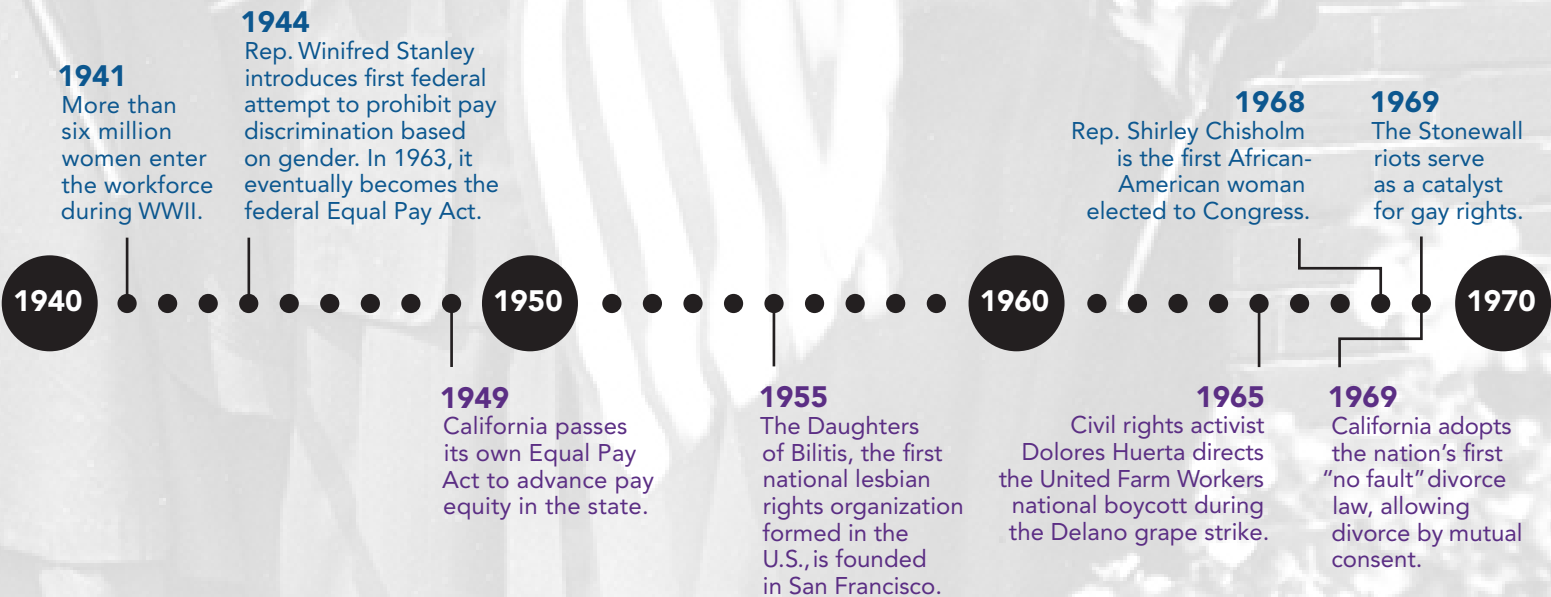
### MILESTONES: A CENTENNIAL TIMELINE



However, the shared cause did afford activists from different backgrounds and social strata with opportunities to cross artificial divisions and join forces. And as the movement gained steam, it was women in the West who led the way. In the 1890s, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, and Idaho all granted voting rights to women. California women got suffrage on the ballot, as well, in 1896. It failed.

Fifteen years later, in 1911, equal suffrage was again put to a public referendum in the state. The nation paid attention. Supporters argued that if women won the vote in California — then considered the most conservative, industrial, and wealthiest state on the West Coast — it would only be a matter of time before women won the vote across the country.<sup>1</sup>

California suffragists decided not to bring in national movement leaders, instead choosing “the women who lived right here” to deliver their message across the state.<sup>2</sup> They also decided to tie their cause to working-class issues of the day, especially labor rights. The strategy paid off. The male voters of California approved the suffrage measure by fewer than 3,500 votes.<sup>3</sup> While better-off urban residents in San Francisco voted against the measure — and it barely passed in Los Angeles — the state’s working-class districts and rural voters put the measure over the top.<sup>4</sup>





California’s vote proved a galvanizing moment in the national movement, sparking another string of political victories in the West. Less than a decade later, women’s enfranchisement was secured nationwide with the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution on Aug. 18, 1920.

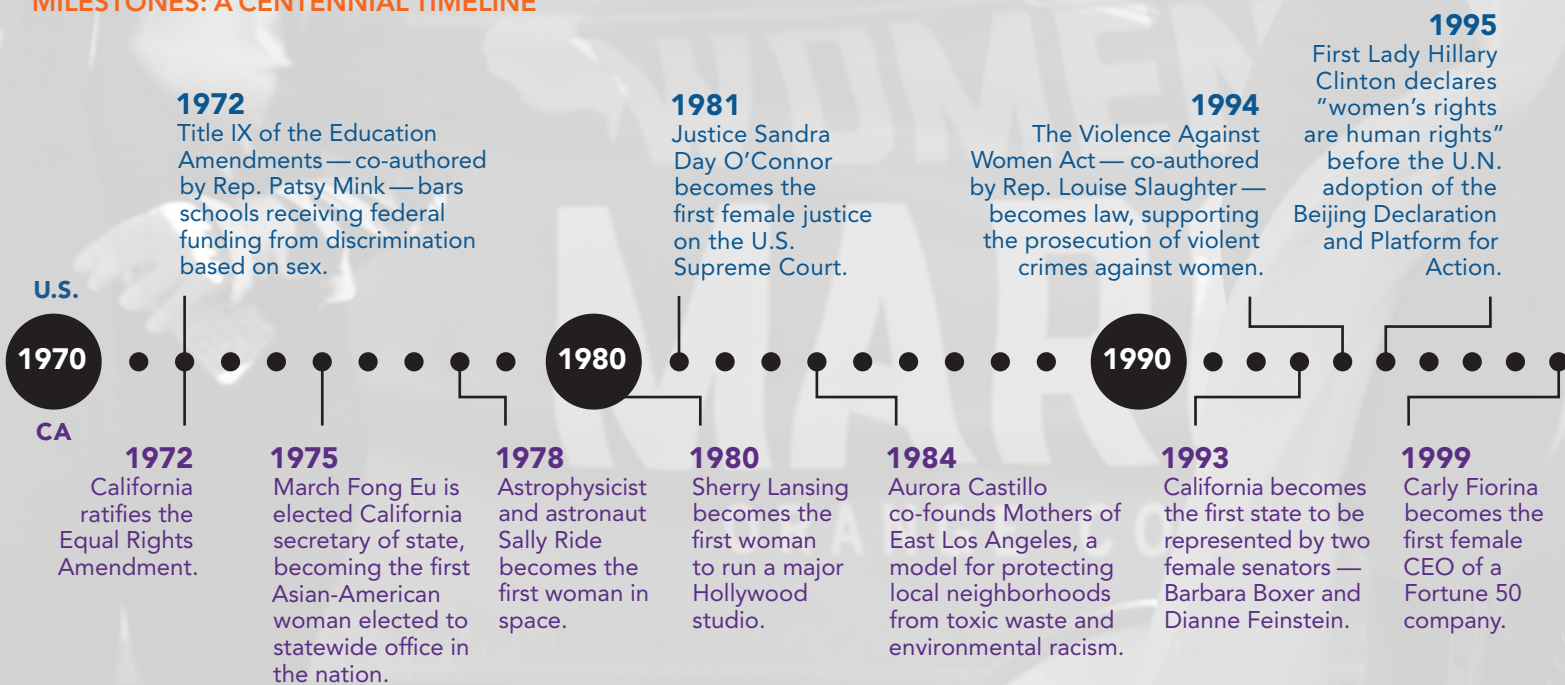
## WOMEN AT THE BALLOT

Having received the right to vote, an estimated 35–40% of eligible women went to the polls in November 1920 to vote in the presidential election — immediately laying claim to their newfound electoral agency.<sup>5</sup> Today, a majority of women vote in presidential elections; in 2016, 63% of eligible women cast a vote. Since 1980, the percentage of women who vote has consistently been higher than that of men; the gap increased to 4 percentage points in the 2016 presidential election.<sup>6</sup>

Women across races and ethnicities don’t vote at equal rates. Since 2000, a majority of eligible white and African-American women have voted in presidential elections; Asian-American women are least likely to vote. In 2016, 67% and 64% of white and African-American women, respectively, cast their ballot; 50% of Latinas voted, and Asian-American women voted at a 48% rate.<sup>7</sup>

Voter turnout often correlates to age. In general, the older a woman is, the more likely she is to vote. More than 70% of women aged 65–74 have voted in every election since 2000.

## MILESTONES: A CENTENNIAL TIMELINE



In the same time span, women aged 18–24 have voted at the lowest rate. Only in 2008 did a majority of women, 52%, in that age bracket vote.<sup>8</sup> Increasing voter engagement of young adults is an opportunity to create energy and spur change in the political culture of the country.

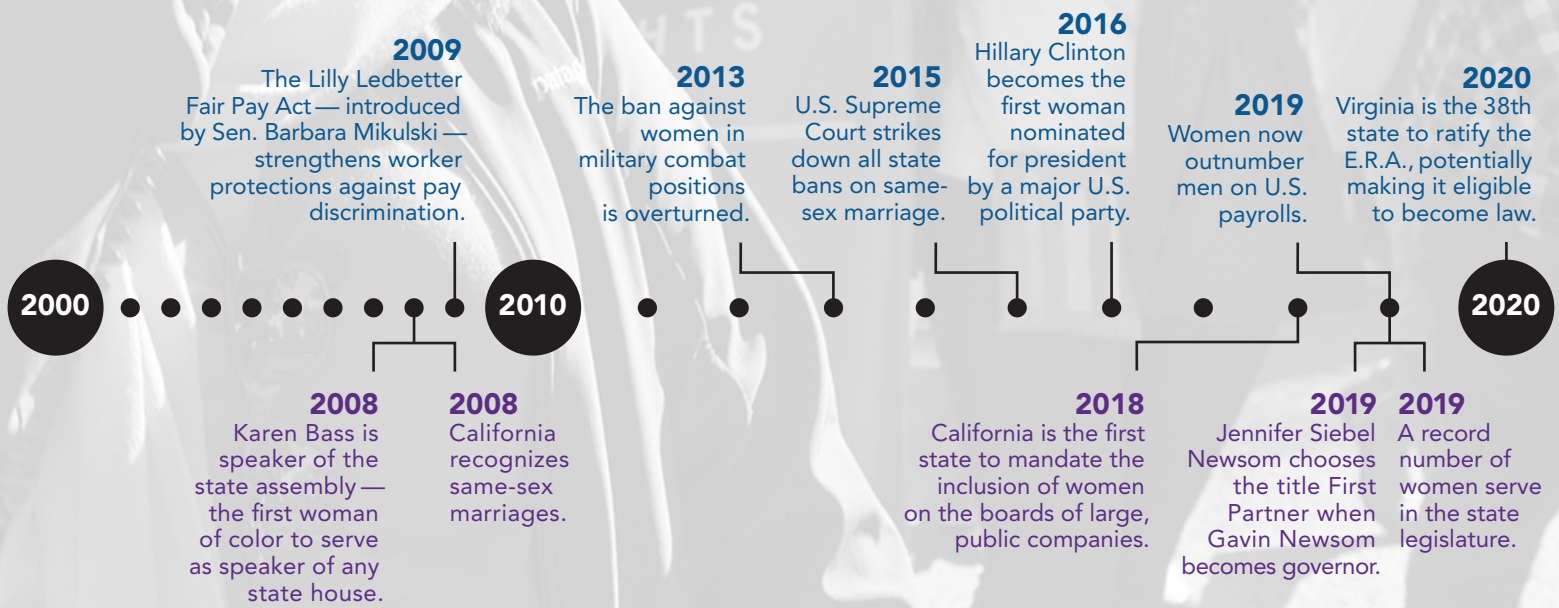
### STILL MOVING TOWARD PARITY

Nearly 200 years since women began collectively advocating for voting rights, women remain underrepresented in elected offices at the national and state levels. Women have made strides, however. Currently, one in four U.S. legislators is a woman, and the proportion of women serving in Congress increased dramatically with the 2018 midterm election. In 2016, women made up 24.5% of state legislators nationwide. As of 2020, that rate has risen to 29%.<sup>9</sup>

Even more promising: The current class of first-time legislators includes the youngest group of women ever to sit in the U.S. Congress. The impact of these and other women in determining policy will continue to evolve as they gain experience and seniority in legislative houses. Women will play more active roles when, as trends predict, their numbers grow and the country’s political culture continues to evolve.

