

STATUS OF VERMONT WOMEN AND GIRLS

January 15, 2005

Executive Summary

The Vermont Commission on Women proudly presents this third edition of our report on the status of Vermont women and girls in Vermont. The report will be submitted to the Governor, Speaker of the House, and Senate President Pro Tempore pursuant to (h)(6) of 3 V.S.A. s/s 22, the authorizing statute for the Vermont Commission on Women.

Our goal in compiling this report is to make it concise, user-friendly, and relevant to your work in the executive and legislative branches of government. We organized information in this report using the four categories of the Commission's 2000-2005 Strategic Plan: Education and Human Development, Economic Equity and Self-Sufficiency, Health, Safety and Civil Rights, and Leadership and Public Life. Please contact the Commission at info@women.state.vt.us if you would like a summary of the Strategic Plan.

This report on the status of Vermont women and girls includes both highlights of where we are currently, and trends over time when that information is available. All information presented is based on the most up-to-date data available at the time of publication from national and state sources. We hope it enhances your work on behalf of the state's women.

The Institute for Women's Policy Research recently ranked Vermont first in the nation in their report, *Status of Women in the States*. Vermont achieved this status by being ranked in the top ten on all five composite indices of women's well being which include: political participation (8th), employment earnings (10th), social and economic autonomy (8th), reproductive rights (2nd), and health and well-being (7th).

Vermont attained this ranking in part due to successful policies and programs instituted in the last 40 years that reduce discrimination and encourage women to live up to their potential. Great progress has been made in our state. However, the high ranking is also somewhat misleading. Throughout the United States minority women continue to face even greater barriers to equality than white women. Because of Vermont's low minority population, Vermont ranked higher in the report than states with larger minority populations.

While we can celebrate the successes of our state, we still have work to do: Vermont women have not achieved parity with men, and women continue to face significant obstacles to achieving economic, political and social parity.

Health, Safety and Civil Rights

There are broad disparities in health status of women in the area of diabetes, asthma, depression and obesity that are linked to income and education levels. Although universal health insurance coverage might reduce some of the disparity, the economic and social stressors that adversely affect women's health are beyond the capacity of the health care system alone to solve.

Leadership and Public Life

Participation on a local school board or select board or serving on a state board or commission is often seen as an entry point into public life for women. As of November 2003, only 37% of Vermont's 1,999 state boards and commissions are gender balanced, falling from a high of 48% in 2001. Exactly half are male dominated and only 13% are female dominated.

A third of both houses of the 2005-2006 Vermont legislature are women. That percentage represents a decline from a high of 36% in 1993. There are 60 women in the Vermont legislature: 50 Representatives and 10 Senators—a gain of three in the House of Representatives and one in the Senate. 45% of the new members of the legislature are women.

Of the 991 Vermonters who are currently serving on a select board or city council only 171 (17%) are women. However over 30% of women serving in the 2003-2004 legislature indicated in their biographies that they had served, or were currently serving, on a select board or city council.

Economic Equity and Self-Sufficiency

With more families becoming dependent on women as breadwinners, and with approximately half of women entering retirement alone, the wage gap between men's and women's salaries remains a crucial issue that affects the health and well-being of women and their families. Nationally the wage gap increased in 2003.

The percentage of women business owners has been slowly rising. However over 80 % of women-owned businesses have no paid employees.

The lack of affordable housing in Vermont has a disproportionate effect on women-headed households. In July of 2004 , 73 % of those on the Section 8 housing waiting list were women.

Education and Human Development

For many Vermonters, the acquisition of information technology skills will be the determining factor in their ability to get and keep a good job. With the exception of a few programs that successfully recruit and train higher percentages of women, there is a gender digital divide throughout the entire Vermont educational system.

The University of Vermont Medical School has been a national leader in the percentage of women admitted to its medical school. The percentage of women in faculty and leadership positions has been increasing but still has a ways to go to reach equity.

While the number of women physicians practicing in Vermont has increased by 78 % in the last ten years they tend to be concentrated in several specialties.

