

Report: Earnings gender gap rises with education

Advanced degrees benefit men more

The Associated Press

Higher education produces higher pay for men more often than it does for women, and the gender gap in earnings increases as they earn advanced degrees, according to a report released yesterday.

The New Hampshire Women's Policy Institute found that though women make up equal or greater percentages of the state's high school and college graduates, male workers reap significantly greater financial returns from education at all levels.

Women with high school degrees earn 77 cents for every dollar earned by their male counterparts, but after that, their income as a percent of men's declines at higher levels of education. Women working full time with a doctorate degree earn just 67 cents for every dollar earned by a man with the same degree.

The report says some of the gap can be explained by a high concentration of women in low-paying jobs such as secretaries, bookkeepers, nurses and teachers. In some cases, female-dominated

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-Ross Gittell, the report's author

occupations require more education than the top male-dominated occupations, yet the five occupations with the highest con-

centrations of men pay about 50 percent more than the top five female-dominated occupations.

The report also examined married women in the work force. It said that three of every five married women in New Hampshire work full time, yet leaving temporarily to care for children - and differences in household responsibilities even for those without children - mean that the women in this group earn only 68 percent of what full-time, married working men earn in the state.

"Working women lag significantly behind their male counterparts in New Hampshire on many key economic indicators," said Ross Gittell, the report's author.

The report also shows how women have failed to attain significant leadership roles in executive offices. Among the state's 25 public companies, only 13 percent of the executive officers are women and nearly 9 percent of the corporate board members are women. Sixteen, or 64 percent of the companies have no women among the top five paid executive officers. And 12, or 48 percent, have no women on the board of directors.

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gests a 'granite ceiling' for women, with significant implications for (their) future economic opportunities."

Overall, women have increased their presence in the work force, from making up only about a quarter of full-time workers in 1969 to 40 percent of the work force in 1999.

Women's income also has risen over the last three decades, with the most significant growth occurring in the 1980s. Income for full-time working women has grown faster than it has for men.

In improving women's earnings, the report suggests improving the support system for working women and their families, such as child care, after-school programs, flexi-

ble work schedules and health care. It also suggests helping college women enter male-dominated professions by supporting enrollment in fields such as science, math and engineering. Efforts also could concentrate on supporting female-owned businesses.

Much of the data in the report comes from Commerce Department data from 2000, stemming from U.S. Census questionnaires for 61,684 people in New Hampshire.

The women's policy institute was formed in 2002 as a not-for-profit organization to increase equity and women's involvement in decision-making in New Hampshire.