

The Vermont Commission on Women proudly presents this second edition of our report on the social and economic status of Vermont women and girls. 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. This section reads, "To report by January 15 of each year to the governor, speaker of the house and senate president pro tempore an annual summary of Vermont women's social and economic status including, but not limited to, employment and earnings, economic autonomy, and political participation and representation."

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 three key categories of the Commission's 2000-2005 Strategic Plan: Education and Human Development, Economic Equity and Self-Sufficiency, 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 and can inform our work on behalf of the state's women.

Leadership and Public Life

When women participate in the political process and in public life, the issues they care about, which are often different than those of their male counterparts, are brought to the forefront and receive the attention of policymakers.

Even though the legislature lacks gender balance, Vermont women register and vote in greater numbers than Vermont men. In addition, while women outnumber men in Vermont leadership training programs, this does not translate to holding public office.

Education and Human Development

Role models are often cited as significant career influences for school-age children. While women dominate the teaching profession in Vermont's public schools, men dominate administrative positions.

The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) is an established standard used as both a determinant for college admission and as a tool to measure potential success in higher education. Boys continue to outperform girls on the SAT; however, more girls take the test, and more girls pursue post-secondary education.

There has been an alarming increase in the female prison population in Vermont. Over the last ten years, the number has skyrocketed from 25 to 139. Many of the crimes they committed were brought on by economic circumstances produced by addiction to drugs.

Economic Equity and Self-Sufficiency

Economic issues are central to the mission of the Commission and the well-being of Vermont's families. Working women are making progress in Vermont, comprising almost half of the workforce and starting many new businesses. However, the wage gap in Vermont is still 80.5%. Recent studies have indicated that there is need for policy improvement in a variety of areas: changing work policies to reflect the present and future reality of two working parents; creating the possibility for workers to discover pay inequities; creating more opportunities for women to access post-secondary education; and encouraging women to consider education and careers in higher paying non-traditional fields such as information technology.

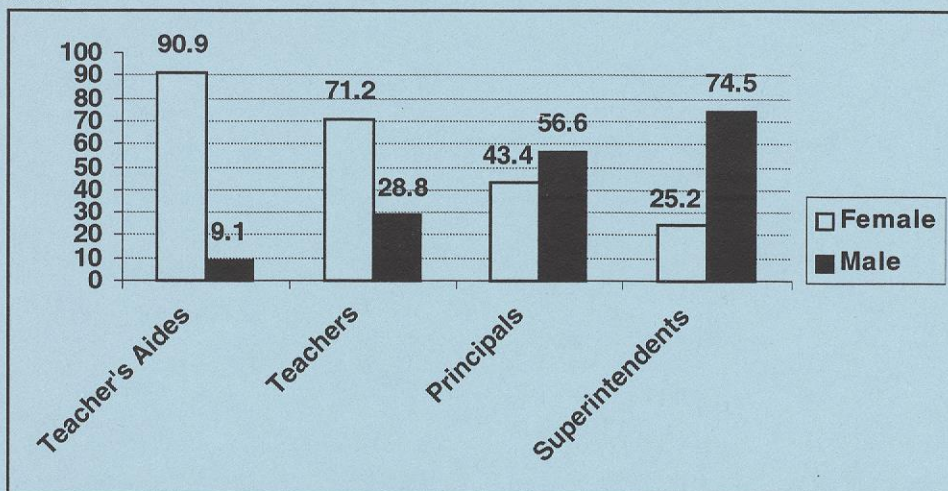
Female-headed single-parent families comprise the majority of families living in poverty in Vermont. Traditional female-dominated jobs, such as child care worker and housekeeping cleaner, continue to pay below a livable wage.

Commissioners

This is the second year under a multiple appointing authority structure. This year the Commission welcomed Marie Duquette, Ruth Finn, and Maureen Trudeau. Commissioner Carol Buchdahl was reappointed.