*“Too often, women have had to be pushed and encouraged to run. I don’t think that’s going to be true anymore. I think we’re going to change that part of our American culture, and I think that from now on... women are going to step forward in equal numbers to men.”*

— U.S. REP. KAREN BASS  
CA-37 (1953–)





SNAPSHOT:  
California's women and girls

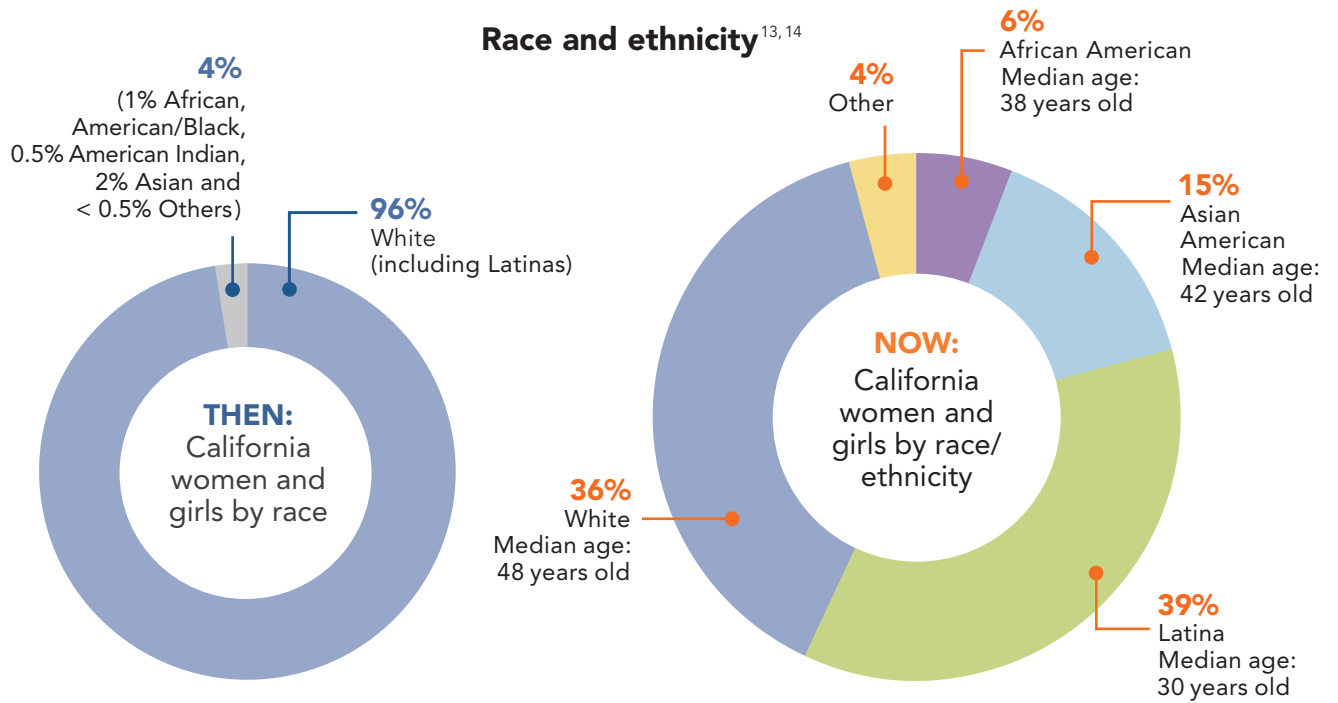
# then+now

**THEN:**

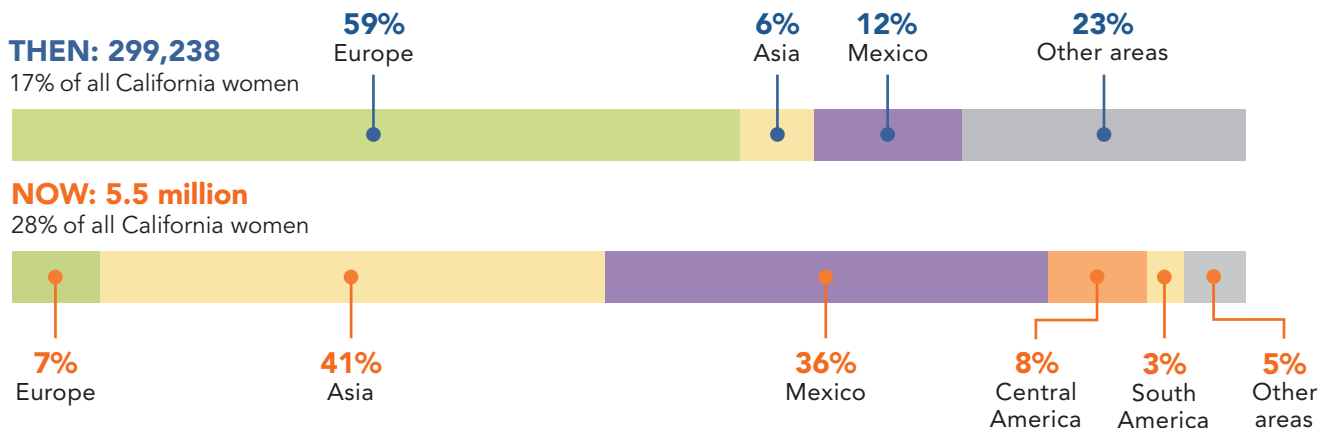
In 1920, California's 1.6 million women and girls made up 47% of the state's population.<sup>10</sup>

**NOW:**

A century later,<sup>11</sup> 19.9 million women and girls make up just over 50% of California's 39.5 million residents.<sup>12</sup>



**California women born outside the U.S.**<sup>15,16</sup>



## California cities<sup>17</sup>

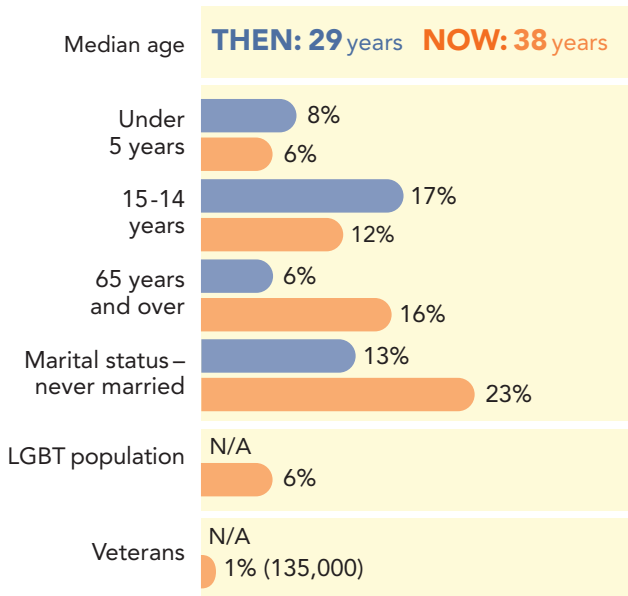
**THEN: 184** and **NOW: 482**

Cities with population over 30,000: **THEN: 11** and **NOW: 268**

Cities with population over 100,000: **THEN: 3** and **NOW: 75**

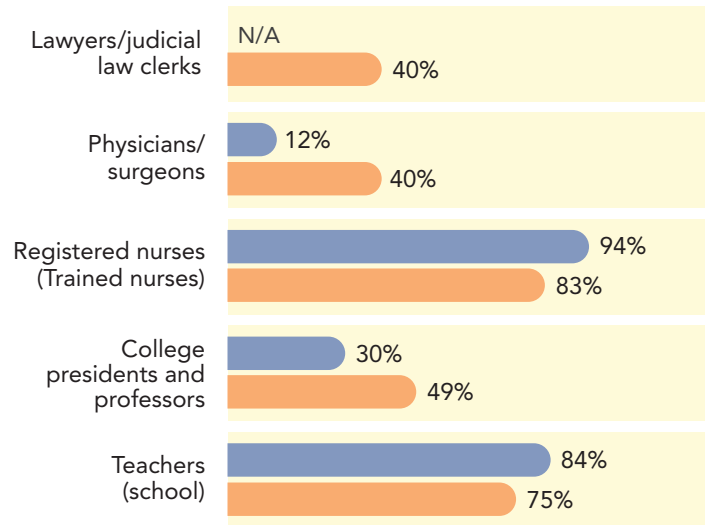
### Age and other characteristics<sup>18</sup>

● **THEN** ● **NOW**



### Women in select professions<sup>19</sup>

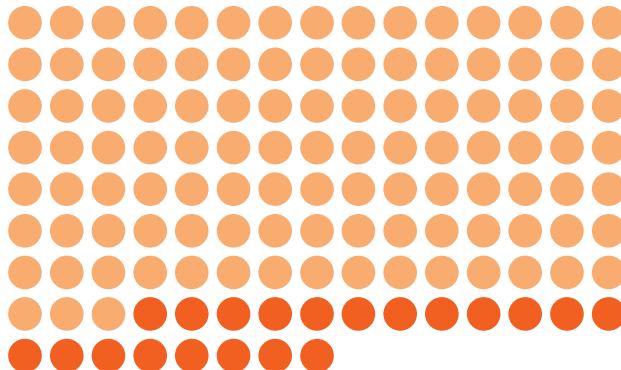
● **THEN** ● **NOW**



### Women in the U.S. Congress<sup>20,21</sup>

**THEN:** 67th Congress (1921–1923)    **NOW:** 116th Congress (2019–2021)

● Total women: **4** (0.8%)    ● Total women: **127** (24%)  
 ● In California's delegation: **1** (9%)    ● In California's delegation: **20** (36%)

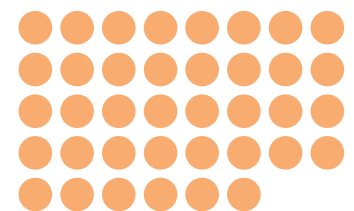


### Women in the state legislature<sup>22</sup>

**THEN:** 4 (3%)



**NOW:** 38 (32%)



## SUMMARY: 2020 research at a glance

Where do women and girls in California stand today? Has 100 years with the vote helped women achieve full equity and agency? This summary of key findings shows the answer isn't a straightforward 'yes' or 'no.' The scorecard on Page 9 reveals where California women have reached parity with their male counterparts in key areas — and where gaps still persist.

### THE GOOD

- Across California, 1.58 million women-owned businesses account for \$236 billion in sales revenue. *[see page 12]*
- A record-setting 38 women now serve in the state legislature. *[see page 13]*
- For the first time, women and girls have achieved gender parity on screen in lead roles in family films (48% female) and children's television shows (52% female). *[see page 16]*
- California's maternal mortality rate is decreasing and it's lower for every race and ethnicity compared to the nation as a whole. *[see page 26]*

### THE BAD

- 72 women are promoted to (or hired for) a managerial position for every 100 men. *[see page 12]*
- The wealth gap is worst for women of color. For every \$100 owned by white men nationwide, Latinas hold \$3 and African-American women have 80 cents. *[see page 20]*
- 21% of California's lesbian, gay, and bisexual high school students have attempted suicide. *[see page 25]*
- Women make up 60% of all U.S. caregivers. They're more likely to have poor health and delay needed care than women without caregiving responsibilities. *[see page 27]*

### THE PATH FORWARD

- EDUCATION: A woman with a four-year college degree earns twice as much as a woman with a high school diploma — and nearly three times more than a woman who didn't complete high school. *[see page 22]*
- CORPORATE LEADERSHIP: California is the first state to mandate the inclusion of women on the boards of large public companies. *[see page 12]*
- POLITICAL LEADERSHIP: Local offices can serve as a pipeline for state and national representation. Right now, fewer than one in three locally elected officials (mayors, city council members, and county supervisors) are women. *[see page 13]*
- MEDIA REPRESENTATION: Films and television programs that have at least one female director employ a much greater percentage of women behind the scenes than productions that have only male directors. *[see page 16]*

*“I grew up with the understanding that I was responsible ... for not opening doors, but for putting my foot in the door, holding them wide open for others to pass through.”*

— ANN SHAW,  
LOS ANGELES SOCIAL  
WORKER AND ACTIVIST  
(1921–2015)

# SCORECARD: Charting gender parity in California

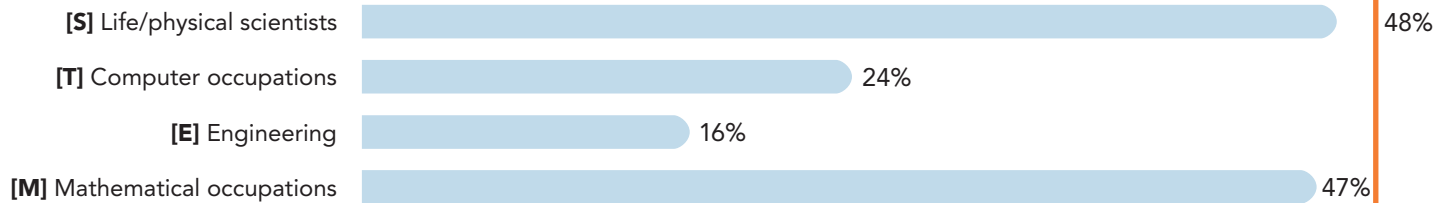
A century after the vote, are we fulfilling the promise of equity?

PARITY  
50%

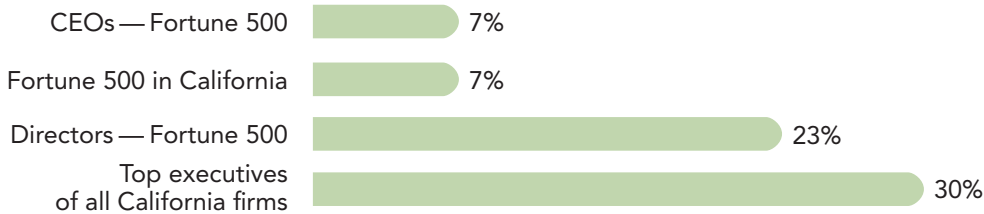
## EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT<sup>23</sup> Degrees held by California women



## STEM EMPLOYMENT<sup>24</sup> California women in STEM occupations



## CORPORATE LEADERSHIP<sup>25</sup> Women in corporate leadership



## STATE GOVERNMENT<sup>26</sup> Women in the state legislature

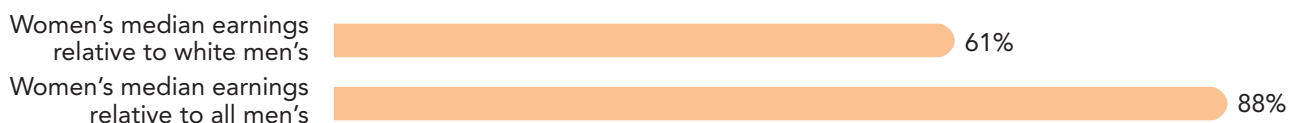


## WOMEN IN MEDIA<sup>27</sup> Women in the 100 top-grossing films of 2018



PARITY  
100%

## WAGE EQUITY<sup>28</sup> California women's earnings compared to men's earnings (full-time workers)





# Striving for parity across occupations

Across California, there are more women-owned businesses than ever before. The percentage of women on corporate boards continues to increase. And a record number of women serve in both the state legislature and in Congress. In all, women comprise nearly half of California's workforce, and they're making inroads into professional fields previously dominated by men. But progress is slow. Women's representation in too many fields remains significantly lower than 50%. And women's inclusion at the highest positions of leadership — in business, politics, and media — lags even further behind.

*“They call me a lady lawyer, a pretty sobriquet, for of course to be worthy of so dainty a title, I was bound to maintain a dainty manner as I browbeat my way through the marshes of ignorance and prejudice.”*

— CLARA SHORTRIDGE  
FOLTZ, SUFFRAGIST  
AND CALIFORNIA'S  
FIRST FEMALE LAWYER  
(1849–1934)

## Women in the workforce

Women now hold more than half of all payroll jobs nationwide. The only other time that's been true in American history was during the Great Recession in the late 2000s.<sup>29</sup> Here in California, since 2010, women have made up about 46% of California's employed workforce.<sup>30</sup> The U.S. Census Bureau tracks occupational participation at the highest level in five broad categories: management, business, science, and art jobs; service jobs; sales and office jobs; natural resources, construction, and maintenance jobs; and production, transportation, and material moving jobs.

