

**WOMEN'S  
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# Closing The Gender Wealth Gap

Advancing Gender Equity With Guaranteed Income

April 24, 2024

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# Our Mission

- The first “umbrella” funding federation in the United States specifically dedicated to women’s issues.
- ***For-Gender and Racial Justice*** organization whose mission is to achieve gender and racial equity by building collective power to disrupt systems of oppression and **strengthen alternative models centered in love, liberation and inclusion.**

# Economic State of Women

## Surviving....Not Thriving

- 80% of workers in the US are living paycheck to paycheck, majority are women
- 47% of Americans are not able to cover an unexpected \$400 expense, majority are women
- Philadelphia has the **highest poverty rate** at just above 25% among the ten largest cities
  - Region's largest demographic group living in poverty are **women aged 25 - 34**

## Gender Wealth Gap

- Larger than the Pay Equity Gap and is worsening

## Retirement Gap

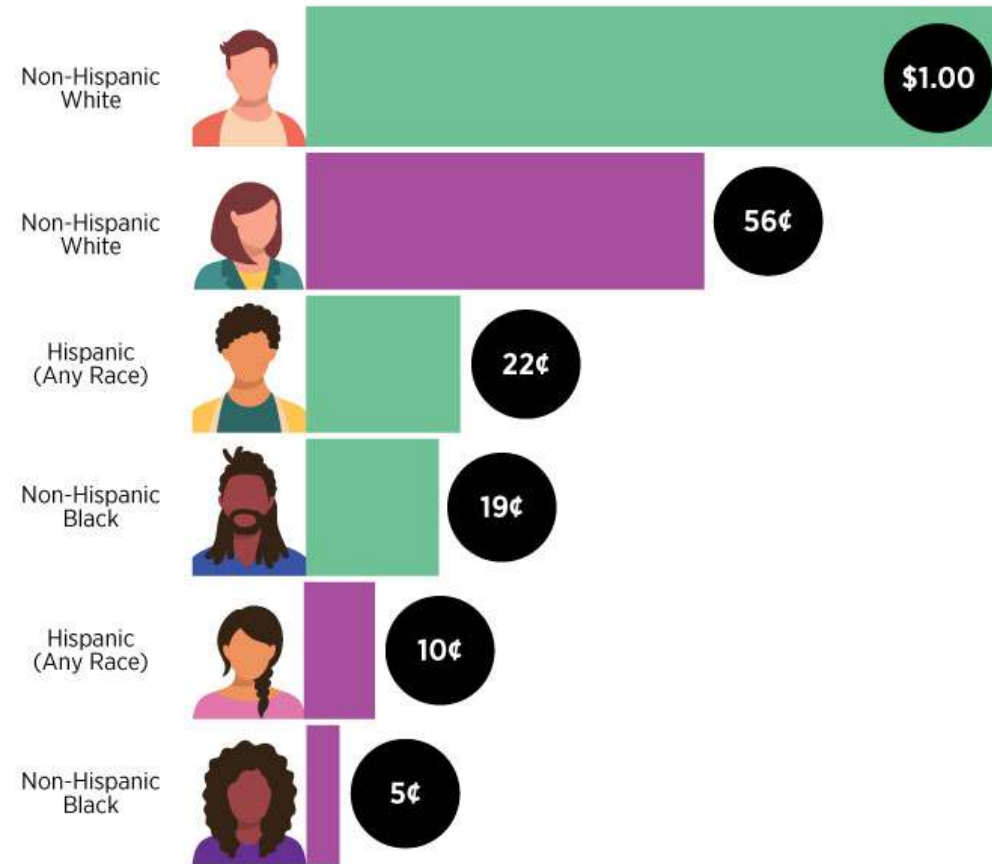
- 80% of women are likely to be living in poverty by age 65



If these current trends continue across economic, health, political and education equality, then gender parity will not be achieved until **2133**.

# Economic State of Women

**The U.S. Wealth Gap Is Particularly Large for Families Headed by Women of Color**



■ FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF ST. LOUIS

# The U.S. Economic Pyramid

**1% of the population holds 47% of the nation's wealth**

**RICH/OWNERS**

Independently wealthy

Over \$3 million/household net worth

Average income over \$374,000/year

**19% of the population holds 44% of the nation's wealth**

**PROFESSIONAL/MANAGERIAL**

Over \$344,000/household net worth

Average income over \$94,000/year

**80% of the population holds 9% of the nation's wealth**

**Middle and Working Class/Unemployed/Welfare/Homeless**

\$56,000/household net worth

Average income \$41,000/year

# The Growing Wealth Gap

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**During the past 2 years, the wealth of the world's ten richest men doubled. The incomes of 99 percent of humanity fell. The wealthiest ten people now own more wealth than 40 percent of all humanity.**

Jayari Ghosh, "Control the Vampire Companies: Skyrocketing Corporate Profits Spur Global Inequalities," Dollars & Sense (July/August 2022); Nabil Ahmed et al., "Inequality Kills," Oxfam International, January 17, 2022, <https://www.oxfam.org/en/research/inequality-kills>.

