Higher Education

- In Greater Hartford, minority and low-income women graduate with post-secondary degrees at significantly lower rates than their counterparts.
- Lack of a post-secondary degree locks women in the cycle of poverty, since they lack the necessary qualifications for jobs with greater earning potential.
- Lack of higher education also exacerbates the wage gap, which widens for women working in lower-wage jobs.

Education has a significant impact on women’s earning power.

Average earnings for women in Hartford County based on education level:

- $19,282 No high school diploma
- $26,801 High school graduate (includes GED)
- $33,462 Some college or an Associate's degree
- $47,031 Bachelor's degree
- $61,955 Graduate or professional degree

Low-income and minority women struggle to complete post-secondary education. Challenges include:

- academic preparation
- frequent transfers between schools & programs
- inadequate advising/mentoring
- academic support services
- financial aid & student debt
- transportation
- childcare
- part-time status
Connecticut fails to prepare students for post-secondary education. The state is second only to Tennessee in the need for remedial education as students enter college.

Retention (progressing from first year to second year of a degree or program) and graduation rates are also low for minority and low-income women.

From CCSU, retention & graduation rates:

Students entering community college in need of remediation in CT

72%

Women are increasingly the majority of students enrolled in Greater Hartford Community Colleges.

The percentage of women at area Community Colleges in 2011-12:

Aurora will work to ensure that more women, particularly low-income and minority women, graduate from post-secondary degree programs prepared for higher-paying jobs. Over the past three years alone, Aurora has invested $94,100 in college retention programs.

Investment in college retention programs reduces the rate of welfare dependency by 88%