Women form the majority of the state's workforce in sales and office occupations as well as in service jobs; men make up nine out of every 10 workers in natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations.<sup>31</sup> While women comprise half of all workers in management, business, science, and art occupations, these figures mask the fact that many occupations within this cluster remain gender-biased.

## Women in STEM

Women have long been considered underrepresented in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). However, there are some promising trends. California women now comprise nearly half (48%) of life and physical scientists. And as recently as 2010, women filled 59% of all mathematical occupations — though that has now dropped to 47%.<sup>32,33</sup>

The two STEM areas where women remain truly underrepresented are in computer technology and in engineering.<sup>34</sup> Fewer than one in four (24%) California workers in the computer sciences is a woman. Roughly one in six engineers is a woman.

## Women in business

Women hold about 40% of management positions in California, but less than one in three top executives is a woman. Those data haven't changed much since 2010.<sup>35</sup>

**Women-owned businesses.** Across the nation, the growth of women-owned businesses has outpaced that of all privately owned businesses. From 2014 to 2019, the number of women-owned businesses grew at 21% while all firms grew at 9%. Women now own 42% of all U.S. businesses; add in the number of businesses equally co-owned by women and men and the number accounts for 49% of all businesses in the nation.<sup>36</sup>

## CRACKING THE CODE FOR GENDER PARITY IN COMPUTER SCIENCE

Ada Lovelace was the world's first computer programmer. A mathematician and writer, she recognized the potential for computing machines and wrote what's now considered the first computer algorithm — in 1843. How have we gone from a female founder of the field to where we are today, when women earn fewer than one in five computer science degrees? And how do we empower the next Ada Lovelace?

The STEM fields of science, technology, engineering, and math have always been crucial factors in driving economic growth and improving human life. Today, “big data” affects almost all aspects of daily existence. But to analyze and interpret all this data, it's necessary to know how to code. Computer programming is a vital tool for creative problem-solving and it's quickly becoming a second literacy requirement.

Everyone should have an equal chance to learn the technology, irrespective of gender, race, age, or other factors. California women, however, hold fewer than one in four jobs in all computer-related occupations; 5% or fewer are African-American women and 9% are Latina.<sup>37</sup> And we're trending in the wrong direction. In 2015, women earned 18% of computer science bachelor's degrees in the United States,<sup>38</sup> a decline from 27% in 1997.<sup>39</sup>

This tech gender gap negatively affects women's careers and earnings, but it also robs the field of innovation and creativity — and gives us technology that fails to fully consider the needs of half the world's population.

How did we get here?

Women played critical roles in computer science development: Grace Hopper participated in the Manhattan Project and helped invent concepts we use today, such as software, compilers, and high-level programming languages; six women<sup>40</sup> working together programmed the world's first all-digital general purpose computer; Margaret Hamilton was the key NASA software engineer who saved the day for the Apollo 11 lunar mission. Yet when personal computers became more accessible to the general audience in the early 1990s, the niche market was mostly male. Among other problems, this gender bias caused parents to buy computers for their sons rather than their daughters.<sup>41</sup>

How do we inspire the next generation of women innovators in the field? We can introduce engineering toys for girls at an early age and organize girls coding camps. And we can connect girls with mentors and role models through meetups such as the Grace Hopper Celebration

of Women in Computing.

Media can become part of the solution, too. A recent report by the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media at Mount Saint Mary's University included an extensive 10-year content analysis of STEM characters in entertainment media. Their findings: Male STEM characters outnumber female STEM characters nearly two to one (63% to 37%). Don't think that matters? Nearly two-thirds of women working in STEM today name Scully, from “The X-Files,” as a personal role model.<sup>42</sup>

What can universities do to bridge the gap? For starters:

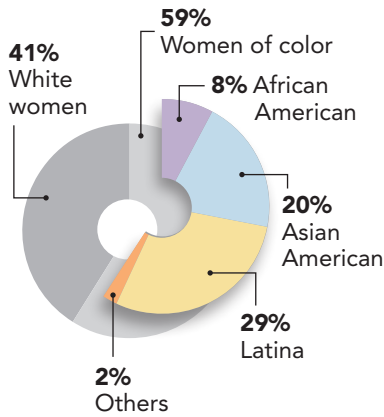
- Provide technology support for students — getting the right tools in their hands
- Organize workshops for high school students to meet college-age role models
- Create a strong tutoring framework for students struggling with computer science concepts
- Fund STEM scholarships that open up the discipline to more female students, especially underrepresented Latinas and African Americans

Many students taking my computer science courses tell me they want to learn coding because the future requires it. My goal is to extend their motivation from bare necessity to something that might become a passion, hopefully leading to further exploration and innovation.

**Irma Ravkic, PhD**

Assistant Professor, Computer Science  
Mount Saint Mary's University

FIGURE 1  
CALIFORNIA WOMEN  
BUSINESS OWNERS



Note: The 2% of businesses owned by other women include Native Americans, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders.  
Source: American Express, State of Women-Owned Businesses, 2019.

In California, women own an estimated 1.58 million businesses, up 13% from 2014. These firms employ 1.1 million people and account for \$236 billion in sales revenue (up 11% from 2014). Women of color own 59% of these firms (FIGURE 1).<sup>43</sup>

**CEOs.** Women serve as the CEOs of 33 companies on the Fortune 500. These numbers illuminate a staggering gender gap in top leadership at the country’s largest public corporations. However, they also represent a new high for women, as these numbers have more than doubled over the past decade.<sup>44</sup> In California, the proportion of Fortune 500 companies with female CEOs has risen from 2% in 2010 to 7% in 2019.

Part of the difficulty in improving women’s representation in corporate leadership is that women are not well represented in the corporate pipeline (FIGURE 2).<sup>45</sup> Although nearly half of entry-level workers are women, the proportion of women diminishes dramatically at higher levels of leadership. One reason: Women aren’t being promoted to the managerial level at the same rate as their male colleagues. A recent study shows 72 women are promoted to (or hired for) a managerial position for every 100 men. This disparity limits the pool of women who can be hired for more senior positions.<sup>46</sup>

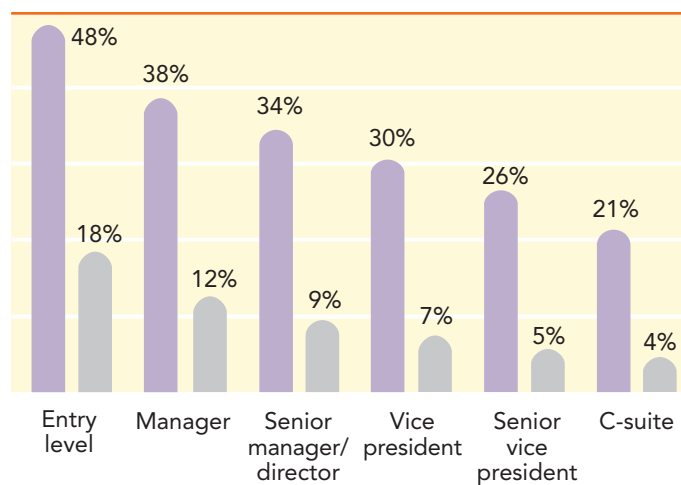
**Boards of directors.** Women now hold 1,278 of the 5,670 director seats in Fortune 500 companies — about 260 of those seats are held by women of color (FIGURE 3).<sup>47</sup> Just under 5% of Fortune 500 companies have a woman serving as chair of the board.

In California, a comprehensive 2015–2016 study revealed women held 13% of seats on the boards of directors of the state’s 400 largest publicly held companies — an increase from 9% in 2006.<sup>48</sup>

**Legislative efforts.** In 2018, California became the first state to mandate the inclusion of women on the boards of large public companies. California Senate Bill 826 calls for at least one woman on each publicly traded firm headquartered in California by the end of 2019. When the bill took effect in 2018, 25% of California’s publicly held companies had one or more women on the board; as of December 2019, it was reported that more than 90% of companies were in compliance with SB 826.<sup>49</sup> A comprehensive study of California firms reveals that the overall number of board seats held by women has increased by 23% since SB 826 was enacted.<sup>50</sup>

FIGURE 2  
WOMEN IN THE  
U.S. CORPORATE PIPELINE

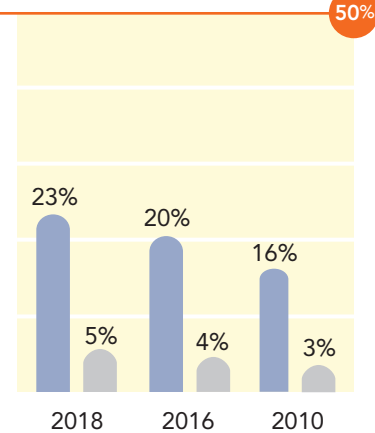
● All women  
● Women of color



Sources: Lean In; McKinsey and Company.

FIGURE 3  
U.S. WOMEN SERVING  
ON FORTUNE 500 BOARDS

● All women among Fortune 500 directors  
● Women of color

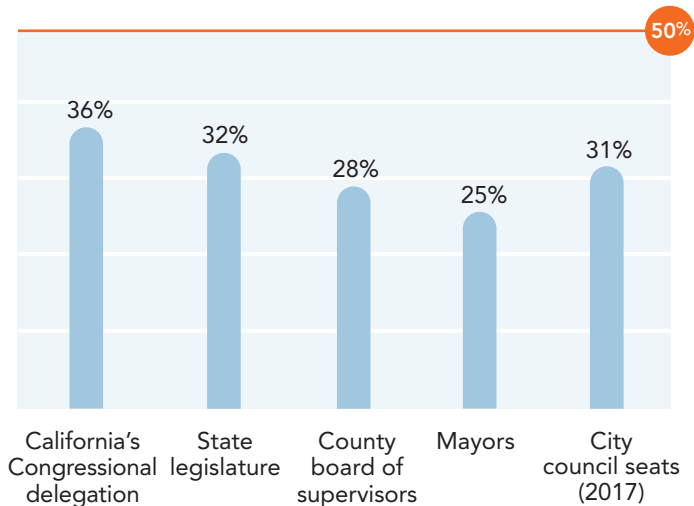


Sources: Alliance for Board Diversity and Deloitte.

50%

FIGURE 4

## WOMEN IN CALIFORNIA POLITICAL POSITIONS (2019)



Sources: Center for American Women and Politics (2019); California Women Lead (2017).

## Women in California public service

**State government.** In the 2019 legislative session, a record-setting 38 women served among the 120 members of the legislature: 14 state senators and 24 state assembly members. The tally bests the previous high-water marks women set in 2005 and 2006.

Overall, though, California is not viewed as a pacesetter when it comes to female leadership in politics. In 2005, California ranked 10th among states for its percentage of women in the state legislature, but recent election cycles have led to lower rankings. In 2017 — when 27 women served in the state legislature — California came in 30th out of all 50 states for its percentage of women serving. The current state legislature ranks 18th.<sup>51</sup>

There are a total of eight statewide elective executive positions. Women currently fill three of those roles — as lieutenant governor, state treasurer, and state controller.

**Local government.** City and county governments offer opportunities for women to represent their communities at the local level (FIGURE 4).

**COUNTY BOARDS OF SUPERVISORS:** In 2019, women filled 82 out of 296 seats statewide (28%) as county supervisors; 13 of California's counties had no women represented on their board.<sup>52</sup> These numbers are slightly improved from 2014, when women made up 23% of county supervisors and 15 counties had no female representation on the county board.<sup>53</sup>

**MAYORS:** There are 268 California cities with populations over 30,000. As of February 2019, 68 (25%) of these cities had female mayors<sup>54</sup> — down from 28% in 2017.<sup>55</sup>

**CITY COUNCILS:** In 2019, women held 31% of city council seats in the state's largest cities (population over 300,000).<sup>56</sup> A comprehensive 2017 study of all 482 cities in California reported there were 796 women (31%) compared to 1,734 men holding council seats. Fifty-six cities had no women on their council.

**CITY ADMINISTRATORS:** Women make up 18% of chief administrative officers in California cities, up from 13% in 2013.<sup>57</sup>

One strategy to address the lack of parity in California's elected offices focuses on encouraging women to get involved in political leadership at the community level. Local political office offers the opportunity to gain experience and support, and increases the number of women in the pipeline who could run for statewide political office.<sup>58</sup> Based on the local offices examined above, however, fewer than one in three local elected officials are women, limiting the effectiveness of local experience as a pipeline for state leadership.



## ACHIEVING GENDER PARITY AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

Achieving equality for women and girls in America did not come with the right to vote in 1920, nor was it perfected when President Obama signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act nearly 90 years later. As efforts in the City of Los Angeles show, equality remains an ongoing — but achievable — struggle today.

- Direct the City's Bureau of Street Lighting, overseeing the maintenance and operation of about 220,000 streetlights
- Serve as the first African-American female leader of a zoo in the country
- Drive change as the City's first chief innovation officer
- Act as the senior technology advisor to the mayor

The facts are clear: California's gender earnings gap persists and women are dramatically underrepresented in management positions in both the public and private sectors. That's why, when Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti was elected in 2013, he made gender equity a top priority. By employing a data-driven approach, the City now documents inequality wherever it exists, sets tangible goals for improvement, and tracks progress.

Today, more than 50% of city commissioners are women, and there are no longer any all-male boards or commissions. All 36 City departments that report to the mayor's office have gender equity plans and liaisons; each set gender equity goals on behalf of their departments and work with staff to execute them.

Gender equity plans include three mission areas to:

- Provide equal opportunity, modernize the definition of leadership, and drive gender equity at all levels
- Promote equity in all operational aspects of City government, including contract and volunteer opportunities
- Create and update city services and programs to ensure equitable access and opportunity

Reports are updated quarterly, goals are updated every other year, and these actions help turn the administration's gender-equity values into policies and results. This work has also resulted in a citywide effort to recruit women for leadership positions in underrepresented fields. Since Mayor Garcetti took office, the City has appointed women for the first time in many traditionally male-dominated environments, including women who:

- Preside over the implementation of one of the largest infrastructure bonds in the country's history at the Department of Transportation
- Lead the \$13 billion renovation of Los Angeles International Airport

### Benefits of equitable representation

The aim of this work is not diversity for diversity's sake. When women are given the opportunity to compete fairly for any job that they want, and when decision-makers reflect the face of the communities they represent, government will inevitably change how it delivers services to its constituents.

