

# CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

## ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

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TUESDAY, JUNE 11, 2019

# WHO WE ARE

- ❖ The Alexandria Commission for Women (ACFW) was founded by City Council in 1974 following a comprehensive report on the status of women and girls in Alexandria.
- ❖ ACFW was created to eliminate gender discrimination and to encourage equal opportunity for women.
- ❖ The Commission's 15 members provide advice and consultation to City Council on issues concerning women.

# WHO WE ARE

- ❖ In 1985, the ACFW reviewed and reported on new challenges and advantages to women in Alexandria.
- ❖ In 2018, the ACFW released a report on the Status of Women in the City of Alexandria. This was a culmination of two years of work by a subcommittee of ACFW.
- ❖ Supported by DCHS, both in terms of staff support and resources.

# WHAT WE DO

- ❖ Provide support to the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Program
- ❖ Provide educational opportunities for Alexandrians
- ❖ Support women and girls in the City of Alexandria
- ❖ Educate members of Alexandria City Council and City staff on issues impacting women and girls

# SALUTE TO WOMEN AWARDS

Since 1981, ACFW honors the tireless work and commitment to women and girls throughout the community.



# TAKE OUR SONS AND DAUGHTERS TO WORK DAY

A mentoring opportunity to demonstrate to girls and boys in our City how women and men contribute to the work force through a firsthand look at different career opportunities.



# WOMEN'S HISTORY TOUR

The ACFW provides a free Women's History Tour to residents, which highlights achievements of women in Alexandria and tells the stories of women from the past to the present.



# PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL AWARENESS

ACFW drafts a number of proclamations throughout the year to educate Alexandrians and bring awareness to a number of different issues impacting women and girls. We thank City Council for their support!



# SUPPORTS ACCESS TO LIFE SAVING SCREENINGS

In 1994, the Alexandria Walk to Fight Breast Cancer was established by former City Manager Vola Lawson.

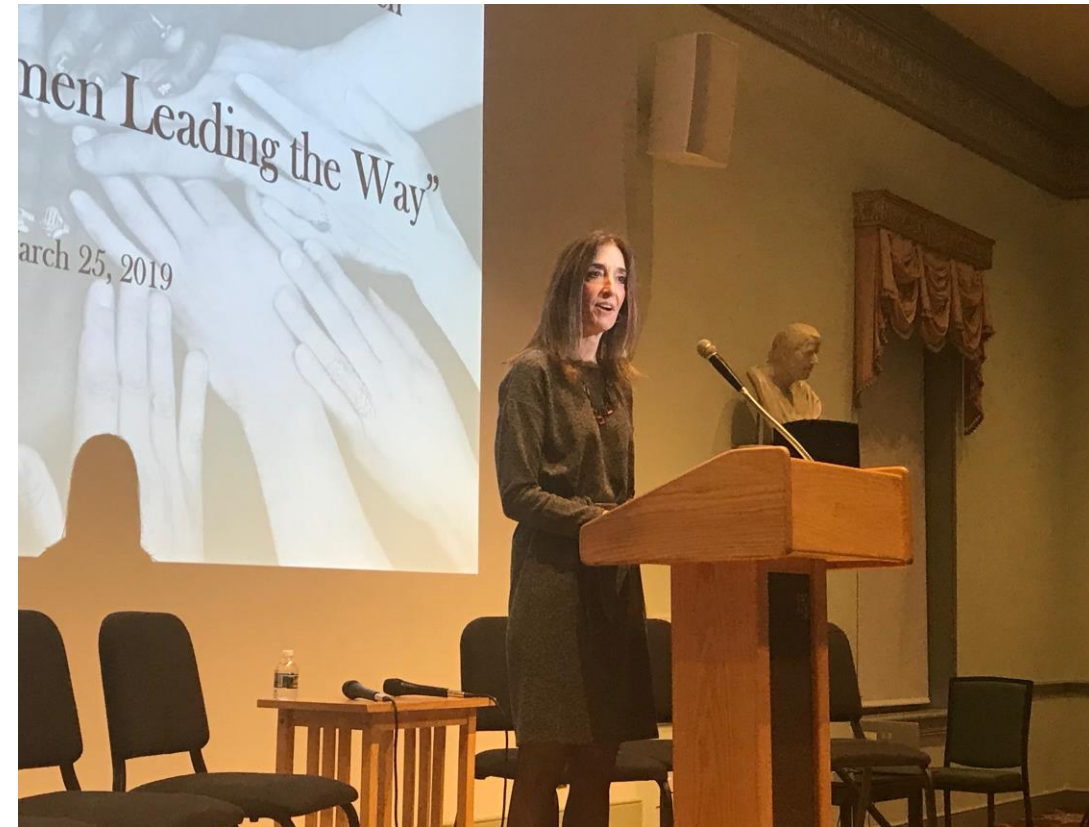
The Walk has helped over 8,000 uninsured and under insured Alexandria women receive free mammograms and other diagnostic screenings. The walk was discontinued in 2014, but grew into the larger Vola Lawson Breast Cancer Fund and is managed by its board in partnership with ACFW.



