

# COMMUNITY CONVERSATION – GENDER EQUITY

Washtenaw County  
November 13, 2019

Statistics PowerPoint by GVSU

WOMEN  
WAGE GAP  
**GENDER INCLUSIVE**  
EMPOWERMENT  
GENDER JUSTICE  
RIGHTS  
SEXUAL ABUSE  
EQUALITY JUSTICE  
METOO MOVEMENT

**GENDER EQUITY DEFINITION:** Behavior, contributions, aspirations and needs of any/all genders are considered and valued equally. Access, rights, benefits and opportunities are equal for all genders. Economic, political and social equality of the sexes. Fairness of treatment for people regardless of their gender identity.

**CARD QUESTION:** What is the greatest challenge women of Washtenaw County face related to Gender Equity?

- Equity in Opportunities: Career/Leadership (28)
- Pay Equality (20)
- Childcare/Family Leaves/Healthcare (17)
- Economic Opportunity/Poverty (17)
- Discrimination & Unconscious Bias (14)

**DIALOGUE Q1:** What would be different if gender equity was achieved in Washtenaw County? (*Vision for the future*)

- Societal/Community Improvements (53)
- Women in Leadership, Jobs & Careers (24)
- Pay & Wealth Equity (17)
- Quality Childcare and Family Leaves (15)
- Gains in Perceptions, Expectations and Views (13)



100% of Evals Satisfied

127

Participants

Rating:  
4.5 Stars



**DIALOGUE Q2:** Critical Elements & Key Actions for greatest impact in the movement for gender equity in Washtenaw County? (Top 10 Votes)

- Financial support for women (58)
- Appointing judicial women of color (37)
- More women at the table (32)
- Providing housing/affordable living /public transportation (30)
- Better and more women in elected positions (36)
- Affordable child-care/flexible family care /paid sick and maternity leave (23)
- Can't ask about pay history (21)
- Ratify Equal Rights Amendment - ERA (18)
- Affordable college education for all (16)
- Education and training in skilled trades; more women in the trades (16)

“  
Achieving gender equality requires the engagement of women, men, girls and boys. It is *everyone's* responsibility.”

Ban Ki-moon

## REFLECTION:

What actions will you personally take within your spheres of influence to make Gender Equity a reality?

*“We all have a responsibility to break barriers and level the playing field for women in our state”*

Governor Gretchen Whitmer



Prepared by Karla J Kretzschmer, Lumency Group

“  
Gender equality is not a *woman's* issue. It is a *human* issue that effects us all.”

# Community Conversation/Washtenaw County Gender Equity, November 13, 2019 Event Output Report - Detail

A community conversation on gender equity was held in Washtenaw County. The event, a gathering of over 100 women, took place for the purpose of sharing experiences, insights and ideas on a topic important to the lives and contributions of women, their families and society overall.

## Objectives:

1. Explore the state of gender equity within Washtenaw County – take a pulse
2. Identify the change desired and vision for the future
3. Facilitate meaningful dialogue for the collaborative identification of key issues and opportunities for taking constructive and positive action for long-term impact
4. Prioritize actions for greatest impact in moving gender equity forward within Washtenaw County
5. Understand the Governor’s experience, perspective and commitment to gender equity and supporting the women and families of Michigan
6. Provide opportunity for connections to form among participants
7. Inspire attendees to action within their spheres of influence

## Summary by Event Segment

### Arrival – Gender Equity Question Card

**Gender Equity Definition:** Behavior, contributions, aspirations and needs of any/all genders are considered and valued equally. Access, rights, benefits and opportunities are equal for all genders. Economic, political and social equality of the sexes. Fairness of treatment for people regardless of their gender identity.