**Elon Musk in a single year of the COVID pandemic gained some \$118 billion. In the same year, the United Nations estimated that 150 million people fell into poverty.**

Allison Morrow, "The World's 500 Richest People Became \$1 Trillion Richer Last Year," CNN Business Journal, January 4, 2022, <https://cnn.it/3Ss75JB>



# The Growing Wealth Gap

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**The three wealthiest men in the US – Bill Gates, Jeff Bezos, Warren Buffet – own more wealth than the bottom half of America combined, for a total of 160 million people.**

Chuck Collins and Josh Hoxie, *Billionaire Bonanza: The Forbes 400 and the Rest of Us*, (Washington, DC, Institute for Policy Studies, November 2017),<sup>2</sup>.

**Since 2009, 95 percent of income gains in the US have gone to the top 1 percent. Meanwhile, an alarming 47% of Americans cannot put together even \$400 in the face of an emergency, leaving the most of us unprepared to face such ordinary mishaps as a flat tire or a child's twisted ankle.**

<sup>1</sup> Data from Berkeley economics professor Immanuel Saez, cited by Josh Baro, "95% of Income Gains Since 2009 Went to the Top 1% - Here's What That Really Means," *Business Insider*, September 12, 2023, <https://www.businessinsider.com/95-of-income-gains-since-2009-went-to-the-top-1-heres-what-that-really-means-2013-9>

<sup>2</sup> Federal Reserve, "Executive Summary" from *Report on the Economic Well Being of U.S. Households in 2017* (Washington, DC: Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, May 2018),<sup>2</sup>.



## Need to answer the questions:

- *Why do we have an economic system where 1% of the population holds 47% of the nation's wealth and the majority are White Christian men, and the bottom 80% hold 9% of the nation's wealth, many of whom are women of color?*
- *How did we get here?*
- **How does our current economic system normalize and institutionalize greed?**

## To answer these questions, we need to understand:

- How wealth and power were built in America and how they currently operate.
- Wealth comes from the extraction of others
- The biased rules of capitalism and how they drive today's gender and racial inequities.

# Inclusive and Equitable Economy

“Creating a **New Normal** requires a **new bold vision** for our economy, one that provides **solutions to centuries of systemic exclusion, extraction, and exploitation** that have continually undermined economic potential in the US.”

Kendra Bozarth, Grace Western & Janelle Jones: *Black Women BEST: The Framework We Need For An Equitable Economy*, September 2020



## Bold Vision

To close the gender wealth gap in the Greater Philadelphia region by advancing research and practical solutions that **build wealth** for women who are economically insecure



## Strong Foundation

Builds upon WOMEN'S WAY extensive experience in advancing economic security of women, which includes **building a network of 100+ active partners** committed to a shared vision.

## When wealth is accumulated,

- **We live and retire** with greater **dignity, freedom** and **peace of mind**
- Our **communities** are prosperous, **resilient** and **vibrant**.
- **Future generations** have the **freedom to dream big** and become all they truly can be.
- We are healthy, and know that **our family, networks and communities** are **healthy, spiritually whole and contributing**.

*Maven Collaborative*



- **Racialized Capitalism** is a key driver of wealth gaps
- **Wealth Supremacy** undergirds our current economic system
- **Heteropatriarchy** shapes the experiences of marginalized genders

Capitalism is grounded in the extraction of social and economic value from people of marginalized racial identities

- Capitalism in the US originated on a racial caste system that privileged whiteness
- Whiteness continues to be a social and economic advantage, as well as an asset
- Racialization is fundamental to the maintenance and sustainability of labor exploitation



Wealth supremacy is a set of cultural and political processes and attitudes by which the wealthy accumulate and maintain prestige, power and privilege that others lack

## Key Features of Wealth Supremacy

**Capital Bias:** Rules that bias maximum increase and benefit to wealth holders

**Myths:** Maximizing profit, fiduciary duty, income statement, takings

A system of oppression designed to reproduce and reinforce the dominance of heterosexual cisgender men

- Patriarchy is a gendered social structure that privileges cisgender men's access to power and resources
- Patriarchy constructs gender into a binary
- Heterosexuality coded as “normative” is a central feature of patriarchy

# Brief History of Cash Transfer (CT)

## Evolution

- CT first introduced in South & Latin America in the 1990s
- TANF introduced in the US in 1996
- Policy Objectives
  - Eradicate Poverty
  - Children's Health
  - Adult Workforce Participation

## Components

- Temporary
- Regular cash payments
- Conditional programs
- Targeting to determine eligibility
  - Area Median Income, Federal Poverty Line
  - Citizenship Status, Family Cap, Carceral Record



*Recipients of the Bolsa Família  
Program, the largest CT program to-  
date*

## Issues with Conditional Transfer

- Conditionality prohibits recipients' wellbeing
- High administrative costs
- Socio-cultural impact