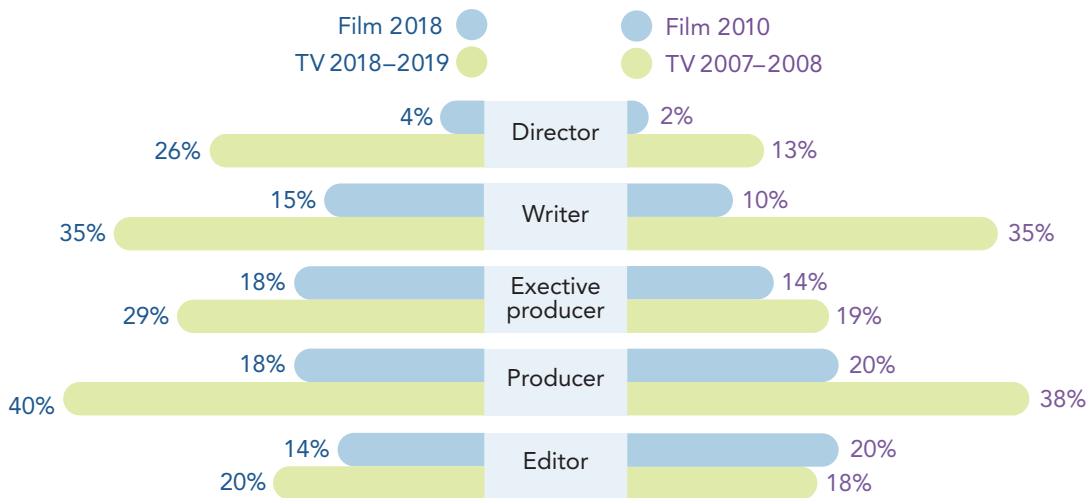
For example, with a woman serving as the first female general manager for the Bureau of Street Lighting, the department is strategically increasing lighting in areas with high rates of human trafficking and other forms of violence — to provide a greater sense of safety.

Similarly, L.A.'s first female chief procurement officer is committed to streamlining the City's buying process and encouraging small- and women-owned businesses to pursue City contracts by becoming certified. Key female leaders in the city have also helped the City's Domestic Abuse Response Team go from operating in 13 of the LAPD's geographic areas to all 21, covering all of Los Angeles.

Local leadership that prioritizes gender equity is vital. With every woman given a seat at the table and in leadership, we get closer to making the world a better place for the next generation.

**Amanda Daflos**  
Chief Innovation Officer  
City of Los Angeles

FIGURE 5 BEHIND THE SCENES:  
WOMEN IN FILM AND BROADCAST TELEVISION



Notes: Film figures are for 100 top-grossing films in 2010 and 2018; television figures are for broadcast network programs in 2007-2008 and 2018-2019.

Source: Center for the Study of Women in Television and Film, San Diego State University.

### Women in film and television

Gender diversity in corporate leadership at major film and television studios lags behind gender diversity on set. Out of all the major film studios, broadcast television networks, and streaming giants, only three have a woman as CEO: Warner Brothers, ABC, and Amazon Studios.

Women fare somewhat better across the executive level at major film studios, where critical decisions are made. Among Disney’s studio leadership team, eight divisional executives (47%) are women. At Paramount, Universal, and Sony Pictures, three to five women fill senior leadership positions at each company.<sup>59</sup>

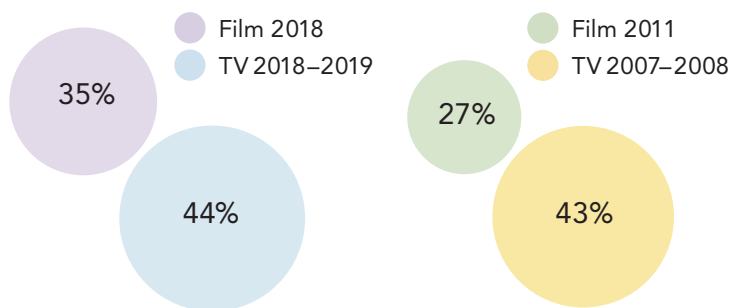
**Behind the scenes.** In 2018’s 100 top-grossing films, women comprised only one in five people working behind the scenes, with the largest proportion serving as producers.<sup>60</sup> Women have greater representation in television than the film industry (FIGURE 5).<sup>61</sup>

These numbers represent a relatively modest increase in the presence of female directors and writers working on films since 2010. While the percentage of women in the film industry has changed slowly — in fits and starts depending on the projects green-lit each year — the presence of women in TV production has increased more significantly in the last few years.

**On screen.** Men continue to dominate on-screen characters in the movie industry’s top 100 films.<sup>62</sup> The proportion of women seen in film has increased, yet men still outnumber women as speaking characters by nearly a two-to-one ratio (65% to 35%). Audiences are more likely to see women on television than on the big screen (FIGURE 6).

The representation of women in on-screen roles is slowly increasing as the industry diversifies its portrayals of characters. Among 500 films from 2014 to 2018 (the 100 top-grossing films each year), the number of LGBTQ characters with speaking roles

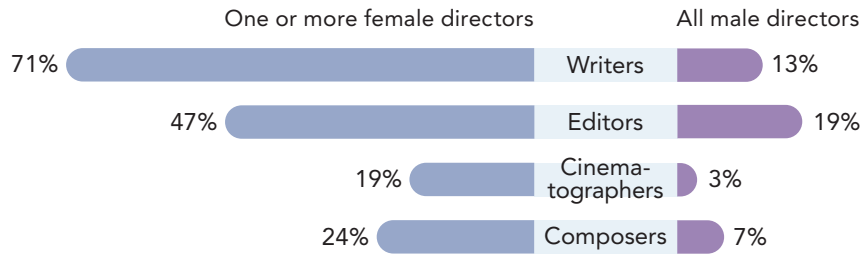
FIGURE 6  
ON-SCREEN ROLES:  
WOMEN IN FILM AND  
BROADCAST TELEVISION



Note: Film figures are for the 100 top-grossing films in 2018 and 2011; figures for broadcast network television are for all female characters in 2018-2019 and 2007-2008.

Source: Center for the Study of Women in Television and Film, San Diego State University.

FIGURE 7  
 IMPACT OF WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP:  
 500 TOP-GROSSING FILMS OF 2018



Source: Center for the Study of Women in Television and Film, San Diego State University.

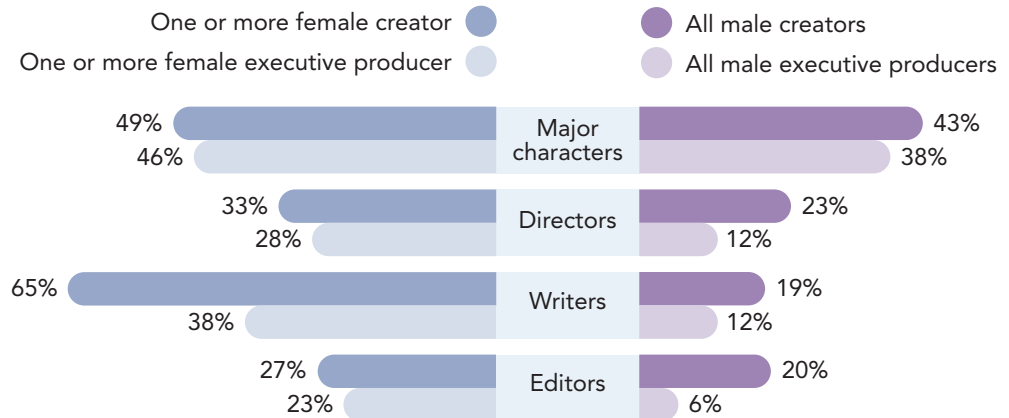
increased from 21 characters to 58. The number of lesbian roles, specifically, has increased from 4 to 17. (Just one transgender character was depicted on screen across the 500 films examined.<sup>63</sup>)

Media images of women and diverse characters on screen have the potential to inspire girls and young adults to become leaders in society. Too often, though, women are portrayed as secondary characters. A global study carried out by the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media at Mount Saint Mary’s University found that, in the top-grossing films of 2018, men were portrayed as leaders more often than women (42% to 27%). The good news? The next generation might have something to say about figures like those. The Institute’s newest research finds gender parity among lead characters in both family films (48% female) and children’s television shows (52% female) — for the first time in history.<sup>64</sup>

**Increasing the presence of women in film and television.** Studies have shown there are key positions behind the scenes in both film and television that correlate with having more women working in production. In film, the presence of at least one female director is critical to getting more women in key production roles (FIGURE 7). An analysis of the 500 top-grossing films of 2018 found that films with at least one female director employed substantially more women behind the scenes than films with only male directors.<sup>65</sup>

In broadcast television, female creators and executive producers have the greatest impact on the overall presence of women in the production (FIGURE 8).<sup>66</sup>

FIGURE 8  
 IMPACT OF WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP:  
 BROADCAST TELEVISION PRODUCTIONS (2018-2019)



Source: Center for the Study of Women in Television and Film, San Diego State University.

# Optimizing economic opportunity

The encouraging news: Women’s income is on the rise and their poverty rate is falling. More women are attaining higher levels of education, and data show that both income and poverty are favorably impacted by this factor. However, until the income of women reaches parity with that of men — giving women more disposable income to invest — the already staggering gap in wealth between women and men is almost certain to grow.

## Employment

More than two-thirds (68%) of California women (aged 25 to 64) earn an income by working either full- or part-time. The unemployment rate<sup>67</sup> is just 5% for California women, but that percentage varies among women of different races and ethnicities (FIGURE 9).<sup>68</sup>

## Earnings

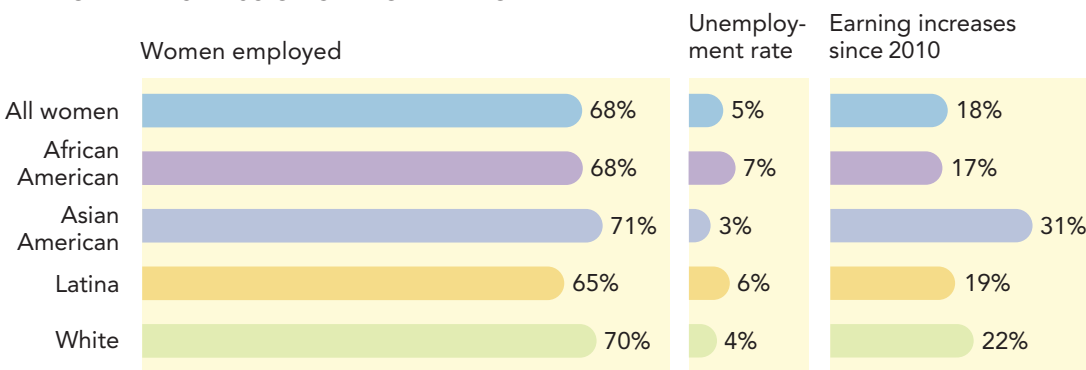
The median annual earnings of California women working full time is just under \$50,000. However, median earnings vary widely across races and ethnicities, from a low of \$33,599 for Latinas to a high of \$61,848 for white women. When part-time workers (women with any earnings in the past year) are added into the data, women’s median annual earnings significantly decrease (FIGURE 10).<sup>69</sup>

From 2010 to 2018, the earnings of full-time working women increased by 18%, or 2% per year on average. While that sounds positive, the inflation rate from 2008 to 2018 was just under 20% — also about 2% per year. Earnings are barely keeping pace with inflation.<sup>70</sup> Since 2010, only Asian-American women appear to have experienced real earnings growth that outpaces inflation (FIGURE 9).<sup>71</sup>

“All women, and especially women of color, continue to face pay disparities as they pursue their careers. Women comprise almost half the workforce and are the sole breadwinners in half of American families. The gender pay gap not only hurts women, it punishes children and families too.”

— CALIFORNIA STATE SEN. HANNAH-BETH JACKSON (1950–)

FIGURE 9  
EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF CALIFORNIA WOMEN

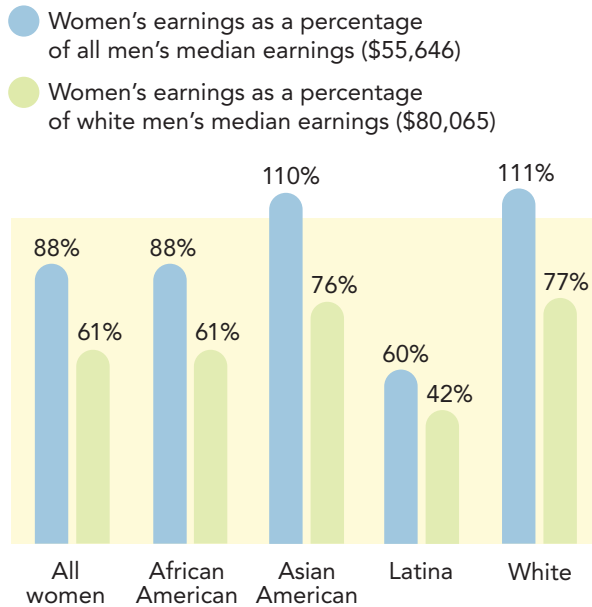


Note: These figures are for 2018 and include women aged 25–64. The unemployment rate measures those in the labor force who are unemployed and looking for work.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 ACS Single-Year Estimates.



FIGURE 10  
EARNINGS GAP BETWEEN CALIFORNIA WOMEN AND MEN



Full-time median earnings >	\$49,009	\$48,844	\$61,246	\$33,599	\$61,848
Part-time median earnings >	\$13,517	\$12,945	\$15,268	\$11,882	\$16,190

Note: Other than the part-time earnings row, these figures are for full-time, year-round workers in California's working population, 16 years and older.  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 ACS Single-Year Estimates.

**Earnings equity:** Overall, the median earnings of men continue to outpace those of women across the nation and the state. In California, women working full time earn 88% of what men earn. However, that percentage obscures the fact that Asian-American women and white women in California actually have greater median earnings than all men statewide; the state's African-American women and Latinas experience the greatest disparity. When women's earnings are compared to the median earnings of white men, the gender earnings gap widens across the board, with women of color again most affected (FIGURE 10).<sup>72</sup>

Overall, the gender earnings gap between women and men who work full time has been slowly shrinking. In 2010, women earned just under 84% of what men earned. However, the gap is not closing when you compare it to the males who make the most money: white men. In fact, since 2010, that gap has either remained stagnant or slightly worsened for Latinas, African-American women, and white women.

