



**WOMEN'S
WAY** | **CONNECTS
EMPOWERS
INVESTS**

Advancing Gender Equity

Understanding White Supremacy: How to Challenge and Dismantle
January 19, 2022

- The region's leading nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement of women, girls, and gender equity.
- The first “umbrella” funding federation in the United States specifically dedicated to women's issues

The Economic State of Women

BEFORE COVID:

- Nationally, women and children were 73% of the poor
- Philadelphia had the *highest poverty rate* at just above 25% among ten largest cities
 - Region's largest demographic group living in poverty *were women aged 25-34*
 - 37.2% of children were living in poverty

The Economic State of Women

IMPACT OF COVID-19:

Nationally, **2.5 million women** have lost their jobs or dropped out of the workforce

- Nearly two million remain unemployed
- In April 2021, all job gains went to men
- Workforce participation rates for women hit 30-year lows

Driving Factors:

- Women account for 74% of employment in high-contact occupations
- Lower paying jobs without benefits and paid family and medical leave are dominated by women
- Lack of a childcare infrastructure or family-forward workplace policies

Julie Kashen, Sarah Jane Glynn, PhD and Amanda Novello, "How COVID-19 Sent Women's Workforce Progress Backward: Congress' \$64.5 Billion Mistake," The Century Foundation, October 29, 2020

If conditions for families do not improve – and if levels of maternal labor force participation and work hours experienced during the pandemic persist long term – lost wages would amount to \$64.5 billion per year.

Liana Landiver and others, “Early Signs Indicate That COVID-19 Is Exacerbating Gender Inequality in the Labor Force,” Socius (2020), available at <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2378023120947997>

The Gender Wealth Gap

At median,

- Single white women **own 32 cents** on the dollar compared to single white men
- Black and Latinx women **own less than a penny**
- Has **not improved** for past **50 years**

Gender Wealth Gap...Causes

Women:

- Earn less than men
- Are more likely to be denied mortgages/loans or to be overcharged for them
- Are more vulnerable to predatory lending
- Hold more debt including 2/3rds of all student debt
- Suffer the effects of occupational segregation
- Provide the majority of unpaid caregiving
- Navigate the unique intersection of intimate partner violence and economic insecurity

Why Build Wealth?

Assets Enable Women to:

- Remain stable through financial emergencies
- Maintain good health
- Improve children's opportunities
- Live with housing security
- Take risks that result in better jobs or business start-ups
- Pursue higher education for themselves and their children
- Retire securely
- Pass on security to the next generation
- Participate in, and shape, political and social agendas



Women's Economic Security Initiative (WESI):

- To build a long-term, systems-level collaborative initiative centered around the shared vision that all women in the Philadelphia region attain financial well-being for themselves and their families
- Long-term vision, long-term strategies, long-term investment
- Foster systems-level learning and change
- Break down silos across organizations and sectors

- **Mission:** 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
- **GW** works in 3 domains:
 - Learning
 - Scaling
 - Influencing



White Supremacy: How to Challenge and Dismantle It

Why is a gender justice organization talking about white supremacy?

Pseudo-scientific concept of race to create whiteness and a hierarchy of racialized value in order to **disconnect and divide**:

- White people from Black, Indigenous, and People of Color ([BIPOC](#))
- Black, Indigenous, and People of Color from each other
- White people from other white people
- Each and all of us from the earth, the sun, the wind, the water, the stars, the animals that roam(ed) the earth
- Each of us from ourselves

<https://www.whitesupremacyculture.info/what-is-it.html>

What do you mean by White
Supremacy?

White Supremacy Culture

The widespread ideology baked into the beliefs, values, norms, and standards of our groups, our communities, our towns, our states, our nation, **teaching us both overtly and covertly that:**

- Whiteness holds value, whiteness is value
- Blackness is not only valueless but also dangerous and threatening
- Indigenous people and communities no longer exist, or if they do, they are to be exoticized and romanticized or culturally appropriated as we continue to violate treaties, land rights, and humanity
- People south of the border are "illegal"
- Arabs are Muslim and that Muslim identity means "terrorist"
- People of Chinese and Japanese descent are both indistinguishable and threatening as the reason for Covid

White Supremacy is a project of psychic conditioning and toxic belonging.

"I have found my own participation in this ideology both enraging and heartbreaking. What I know is that the invitation to join is toxic to all who say yes. When I say yes, when we say yes, we visit this toxicity on others and everybody suffers, including us. And when I say no, when we say no - for we have among us those who have said no from the very beginning - when we say no, we discover the secret of joy."

