



## NEWS RELEASE

---

**Contact: Communications Office**

[Elizabeth Brandt](#), Communications Specialist, 919-623-4763

[Communications Office After Hours](#)

[wakegov.com/news](http://wakegov.com/news)

Date: March 7, 2016

### **TASK FORCE CREATED TO ADDRESS WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT ISSUES**

In 2014, the median earnings for women over the age of 25 in Wake County were \$34,809 – that is \$15,000 less than men in the same age group with the same level of education.

Female high school dropouts make \$12,811 per year while men who do not have a high school diploma make \$18,933 annually.

There are 79,000 women in Wake County who have a GED or less. More than half of these women live in poverty.

These are just a few of the challenges currently facing women in the Wake County workforce.

But, that is about to change.

During its meeting tonight, the Wake County Board of Commissioners established the Wake County Task Force on Employment and Wage Issues for Women to address these and other issues impacting local working women.

The task force was created in direct response to the [State of Employment for Women Report](#), which the Wake County Commission for Women drafted last year and presented to the board in February. The report investigated the barriers women face in seeking and obtaining employment, income disparity and returning to the workforce after an absence.

The task force will examine the resources that currently exist to help women across Wake County overcome these challenges. It will also discuss plans to develop new programs and services to complement and expand existing offerings.

The task force's actions will meet its charge of identifying ways to assist women with limited education, supporting women returning to the workforce and addressing the gender wage gap.

Commissioner Caroline Sullivan will chair the task force. She will lead a group of up to 18 community leaders who will be appointed by the board of commissioners.

The task force will run for 10 months and deliver a strategic report to the board in early 2017.

The success or failure of women in the workforce has direct impacts on the social and economic vitality of our local communities. To learn more about issues facing women in our county, visit the [Wake County Commission for Women's website](#).

**###**