### Wealth equity

Wealth is an even more powerful indicator of economic agency than earnings. Wealth, or net worth, is calculated as the value of assets someone has, minus any debts owed. In times of need — unemployment, illness, or other financial stress — wealth can be used to cover expenses. The asset of greatest value for most households is equity in an owned home. Other assets that contribute to wealth include financial savings in retirement or savings accounts; investments in stocks and bonds; and ownership of things like property, businesses, and vehicles.<sup>73</sup>

California is the wealthiest state in the nation, with a total net worth of \$6.3 trillion. Distributed equally, this wealth would amount to \$160,000 per resident. That's not the reality, of course. Most of the state's wealth is concentrated in coastal regions around San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego. There are racial and gender disparities, too. In Los Angeles, for example, the net worth of an African-American or Latinx

## EMPOWERING EMPLOYERS TO CLOSE THE GENDER WAGE GAP

In 1949, California enacted its first Equal Pay Act. While a positive step, the wording of the law enabled loopholes to be exploited, and it remained difficult to bring an equal pay suit to court.

In recent years, an expansion of California's Equal Pay Act has improved upon the state's first efforts at promoting fair pay.

gender wage gap, employers must be educated on measures they can take to adopt diverse hiring practices, create fair and equitable work spaces, and develop mentorship pipelines

Pay inequity impacts women at all stages of their career, even in the highest positions of power. The California Fair Pay Act,<sup>74</sup> authored by State Sen. Hannah-Beth Jackson, defines wage inequity as when an employer pays an employee wage rates less than the rates paid to employees of the opposite sex for substantially similar work. This gender wage gap<sup>75</sup> exists for a myriad of reasons, including implicit bias, which reflects the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner.<sup>76</sup> This bias can lead to occupational segregation and a lifetime of pay discrimination.<sup>77</sup>

Intentional or not, these persistent earning inequities result in increased family poverty, as half of all households with children under the age of 18 in the United States have a mother who is responsible for most, or all, of the financial earnings for the home. When a woman is paid less than what she's owed, her entire family suffers.<sup>78</sup>

Following passage of the 2015 Fair Pay Act, the California Commission on the Status of Women and Girls launched a statewide, multi-stakeholder Pay Equity Task Force that examined factors contributing to the gender wage gap. This led to the creation of a California Pay Equity Tool Kit<sup>79</sup> with resources for employers, employees, job seekers, and unions. It also led to the launch of the #EqualPayCA campaign, in which the Commission united with the First Partner of California and Time's Up to highlight pay inequities and encourage proactive compliance with the Fair Pay Act. The Commission's work to break down stigmas, assumptions, and barriers to equity for the women and girls of California finds a natural partner in this campaign.

The Commission's focus on pay equity is designed to shift efforts from punitive action to preventive measures when discussing the role of employers. To close the

for women — especially women of color — that help companies retain qualified staff.

The impact of these measures shows equal pay leads to greater diversity — and greater returns for companies. In a recent global survey, more than 60% of companies reported 10% to 15% increases in productivity and profits with increased gender diversity.<sup>80</sup> More than half of these global companies also reported that gender diversity correlated with greater creativity and innovation, enhanced company reputation, and an increased ability to attract and retain talent.

Through the #EqualPayCA program, employers are invited to take the California Pay Equity Pledge and embrace the work of closing the gender wage gap.<sup>81</sup> Pledge-takers commit their organizations to reviewing their pay equity efforts and identifying best practices. Industry leaders are taking note. Fortune 500 companies make up 31% of all businesses that have taken the pledge.

Since 2017, 460 state bills have been introduced across the United States to address workplace culture. These serve as a vital, collective first step to achieving pay equity.<sup>82</sup> Here in California, legislators have championed equal pay for five years. It's time for all of California's employers to do the same.

### **Meryl Press**

*Equal Pay Program Specialist  
California Commission on the Status  
of Women and Girls*

household is 21% and 13%, respectively, of a white household.<sup>83</sup> Nationally, when home equity is excluded, women-headed households have a net worth roughly 60% of households headed by men. That figure has held constant for a decade.<sup>84</sup>

The wealth gap among single people is more stunning (FIGURE 11). Nationally, women have accrued wealth that is 32% that of men. That means that for every \$100 of net worth of single men, single women have a comparable wealth of \$32.

When measured against single white men nationally, single women’s wealth drops to \$11.<sup>85</sup> Again, the inequity is even more startling for women of color.

For every \$100 of wealth held by white men, white women (aged 18–64) have \$74, Latinas have \$3, and African-American women have 80 cents.

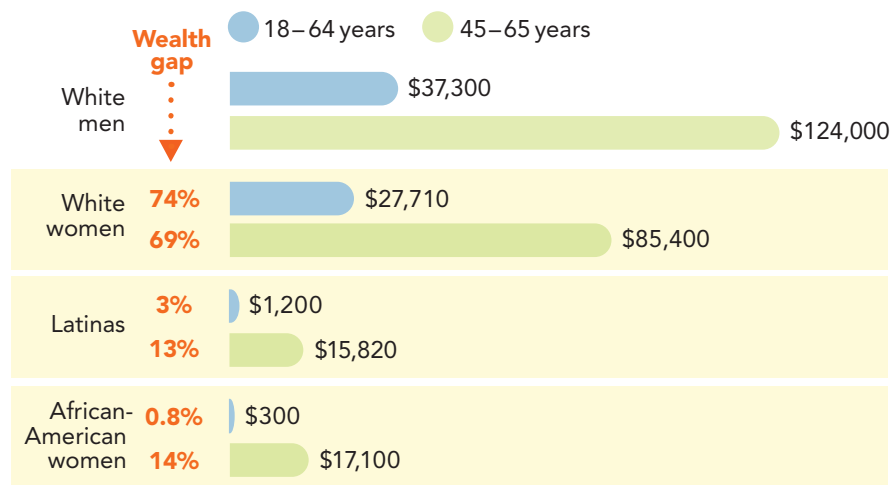
Women face many societal barriers to building wealth. As a whole, women:

- Tend to earn less than men
- Are more likely than men to take time off from work or work part-time in order to care for family members
- May not have access to as many employment benefits — like a 401(k) — as men
- Have more limited access to mortgage credit
- Carry a higher student debt than men<sup>86</sup>

Due in large part to lower earnings, women have less in savings than men. Just over half of women in the 18–34 age bracket have savings compared to 70% of men in this age group.<sup>87</sup> Even with savings, women invest less than men. One study indicates women keep 71% of their assets in cash compared to men, who hold 60% in cash, with the difference invested for growth.

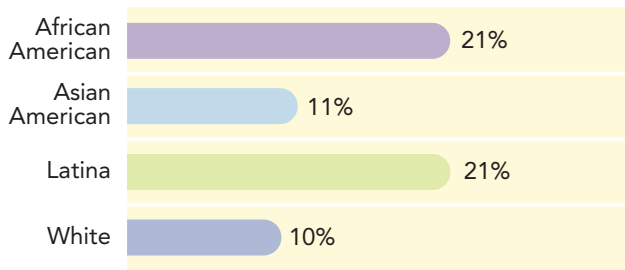
With women also carrying more debt than men, women tend to have lower credit scores than men and, thus, less favorable terms for credit. Single women may pay higher interest rates on home mortgages than single men do, or as much as a half point higher annually on credit cards.<sup>88</sup>

FIGURE 11  
U.S. WEALTH GAP BETWEEN  
SINGLE WOMEN AND SINGLE WHITE MEN



Note: Information related to Asian-American women is not available at the source cited. These data result from an analysis of the 2016 Survey of Consumer Finances Data. Sources: California Budget and Policy Center (18–64 years); Asset Funders Network (45–65 years).

FIGURE 12  
CALIFORNIA WOMEN AND GIRLS LIVING IN POVERTY



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 ACS Single-Year Estimates.

## Poverty

The 2018 federal poverty level for a family of four is \$25,701; for a single individual, the poverty threshold is \$12,784.<sup>89</sup> Given those thresholds, 13% of all Californians live in poverty. And 6% of Californians live in extreme poverty with an income less than half of those thresholds.<sup>90</sup> The good news is that the poverty rate for all Californians has declined for four consecutive years and is now lower than it was in 2010.<sup>91</sup>

The poverty rate of California's women and girls is roughly two percentage points higher than that for males; it's now 14%, down from 17% in 2010. Again, though, there are variations between different races and ethnicities (FIGURE 12).

While the poverty threshold established by the U.S. Census Bureau depends on a number of factors, it does not take into account the variance in the cost of living across the country. Other poverty measures — such as the Supplemental Poverty Measure and the California Poverty Measure — consider expenses of food, clothes, shelter, utilities, and housing costs by region. By either of these measures, California has one of the highest poverty rates in the nation, at 18%.<sup>92</sup>

**Housing insecurity.** Among California's nearly 1.7 million households headed by a woman, 22% have a household income below the federal poverty threshold. Of these women-headed households living in poverty, 19% own their home, while 81% live in a rented home.<sup>93</sup> When housing costs eat up more than one-third of income, unanticipated economic or health issues can threaten stable housing.

Among all of California's homeowners, 70% carry a mortgage. The median monthly cost associated with living in these owner-occupied units is \$2,345, which equals or exceeds 35% of the household income of those living in nearly 1.5 million of these units. For the nearly six million renter-occupied households across California, the median rent is \$1,520. This figure represents 35% or more of household income for more than 2.5 million of California's rental households.<sup>94</sup>

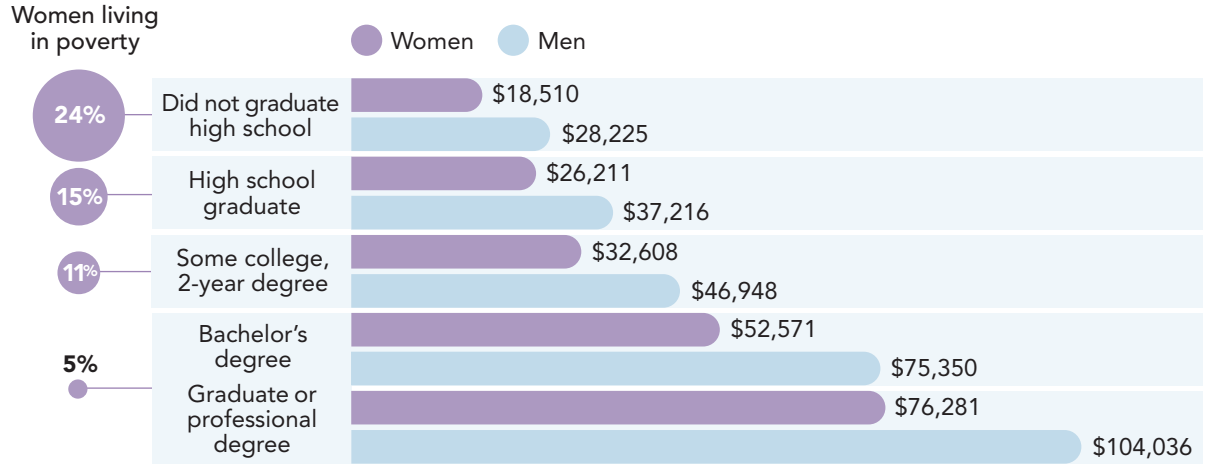
In total, nearly 4.3 million California households are at risk of housing instability. And households headed by women, with a higher poverty rate, are at greater risk of becoming homeless than married-family and male-headed households.

**Homelessness.** California has the largest homeless population of any state. In January 2018, there were nearly 130,000 people experiencing homelessness in the state, 69% of whom were unsheltered and living in the streets or in automobiles.<sup>95</sup> One in three were women, and just over 1% identified as transgender or nonbinary. Nearly 13,000 were victims of domestic violence.

The state's homeless rate is rising. Three years ago, just under 116,000 Californians (one-third of them women) were experiencing homelessness. Californians are also more likely to experience crime while homeless. In Los Angeles, for instance, violent crimes victimizing homeless persons rose by 68% in 2018, compared to a decrease of such crime in the general population citywide.<sup>96</sup>



FIGURE 13  
 IMPACT OF EDUCATION ON CALIFORNIA  
 WOMEN'S EARNINGS AND POVERTY STATUS



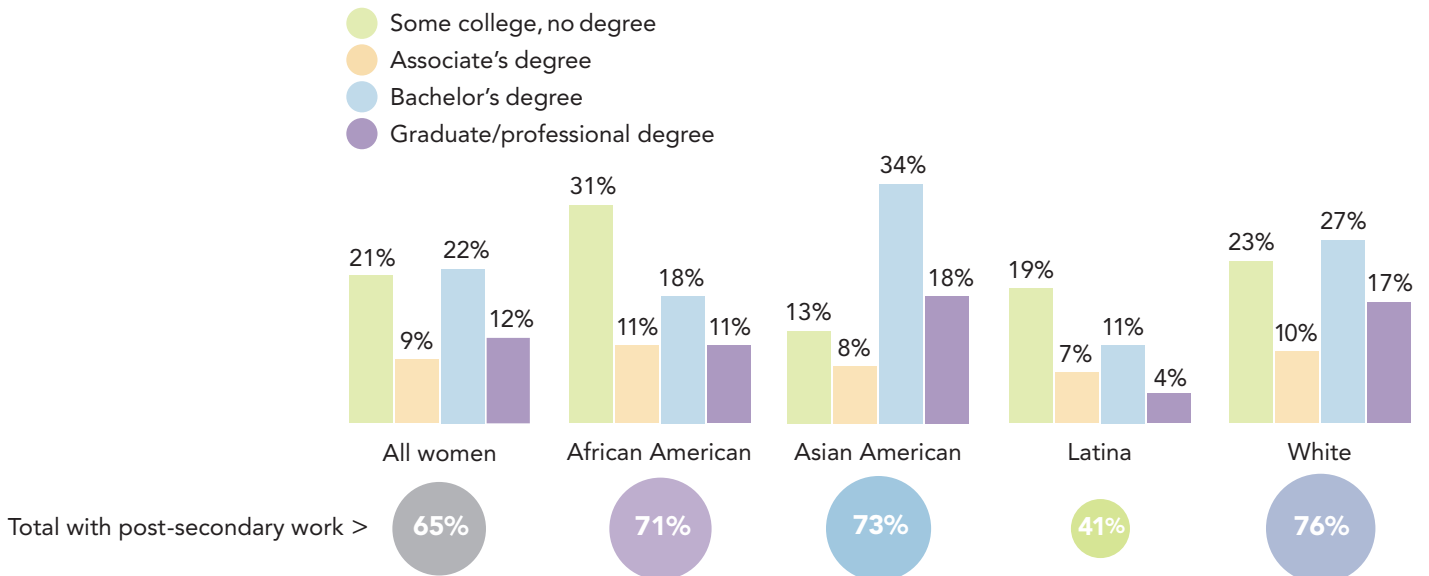
Note: These figures are for Californians 25 years and over.  
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 ACS Single-Year Estimates.