## Cultural Shift in Anti-Poverty Policy

- Right-based approach
- Unconditional Cash Transfer, Guaranteed Income, Universal Basic Income
  - Who decides
  - Remove conditional programs, Loosen eligibility requirements & targeting strategy

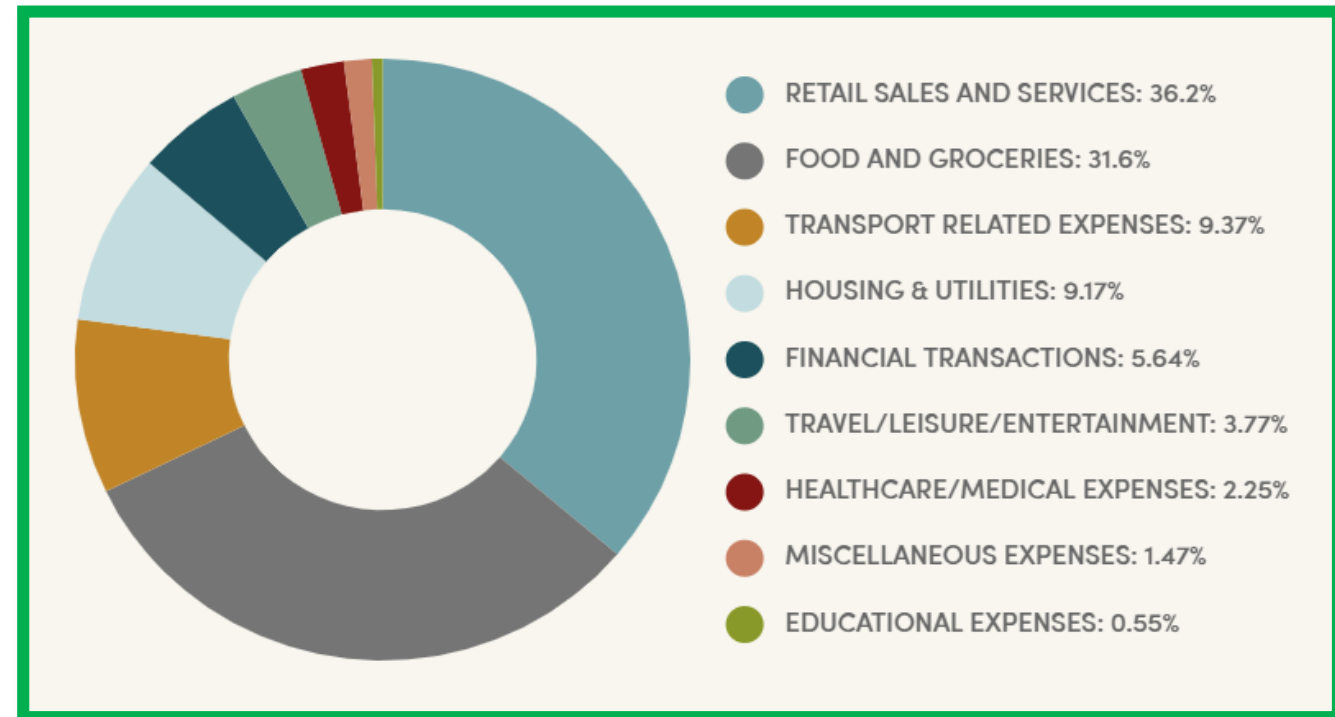
# Guaranteed Income: 2020-Now

## COVID-19 & GI

- The recession imposed record-high unemployment, inflation
- “Non-eligible” communities are most affected
- Early findings show recipients spend on essentials.

## 2020 Onwards

- 100+ GI pilots launched
- Advocacy & Philanthropy for GI
  - More experimentation
  - More political will
  - More CT & data



Guaranteed Income Pilot Dashboard (2024). This chart compiled the spending data of 8,297 GI participants.

# “Welfare is a Women’s Issue”

## GI impact on Gender Equity

- Targeting Women
  - Transcending stereotypes
- Program Duration
  - Scarcity to abundance
- Systems Impact
  - Wraparound support that is agency-building



Getty Images. Johnnie Tillmon, American activist, Black woman, single mother, and leader of the National Welfare Rights Organization (1965-72).

# What's Behind Guaranteed Income?

## Economic Assumptions:

- How the economy works
- What are basic needs?
- Who is responsible for making sure basic needs are met?





# What's Behind Guaranteed Income?

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## Narrative Assumptions

- “American Dream”
- “Meritocracy”
- “Deservedness”

Part of the work of liberation is to uncover the plot; that is, the intentions, actions and outcomes

# Moderator

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**Anne E. Price, Co-President and  
Founder of The Maven  
Collaborative**

# Upcoming CGWG Forums: 2024

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- June 2024: It Takes a Village, Community Wealth Building
- July 2024: Exploring Models of Shared Wealth
- November 2024: Impact Investing for Gender Equity