EDUCATION

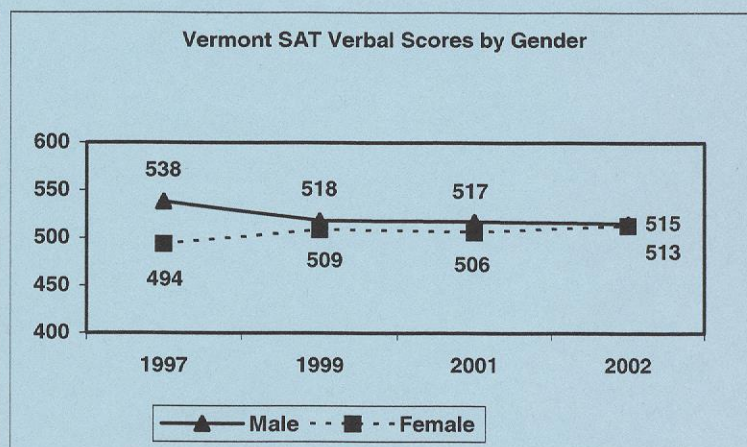
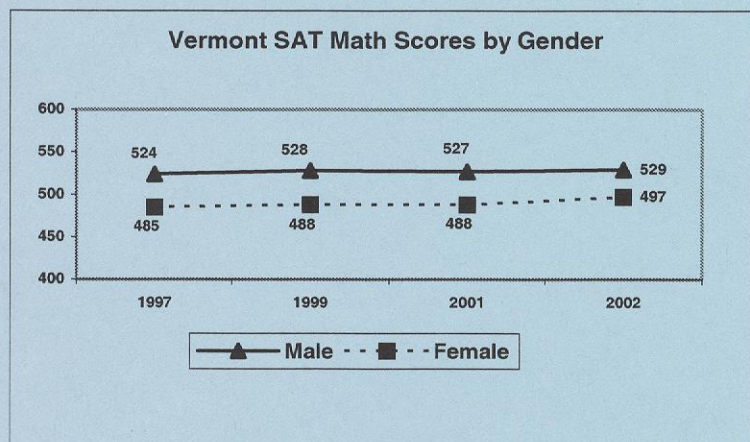
Women in Public Schools



Better paying jobs in education are held by men. In FY 2003, 71.2% of the teachers and 90.9% of the teacher aides were female. Women fill the majority of direct instructional positions in Vermont. However, administrative positions are predominantly male. In FY 2003, only 43.4% of the principles and 25.2% of the superintendents were female.

Sources: Department of Education School Report 2001-2002; Vermont Department Of Education, 2002-2003 School Year Teacher/Staff FTE and Salary Report