Alice Walker

What does White Supremacy have to do with wealth inequality?

White Supremacy & 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

For today

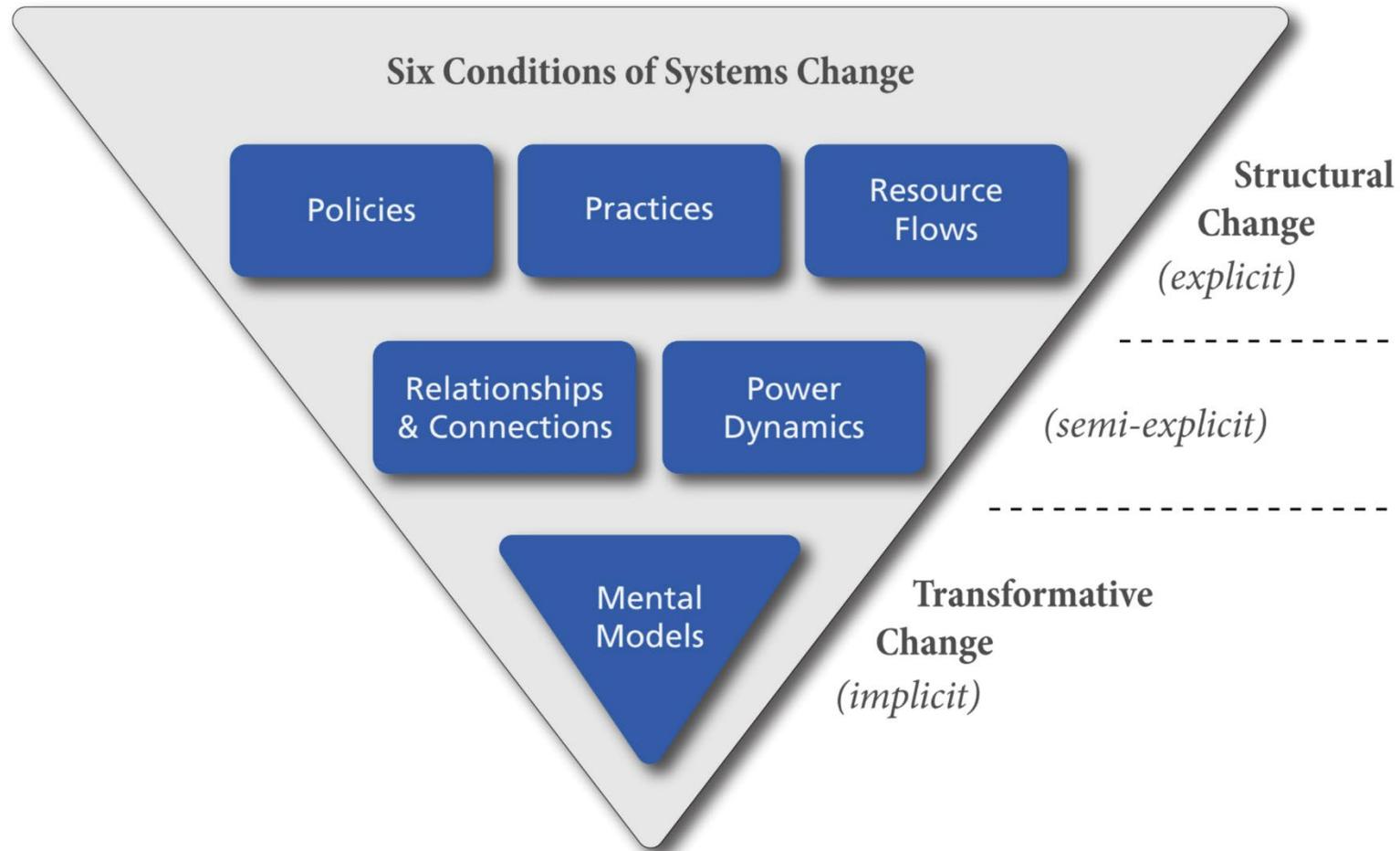
**WOMEN'S
WAY** | **CONNECTS
EMPOWERS
INVESTS**

What this conversation can be/what this conversation will not address

Shifting the conditions
that are holding the
problem in place.