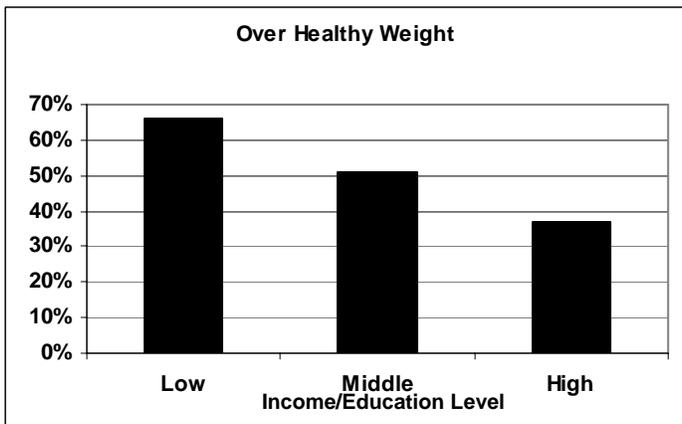
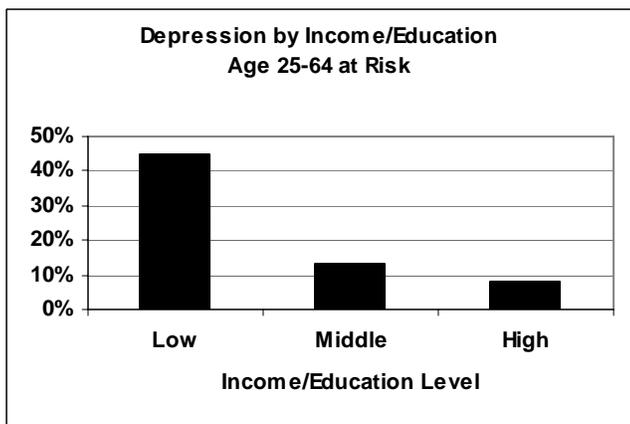
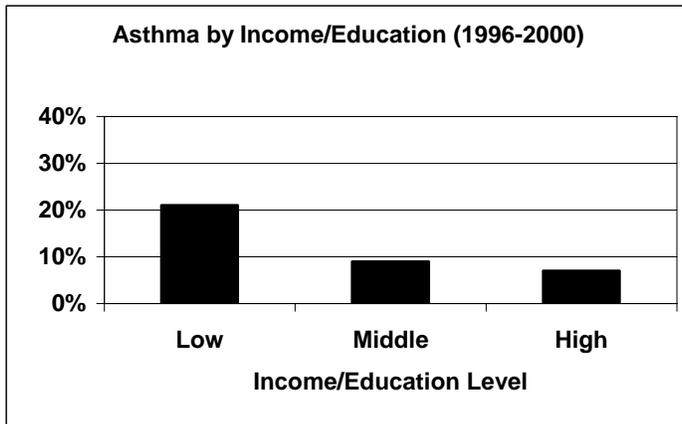
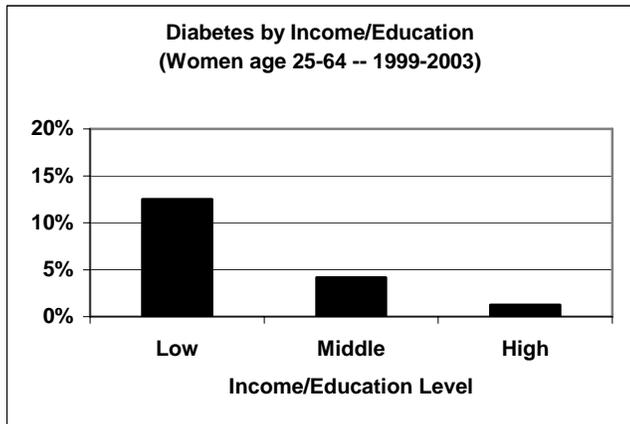
Commissioners

This is the third year under a multiple appointing authority structure. Currently, twelve of sixteen commissioners have been appointed under the new structure. The Commission welcomed two new commissioners: Marcia Merrill appointed by the Senate Committee on Committees and Libby Sternberg appointed by the Speaker of the House. Marion Milne was reappointed to a four-year term by the Governor.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND CIVIL RIGHTS

2004

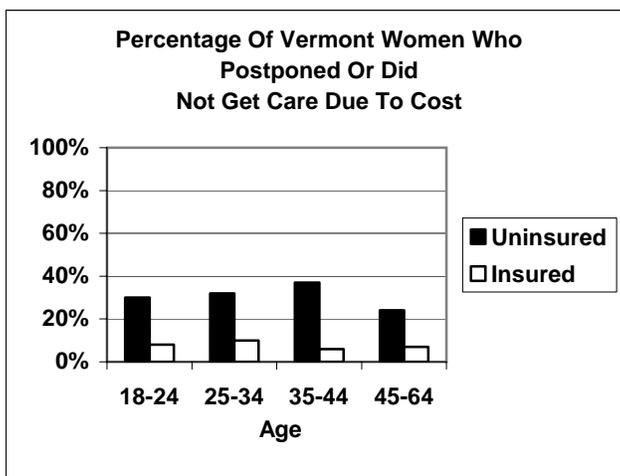
Poverty and Women's Health Status in Vermont



Vermont women do very well on some indicators of access to care such as the high proportion of pregnant women getting early and adequate prenatal care and breast cancer screening. However there are still broad disparities in health status of women based on income and education in the areas of diabetes, asthma, depression and obesity. Although universal health insurance coverage might reduce some of the disparity, the economic and social stressors that adversely affect women's health are beyond the capacity of the health care system to solve alone.

Source: Vermont Department of Health, Women's Health Status 2002

Cost as a Barrier to Healthcare

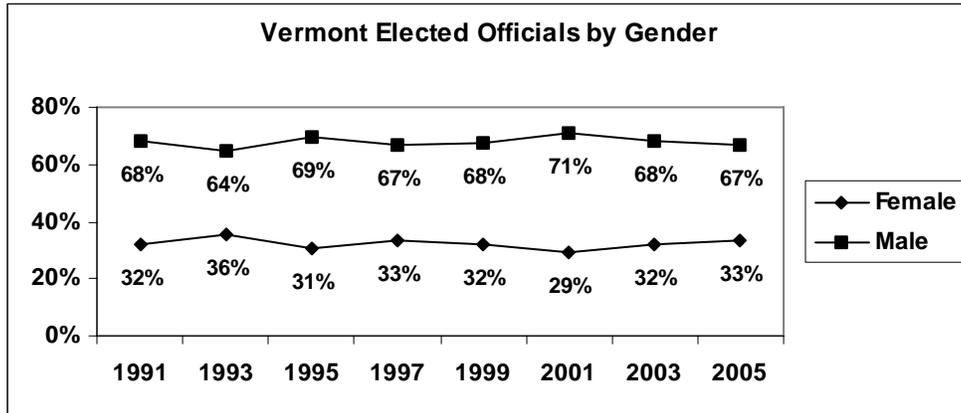


Cost of care remains a barrier even for those who have health insurance, regardless of whether the health insurance is employer-based or publicly funded such as Medicaid and Medicare. Rising co-pays, deductibles and restrictions on service are a barrier for those who must spend a disproportionate share of their income on housing and childcare.