SAT Scores

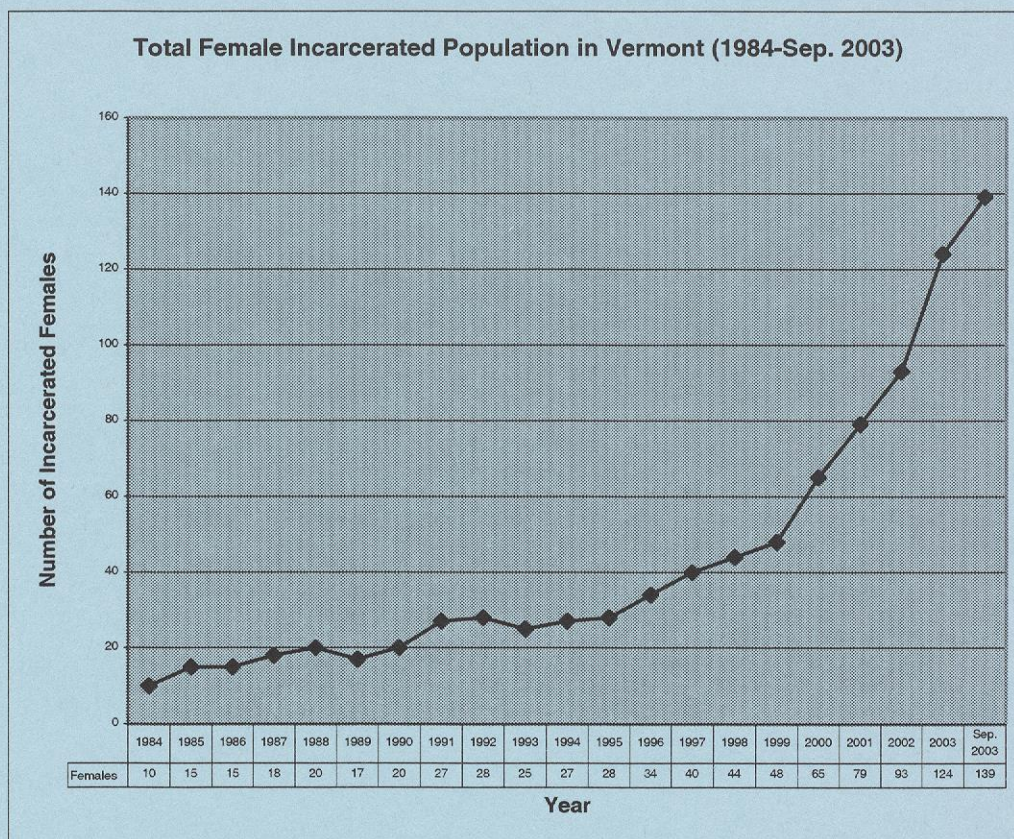


Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT): Males still score higher on the SAT test, although the gender difference appears to be narrowing. In the academic year 1999-2000, 63% of Vermont's seniors in high school took the SAT exam. More (56%) of those test takers were female, and more (68.8% of females as opposed to 58% of males) actually pursued postsecondary education.

Sources: "The Vermont Institute's Equity Initiatives", 2001, Vermont Institutes; Vermont School Report 2002, The College Board, 2003 College Bound Seniors, Vermont Report; VSAC, Vermont Senior Survey Part II: Actual Activities After High School

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

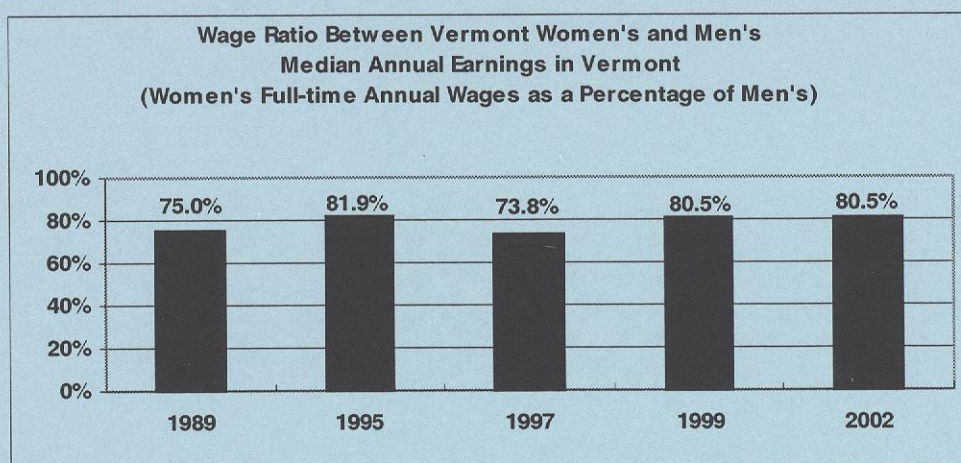
Women In Prison



As of September 2003, there were 139 female inmates in Vermont prisons. Vermont's female incarceration rate of 26 per 100,000 women residents still ranks below the nation's rate of 60, there have been dramatic increases in the female prison population over time in Vermont. Experts believe the increase may be due in part to substance abuse and crimes related to drug use, particularly heroin. Vermont's female offenders share many of the characteristics of their cohorts nationally; 80% are mothers, 48 % have an alcohol problem, 38% have a drug problem, 40% have been sexually abused as a child; and 72% were physically abused as an adult. The majority of prison sentences were attributed to felony property charges.

Sources: "More VT Women are Doing Time", Rutland Herald, reporter David Mace, Sun 03 Aug. 2003, Data courtesy of the Vermont Department of Corrections

Vermont's Working Women



A recent GAO congressional report revealed that the wage gap is due in part to the fact that women have traditionally worked less, tend to have jobs that pay less, and drop out of the work force for longer periods of time than men. However, even after making adjustments for these aspects, women still earn a national average of 20.3 % less than men. The report quoted experts' speculation about continued discrimination against female workers and a causal link with an outdated work life structure. The report further stated: "Research suggests that many work places still maintain the same policies, practices and structures that existed when most workers were men who worked full time, 40-hours per week. As a result there may be a mismatch between the needs of workers with family responsibilities and the structure of the workplace."