Six Conditions of Systems Change

SHIFTING THE CONDITIONS THAT HOLD THE PROBLEM IN PLACE



Panelists

**WOMEN'S
WAY** | **CONNECTS
EMPOWERS
INVESTS**



Diane Cornman Levy
Chief Disruptor
WOMEN'S WAY



Ally Richman
Chief Operating Officer
William Way LGBT Community Center



Kelly Croce Sorg
Founder
The Opt-In

Moderator

**WOMEN'S
WAY** | **CONNECTS
EMPOWERS
INVESTS**

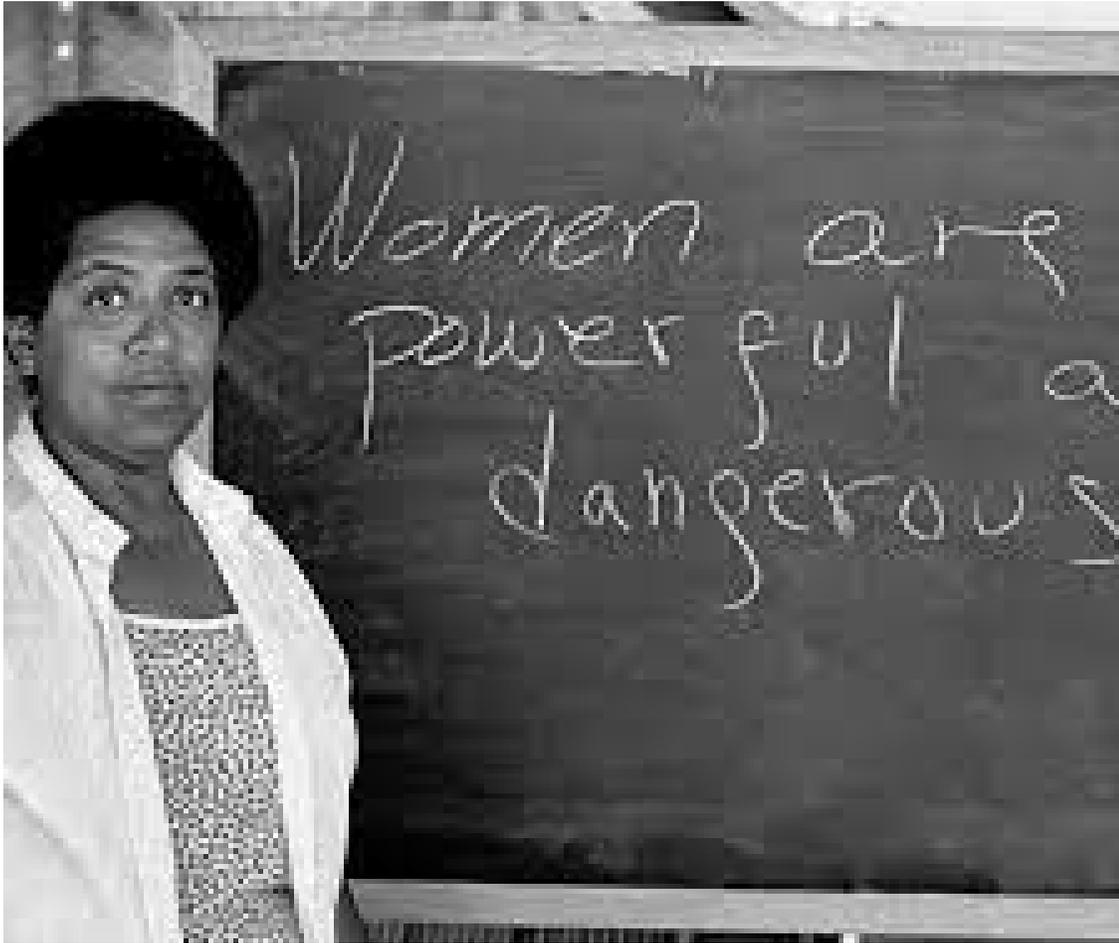
Deidre
Alston



- **February 24, 2022:** Closing the Gender Wealth Gap Forum: Intersections of Reproductive Justice and Economic Justice
- **April 2002:** Closing the Gender Wealth Gap Forum: Retirement Planning for Women: Saving and Preparing
- **The Gender Wealth Summit:** June 2022
- **September 2022:** Closing the Gender Wealth Gap Forum: Why the Student Loan Crisis is a Gender Justice Issue
- **October 2022:** Closing the Gender Wealth Gap Forum: Challenging Gender Norms through Gender Transformative Programs

Thank You

**WOMEN'S
WAY** | **CONNECTS
EMPOWERS
INVESTS**



“Everything can be used/except what is wasteful/ (you will need/to remember this when you are accused of destruction”).

(1981) Audre Lorde, “The Uses of Anger: Women Responding to Racism”