Source: Vermont Department of Health

**LEADERSHIP & PUBLIC LIFE
2004**

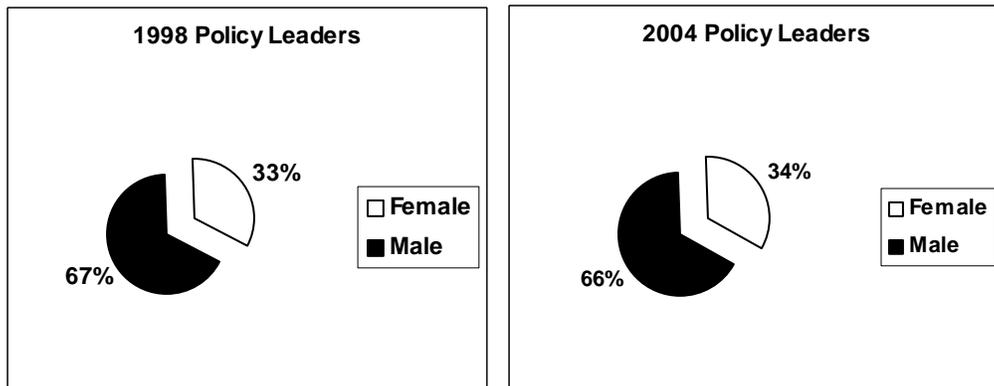
Vermont Legislature By Gender



As a result of the 2004 elections, a third of both houses of the Vermont legislature are women. That percentage represents a decline from a high of 36% in 1993. There are 60 women members in the Vermont legislature: 50 Representatives and 10 Senators—a gain of three women in the House of Representatives and one in the Senate. Of the new members of the legislature, 45% are women.

Source: VCW analysis of the Vermont Legislature

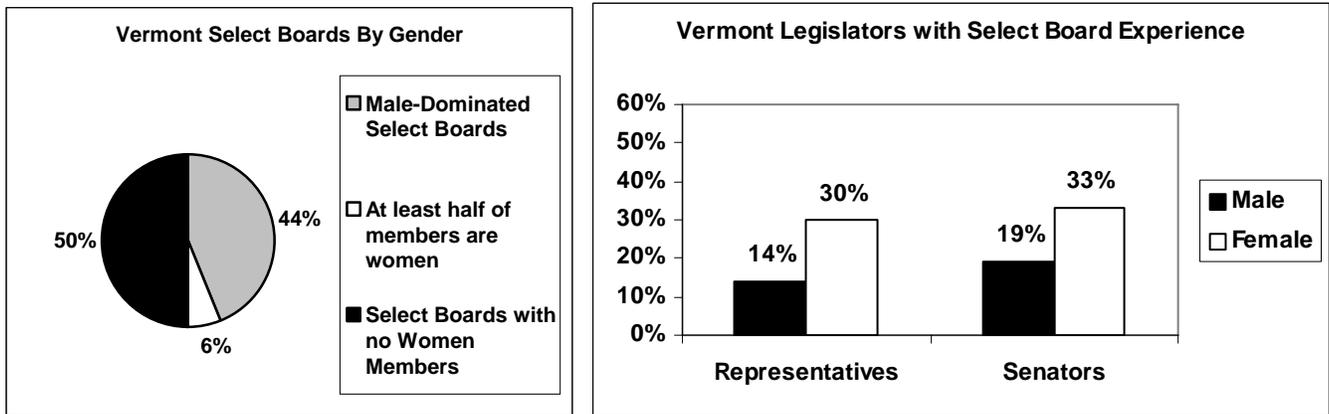
Policy Leaders



While women’s participation as top policy leaders in the executive, legislative and judicial branches of state government has remained relatively static, Vermont still ranks 5th in the nation for women in these positions: 51.7% of top advisors, 47.4% of department heads, and 31.1 % of elected state legislators were women in 2004.

Source: Center for Women in Government and Civil Society, Vermont Women’s Leadership Profile, Fall 2004

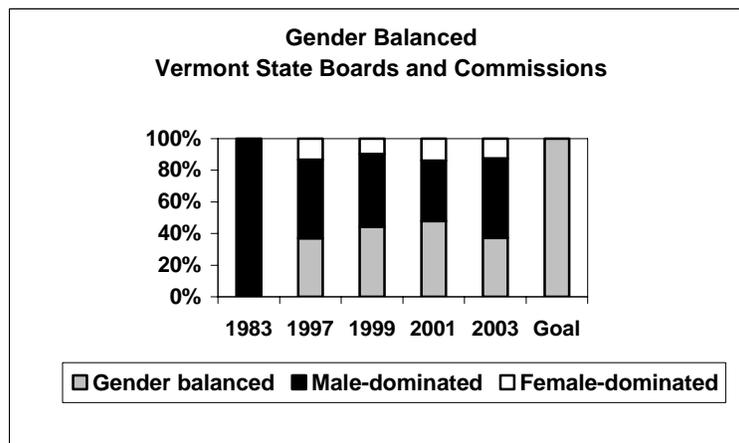
Select Boards



Being on a select board is often seen as a stepping stone to higher political office. Of the 991 Vermonters who are currently serving on a select board or city council only 171 (17 %) are women. However over 30 % of women serving in the 2003-2004 legislature indicated in their biographies that they had served, or were currently serving, on a select board or city council. Select boards are still overwhelmingly male-dominated. Fully 50 % of the 246 boards have no women members. There are only 15 select boards where at least half of the members are women.