Sources: United States General Accounting Office, Report to Congressional Requesters, Women's Earnings, October 2003; Institute for Women's Policy Research

2000 Statewide Occupation Wage Estimates - Vermont

from Occupational Employment Statistics Survey (OES) October 2001, DET

Occupation	# of workers in 2000	2000 median hrly wage	Median annual wage
Food prep/svc*	3,950	\$6.82	\$14,280
Cashier	9,630	\$6.91	\$14,380
Food counter wk**	1,740	\$7.32	\$15,220
Maids/Hskpg Clnrs	2,910	\$7.53	\$15,660
Child Care Worker	1,580	\$7.60	\$15,820
Security Guards	1,200	\$8.13	\$16,920
Vet.Asst/Lab			
Animal caretakers	140	\$8.19	\$17,030
Stock Clerks	4,110	\$8.29	\$17,240
Hotel/Mot. Dsk Clk	740	\$8.46	\$17,600
Retail Salesperson	9,140	\$8.60	\$17,890
Janitors & Cleaners	5,110	\$8.85	\$18,410
Hairdressers	750	\$9.46	\$19,680
Truck Drvr-lgt,local	2,400	\$9.52	\$19,800
Team Assemblers	2,500	\$9.81	\$20,410
School Busdriver	1,010	\$10.24	\$21,300
Secretaries	4,190	\$10.79	\$22,450
Truck Drvr-Hvy,TT	4,180	\$12.33	\$25,640
Hwy Maint. Wrkr	1,220	\$12.39	\$25,770

**Median Wage for Female
Full-Time, Year-Round
Worker in VT, Year 2000**
\$25,322

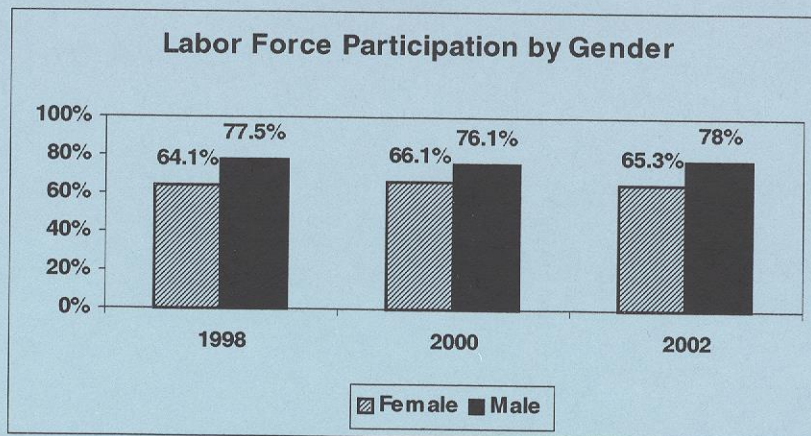
**Median Wage for Male
Full-Time, Year-Round
Worker in VT, Year 2000**
\$32,457

Many of Vermont's jobs don't pay a livable wage. A recent study found that full-time Vermont female workers are clustered (60%) in four industries: healthcare and social services, education, manufacturing and retail. Female workers also dominate the non-profit sector.

Sources: Census 2002; Vermont Job Gap Study Phase 8;
Graph courtesy of the Vermont Children's Forum

*Combined Food prep, serving wrkrs, include fast food

**Counter attndnts, cafeteria wrkrs, food concession, coffee shop



In 2002, 65.3 % of Vermont's women were in the labor force. A current job gap study reveals that they make up 48% of Vermont's labor force and 41% of full-time workers.

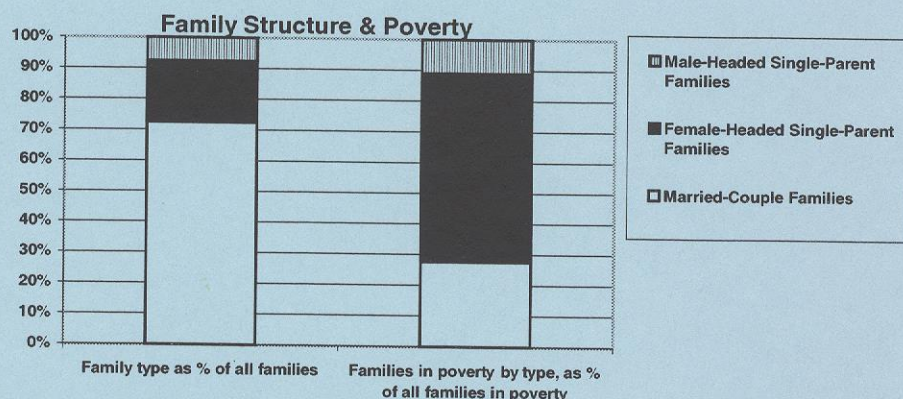
Sources: "The Status of Women in the States" 1998, 2000, 2002 Institute for Women's Policy Research; Vermont Job Gap Study Phase 8