# CIVIC ACTIVISM: WOMEN LEADING THE WAY

On March 25, 2019, we held an event to highlight the 2018 report and invited women leaders to discuss the unique barriers they faced to holding public office.

While women in Alexandria are rising in City government leadership, there are still City departments in which women are under-represented; gender wage gaps have narrowed but continue to persist.





November 2018

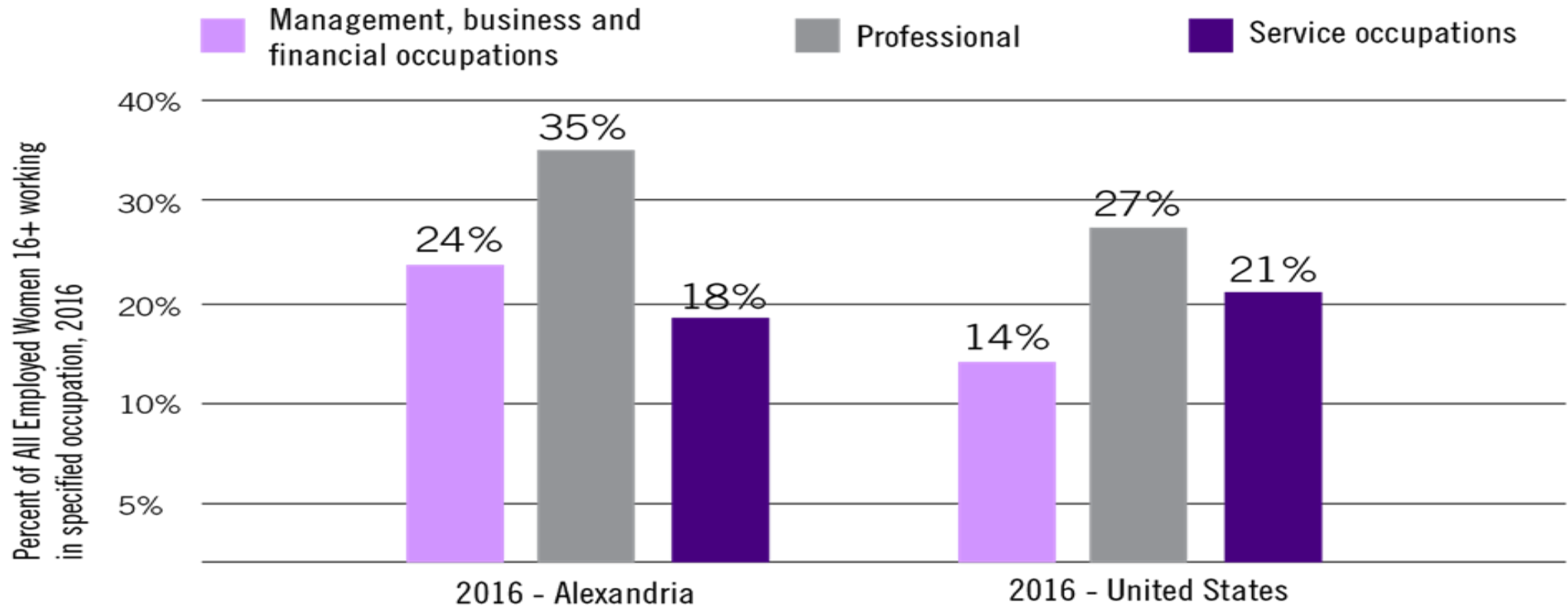
Alexandria Commission for Women  
**Status of Women Report**

