

REALIZING THE POTENTIAL OF AN EQUITABLE ECONOMY:

*Centering Black Women's  
Upward Mobility in the Cincinnati Region*



**ECONOMICS CENTER**  
RESEARCH AND CONSULTING



**WOMEN'S FUND**  
*of the* GREATER CINCINNATI FDN.



# *The Black Women's Economic Mobility Project*

**Phase 1:** Literature review of the historical context of labor trends and systemic barriers to Black women's employment.

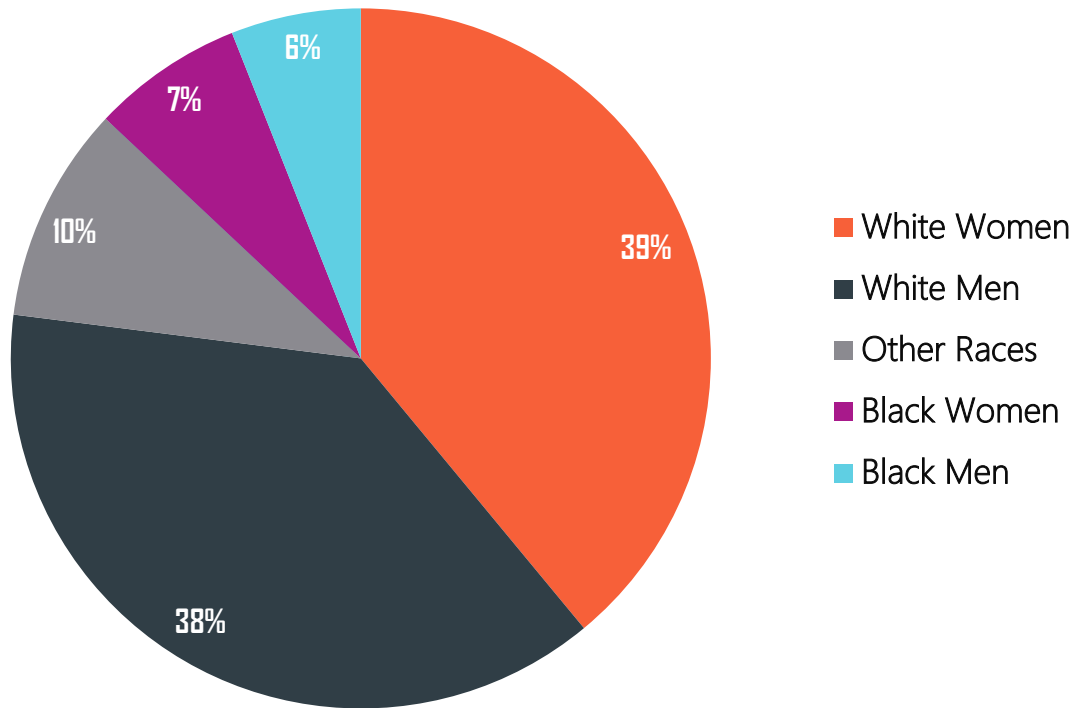
**Phase 2:** Quantitative analysis to understand Black women in the workforce and their economic mobility status in Cincinnati region.

**Phase 3:** Qualitative study to determine the factors fostering or deterring Black women's economic mobility.

# *Key Findings*

- The industries with a significant portion of the Black female workforce are also the growing industries in the Cincinnati MSA.
- There is a high desire to participate in the workforce by Black women, and they have a disproportional harder time gaining employment.
- Black women are predominantly in jobs that do not pay a living wage, and wage gaps are experienced in every occupation group.
- Black women are not seeing the economic returns for increased educational attainment.

## *Cincinnati MSA Population by Gender & Race*



	Population	Percentage Share
<b>White Identifying</b>	1,729,825	79%
<b>Black Identifying</b>	268,491	13%
<b>Asian Identifying</b>	60,367	3%
<b>Multi-Race Identifying</b>	57,222	3%
<b>Other Race Identifying</b>	24,588	2%
<b>Total Population</b>	2,140,493	

\* Racial demographics include Hispanic and non-Hispanic identifying. Overall, the Hispanic identifying population is about 3% of the Cincinnati MSA population.

# 2018 Total Prime Working-Age Population by Employment & Poverty

	Black Women	White Women	Black Men	White Men
<b>Total Prime Working-Age Population</b>	58,572	335,915	49,801	334,964
<b>Employment</b>				
Labor Force Participation	78.3%	79.9%	75.4%	90.7%
Unemployment Rate	4.5%	2.1%	2.4%	3.5%
<b>Poverty &amp; Public Assistance</b>				
Percentage with Annual Earnings below 100% FPL	26.2%	9.4%	18.8%	8.3%
Percentage Receiving Public Assistance	6.7%	1.3%	0.9%	0.5%

**Labor Force Participation:** A measure of an economy's active workforce (all workers employed and actively seeking employment).