### Educational attainment

Evidence shows the more education a woman gains, the greater her odds are of maximizing income and minimizing poverty. While the median earnings of men are more than that of women at all levels of educational attainment, a woman with a four-year college degree earns twice as much as a woman with a high school diploma. And a woman with a bachelor's degree earns nearly three times more than a woman who didn't complete a high school education (FIGURE 13).<sup>97</sup>

Today, more women than ever — across all races and ethnicities — attain a minimum of a bachelor's degree (FIGURE 14).<sup>98</sup> And the proportion of women aged 25–34 who have attained a bachelor's degree or higher is increasing. In 2010, 25% of women in this age bracket had a bachelor's degree; 10% had a graduate degree. Today, those percentages have risen to 28% and 12%, respectively.<sup>99</sup>

FIGURE 14  
 DEGREES HELD BY WOMEN 25 YEARS AND OLDER



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 ACS Single-Year Estimates.

# Securing optimal health and wellness

Good health — both physical and mental — is critical to optimizing almost every aspect of one’s life. Since 2000, between 50% and 55% of California women have ranked their overall health as very good to excellent.<sup>100</sup> In this chapter, we explore areas where women cope with special concerns in physical and emotional well-being, maternal and infant health, the health demands of family caregiving, and food insecurity.

## Chronic conditions

More than half of the U.S. population — including more than 14 million Californians — suffer from at least one chronic condition. According to a 2015 report, treatment of chronic diseases accounts for more than 40% of the state’s healthcare costs.<sup>101</sup>

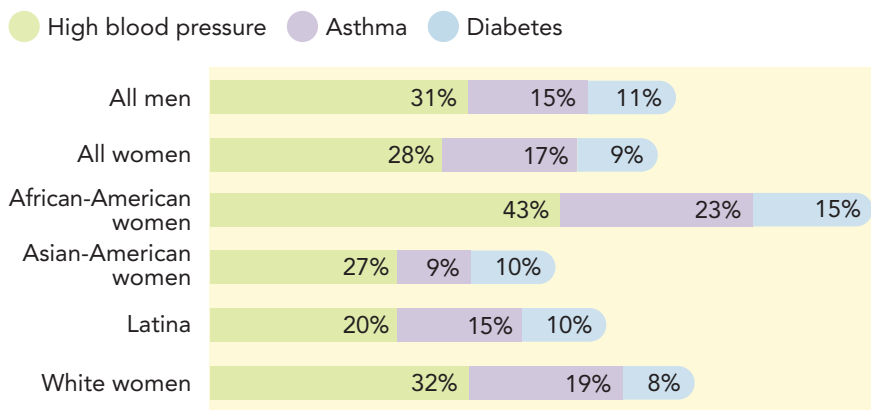
The three most common chronic conditions affecting Californians are high blood pressure, asthma, and diabetes.<sup>102</sup> The prevalence of all these diseases has increased three to eight percentage points since 2000.<sup>103</sup>

Among all California women, the most common chronic disease is high blood pressure; more than four in 10 African-American women and three in 10 white women have the condition. Latinas are least likely to suffer from high blood pressure. As a group, African-American women are 1.5 to two times more likely than other women to suffer from high blood pressure, asthma, and diabetes (FIGURE 15).

“The people who we expect to raise us, care for us, and work to support us are too often left unsupported and uncared for.”

— MARIA SHRIVER, JOURNALIST, AUTHOR, FORMER FIRST LADY OF CALIFORNIA (1955–)

FIGURE 15  
COMMON CHRONIC DISEASES IN CALIFORNIA



Note: Figures represent the percentage of people who responded “yes” to the question: “Have you ever been diagnosed with ... ?”  
Source: California Health Interview Survey 2018.

## IMPROVING THE MENTAL HEALTH OF WOMEN AND GIRLS

The care of people with mental illness has changed in California over the last century. Initially provided in large, Victorian-era institutions, that model ultimately resulted in overcrowding and inhumane practices such as involuntary sterilization and the commitment of women without their consent by spouses and parents. Over time, the paradigm for care transitioned to community-based approaches — better in theory but vulnerable in practice. What are the next steps in the evolution of mental health care for California’s women and girls?

our caregivers’ mental health burden?

The state legislature is taking some steps in the right direction, including the California Family Rights Act, which guarantees 12 weeks of mostly unpaid leave;

Today, severe underfunding and budget cuts— \$587 million cut between 2009–2011 in California alone<sup>104</sup> — often leave many women and girls without access to mental health services. And those services are in great need.

Research shows the prevalence of mood and anxiety disorders is greater among women than men. Yet women and girls — especially women of color — are less likely than males to receive needed mental health services. That’s particularly true for younger women and sexual minorities.<sup>105</sup> Stigma surrounding mental illness, lack of health insurance, and low accessibility to culturally, linguistically, and LGBTQ-competent services are some of the reasons for this disparity.<sup>106</sup>

We need to increase the number and training of mental health therapists in schools, as research shows personnel shortages and lack of preparation make it more difficult for school-aged children to receive mental health care.<sup>107</sup>

California needs more mental health care professionals in the field, period. The state already has a shortage of behavioral health professionals and new research shows we face a “severe shortage of psychiatrists by 2028,” if measures aren’t taken.<sup>108</sup> And the American Psychological Association reports a shortage of mental health care services for Latinx populations in particular. To better serve the needs of diverse populations, here at Mount Saint Mary’s, we’ve created a doctor of psychology in clinical health psychology with two new emphases: Latinx mental health and diverse populations. The PsyD complements our longstanding Spanish-language *Enlaces!* certificate program in marriage and family therapy.

Another revelation in this Report is that caregiving — performed most often by women — can significantly increase mental health risks. How we do relieve

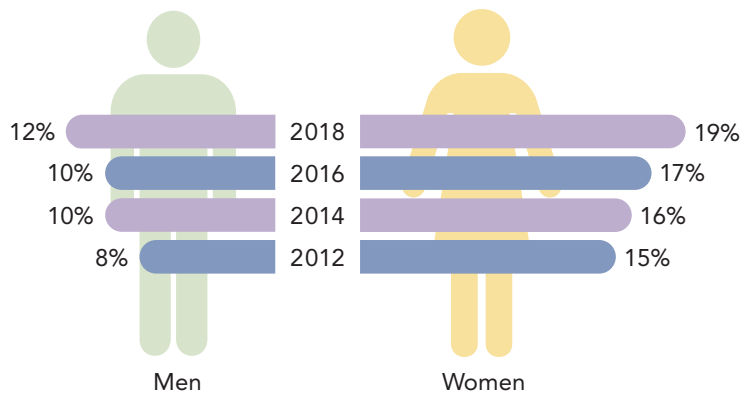
the Family and Medical Leave Act, also unpaid; and the Paid Family Leave program, which seeks to provide some compensation while on leave. But we need to offer job protections and more paid family leave for those who take time off to care for family members. These actions can help better protect our caregivers’ mental health.

State and local policies have attempted to ameliorate the effects of federal budget cuts to mental health services. For example, the new California Mental Health Services Authority has helped develop prevention and early intervention programs, focusing on diverse racial/ethnic groups and young adults.<sup>109</sup> Although these programs show promise, there’s still much to do. More attention must be paid to the needs of women of color, those with serious mental illnesses, those experiencing homelessness, and incarcerated women who may not frequent places that commonly offer social services, such as community centers, schools, and churches.

The evolving needs of our diverse population require creative solutions to engage California’s women and girls in mental health services. And we need to offer those services in nontraditional settings like consulates,<sup>110</sup> markets, and festivals, and by developing campaigns on social media platforms where many young people already look for, and receive, informal support. Our work has only begun.

**Paula Helu-Brown, PhD, LMFT**  
Assistant Professor, Psychology  
Mount Saint Mary’s University

FIGURE 16  
CALIFORNIANS DIAGNOSED  
WITH DEPRESSION



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System.

### Emotional well-being

Stress, anxiety, and occasional depression seem to be inherent to busy lives; when these feelings occur frequently and interfere with daily life, they may be treated as mental disorders. Common mental disorders include mood (depression), anxiety (certain phobias), substance use, and adjustment disorders (such as post-traumatic stress).<sup>111</sup>

Men are more than twice as likely as women to have a substance use disorder, but the prevalence of both mood and anxiety disorders is greater among women.

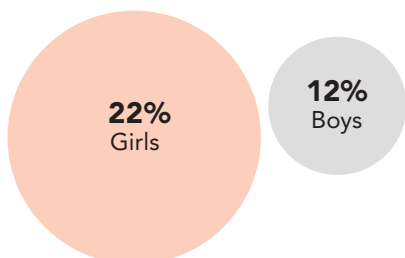
**Depression.** Californians are less likely than women and men across the nation to suffer from depression. Fifteen percent of adult Californians, compared to 20% of adults nationwide, have been diagnosed with depression at some point in their lives. However, women are more than 1.5 times more likely to suffer from depression than men (FIGURE 16).<sup>112</sup>

Across the nation, LGBT individuals are two to three times more likely to experience depression, anxiety, and substance use problems.<sup>113</sup> In California, 61% of gay, lesbian, or bisexual high school students consistently felt sad or hopeless for several weeks in a row compared to 29% of heterosexual students.<sup>114</sup>

**Suicide.** Suicide is an extreme manifestation of poor mental health, and the rise in suicide and suicide attempts among Californians — especially among adolescents (aged 15–19 years) — should be noted. In 2017, there were 3.7 suicides per 100,000 California adolescent girls, up from 2.6 in 2012. Adolescent boys are roughly three times more likely to commit suicide than girls. In 2017, there were 10.7 suicides per 100,000 boys aged 15–19, up from 6.9 in 2012.<sup>115</sup> Importantly, many more youth suffer feelings of depression and contemplate suicide than actually commit the act (FIGURE 17).<sup>116</sup>

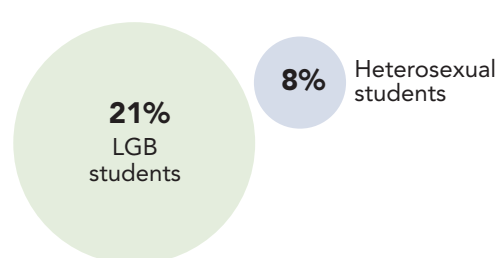
LGBTQ individuals are more susceptible to contemplating and attempting suicide, and this is particularly true among adolescents. In 2017, California’s lesbian, gay, and bisexual high school students were more than 2.5 times more likely to attempt suicide than heterosexual students (FIGURE 18).<sup>117</sup>

FIGURE 17  
CALIFORNIA PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL  
STUDENTS CONSIDERING SUICIDE



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018.

FIGURE 18  
CALIFORNIA HIGH SCHOOL  
STUDENTS ATTEMPTING SUICIDE



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018.

## Maternal and infant health

**Maternal health.** The United States has the highest rate of pregnancy-related deaths of all developed countries and is the only country with an increasing rate.<sup>118</sup> In California, though, the maternal mortality rate is decreasing. The most recently reported maternal mortality rate<sup>119</sup> among California mothers is 4.5 deaths per 100,000 births, down from 5.9 reported in 2016.<sup>120</sup> There are considerable racial and ethnic disparities among pregnancy-related death rates. The most recent data available show maternal death rates are highest for African-American women and lowest for Latinas (FIGURE 19).

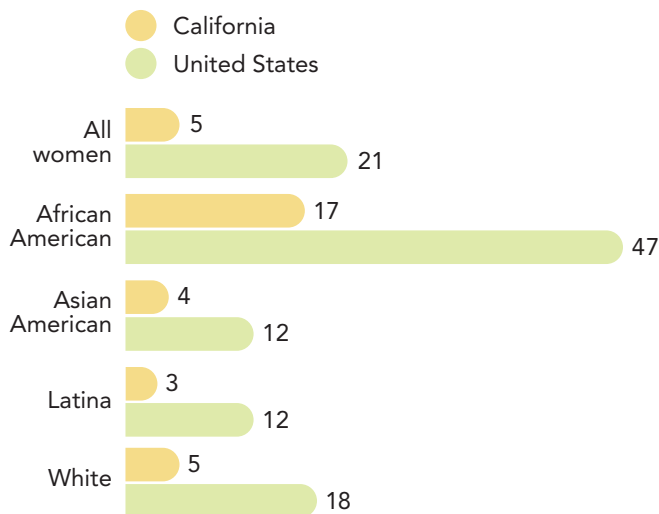
It's estimated roughly 40% to 50% of these deaths could have been prevented by some change in provider care, patient behavior, or the health system.<sup>121</sup> California has taken the initiative to improve health outcomes for mothers and infants through its California Maternal Quality Care Collaborative's research studies. The research has led to the development of quality improvement toolkits for caregivers and hospitals that are widely implemented throughout the state; California's lower mortality rates have resulted in part from this effort.<sup>122</sup>

**Infant health.** The death rate of infants up to one year of age is lower in California than across the nation — 4.2 per 1,000 live births in California compared to 5.8 nationwide.<sup>123</sup> Still, infant mortality is roughly 100 times that of maternal mortality.

As with maternal mortality, there's a wide disparity in infant death rates based on the race or ethnicity of the mother, with babies of African-American women being at greatest risk. Most infants die as a result of complications in childbirth, birth defects, or infection. Additional risk factors to infant health include a preterm birth and low birth weight (FIGURE 20).<sup>124</sup>

**Teen births.** According to the most recent America's Health Rankings, the infant mortality rate for babies born to California mothers aged 15–19 is 5.6 — higher than for any other child-bearing age group. The good news: California's teen birth rate is on the decline, reaching a new low last year. The 2019 edition of America's Health Rankings reports just 1.5% of teen girls are giving birth, compared to 2.1% in its 2016 edition.<sup>125</sup>

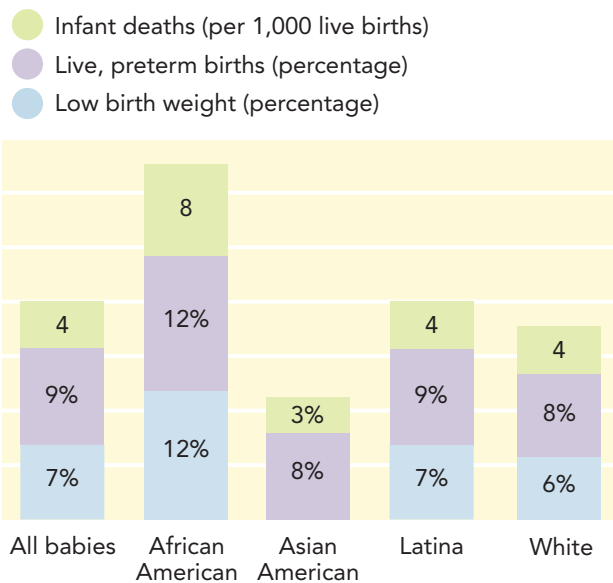
FIGURE 19  
MATERNAL MORTALITY  
PER 100,000 BIRTHS



Note: The maternal mortality rate includes women who died within 42 days of giving birth or from when the pregnancy was terminated (whatever the cause). Data are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Source: America's Health Rankings (2018 edition), analysis of CDC WONDER online database, mortality files, 2011-2015.