Sources: *Biographical Sketches of the State Officers and Members of the General Assembly of 2003-2004*, Secretary of State; *2004 Town Master List*, Secretary of State

Gender Balance On Vermont Boards And Commissions



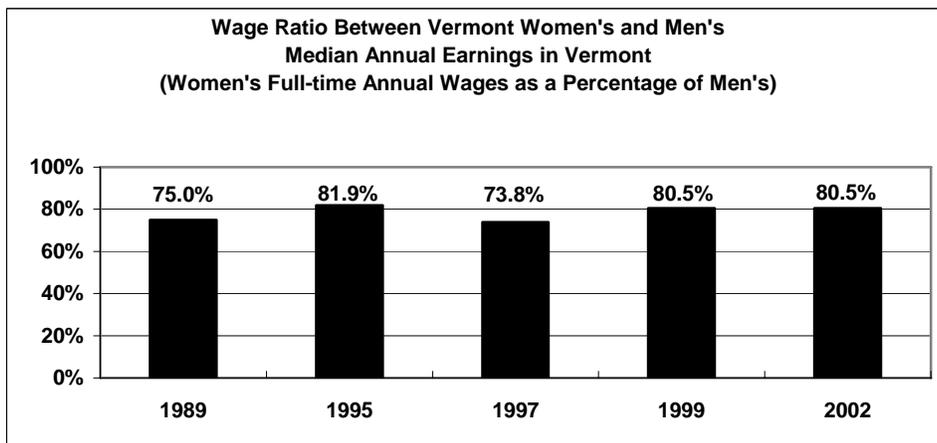
As one measure of the participation of women in public life, the Commission on Women has analyzed the gender composition of state boards and commissions since 1983. At that time no state board or commission was gender balanced, in fact, the majority had no women members at all. Boards and commissions have various appointing authorities and various processes for becoming a member. As of November 2003, only 37% of Vermont's 199 state boards and commissions were gender balanced, falling from a high of 48% in 2001. Exactly half were male-dominated and only 13% were female-dominated. The female-dominated boards and commissions were focused on issues such as aging and disabilities, mental health, workforce diversity, and special education. Sadly 12 % of the boards and commissions had no women members.

Source: *VCW analysis of Civil Government, State of Vermont, Secretary of Stat, 2003, 2001, 1999, 1997*

ECONOMIC EQUITY & SELF-SUFFICIENCY

2004

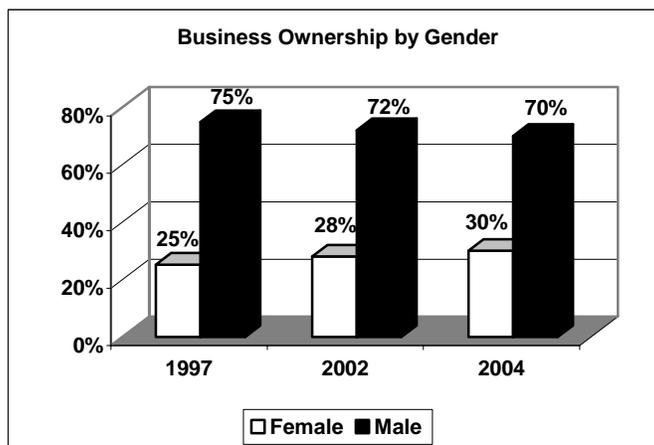
Vermont's Working Women



Nationally, the pay gap between women and men widened in 2003. Women's pay slumped for the first time since 1999. Comparable data is not yet available for Vermont. With more families becoming dependent on women as breadwinners, and with approximately half of women entering retirement alone, the wage gap is a crucial issue that affects the health and well-being of women and their families.

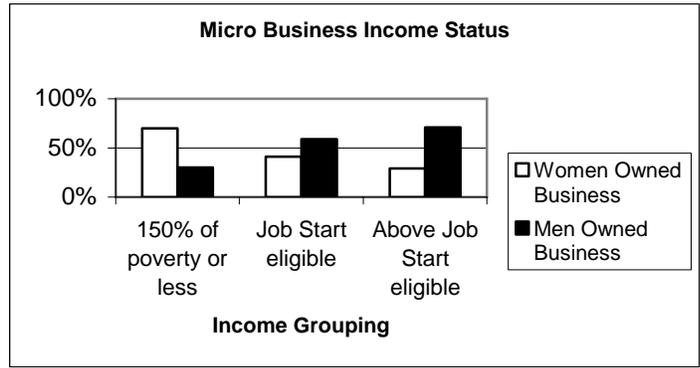
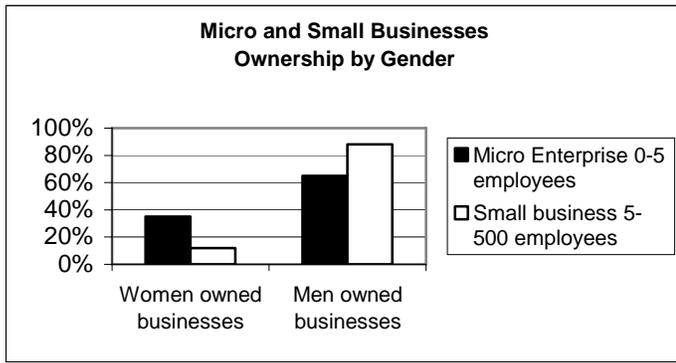
Source: Institute for Women's Policy Research