# ACFW PRIORITIES

# 2018 STATUS OF WOMEN REPORT

- ❖ Assessed current and future trend lines for women and girls in Alexandria by utilizing publicly available data and information, as well as information provided by community and City departments/organizations
- ❖ Supplemented with conversations and focus groups with key community stakeholders
- ❖ Focuses on five key areas:
  - Economic Security
  - Personal Safety and Security
  - Representation and Opportunities in Leadership
  - Educational and Career Opportunities
  - Health Status and Access to Care

## Women Working in Management, Professional and Service Occupations



Professional: computer/eng/science, education/legal/comm service/arts/media, healthcare practitioner/technical  
Service: Healthcare support, protective service, food prep/serving/related

## Unemployment by Sex and Race

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2011-2015

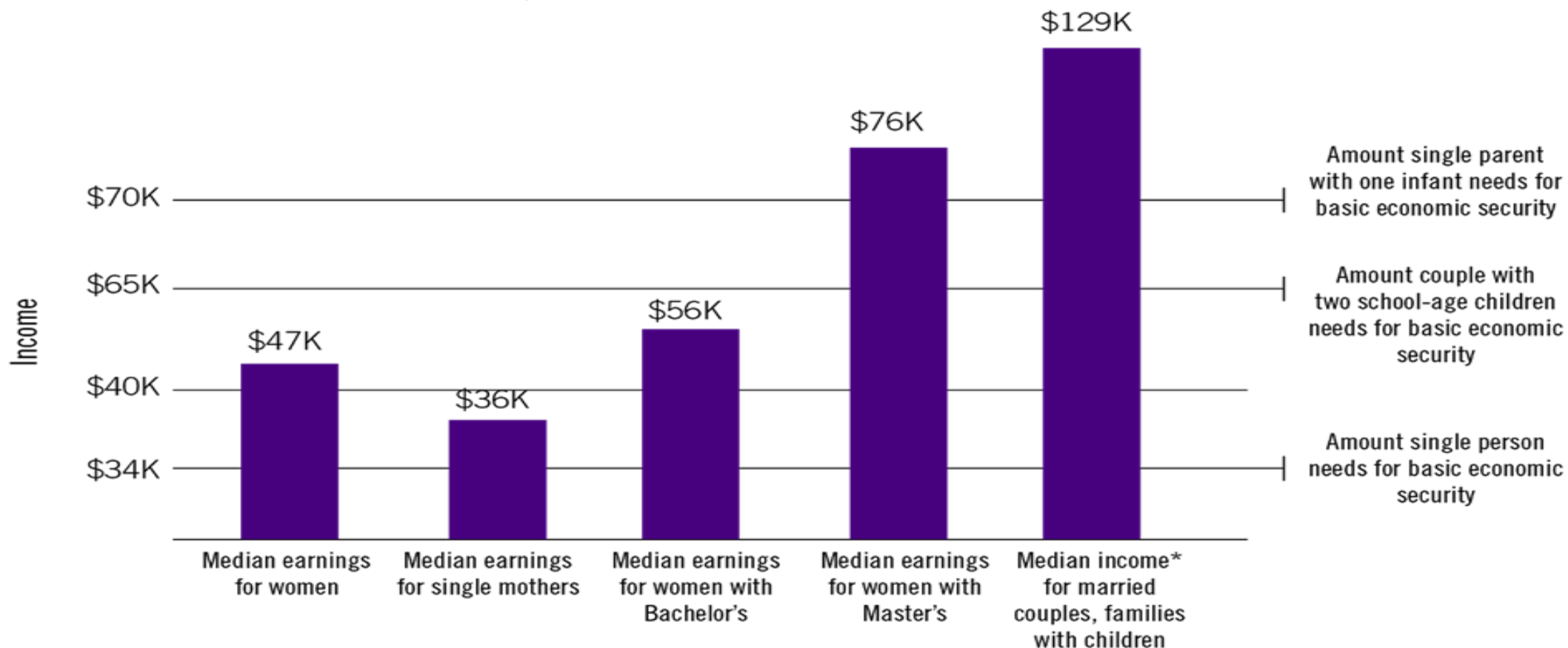
Note: Results are not statistically significant



# Basic Economic Security for Alexandrians

From the Institute for Women's Policy Research's Basic Economic Security Table (BEST Index)