**Card Question:** What is the greatest challenge women of Washtenaw County face related to Gender Equity?

**Equity in Opportunities: Career/Leadership (28):** Opportunity for leadership positions. Opportunities for leadership at the corporate level. More women of color in leadership roles (2). Opportunities for women to be in leadership – govt, academia, and business. Gender representation in elected, civic and political leadership. Representation on boards/government. Equal in the board room and in presidential positions. Women not getting a seat at the table or not being seen as leaders. (We are operating in a system not made for us.) The minimal presence of women in power who assert the power to benefit all women and families. Equal opportunities and recognition. Acknowledgement of accomplishments. Equal opportunity in the work force. Upward mobility with pay/benefits equity. Career advancement in a male dominated world. Being seen as equals. Being seen as equal to men. Patriarchy. Cultural issue in gender equity: Women still need to ‘earn their stripes’ going into each business situation. Career opportunities and work flexibility. Opportunities as workers and mothers. Equity in opportunity for women of color. White women not empowering or providing opportunities to women of color. Uneven playing field in all aspects of women’s lives. Unable to get to the table or not being invited due to balancing other responsibilities. Women have more roles and identities which pile up on us reducing our opportunities. Too many ‘part time’ positions for women – just below the number of hours for them to receive benefits (health insurance). Women in STEM (Science/Tech/Engineering/Math).

**Pay Equality (20):** Equal pay/pay equity/gender pay gap/ (14). Equal pay for equal work (3). Women earn less for same job. Equal pay/good paying jobs. Pay/male control (2): Policies and structures that continue to codify

male supremacy (e.g. lack of transparent and clear compensation policies, asking about prior salary to determine how much to pay new hires). Pay gap which parallels the leadership gap. Men are still in control and like it that way.

**Childcare/Family Leaves/Healthcare (17):** Affordable, accessible, safe and quality childcare (10). Childcare deserts – lack of access and barrier to pay for low income moms. Many employers/decision makers consider caring for one’s children as a ‘blank time’. This rich experience makes it harder to find employment or reduces income. Family leave and care after birth of baby. Access to affordable healthcare for women and their families (2). Mental health support. Opportunities to get back to work after maternity leave.

**Economic Opportunity/Poverty (17):** Economic opportunity (3). Economic discrimination. Economic inclusivity. Economic segregation. Economic disparity and challenge to cover basic expenses. Access to business opportunities. Access to small business opportunities. Access to capital to start, grow and expand businesses. Gaining wealth equally to men. Ownership of property of all sorts – residential, commercial, and corporate. Nationally all women are poor. Ownership is power and women are not owners. Poverty (2). Affordable housing. Issues getting to work – transportation; transportation needs.

**Discrimination & Unconscious Bias (14):** Women of color → discrimination. Criminalization of men of color. Trans Women → Discrimination and less representation. Diversity. Racism. Racial segregation. Age discrimination related to employment. Unconscious biases, microaggressions, discrimination. Institutional and structural bias, that prevents power shift. Unconscious bias, mental blocks based on history, stereotypes, and fear. Unbalanced criteria for what is success between men and women. The subtle cultural undertone of women as second class and unqualified. Challenge to have our voices heard. Our ideas are often overlooked. Leading with emotion is looked down upon, often reviled and penalized.

**Education & Development (8):** Access to equitable and high-quality education. School quality. Equality in education which results in greater pay inequity. Support for expectant mothers so they can continue their education. Young African American women not graduating from high school. Youth education. Universal PreK education. Exposure to various skill building activities.

**Sexual Assault (4):** Sexual harassment and domestic violence. Sexual assault on college campuses. Justice and support for survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence. Violence against women, need stronger protections and common-sense gun legislation – this is a woman’s issue.

**Women Not Supporting Women (3):** Many women feel comfortable advocating for others, but we still need to believe in and advocate for ourselves. Women helping women. Sometimes other women cause the most challenges, stress and roadblocks to women in the workforce.

**Other (4):** Lack of mentors and knowledge of resources for women and families in the county – buying into social norms. Women’s emotional burden and running households. Doing more of the emotional work for the organization. Being able to voice concerns in the workplace and responsiveness and openness in environment.

