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Washington State Women's Commission announces Activate 3.8 campaign

OLYMPIA, WA – The Washington State Women's Commission will launch a campaign June 28 aimed at raising awareness and generating solutions to close the gender pay gap in Washington state. [Activate 3.8](#) is a statewide campaign that seeks to bring together elected officials and state agencies, business and labor leaders, and academics to close the pay gap for Washington women and girls.

The [National Partnership for Women and Families](#) found that women in Washington made \$18,400 less in average wages than men in 2022, the largest gender-based wage discrepancy in the nation, second only to Utah. This reality stunts our state's economy and the opportunities for 3.8 million women and has the potential to do the same for future generations of girls. If this gap were closed, women in our state could pay for 11 months of rent, over a year of childcare, or pay off nearly two years of student loan debt.

For Black women, indigenous women, and women of color in Washington, the wage gap is even more dire.

- Latina women make \$35,402 less than white, non-Hispanic men.
- Native American women make \$31,587 less than white, non-Hispanic men.
- Black women make \$28,405 less than white, non-Hispanic men.
- Asian American, Native Hawaiian, & Pacific Islander women make \$21,468 less than white, non-Hispanic men.

There are many reasons Washington state lags the country. The overrepresentation of men in industries like technology and aerospace, where workers earn some of the highest salaries in state, skews the wage distribution. Higher-paying trades jobs often lack properly fitting protective equipment for women, contributing to their exclusion from these occupations. Additionally, when women find the opportunity pursue jobs in lucrative professions, as those fields become more female dominated, salaries drop. For example, when more women entered biology, wages dropped by 18%, according to a 2016 Cornell study. That same study showed wages for graphic designers fell 34% when women stepped into these roles.



The Washington State Women's Commission is seeking solutions to close the wage gap by bringing together thought leaders across industries and experiences, while also introducing the next generation of young girls to opportunities in STEM careers, the trades, and other high-paying positions. The agency has partnered with the Girl Scouts of Washington on a state-wide tour to spotlight these opportunities and connect girls to women leaders in these fields.

Interview availability

Washington State Women's Commission Executive Director [Grace Yoo](#), Gov. Jay Inslee's lead cabinet director on women's policy, is available for virtual or in-studio interviews to speak on:

- Washington State Women's Commission's analysis of driving factors behind the gap
- WSWC's Activate 3.8 campaign to close Washington's staggering gender pay gap

Reach out to eliza.craig@swsc.wa.gov to coordinate.

Research Coordinator Annie Kucklick, social worker and lead author for the Center for Women's Welfare's published reports, is available for phone/virtual interviews to speak on:

- Occupational segregation:
 - o the underrepresentation of women in the state's highest-paying industries
 - o overrepresentation of women in the state's lowest paid sectors

Reach out to akuckl@uw.edu or eliza.craig@swsc.wa.gov to coordinate.

Developmental disability community advocate Adrienne Stuart, former Director of Public for the Developmental Disabilities Council, is available to speak on:

- Women's disproportionate caregiving responsibilities
- The uncompensated work of caregiving, specifically for people with developmental disabilities amid the health care worker shortage, and its impacts on economic stability.

Reach out to adriennestuart@gmail.com or eliza.craig@swsc.wa.gov to coordinate.

ABOUT THE WASHINGTON STATE WOMEN'S COMMISSION

The Washington State Women's Commission (WSWC) is an executive branch cabinet agency in the Office of Governor Inslee serving as the primary voice in government for Washington women and girls. Signed into law in 2018, WSWC develops policies and initiatives to address critical issues that disproportionately affect women, including childcare access and affordability, domestic and gender-based violence, equal pay, health care access, and intersectional inequities. Through strategic listening and collaboration, we represent the 3.8 million women and girls across the state.

Learn more at swsc.wa.gov and activate38.com.