Vermont's Women Business Owners



There were an estimated 20,037 privately held majority (51% or more) women-owned firms in Vermont in 2004, comprising 30% of all privately held firms in the state. Between 1997 and 2004, the number of these firms increased by 17.7%; employment grew by 59.9%; and sales increased by 59.1%. These firms employ 21,621 people and generate \$2.1 billion in sales. However only 3,812 or 19% of these businesses had paid employees.

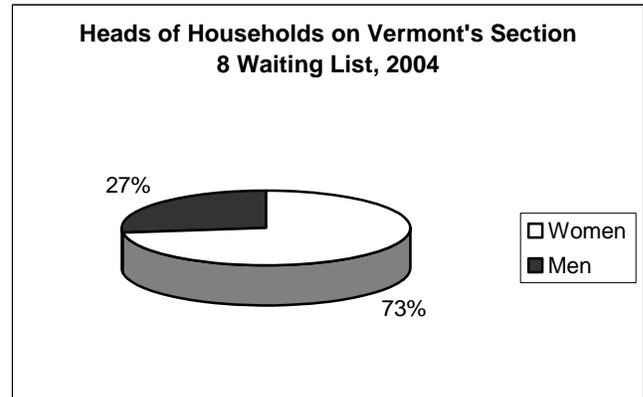
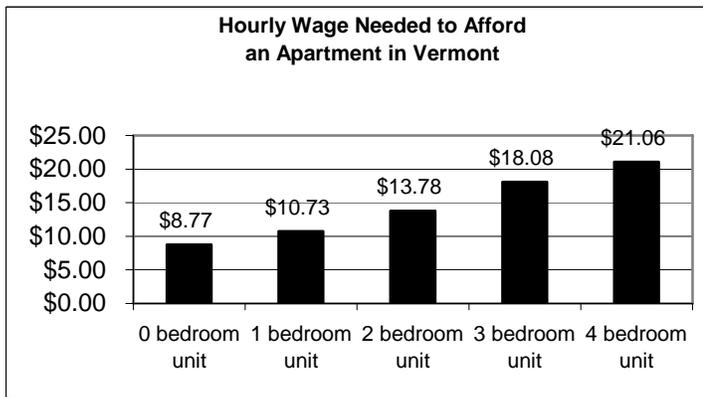
Sources: "The Status of Women in the States" 1998, 2000, Institute for Women's Policy Research; "Women-Owned Businesses in Vermont, 2004: A Fact Sheet, Center for Women's Business Research



According to the 2004 Vermonter Poll, women were more likely to own micro businesses (those with 0-5 employees) than small businesses. Women-owned micro businesses were significantly more likely to earn a lower income compared to men-owned micro businesses.

Source: *Micro and Small Business Ownership in Vermont Vermonter Poll*, Center For Rural Studies.

Housing in Vermont

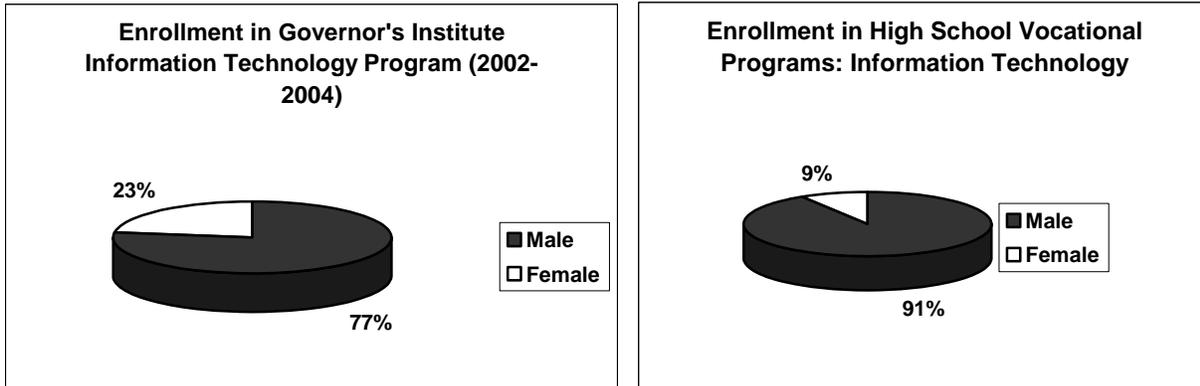


The lack of affordable housing in Vermont has disproportionate effect on women and women-headed households. The median wage for a year-round, full-time female worker is \$12.17/hour. As of July 2004, Vermont's Section 8 (federally subsidized housing) waiting list consisted of 3,156 applicants; of these, 73% indicated women as heads of households.