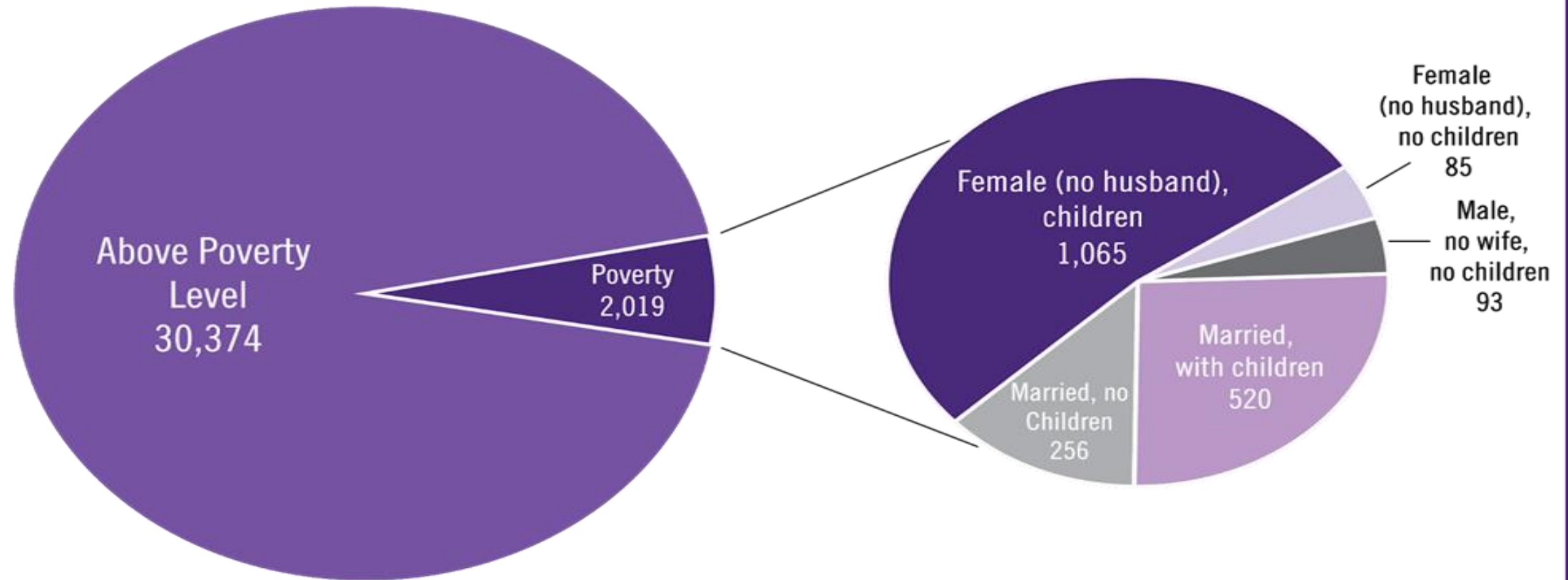
Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2011-2015



\* Income is slightly different than earnings. Income may include earnings, social security payments, annuities, public assistance, interest and dividends.

