This month, we celebrated the 30th anniversary of our Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations (WANTO) grant program, which has served thousands of women through job-related training and retention activities since 1992. WANTO grantees set up support groups and provide supportive services like career counseling and mentoring to improve women’s retention in pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs. They also offer trainings for employers and unions on creating an environment for women to succeed. The WANTO grant helps women gain access to family-sustaining, high-quality jobs in the trades and nontraditional fields by creating pipelines into those career paths. Through WANTO, women are being empowered to enter and succeed in new industries.

Highlights:

- WANTO has provided nearly $33 million through 132 grants to community-based organizations since the program’s inception in 1992.
- The number of female apprentices in the United States has more than doubled over the last 8 years, with women now making up almost 14% of all active apprentices.
- Electrician, truck driver, and pharmacy specialist are just some of the occupations that have seen the largest increases in female apprentices.
- In 2021, the number of women working in the trades reached the highest level ever at more than 314,000.
- Over the last five years, the number of women working in the trades has increased by almost one-third.

Learn more about the WANTO grant program and this year’s awardees
October Observances

Hispanic Heritage Month
In celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, observed annually from September 15 to October 15, the Women’s Bureau published a blog on employment outcomes for Latinas in the United States. Available in both English and Spanish, the blog highlights key statistics on labor force participation, unemployment, educational attainment, earnings, and more for the approximately 21.7 million Latinas 18 and older in the country. And if you missed last month’s related webinar, “Jobs and the Economy: Advancing Equity for Latinas in the Workplace,” you can now view the recording online.

- Read the blog: [English](#) | [Spanish](#)
- Watch the webinar

National Work and Family Month
This month, the Women’s Bureau recognized National Work and Family Month by continuing our work to ensure women are aware of the family-friendly policies, workplace flexibilities and other work-life benefits that can help them balance work obligations and caregiving responsibilities. We updated our map of employment protections for pregnant or nursing workers, which provides information on federal and state-level employment protections against pregnancy discrimination. We also shared data on mothers’ labor force participation rates, occupation, family type and earnings. Check out the resources and data.

- View our Employment Protections for Workers Who Are Pregnant or Nursing map
- Explore the data on mothers and families

National Women's Small Business Month
Every October, we observe National Women’s Small Business Month and recognize the contributions women are making in creating jobs and strengthening the economy. Less than 35 years ago, the Women’s Business Ownership Act was signed into law, providing government support for women business owners. This important piece of legislation eliminated the requirement that women entrepreneurs have a male co-signer for loans. The number of women-owned businesses in the United States has grown over the years and is now at nearly 13 million, a meaningful sign of progress.

- Find your local Women’s Business Center
National Disability Employment Awareness Month

In honor of National Disability Employment Awareness Month, the Women's Bureau moderated a panel, “Women with Disabilities: Barriers and Bias in the Workplace,” on Oct. 26. In this latest webinar in our Equity Series, speakers emphasized the importance of employees knowing their workplace rights and of employers creating workplaces that model diverse and inclusive practices.

- Learn more about the Department of Labor’s work to support inclusive employment policies

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Roughly 1 in 4 women experience intimate partner violence at some point in their lives, a trauma which may affect their physical and emotional health and negatively impact their ability to work and build financial security. Last year, the White House shared a National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality. One of the key components of this strategy is addressing gender-based violence and harassment in the world of work. The strategy offers a roadmap for implementing policies and protections that safeguard women from harassment, assault and exploitation in the workplace. Earlier this month, the ILO Office for the USA and Canada, in collaboration with the Women's Bureau, hosted a virtual roundtable, “Uniting to End GBVH in the World of Work: Collaboration through Legislation and Bargaining,” to discuss current efforts at the state and local levels to end gender-based violence and harassment.

- View the virtual roundtable
- Read the National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality

Events and Partnerships

Oregon Tradeswomen's Safe from Hate Alliance Summit

On Oct. 3, Women's Bureau Director Wendy Chun-Hoon shared taped remarks at the Oregon Tradeswomen Safe from Hate Alliance Summit in Portland, Oregon. Director Chun-Hoon spoke to the audience about three ways to promote gender equity: create a strong national care infrastructure; increase wages in historically women-dominated industries; and build avenues for women to enter higher-paying, family-sustaining jobs that are typically dominated by men.

- Read about the effects of occupational segregation on women's economic security

“What to Expect When Your Employee is Expecting: Manufacturing & Warehousing” Webinar
The U.S. Department of Labor’s Wage and Hour Division and Women’s Bureau, along with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, hosted the second webinar in a series on workplace protections for new and expecting mothers. In recognition of National Manufacturing Week (October 7–14, 2022), the webinar provided employers in the manufacturing and warehouse industries with information about their responsibilities under federal workplace laws to protect pregnant workers from discrimination, provide time off for the birth or adoption of a child and ensure nursing workers can take breaks to pump breast milk while at work.

- See employment protections for workers who are pregnant or nursing
- View resources on what to expect when you’re expecting

North America’s Building Trades Unions _ Tradeswomen Build Nations 2022 Conference
On Oct. 28–30, a group of Women’s Bureau staff attended the 2022 Tradeswomen Build Nations conference in Las Vegas, Nevada. The annual conference is an opportunity for tradeswomen; apprenticeship officials; union representatives; nonprofit leaders; and local, state and federal government officials to exchange ideas for promoting equity in the construction trades. Women’s Bureau Director Wendy Chun-Hoon shared current data on women in the trades and spoke to the need to get more women into these higher-paying, good quality jobs, especially with recent federal infrastructure and jobs investments.

- Learn more about federal investments in good jobs
- Watch our Equity in Focus Summit: Job Creation for a Just Society livestream

In Case You Missed It

**Employment Protections for Workers Who Are Pregnant or Nursing**
Do you know the employment protections in your state for pregnant or nursing workers? Our recently updated map provides a breakdown of federal and state-level employment protections against pregnancy discrimination, provisions for pregnancy accommodation and information on workplace breastfeeding rights.

- Get more information

**New DOL grant: Nursing Expansion Grant Program**
The Department of Labor announced this month $80 million in grant funding to support nursing training programs. The goal of this new funding is to promote diversity in the nation’s healthcare workforce by training future nurses from historically underrepresented populations and underserved communities.

- Learn more about this funding opportunity
We Want to Hear from You!
“Occupational segregation” is the gendered sorting of men and women into different types of jobs. It leads to women being overrepresented in certain jobs, which are valued and compensated less than male-dominated jobs.

We’ve heard from many working women about their experiences with gendered job expectations, the challenges they face at work, the support systems that help them thrive and the policy changes that would help them succeed. We’d like to hear from you.

- Read their stories
- Tell us your story

Follow the Women's Bureau on Twitter: @WB_DOL

The Women's Bureau has championed the rights of working women and served as a convener of conversations critical to an equitable economy for women for more than 100 years.

Follow us at @WB_DOL to view our #ThrowbackThursday series highlighting pioneering women, and to learn more about the latest research, initiatives, policies and updates related to working women and their families.