



News Release

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Persistent Economic Disparities Mark Connecticut's Slow Economic Recovery *Share of Low-Wage Increased by 9 Percent Over Past Five Years*

NEW HAVEN – Connecticut's slow economic recovery since the Great Recession is leaving many working families behind, according to a new report by Connecticut Voices for Children. While the state struggles to reach pre-recession employment levels, disparities in wages and employment opportunities have increased, threatening future economic prosperity.

"The combination of slow job creation and stagnant or lower wages has a direct impact on disparities of opportunity for workers in the state," says Ray Noonan, Associate Policy Fellow at Connecticut Voices for Children. "Low-wage jobs are less likely to offer good benefits, leaving many families struggling with lower pay, fewer supports, less capacity to react to crisis, and more uncertainty in their lives."

These shifts are compounded by changes in the types of jobs Connecticut offers. The report highlights that the share of low-income jobs in Connecticut has increased by more than nine percent while the share of mid-wage jobs has declined. High-paying jobs, in contrast, have remained flat. This Jobs Swap has widened disparities between workers; people of color have become increasingly overrepresented in low-wage work and underrepresented in high-wage occupations over the last five years.

"The persistent race and ethnic disparities in wages and employment suggest that many Connecticut workers face systemic structural barriers," says Ellen Shemitz, Executive Director at Connecticut Voices for Children. "We must commit to an agenda of equitable opportunity and shared prosperity, making strategic investments that address disparities in local resources, afford quality education cradle to career, and attract businesses that provide good wages, benefits, and career opportunities."

Report - Key findings:

- Over the last five years, the share of low-wage jobs increased by 9.2 percent. In contrast, the share of mid-wage jobs decreased and the share of high-wage jobs remained flat.
- People of color have become increasingly overrepresented in low-wage work and underrepresented in high-wage work over the last five years.
- The wealthiest 10 percent experienced the greatest raise in wages in the last year while the median worker's wage remained essentially flat.
- Wage disparities by race continue to widen: the median white worker now makes \$10.08 and \$8.98 per hour more than their black and Latino counterparts, respectively.

About Connecticut Voices for Children: Connecticut Voices for Children is a research-based child advocacy organization working to ensure that all Connecticut children have an equitable opportunity to achieve their full potential. In furtherance of its mission, 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.