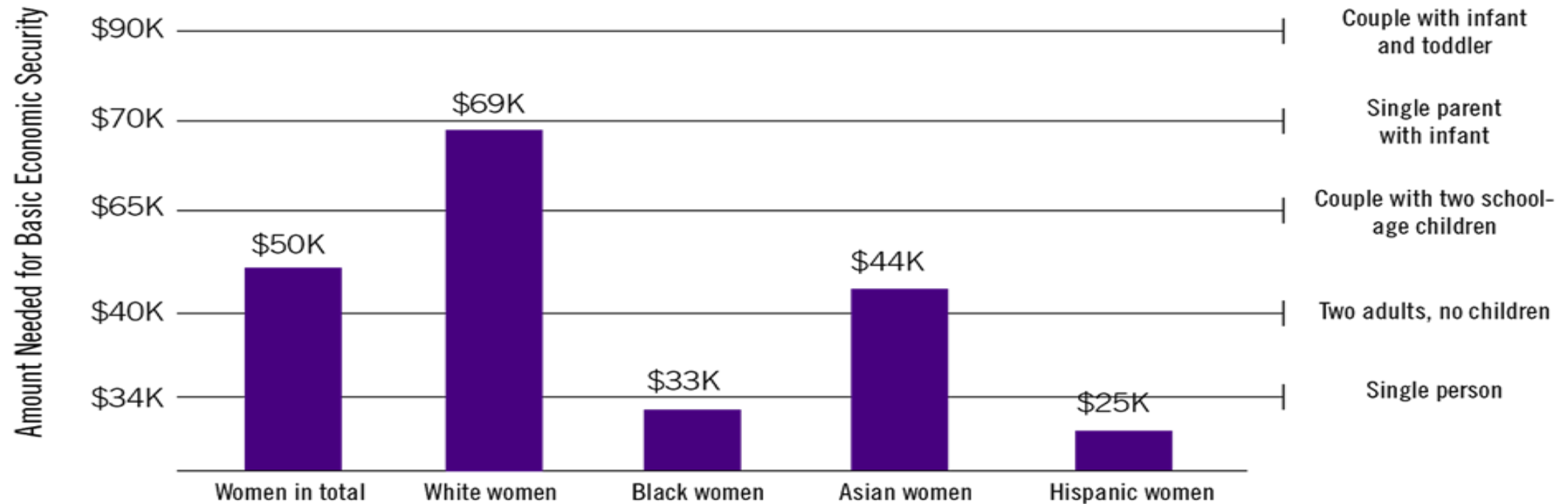
# Family Structure by Poverty Level

Source: ACS 2015 5-Year Estimates



# Median Earnings of Women by Race/Ethnicity (from BEST Index)

From the Institute for Women's Policy Research  
Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2011-2015



**Women make up more than half of the  
workers in Alexandria in:**

Health Care Support – **79%**

Personal Care and Service – **80%**

Health Care Practitioner and Technical – **71 %**

Office and Administrative Support – **67%**<sup>49</sup>

# KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Alexandria women have made great strides since the first report issued in 1974.
- More than one-quarter of women work in high-level jobs and 39 percent of our businesses are owned by women.
- We are a city where most women feel safe. We're proud of the comprehensive domestic violence and sexual assault outreach and programming that Alexandria women have worked hard to maintain for decades.

# KEY TAKEAWAYS (CONT'D)

- In areas of affordable childcare, and rising costs for housing – both issues highlighted in the 1974 report and again in 1985 – women with children fall behind
- 94% of Alexandria's single mothers work, the highest rate in the region, yet they don't earn enough to support themselves or their families. Which is why, when our poverty rate nearly doubled between 2006 and 2015, we saw the continued "feminization of poverty" – a term that was used in the Alexandria's Ad Hoc Committee on Women's 1985 report.

# KEY TAKEAWAYS (CONT'D)

- Women who are uninsured and underinsured continue to face challenges in accessing care and maintaining health.
- Teen pregnancy rates remain higher than the region and the state, and our Health Department is particularly concerned about this trend in Latina's.
- African American women have higher rates of breast cancer mortality that must be further examined.

# ACFW NEXT STEPS: IMPLEMENTATION OF REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

ACFW formed 4 working groups:

- Communication
- Alignment and Implementation
- Education and New Information
- Strategic Partnerships

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CITY COUNCIL

# CREATING A STRONG ECONOMY

- ❖ Apply a gender lens to City decisions on budgeting and development, in particular consider the gender impacts of policies on land use, transportation, and housing.
  - Hire 3-4 staff that report to the City Manager's office to introduce a gender lens into policy-making and implementation across departments.
- ❖ Provide economic development incentives to employers to include exemplary wage, leave, benefit, and scheduling policies and practices.
- ❖ Closely monitor and guide the implementation and usage of the new paid parental leave policy for City employees.

# CREATING A STRONG ECONOMY

- ❖ Work with the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership to collect more information from major employers such as:
  - Wage Information
  - Benefit information, leave policies, paid sick leave, paid family and/or parental leave
  - Child care subsidies or on-site child care for employees
  - Workplace flexibility
  - Diversity and inclusion practices and policies
- ❖ Explore benefits for City and ACPS employees to assist with child care and housing costs in the city.

# HEALTHY RESIDENTS & A SAFE & RESILIENT COMMUNITY

- ❖ Appoint an ad hoc Task Force on Girls' Mental Health.
- ❖ Provide funding for additional legal services and immigration support for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault in the City.

ACFW intends to join the Mayor & City Council, along with other city leaders to bridge the gap and ensure that all women and girls in Alexandria live, work, and play in a city on a level playing field!