Sources: *Vermont Housing Data Online, 2003*; *Vermont State Housing Authority*

**EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
2004**

Information Technology



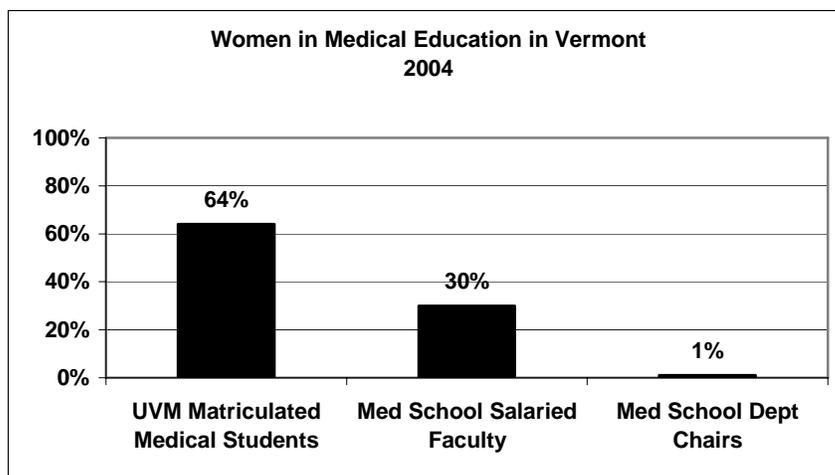
Enrollment in Vermont Higher Education Information Technology Programs 2003-2004			
Institution	Program	Percent enrolled	
		Female	Male
University of Vermont	Computer Science	8	92
	Management Information Systems	25	75
Champlain College	IT Professional Certificate	54	46
	IT Associate's Degree Programs	34	66
	IT Bachelor's Degree Programs	29	71
Community College of Vermont	Network Administration	15	85
	Computer Systems Management	27	73
	Web Design & Administration	75	25

In the last ten years, women have emerged as the driving force in Vermont's economy, accounting for 65% of the labor force growth. However they continue to lag behind in training in the Information Technology (IT) sector. The Information Technology sector is forecasted to experience labor shortages as job growth accelerates. For many Vermonters, the acquisition of IT skills will be the determining factor in their ability to get and keep a good job.

While women nationally make up 55% of those studying toward bachelor's and master's degrees, they comprise only 21% of those pursuing IT degrees. In Vermont, women make up a small percentage of currently enrolled IT students. Only 8% of undergraduate and 28% of graduate students enrolled in the Computer Science Department at the University of Vermont are women. With the exception of a few individual programs that successfully recruit and graduate higher percentages of women, there is a gender digital divide throughout Vermont's entire educational system.

Sources: Governor's Institute of Vermont; Vermont Department of Education - Career and Workforce Development; Vermont Institute; A Vermont Initiative on Women in Information Technology June 8, 2004; Center for Labor Market Studies, Northeastern University

Women In Medicine



Role models are important in any profession. The University of Vermont Medical School has had an excellent track record of admitting female medical students. Although nationally, the percentage of woman entering medical school just reached 50 % in 2003, at UVM, women have been in the majority in all but three of the past thirteen years' entering class. The percentage of women in medical school faculty positions has been increasing but still has far to go to reach equity.
Source: University of Vermont College of Medicine

Gender Division Among Vermont Physicians									
	1994			1998			2002		
	F	M	% F	F	M	% F	F	M	% F
PRIMARY CARE	136	357	28%	183	371	33%	237	389	38%
Family Practice	43	156	22%	73	161	31%	97	162	37%
Internal Medicine	32	115	22%	40	118	25%	54	143	27%
Pediatrics	36	50	42%	45	55	45%	54	48	53%
Ob/Gyn	25	36	41%	25	37	40%	32	36	47%
SPECIALTY CARE	123	588	17%	156	700	18%	193	744	21%
Anesthesiology	10	41	20%	13	45	22%	12	61	16%
Emergency Medicine	17	52	25%	17	65	21%	18	68	21%
Internal Medicine	10	84	11%	14	110	11%	20	108	16%
General Surgery				4	34	11%	6	45	12%
Orthopedic Surgery	3	45	6%	2	51	4%	4	56	7%
Other Surgery	6	62	9%	1	29	3%	2	30	6%
Psychiatry	34	96	26%	43	99	30%	50	96	34%
Radiology	6	41	13%	12	54	18%	17	66	20%
Pathology	8	26	24%	13	30	30%	16	28	36%
Other Specialties	29	141	17%	37	183	17%	48	186	21%
Plastic surgery	0	4	0%	0	8	0%	3	12	20%
TOTAL	259	945	22%	339	1071	24%	430	1133	28%

Although the number of women physicians practicing in Vermont has increased by 78% in the last ten years, women still represent only 28 % of the 1,563 physicians practicing in Vermont in 2002. Women are almost twice as likely go into primary care as opposed to so-called "specialty care". Among the specialties, the percentage of women varies dramatically. Some specialties such as surgery are still overwhelmingly male while pathology and psychiatry are attracting increasing numbers of women.