FIGURE 20  
CALIFORNIA'S INFANT DEATHS  
AND BIRTH CHARACTERISTICS



Notes: The infant mortality rate includes infants who died up to one year after birth. Full-term births begin at 37 weeks. Low birth weight is considered less than five pounds, eight ounces. Data on low birth weight not available for Asian Americans. Race/ethnicity is that of the mother. Data for infant deaths rounded to the nearest whole number to match rounding used for percentages.

Source: America's Health Rankings, 2019 edition.

## Caretaking and self-care

**Family caretaking.** An estimated 43.5 million adults in the U.S. have provided unpaid care to adult family members in the past year. Sixty percent of these caregivers are women; over half (56%) are employed full-time. The median age of caregivers across the U.S. is 49 years: one in four caregivers is a millennial (aged 18–34), and one in five is 65 years or older.<sup>126</sup>

In California, a survey of registered voters 40 years and older finds that 44% have provided unpaid care for an adult loved one (including a special-needs child) at some point; 14% are currently serving as a caregiver.<sup>127</sup> The majority (60%) of those unpaid family caregivers have held a job while providing care. In order to juggle responsibilities, more than 70% have changed their work schedule or taken time off to provide care: one-third have taken a leave of absence; another 27% have gone from full-time to part-time jobs. More than one in five (22%) have given up work entirely in order to provide care.

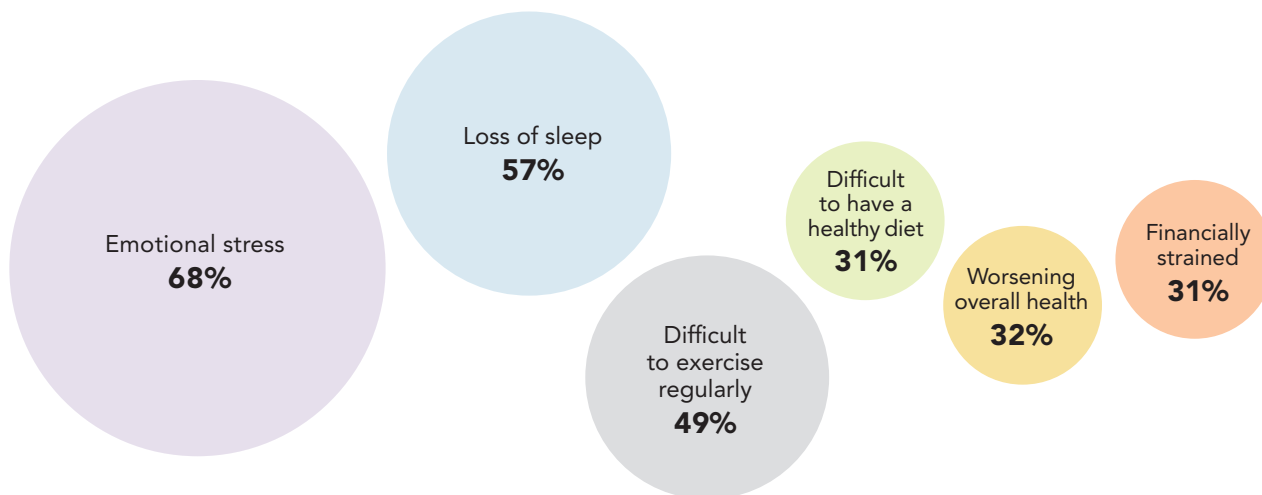
In addition, two-thirds of current and former caregivers (40 years and older) have used their own money to provide care. On average, U.S. caregivers spend just under \$7,000 a year out of pocket on caregiving costs.<sup>128</sup> Much of this money is spent on providing transportation, assistive devices such as wheelchairs, or in making changes to the home necessary to provide adequate care.<sup>129</sup>

Beyond the financial impact, caregiving can lead to negative health effects. The more hours involved in caregiving, the more likely the California caregiver is to experience emotional stress, physical health problems, and financial strain (FIGURE 21).<sup>130</sup>

At the national level, women who care for family members are more likely to report fair to poor health than women who do not have these responsibilities (25% and 17%, respectively).<sup>131</sup> Compared to women who do not have caregiving responsibilities, caregivers are twice as likely to delay needed care, are more likely to suffer from a chronic health condition (54% to 41%, respectively), and are more likely to develop heart disease. Women caregivers also have higher rates of mood disorders (such as depression and anxiety) than those who do not serve as caregivers.

**Self-care.** Data like those above underscore why self-care is key to maintaining health. More than one in four caregivers (26%) report needing some information about community support for themselves, primarily in the area of managing stress.<sup>132</sup> Self-care refers to actions that individuals can take to enhance and preserve their own health, limit illness, and maintain general wellness.

FIGURE 21  
ISSUES REPORTED BY CALIFORNIA FAMILY CAREGIVERS,  
40 YEARS AND OLDER



Source: AARP Research.



The health value of preventive care is well established thanks to the existence of mammograms, Papanicolaou tests, and various vaccinations. But regular physical activity and a healthy diet can also prevent poor health — and reduce stress.

Regular physical activity is associated with lowering stress as well as lowering the risk of death, especially from cardiovascular disease, hypertension, and type 2 diabetes. Yet, nearly one in five women (aged 18–44 years) across the state report doing no physical activity or exercise other than their regular job.<sup>133</sup>

A nutritious diet, with sufficient vegetables and fruit, is another key factor to health maintenance. Perhaps surprisingly, given the agricultural industry and health culture in California, 18% of women eat less than one serving of vegetables each day and 29% of women eat less than one daily serving of fruits.<sup>134</sup>

### **Food insecurity**

The reasons more individuals don't consume vegetables and fruits are varied, but inadequate access to affordable fresh food and vegetables is among them. In California, only 52% of residents report affordable fresh fruits and vegetables are always available in their neighborhood — up from 49% in 2013. There are disparities by neighborhoods, with 51% of African Americans and 47% of Latinx residents reporting they always have access to affordable fresh foods. And there are still some “food deserts” in California where there's no access to fresh food: 1% to 3% of African Americans and Latinx residents report having no access to fresh foods in their neighborhoods.<sup>135</sup>

The cost of food is another reason that some individuals don't have a healthy diet. More than one in 10 U.S. households (12%) report food insecurity: they're unable to provide adequate food for one or more members of the household due to lack of resources. Food insecurity has broad effects on health because of the mental and physical stress that it places on the body.

California's households fare slightly better than those across the nation. From 2015–2017, 11.2% of California households experienced food insecurity — a decrease from 13.5% in 2012–2014.<sup>136</sup>

## ELIMINATING FOOD INSECURITY ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

A decade after passage of the 19th Amendment, the Great Depression began gripping the country. Hunger became a daily concern for many. Californians waited outside soup kitchens and in long bread lines along with millions of other Americans. By 1939, the federal government had created an initial food stamps program. It would become a permanent form of public assistance in the 1960s.

Connecting students with support services is another important step. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, known as CalFresh in California) provides assistance to low-income individuals and families to purchase food. However, California is third-to-last in SNAP/CalFresh participation

Today, access to enough food for an active, healthy life is considered a basic human right. Yet food insecurity — the lack of reliable access to affordable and nutritious food — still affects millions of people. But unlike the bread lines of the Great Depression, some of those most vulnerable to food insecurity today are more hidden from public view — because they're in dorms and classrooms across our country's college campuses.

A recent survey of 43,000 students at 66 institutions nationwide revealed 36% of responding students had experienced food insecurity in the 30 days leading up to the survey.<sup>137</sup> In our state, 42% of California State University students experience food insecurity.<sup>138</sup> Mount Saint Mary's University's own internal assessment revealed 30% of student respondents experienced food insecurity monthly.<sup>139</sup>

Though this may seem surprising, low-income students now enroll in college at a higher rate than their middle-income peers.<sup>140</sup> Colleges must develop the right initiatives to meet the needs of today's students. If we don't, the effects are far-reaching. Students who experience food insecurity report physical and mental health consequences that are associated with lower academic achievement. Food insecurity disproportionately affects marginalized students, with students of color and first-generation college students experiencing the highest rates. Notably, female students report lacking access to affordable food at a higher rate than male students.<sup>141,142</sup>

### Solutions that work

On-campus food resources, such as food pantries and partnerships with local food banks, are growing. In 2016, more than 350 colleges had a food pantry on campus, compared to just 10 in 2009.<sup>143</sup> In 2017, Mount Saint Mary's established a partnership with Westside Food Bank to provide free produce for students twice a month. To date, Westside Food Bank had distributed about 31,000 pounds of produce to students.

nationwide, with three million eligible Californians who haven't applied. And the current federal administration's new work requirements for SNAP assistance will make it harder for Americans to access and qualify for this support.<sup>144</sup>

In 2018, Mount Saint Mary's partnered with The Center for Healthy Communities. The Center is a statewide authority on nutrition education, food security, and basic needs programs for diverse populations. In the 2018–2019 academic year, thanks to the Center's support, specially trained Mount students helped 220 of their peers complete CalFresh eligibility screenings and/or submit CalFresh applications.

The task of ending hunger on college campuses is daunting. Effective preventive measures include encouraging CalFresh enrollment, adding accessible food pantries, and forming food bank partnerships. At the policy level, the Wisconsin HOPE Lab has identified three promising solutions for federal and state policy makers to take corrective action:

- Expand access to public benefits for students
- Improve financial aid processes and procedures
- Fund students' living expenses beyond tuition and fees<sup>145</sup>

For students to reach their potential in school and after graduation, we need to make sure their basic needs are met first. That starts with access to the nutrition they need to thrive.

### **Alison Halpern, RD, CHES**

*Wellness Manager*

*Mount Saint Mary's University*

# Improving **safety** for women and girls

This chapter focuses on four types of crime that disproportionately affect women and girls: sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, and human trafficking. While safety is an issue for all women and girls, not all are equally at risk. The most disadvantaged — those with less education who are living in poverty and on the streets — are especially vulnerable to crime.

“Societies that treat women badly are dangerous societies. The empowerment of women is not only morally right, it is also practical in the positive impact it has on so many social ills.”

— CONDOLEEZZA RICE, FORMER U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE; DIRECTOR, HOOVER INSTITUTION AT STANFORD UNIVERSITY (1954–)

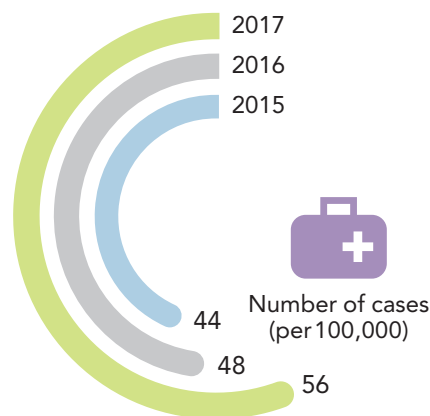
## Sexual harassment and sexual assault

In 2006, activist Tarana Burke started the Me Too movement to raise awareness about sexual harassment and assault, and to empower victims. In 2017, amid the accusation of sexual crimes in Hollywood, the Me Too movement went viral, and it continues to highlight the frequency of sexual harassment and assault endured by women.

An analysis of the #MeToo movement shows that 81% of women and 43% of men across the nation have experienced some form of sexual harassment and/or more serious sexual assault.<sup>146</sup> Women and men in California fare worse, where 86% of women and 53% of men report experiencing some form of sexual harassment and/or assault in their lifetime.<sup>147</sup>

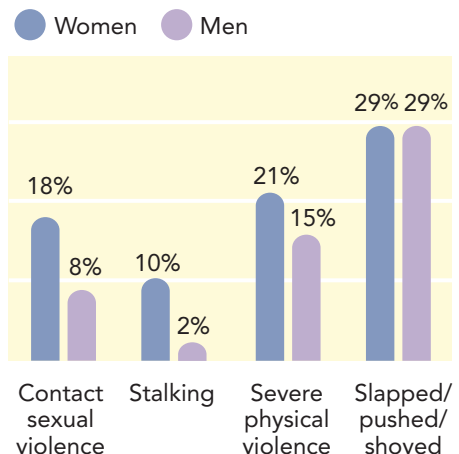
Focusing on sexual assault, more than one in four women in California (26%) report having been forced to perform a sexual act without consent and against their will during their lifetimes. Lesbian and bisexual women are much more likely to report sexual assault than straight women: 81% to 26%, respectively.<sup>148</sup>

FIGURE 22  
U.S. WOMEN SEEKING EMERGENCY CARE FOR SEXUAL ASSAULT



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/WISQARS.

FIGURE 23  
INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE EXPERIENCED BY U.S. WOMEN AND MEN



Source: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Tracking nonfatal injuries related to sexual assault and treated in emergency rooms across the nation can provide sexual assault data (FIGURE 22). In 2017, sexual assault accounted for 9% of all violence-related emergency room visits by women — making sexual assault the third-leading cause of nonfatal, violence-related injuries women are treated for at emergency units across the nation.<sup>149</sup>

### Domestic violence

Domestic violence, also commonly referred to as intimate partner violence, is characterized by violent, abusive behavior of a current or former intimate partner. Forms of abusive behavior include physical or sexual assault, stalking, and psychological aggression.