Living in Poverty

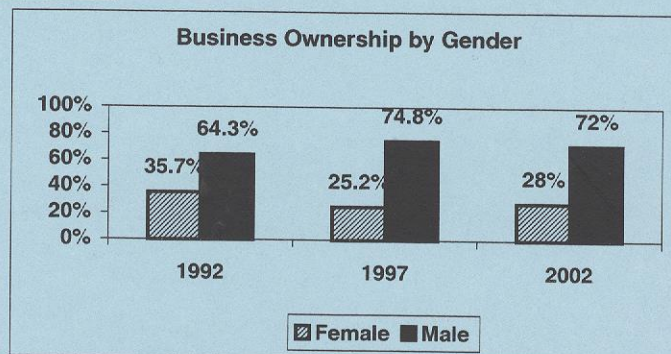
While female-headed single-parent families make up only 20% of all family types in Vermont, they comprise 61.4% of families living in poverty.

Sources: Annie E. Casey Foundation, Census 2000,

Graph courtesy of the Vermont Children's Forum



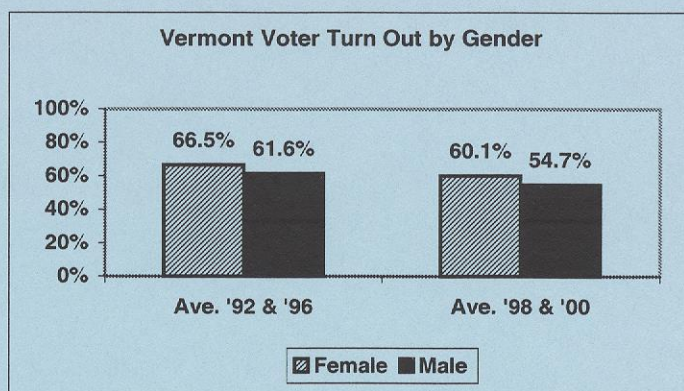
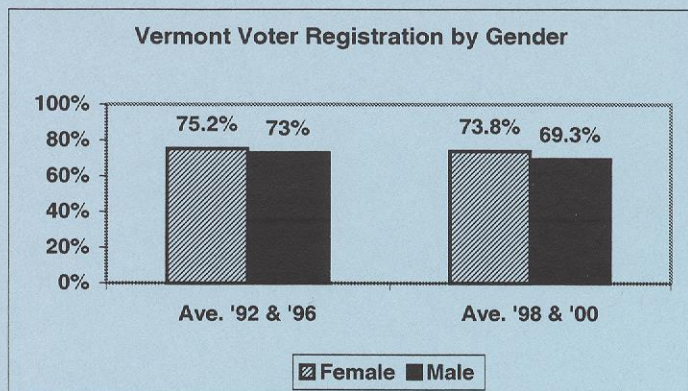
Vermont's Women Business Owners



Vermont currently rates among the top ten states for women's business ownership. There were an estimated 18,902 majority-owned, privately held women-owned firms in Vermont in 2002, comprising 28% of all privately held firms in the state. Between 1997 and 2002, the number of women owned-firms increased by 11%; employment grew by 46%; and sales increased by 52%. These women owned firms in Vermont employed nearly 20,000 people and generated almost \$2 billion in sales.

Sources: "The Status of Women in the States" 1998, 2000, Institute for Women's Policy Research; "Women-Owned Businesses in Vermont, 2002: A Fact Sheet, Center for Women's Business Research

Voting

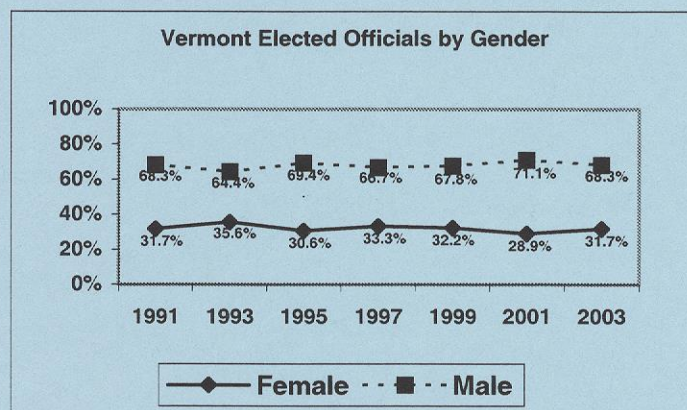


Women have a higher rate of voter registration and participation than men. Nationally, in 2000, Vermont ranked 10th in women's voter registration and 6th in voter turnout. In the same year, regionally, Vermont ranked 2nd of the six states in the New England region, (CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, and VT) for voter registration and turnout. Source: "The Status of Women in the States" 1998, 2000, and 2002, Institute for Women's Policy Research