Source: Vermont Department of Health

VCW COMMISSIONERS 2004

Vicky Young, *Chair of the Vermont Commission on Women (Proctor)*

Commissioner Young has enjoyed a career in management of non-profit organizations. In addition to her work as Chair of the Commission, she serves on the boards of the Rutland Regional Medical Center, Vermont Public Radio, Vermont Community Foundation (as Chair), Rutland Health Foundation (as Vice-Chair), The Sunset Home (a community care home), and on the Council of the Vermont Women's Fund. Commissioner Young received a Bachelor of Arts degree at the University of California at Berkeley and undertook graduate studies at Stanford University and St. Michael's College.

Joyce Barbieri (*Wallingford*)

Commissioner Barbieri worked for the First Vermont Bank in Rutland for 7 years as an auditor and has been the town clerk and treasurer for the Town of Wallingford for the past 20 years. In addition, she has served her community as a member of the Vermont Clerk's and Treasurer's Association, and as the delinquent tax collector for her town. Commissioner Barbieri was also a State Representative for Rutland during the 1997-2000 legislative sessions. She was Vice-Chair of the House Local Government Committee, a member of the House Agricultural Committee, and was on the Governor's Task Force on Current Use. Commissioner Barbieri received her Associates Degree in Business Administration from Community College of Vermont in 1995.

Carol Buchdahl (*Saxtons River*)

Carol Buchdahl, R.N., M.A. served in the Vermont Legislature from 1997-1999 as a representative from Georgia. Prior to serving as a legislator, Commissioner Buchdahl worked in the fields of education and health as a registered nurse, college instructor, youth advisor, and career development specialist. She currently is the Manager of Leadership Development for the Workforce Education Consortium of the Vermont State Colleges.

Mary Claire Carroll (*Richmond*)

Commissioner Carroll lives in Richmond with her son and husband and runs a commercial photography business. She is a long-time member of Burlington Business and Professional Women (BPW), part of a national networking organization that advocates for working women. Through BPW Commissioner Carroll developed an interest in economic issues, particularly closing the wage gap between men and women. As BPW's advisor to the Commission, she served on the Economic Equity committee and worked on securing legislation to close the wage gap. Appointed as a Commissioner in the fall of 2001, she now chairs that committee and champions work to end wage discrimination. In addition to her Commissioner role, she serves on the Northern New England Tradeswomen board, Richmond Free Library Board of Trustees, chairs the VTBPW Legislation committee where she directs Equal Pay Day events, and is a former member of BPW/USA's Legislation Committee.

Ann Cummings (*Montpelier*)

Commissioner Cummings has been a member of the Senate since 1997. She served as the mayor of Montpelier from 1990 -1996 and as a city council member before that. She has also served as Outreach Coordinator and Program Director at Project Independence, an adult day care facility. Senator Cummings was recently Director of Marketing for Westview Meadows Retirement Community in Montpelier, and is currently Realtor at Coldwell Banker Heney Realtors in Montpelier. In addition, she is the owner of a custom design knitwear business, Core Designs. She received a BA from Cardinal Cushing College and an MSA from St. Michael's College.

Sandy Dooley (*South Burlington*)

A Commissioner since 1986 and, thus, the "dean" of the Commission, Sandy is a repository of commission institutional memory. Her 30+-year social work career includes work as a caseworker, college-level teacher, planner, evaluator, consultant, program director, Deputy Commissioner of PATH, and policy advisor--her current position at the Vermont Department of Health. She is a member of the Advisory Board of the Child Care Fund of Vermont; the National Association of Social Workers-Vermont, serving on its board from 1993-1999; and the Spear-East Terrace Neighborhood Association steering committee. Commissioner Dooley is a graduate of Middlebury College, the University of Vermont (MEd) and West Virginia University (MSW).

Marie Duquette (*Stowe*)

Commissioner Duquette recently retired as Director of Investments at the Office of the Vermont State Treasurer. Prior to moving to Vermont, she was Director of Investments and Assistant Treasurer of Boston University, a Senior Portfolio Manager at the Bank of Boston and held several other positions in investment management and finance in New York City. She received her BA and MBA from Columbia University. She currently serves on the Vermont Municipal Employees' Retirement System Board of Trustees and the Investment Committee for the Vermont Community Foundation. In addition, she recently served on the Boards of Advisors for North Atlantic Venture Fund II and Green Mountain Capital Corporation. She has two grown children.

Ruth Finn (*Barre*)

Commissioner Finn retired as Barre Town Clerk-Treasurer in 2000. In addition, she's volunteered for many state and community organizations, and is currently on the Barre Town Zoning Re-Write Committee, a volunteer at the Vermont Historical Library, a Parliamentarian for the VT Society Daughters of the American Revolution, a secretary for Barre Town Republican Committee, and a treasurer for the Washington County Republican Committee. In the past, she has served on the Historical Records Advisory Board, as President of the Vermont Town Clerk-Treasurer Association, as President of the Vermont Government Finance Officers Association, as a member of the New England Municipal Clerks Association, as a regional advisory council member of the UVM Extension Service, as President of American Association of University Women's Barre Branch, and as State Regent and VP General of the DAR.

Anne Ginevan (*Middlebury*)

Commissioner Ginevan recently served as Vermont's Commissioner of the Department of Employment and Training. Prior to that, she was the director of the Addison County Education Partnership and was a Representative for Middlebury in the Vermont House from 1997-2000. Commissioner Ginevan has also worked as the Co-Director of Development for the Counseling Service of Addison County, and was Executive Director of the United Way of Addison County from 1983-1997. Prior to that she was the founder and Executive Director of Elderly Services, Inc. where she worked for 5 years. Commissioner Ginevan also worked in higher education and in the public school system. She has also served on various boards over the past 31 years, including the Middlebury Union High School Board of Directors, Chair of the Porter Medical Center Auxiliary, Chair of the Helen Porter Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center, member of the Champlain Valley Health Education Center Board, and as the 2001 Legislative Appointment for the Vermont Center for the Book.