Across the nation, more than one in three women (36%) and roughly the same percentage of men (34%) report sexual or physical violence and/or stalking by an intimate partner. However, women are more likely than men to experience sexual or severe physical violence at the hands of an intimate partner (FIGURE 23).<sup>150</sup>

Statewide numbers are similar, with the most recent data available showing an estimated 35% of California women have experienced some form of violence by an intimate partner.<sup>151</sup>

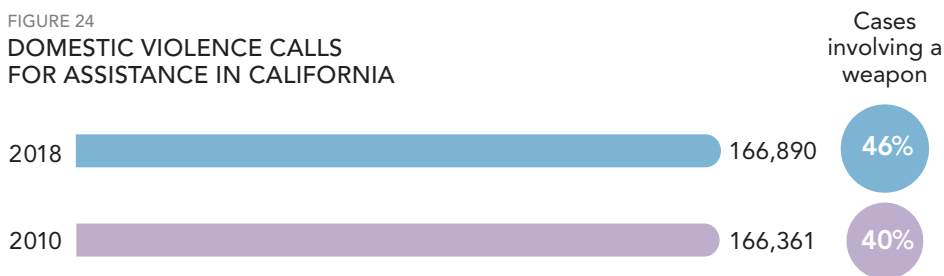
The California Attorney General’s office tallies domestic violence-related calls for assistance to law enforcement agencies across the state. In 2018, there were 166,890 domestic violence-related calls for assistance, roughly the same number as in 2010. The difference now is that a weapon is used in more domestic violence cases — up six percentage points since 2010.<sup>152</sup> (FIGURE 24)

### Human trafficking

Human trafficking data are difficult to assess accurately — due in part to the illegal nature of the activity, as well as to laws and agency policies designed to protect the privacy of survivors. There are an estimated 40 million survivors of human trafficking across the globe; women and girls account for 72% of them.<sup>153</sup> Data from multiple systems suggest an estimate of just over 400,000 survivors of human trafficking in the United States.<sup>154</sup>

Human trafficking is a problem that doesn’t respect state or national boundaries. In fiscal year 2018, the U.S. Departments of Justice, State, and Homeland Security investigated roughly 1,650 cases of human trafficking. Compared to 2016, the number of investigations and prosecutions has decreased, but the number of convictions has increased.<sup>155</sup>

FIGURE 24  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CALLS  
FOR ASSISTANCE IN CALIFORNIA



Source: Office of the Attorney General, State of California.

## RESPONDING TO THE LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

America's pioneering social workers were women who found enterprising ways to support women and children in need, often due to domestic abuse and sexual violence. Methods varied from informal settlement houses — like Jane Addams' Hull House — to women-led organizations like the YWCA. Over the past century, tactics to end domestic violence have evolved. So, too, has our understanding of how we can best support survivors.

To keep women and children safer, and help them achieve their full potential, we must first understand the complexities and dynamics of domestic violence.<sup>156</sup> This knowledge can help us avoid victim shaming and blaming. We also need to realize that the trauma of physical, verbal, emotional, and psychological abuse can affect survivors for the rest of their lives — and affect their families and communities. Children are particularly vulnerable.<sup>157</sup>

It is essential that mental health professionals and educators learn from survivors to become trauma-informed. It's not only the physical well-being of women and children that's at stake. Domestic violence also has a profoundly negative effect on survivors' mental, emotional, and financial health that doesn't necessarily end when the relationship ends. For example, research shows:

There's a relationship between intimate partner violence, depression, and suicidal behavior. Survivors are also more susceptible to post-traumatic stress and are more likely to develop addictions to alcohol, tobacco, and drugs.<sup>158</sup>

In the U.S., survivors lose eight million days of paid work each year — and as many as three in five survivors of intimate partner violence lose their jobs due to reasons stemming from the abuse.<sup>159</sup>

And the family court system does not factor in prior physical, emotional, verbal, and financial abuse when determining physical and legal custody. In California, there's an 85% chance of losing custody to an abuser even when abuse is reported in family court.<sup>160</sup>

So, what can we do? According to the World Health Organization, the following interventions have shown "promise and effectiveness":

### **Strengthen women's and children's civil rights**

Reforming legal frameworks must include strengthening women's civil rights. Continuing to refine laws that

define what rape is, what constitutes assault within a marriage, and what's in "the best interest of a child" can help improve the rights of women and children and potentially protect them from suffering lifelong effects of abuse.<sup>161</sup>

### **Provide early intervention services to at-risk families**

Research indicates early intervention plays a key role in decreasing domestic violence, child abuse, and child maltreatment. Early intervention strategies such as home visits, parental education, and

counseling have shown to reduce rates of child conduct issues and violent behavior that commonly surfaces later in victims of abuse.<sup>162</sup>

### **Hold perpetrators accountable**

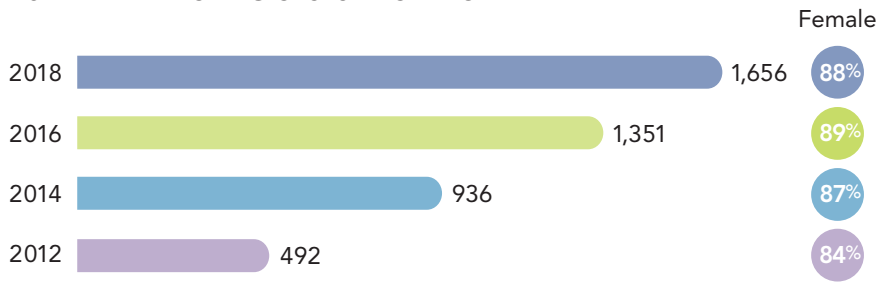
There should be a zero-tolerance policy for all forms of abuse, and laws must be enforced fully and consistently. Research shows the most dangerous peak in an abusive relationship is after the survivor leaves the abuser. Knowing this, the appropriate agencies must take protective measures to prevent further domestic violence or domestic violence by proxy — abusing or controlling the survivor's children.<sup>163</sup>

We can create an even greater impact by directly contending with the beliefs, perceptions, and stereotypes that perpetuate a culture of violence. The responsibility for change rests on all community members as we set the tone and example for future generations — this includes engaging men and boys in promoting nonviolence and gender equity. Healthy, equitable, and nonviolent relationships are possible as long as we reject violence and hold each other accountable.

### **Amanda Romero, EdD**

*Chair, Associate Professor of Social Work  
Mount Saint Mary's University*

FIGURE 25  
HUMAN TRAFFICKING CASES IN CALIFORNIA



Note: Percentages indicate females among survivors (as identified by gender in the data available).  
Source: National Human Trafficking Hotline.

The National Human Trafficking Hotline is the largest publicly available data set on human trafficking in the United States.<sup>164</sup> In 2018, it reported 10,949 cases; California accounted for 1,656 (15%) of those cases (FIGURE 25). The vast majority of human trafficking survivors are women and girls. In 2018, 88% were women and girls; just under 2% identified as transgender or nonbinary.

Nearly three-quarters (74%) of California's cases involve sex trafficking (such as escort services and outdoor solicitation); 9% involve labor trafficking (especially domestic work and agriculture), and 7% of cases involve a combination of both sex and labor trafficking (such as illicit massage businesses, bars, and strip clubs).<sup>165</sup>

Survivors of human trafficking face many hurdles as they re-enter society — a fact that's been documented by the California-based Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (Cast), which provides comprehensive social and professional services to trafficking survivors. A Cast study of a small sample of youth survivors (94% girls) who were commercially trafficked for sex revealed that over half had suffered emotional, physical, psychological, and/or sexual abuse from their trafficker. Prior to being trafficked, over 40% had been involved with child protective services and 57% reported having a mental health diagnosis.<sup>166</sup>

The importance of social services and mentors for trafficking survivors cannot be overestimated. After receiving social support services for at least six months, more than half of the youth survivors in Cast's study had access to medical services and safe housing, and more than 40% were attending school or were employed.<sup>167</sup>



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## Notes on this year's research

This marks the ninth edition of *The Report on the Status of Women and Girls in California*,<sup>TM</sup> published annually by the Center for the Advancement of Women at Mount Saint Mary's University in Los Angeles. The Report draws heavily from data such as those collected by the U.S. Census Bureau, including yearly estimates provided by the American Community Survey (ACS). The most recent ACS data at the time of publication were from 2018. This Report also uses other sources of information. When the most recent data available from other sources are from an earlier year, the Report lists that year specifically. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number. Endnotes provide detailed citations for all data and claims presented. Demographic breakdowns focus on California's African-American, Asian-American, Latina, and white women. Combined, these groups account for 96% of the state's female population.

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## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Mead, R. J. (2004). *How the vote was won: Woman suffrage in the western United States, 1868–1914*. New York University Press.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> California State Archives, a division of the Office of the California Secretary of State. (2018). *Women get the right to vote: Celebrating 99 years of women's suffrage*. [sos.ca.gov/archives/women-get-right-vote](https://sos.ca.gov/archives/women-get-right-vote)

<sup>4</sup> Mead, R. J. (2004). *How the vote was won: Woman suffrage in the western United States, 1868-1914*. New York University Press.

<sup>5</sup> Keenleyside, H. (1927, May 31). The woman's vote in national elections. *Editorial research reports 1927* (Vol. II). CQ Press. [library.cqpress.com/cqresearcher/cqresrre1927053100](https://library.cqpress.com/cqresearcher/cqresrre1927053100)

<sup>6</sup> Center for American Women and Politics. (2019). *Gender differences in voter turnout*. Rutgers University, Eagleton Institute of Politics. [cawp.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/resources/genderdiff.pdf](https://cawp.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/resources/genderdiff.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Center for American Women and Politics. (2020). *Women in state legislatures 2020*. Rutgers University, Eagleton Institute of Politics. [cawp.rutgers.edu/women-state-legislature-2020](https://cawp.rutgers.edu/women-state-legislature-2020)

<sup>10</sup> Nearly all figures in this snapshot are from data reported by the U.S. Census Bureau. "Then" data are from the Bureau's *Fourteenth Census of the United States, state compendium (California)*. (1924) Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C. [census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1920/state-compendium/06229686v1-7ch04.pdf](https://www.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1920/state-compendium/06229686v1-7ch04.pdf); "Now" data are from the 2018 *American community survey single-year estimates*. [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov)

<sup>11</sup> Note: Since the most recent Census data available at time of publication were from 2018, this Report doesn't make exact 100-year comparisons to 1920.

<sup>12</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. Then: *Population of California*, Table 1; *Population of incorporated places*, Table 3. Now: Table B01001: Sex by Age. [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov)

<sup>13</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. Then: *Composition and characteristics of the population*, Table 1: Population—California. Color or race, nativity, parentage, and sex for the state. [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov)

Note: In 1920, the U.S. Census Bureau categorized racial and ethnic demographics by Chinese, Indian (Native American), Japanese, Negro, white, and other. Also, the census did not break out Latinas by ethnicity but included them within racial groups, usually among whites. Due to this counting methodology, there was substantial under-counting of nonwhite communities during this time period.

<sup>14</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. Now: Tables B01001, B01001B, B01001D, B01001H, B01001I: Sex by age. [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov)

<sup>15</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. Then: Table 17: Country of birth of the foreign-born population, with citizenship of the foreign-born white, for the state, 1920. [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov)

Note: Foreign-born women in 1920 were identified by country of birth; "Other areas" include Canada, Central America, and South America.

<sup>16</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. Now: *2018 American community survey single-year estimates*. [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov)

<sup>17</sup> Then: 1920 U.S. Census state compendium. (See footnote 10.)

Now: *Cities in California*, Ballotpedia. [ballotpedia.org/Cities\\_in\\_California](https://ballotpedia.org/Cities_in_California)

Note: Total number of cities (184 and 482) is based on the number of incorporated cities statewide, then and now.

<sup>18</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. Then: Tables 14 (age) and 15 (marital status). Now: Table B01001: Sex by age (age); Table B12002: Sex by marital status by age for the population 15 years and over (marital status); California Health Inventory Survey (Accessed December 2019): Sexual orientation and gender identification. Selected for women and data aggregated 2015-2018 to enhance statistical reliability. [ask.chis.ucla.edu](https://ask.chis.ucla.edu) (LGBT population); Table B21001: Sex by age by veteran status for the civilian population 18 years and over (veterans).

Notes: Reliable data for veterans and LGBT residents are not available for 1920, though it should be noted an estimated 90,000 American women served in uniform in World War I (Source: Women Overseas Service League: History. [wosl.org/history](https://wosl.org/history)). Today, 9% of all California veterans are women.

<sup>19</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. Then: Table 25: Occupations for 19 years and over. Now: Table B24010: Sex by occupation for the civilian employed population 16 years and over. [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov)

Notes: In 1920, no category of lawyers/judicial law clerks for women were listed. In 1920, college presidents were grouped with professors (1920 Census notes indicate there are likely pre-college teachers included in this category); the 2018 figure for this category is for "postsecondary teachers." The higher-than-expected percentage of women as college presidents and professors in 1920 likely has something to do with the greater number of women's colleges back then, where more women would have been professors.

<sup>20</sup> Center for American Women and Politics. History of Women in the U.S. Congress. [cawp.rutgers.edu/history-women-us-congress](https://cawp.rutgers.edu/history-women-us-congress)

Note: "Then" data are for women serving in the 67th Congress (1921–1923). "Now" data are for women serving in the 116th Congress (2019–2021). As of 2020, there are 17 Democrats and 9 Republican women serving in the U.S. Senate. Of the 101 women in the House, 88 are Democrats and 13 are Republicans.

<sup>21</sup> Ballotpedia. *United States congressional delegations from California*. [ballotpedia.org/United\\_States\\_congressional\\_delegations\\_from\\_California](https://ballotpedia.org/United_States_congressional_delegations_from_California)

<sup>22</sup> Center for American Women and Politics. Fact sheet—California. [cawp.rutgers.edu](https://cawp.rutgers.edu)

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- <sup>168</sup> Note: The Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media at Mount Saint Mary's University is the only research institute working collaboratively within the entertainment industry to improve gender balance, reduce stereotyping, and create diverse female characters in entertainment and media targeting children 11 and under. The Institute's theory of change is: "If she can see it, she can be it." By creating opportunities for children and adolescents to see positive media portrayals of what's possible for them, it increases their ability to see themselves in these roles. To date, the Institute has conducted over 28 major research studies highlighting the gender imbalances and stereotyping that exist in children's programming. [seejane.org](http://seejane.org)





# Engage for equity

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## **Contact**

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“*Every moment is an organizing opportunity, every person a potential activist, every minute a chance to change the world.*”

— DOLORES HUERTA,  
CALIFORNIA CIVIL  
RIGHTS ACTIVIST  
AND LABOR LEADER  
(1930–)



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“*Every woman's success should be an inspiration to another. We're strongest when we cheer each other on.*”

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