**Welcome by Fran Brennan, Political Consultant**

**Opening by Cheryl Bergman, Executive Director, Michigan Women’s Commission**

**Meeting Facilitation by Dr. Rita Fields, CEO of 313 Industries, & Copper Phoenix Consulting, LLC**

**Gender Equity Stats (Automated PPT) – Grand Valley State University, Division of Inclusion & Equity**

**Introduction of Governor by Brenda McKinney, Superior Township Treasurer**

## Governor Gretchen Whitmer

### Message with Q&A

- As leaders, we all have a responsibility to break barriers and level the playing field for women in our state.
- The work you do directly impacts my work as governor.
- Because of your advocacy and your dedication to identifying the changes we need to make, I'm able to move forward with actions that will actually impact women and families.



### Small Group Dialogue Question 1

#### What would be different if gender equity was achieved in Washtenaw County?

##### (Vision for the future)

*Note: Bold items were shared out by tables as most important.*

**Societal/Community Improvements (53): Facility, urban planning, policies, programs, laws would be designed equitably. Quality of life (2). Men would have better quality of life too. People would be happier – less stressed. Improved healthcare. More access to mental health.** Healthier communities. Quality healthcare. Overall improvement in maternal health. Health opportunities/outcomes. Healthier children. Healthier families. Better access to food and healthcare. **Access to reproductive health products (birth control)/feminine hygiene products. Communities would be safer (3).** Safer neighborhoods. **Reduction violence overall.** Crime reduction, especially violent crime. Community oriented policing. **Assailants held accountable. Domestic Violence Decrease (3).** Women wouldn't be victims of gender-based violence. Gender-based violence reduced. Safe from sexual assault. Eliminate rape and sexual misconduct and sexual harassment. More just prosecution of crimes against women. **Reduction of poverty rate (2).** Wouldn't have people in poverty. Less poverty. Less children/young people in poverty (3). **Economic productivity.** Economic growth. Increase in family income. Increased household incomes. Higher income for families, needs are met easily, financial security. Affordable housing (2). Homelessness reduction. Less homelessness. Less homeless families. Less housing insecurity/Housing stability. Homeless would be housed and assisted. Better communities – looking out for one another. Equity between communities within Washtenaw County. Social services.

**Women in Leadership, Jobs & Careers (24): Leadership roles, women of color in these roles.** More women leaders. Increase in women in leadership roles (2). Women leaders in church. **Women in decision making positions.** Greater diversity in leadership roles. More women in leadership/more women judges. **Women would have a seat at every table.** Women in positions of power. **More women in tech careers.** Building trades. Women in trades and apprenticeships. **More women professors.** More job opportunities for women of color. More opportunities for all women. Less gender segregation in jobs. **No more "pink collar" jobs. Closing achievement gap.** Promotion opportunities. More men in stereotypical female jobs. **More diversity in police depts. More women voting.** Women would be represented in elected offices.

**Pay & Wealth Equity (17): Pay equity/Equal Pay (6).** Pay gap closed. Equitable pay and opportunities. Women would be paid more. Women would have more money. Building wealth would be easier. Women would be owners of businesses of the same monetary value as men. **More women owned businesses, more businesses in general. Women would assert our consumer power. Women donate more money, more philanthropy.** More women homeowners/property owners. More women homeowners and wealth creation.

**Quality Childcare and Family Leaves (15): Paid family leave/longer family leave.** Better family leave policies. Equitable family leave policies, for both parents. Quality childcare (3). Better Day Care. More childcare options.

More support after maternity. Equity in childcare access. Childcare would be free. Childcare subsidies. Affordable daycare. Better access to affordable/flexible childcare. Better childcare resources.

