

**You live the facts, here are the figures on what Ohio's workers made and didn't make in 2000.**

**These numbers come from the *State of Working Ohio 2001* report released by Policy Matters Ohio, a Cleveland-based research institute.**

**Policy Matters Ohio produces figures on working Ohioans every year.**

## **OHIO 2001, WORKING MORE FOR LESS HOW COULD "GOOD TIMES" LOOK SO BAD?**

In 2000, the typical Ohio worker made \$12.61 an hour, 35 cents above the national average. The 1990's have been called an economic victory, with very low levels of unemployment and several hikes of the federal minimum wage. Yet, workers did not get their share of the profit.

While wages for white workers increased in the late 1990s, black workers' wages dropped over the entire decade. Typical wages didn't keep up with extra work hours, and didn't return to the high levels they reached in 1979, another business cycle peak with high wages we should expect from a booming economy. All the following figures are real wages adjusted for inflation.

Since 1979, Ohio families added an average of 500 hours (12 weeks) to their work year.

On average, single parents doubled their work hours.

Between 1979 and 2000, median hourly wages for all Ohio workers (taken as a group) dropped 5.5%.

For black men they dropped a startling 23.3%.

White women's wages actually increased by 11.4%.

### **OHIO'S WAGE GAPS BY RACE AND GENDER**

In 2000, Ohio men made a median wage of \$14.64 an hour. Women made \$10.80 an hour, \$3.84 less than men.

White men made \$15.00 an hour.

Black men made \$11.44, a difference of \$3.56.

White women made \$11.00 an hour.

Black women made \$10.00, one dollar less.

Many try to explain away race gaps in wages, saying they result from lower education levels among black people. However, no matter what level of education, African American workers made less than white workers with the same schooling.

### **WHO'S BENEFITTING FROM BENEFITS?**

Between 1997 and 1999, 71% of all Ohio men received health insurance from their private-sector jobs, down from 85.4% in 1981.

57% of women workers got health insurance, down from 63%.  
66% of white workers, down from 77%, got health insurance.  
59% of black workers received health insurance, down from 76%.

## OHIO'S EDUCATION GAP

Ohio's high school dropouts made \$8.00 an hour in 2000.  
High school graduates made \$11.00 an hour.  
College graduates made \$18.00 an hour.  
People with postgraduate degrees made \$23.07 an hour.  
People with a high school education or less lost 14% of their wages between 1979 and 2000, while college graduates gained 14%.

## OHIO'S BOTTOM LINE

In 2000, the richest fifth of Ohio's families earned ten times what the poorest fifth earned.

31% of black workers, 32% of female workers, and 22% of all Ohio workers earned at or below a poverty-level wage of \$8.47 an hour—the wage that would bring a family of four to the federal poverty level with a full-time job.

## CAN GOOD TIMES BE GOOD FOR EVERYONE?

Both unionization and quality education dramatically reduced wage gaps between black and white, male and female workers.

Without a union, Ohio's white workers made 18.7% more than black workers, but among unionized workers the gap was almost completely eliminated.

While non-union men made 27% more than non-union women, the gap among unionized workers was only 16%.

Black workers received an average 38% boost in their wages when they earned high school degrees, and a stunning 65% increase with a college or graduate school degree.

Policy Matters Ohio recommends increases in the minimum wage, Living Wage and anti-discrimination legislation, better access to health and child care, corporate accountability, and tax laws that are fairer toward low-income people.

**Visit our website to view this full report, plus reports on local policy issues including unemployment insurance, prison privatization, and school vouchers.**

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