



# News Release

33 Whitney Avenue  
New Haven, CT 06510  
Voice: 203-498-4240  
Fax: 203-498-4242  
www.ctvoices.org

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Contact: Roger Senserrich  
Communications Director  
203-498-4240 x117  
rsenserrich@ctvoices.org

## **Connecticut residents see income and health insurance gains, but child poverty remains high**

*Economic recovery brings improvement, but gaps by race and place persist*

NEW HAVEN – New data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey data finds modest progress in health care access, median household incomes and income inequality, but little improvement in reduced poverty. Collectively, these data tell a story in Connecticut not as meaningful as the broad-based national median income increases and poverty reduction figures, not seen in a half-century.

Median household income increased in Connecticut by \$1,211 in 2015, from \$70,048 to \$71,346. This increase, however, lagged behind the historically strong 5.2% national uptick. Demographically, only whites experienced meaningful median household income growth, leaving persistent minority gaps – in 2015, white households earned \$36,906 more than blacks and \$38,953 more than Latinos.

As was the case particularly for states across the nation that expanded Medicaid, the rate of Connecticut’s uninsured fell, from 7% to 6% in 2015. The drop was small compared to other states, in part because Connecticut already boasted one of the lowest uninsured rates in the nation.

Connecticut was the only state in the nation to see a statistically significant decline in income inequality, measured by the Gini Index. The decrease follows five straight years of increases. Connecticut remains the second most unequal state in the nation behind New York.

Statewide, poverty didn’t budge. More than one in ten individuals remain in poverty – 2.5 percentage points above pre-recession levels. Child poverty persists at 14.5 percent, and still remains more than three percentage points above pre-recession levels. Poverty gaps between blacks and Latinos and whites closed slightly, but still remain 14.4 and 18.9 percentage points apart, respectively.

“The encouraging data on health insurance coverage in our state affirms how smart public policy can improve the lives of children and families,” said Ellen Shemitz, Executive Director of Connecticut Voices for Children. “Progress can and has been made in health care access; a parallel commitment is needed to address uneven economic gains and unacceptable rates of child poverty.”

To see a full analysis of our findings please visit <http://www.ctvoices.org/publications/ACS-2015-data>, and explore even more data interactively at: <https://public.tableau.com/profile/connecticut.voices.for.children#!/>

*About Connecticut Voices for Children:*

Connecticut Voices for Children is a research-based policy think tank based in New Haven, Connecticut. Our Mission is to promote the well-being of all of Connecticut's young people and their families by advocating for strategic public investments and wise public policies. To achieve these objectives, Connecticut Voices for Children produces high quality research and analysis, promotes citizen education, advocates for policy change at the state and local level and works to develop the next generation of leaders.