At The State Level

Governor: Madeleine Kunin served from 1985 to 1991 and is the only female governor to have served three terms. Vermont's three subsequent governors have been male. There has not been a female lieutenant governor since Barbara Snelling held the position from 1992 to 1996.

Source: Center for American Women in Politics Municipal Yearbook, State of Vermont (2003)



Legislature: 31.7% of Vermont elected officials are female. That percentage represents a decline from a high of 35.6% in 1993. There are 56 female members of the Vermont legislature: 47 Representatives and 9 Senators. Vermont now ranks 1st in New England and 5th in the U.S. for the percentage of women in the state legislature. In the 2003-2004 legislature, 25% male and 28.5% female legislators are serving their first term. Two women currently hold leadership positions in the House of Representatives: Representative Connie Houston is the House Majority Leader and Representative Gaye Symington is the House Minority Leader. Five of the fourteen House committees Chairs are women, and four of the eleven Senate committee Chairs are women.

Sources: VCW analysis of the Vermont Legislature; Center for American Women in Politics, Municipal Yearbook, State of Vermont (2003)

Elected Officials: Nine women have held elected statewide office in Vermont. The state ranks 2nd in New England for women elected to statewide office (behind only Connecticut with 19, but ahead of Massachusetts and Rhode Island with 5 each, New Hampshire with just 2, and Maine with 0). Currently, women hold two of the five statewide elected offices: Deborah Markowitz was elected Secretary of State in 1999 and Elizabeth M. Ready was elected State Auditor in 2001.

Source: Center for American Women in Politics, Municipal Yearbook, State of Vermont (2003)

At The Local Level

City Mayors: Only one of eight Vermont city mayors is a woman.

Source: Center for American Women in Politics; Municipal Yearbook, State of Vermont (2003)

Select Boards: 12.5% of Vermont's selectboard/city council members are women.

This percentage is virtually the same as in 1992, but up compared to 8 percent in 1982. The percentage of women serving at the municipal level above school committee has not risen in the past 10 years.

Source: Center for American Women in Politics, Municipal Yearbook, State of Vermont (2003)

School Boards: 45% of Vermont's school board members are women.

Source: VT School Board Association

Town Clerks: 91 % of Vermont's Town Clerks are women.

Out of 246 town and city clerks, there are 223 women holding these positions.

Source: VT League of Cities and Towns

Leadership Training

The Vermont Community Leadership Training (VCLT) is a program of the Vermont Children's Forum, a nonpartisan, nonprofit education, research and advocacy organization. VCLT was founded in 1997 to help build the skills, knowledge and confidence that parents need to improve society for children, and has evolved into a successful community-based process for encouraging broader civic participation. This 20-week training includes focus on problem solving, active listening, facilitation skills and group dynamics; economic issues and community resources; coalition building; public speaking and media studies; and public policy formation. Community projects developed by each participant provide the opportunity to practice real world civics during the training. To date, there have been 37 trainings in 24 different communities with over 375 participants, of whom 90% are female.

Source: Vermont Community Leadership Training, a program of the Vermont Children's Forum

The Vermont Leadership Institute (VLI) is a program of The Snelling Center for Government. The program provides current and future leaders with the knowledge, guidance, and encouragement they need to make the most of their commitment to our state. Through an intensive and experiential twenty-day program, VLI seeks to stimulate citizen enthusiasm for and participation in public service, enable Vermonters to take thoughtful action within the public sector, and improve the capacity of citizens to work together and bring about positive change. Since the fall of 1995, The Snelling Center has been offering the VLI to public, private and non-profit Vermont leaders. Since June of 1996, they have graduated eight classes of 22 to 27 Associates: 90 are men and 116 are women.

Source: The Vermont Leadership Institute of The Snelling Center for Government.