**Gains in Perceptions, Expectations and Views (13):** Higher confidence levels in women. More respect for women. Not expected to be cleanup crew. Elimination of stereotypical expectations. Elimination of stigma associated with women who choose to be unmarried during their careers. Less of a stigma for working mothers. Pregnancy wouldn't be an issue at work nor would it be an expectation for women to get pregnant. More equal division of labor at home. Men would be free to express themselves and be stay at home dads. **Not have to choose between career and family.** Change in ideas about who should be staying home with kids. Age discrimination wouldn't exist. **Raise more "woke men".**

**Education & Development (10):** Better educational funding. Education stability. Better education for all. More children would be more successful in school. Greater drive for education. **Increased focus on school opposed to work for high school students.** Higher graduation rates for kids. Women have higher levels of education. **Mentorship.** Role models for future generations.

**Workplace Improvements (8):** More cooperative work culture. More employers accepting flexible nature of busy moms. More flexible/healthier work environments. More flexible work hours. **Workplaces would be more child-friendly.** Parent friendly policies. Women are being capped at 35 hours/week for work shifts so companies don't have to give them benefits. Safe workspaces.

**Other (9):** Closer to racial equity assuming gender equity is intersectional. Better racial equity. **Eliminate the back lash from white privileged men to the Me Too movement.** Access for transgendered people. **Multiculturalism.** Barriers to veterans would be erased. **Pink tax would be eliminated.** Explosion of creativity. Help to bridge US 23 gaps.

*Note: Bold items were shared out by tables as most important.*

## Small Group Dialogue Question 2 & Voting w/ Dots

**What are the top 5 actions that would create the greatest impact in the movement for gender equity in Washtenaw County?**

### Top Prioritized Actions! (Highest top 10 dot votes)

1. Financial Support for Women, (i.e. social safety net, living wage rather than minimum wage, eliminate anti-union policies, eliminate "typed wages") (58)
2. Appointing Judicial Women of Color (37)
3. More Women at the Table (32)
4. Providing Housing/Affordable Living /public transportation (30)
5. Better and More Women in Elected Positions (36)
6. Affordable child-care/flexible family care /paid sick and maternity leave (23)
7. Can't ask about pay history (21)
8. Ratify ERA (18)
9. Affordable college education for all (16)
10. Education and training in skilled trades; More women in the trades (16)

*Numbers indicate votes/dots given for actions of highest impact for movement forward. Each participant was given four dots to place/vote.*

### Other Top Actions (with votes):

- Unite women—social/economic/racial boundaries (14)
- Intersectional lenses in policy decision making (13)
- Empowerment activities starting with young girls (11)
- More female focused health research—including women of color (10)
- Forced policies around gender equity (8)
- Better reproductive rights (8)
- Normalize stem subjects as non-gendered (8)
- Access to mental health support (8)
- Women free to “go” and not wait their turn (5)
- County wide school districts—reduce segregation for better access to quality education (5)
- Proactively act to destigmatize gender roles/stereotypes in the workplace (5)
- Penalize companies who do not have family leave (5)
- OFCCP (federal agency) should have public guidelines on pay equity—currently no agreement on what pay equity is (3)
- Reform tax laws, i.e. graduated income tax at state level (3)
- More women on corporate boards (3)
- More women in key decision-making positions (2)
- Employment protections for women of all identities (2)
- More meaningful relationships between those in power and those not yet in power (2)
- Funding classrooms to meet students’ needs (2)
- Speaking truth to power (2)
- Healthcare for trans people (1)
- Universal free preschool (1)
- Addressing intersectional forms of oppression (1)
- Getting more women-centered male allies (1)
- Provide free, reliable childcare (1)
- Stronger unions (1)
- More funding for agencies like Safe House (1)

*Numbers indicate votes/dots given for actions of highest impact for movement forward. Each participant was given four dots to place/vote.*

**Closing Remarks – Honorable Gretchen Driskell, Former State Legislator-52nd District,  
Former Mayor-City of Saline**

### Next steps – Other opportunities

- This summary will be shared with Governor Gretchen Whitmer and her team
- Participants are encouraged to move their agenda forward within Washtenaw County

**Thank you** to all participants for your active engagement!