Bea Grause (*Montpelier*)

Commissioner Grause became president of the Vermont Association of Hospitals and Health Systems in November 2001. She received her Juris Doctorate in May 1991 from Santa Clara University School of Law and her BSN from Boston College in 1979. Before moving to Vermont, Commissioner Grause worked in a variety of health care positions in Washington, D.C. She worked as professional staff to Congressman Norman Y. Mineta and then Joseph P. Kennedy II. After leaving Capitol Hill, she spent the next five years as Senior Director for Federal Affairs for the Massachusetts Hospital Association and the Tennessee Hospital Association. After Congress passed the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 she was recruited to the Washington office of the Boston-based law firm, Foley Hoag LLP, where her practice focused on Medicare legislative and regulatory issues. Prior to entering the field of law, Commissioner Grause worked for ten years as a Registered Nurse primarily in the Emergency Room and Intensive Care areas.

Marcia Merrill (*Jericho*)

Commissioner Merrill is a partner in Montgomery and Merrill, P.C., a women-owned business in Burlington. She has been active in Business and Professional Women (BPW) in Vermont for over 15 years, and currently serves on the national organization's Finance Committee. In addition, she serves on the Board of Directors of the Vermont Council on Rural Development. Commissioner Merrill holds a BA, Summa Cum Laude, from Hobart and William Smith Colleges and an MBA from Rochester Institute of Technology.

Marion Milne (*Washington*)

Commissioner Milne has lived in the town of Washington since 1960 and started Milne Travel in Barre in 1975. She has been active in her community for over 40 years. She's served as: Representative to the Vermont House from 1994 to 2000, where she was ranking member of the Ways and Means Committee; first woman President of Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce, where she was recently named a Life Member for her fundraising efforts since 1980; member of the Vermont Judicial Nominating Board from 1996 to 2002; and was BPW's Woman of the Year in 1980. She currently serves as a Library Trustee (for over twenty years); Vice-President of the Community of Vermont Elders; as a member on the Professional Responsibility Board (a state board appointed by the Supreme Court); a Director of Washington Electric Co-op; and is an incorporator of the Northfield Savings Bank. She was co-chair of the Woman's Caucus in the Vermont Legislature and recipient of their Legislator of the Year award in 2000. She is married to House Clerk Donald Milne.

Mary Barrosse Schwartz (*Dorset*)

Commissioner Barrosse Schwartz is a fundraising consultant and is currently co-authoring a book on aging with physician husband Bob Schwartz. Her professional roles have included lobbyist, non-profit Executive Director, and freelance writer and editor. Commissioner Barrosse Schwartz has been a Vermont Public Radio Commentator since 1997, and a contributing writer to the Burlington Free Press and other state and national publications. She's an active civic volunteer, serving on the board of Vermonters for Better Education, a non-partisan statewide education policy group, as an Advisor for Child Care Fund of Vermont, as a Justice of the Peace, and as a school volunteer for Vermont Institute of Natural Science Elf program (a natural science curriculum taught by parents, designed to augment school science programs). In addition, her volunteer background includes stints as school board and rescue squad member. She received a BA in History from the University of Delaware. She has 3 children ages 9-15.

Libby Sternberg (*Rutland*)

Commissioner Sternberg is an author and education reform activist living in Rutland. Her first published book, a young adult mystery entitled *Uncovering Sadie's Secrets* (Bancroft Press, Spring 2003), was an Edgar finalist in 2004. A commentator on Vermont Public Radio, Sternberg has also had articles and commentaries published in numerous magazines and newspapers, including the Weekly Standard, the Baltimore Sun, the Indianapolis Star, and Insight. She is currently executive director of Vermonters for Better Education, an education reform organization promoting school choice. She holds a bachelor's and master's degree from the Peabody Conservatory of the Johns Hopkins University and also attended the summer American School of Music in Fontainebleau, France. Sternberg is married and has three children.

Joan Lawrence-Studebaker (*Wilder*)

Commissioner Lawrence-Studebaker's expertise and interest in women's issues stems from her work for more than twenty years as a social worker, educator, and counselor for the elderly, battered women, and abused children in the educational system and in private practice. She lives in Wilder with her son Ethan.

Maureen Trudeau (*Rutland*)

Commissioner Trudeau has worked as a Registered Nurse in a variety of settings that include Medical Surgical, Critical Care, Home Health and Hospice. She is a Certified Family Life Educator and has specialized training in Marriage and Family Counseling, Family Mediation, Abstinence Education, and Grief/Loss Issues. Commissioner Trudeau has worked as a Hospice Bereavement Counselor and is the Regional Director of RAINBOWS, providing bereavement support to children. She established the first Compassionate Friends Chapter in Vermont in 1996; several chapters now provide support to families when a child has died. Maureen has been the Chairperson of Rutland County Right To Life since 1997. She received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Wagner College, Master of Arts in Pastoral Care from Loyola Marymount, and a Master of Science in Counseling from San Diego State University. She lives in Rutland with her husband Tom and two children.