**Unemployment Rate:** A measure of the share of workers in the labor force who do not currently have a job but are actively looking for work.

# *Black Female Occupations by Percentage of Gender and Race*

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Jobs</b>	<b>Median Hourly Earnings</b>	<b>Entry-Level Education</b>	<b>% of Women in Job</b>	<b>% of Black people in Job</b>
Nursing Assistants	12,454	\$14.88	Some Postsecondary	89%	39%
Home Health & Personal Care Aides	13,166	\$11.49	High School	86%	36%
Licensed Practical Nurses	7,182	\$22.10	Some Postsecondary	92%	29%
Customer Service Representatives	23,811	\$16.44	High School	69%	16%
Cashiers	20,554	\$11.16	No formal education	74%	16%
Fast Food & Counter Workers	34,479	\$9.85	No formal education	65%	15%
Retail Salesperson	28,348	\$11.42	No formal education	56%	11%
Office Clerks, General	19,811	\$17.32	High School	83%	11%
Registered Nurses	24,760	\$33.64	Bachelor' s Degree	91%	10%
Waiters & Waitresses	18,688	\$9.85	No formal education	71%	10%

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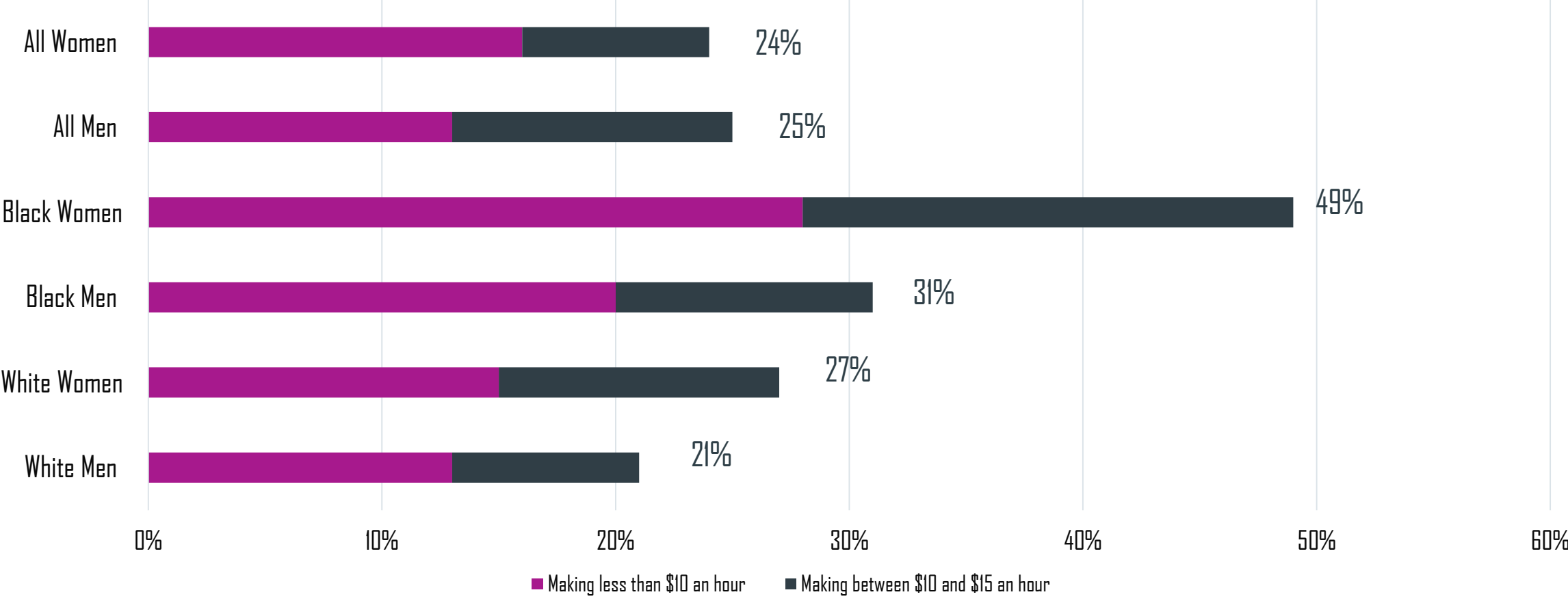
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# Percentage of Employed Individuals Making Less than \$10 and \$15 an Hour



# *Percentage of Employed Individuals Making Less than \$15 an Hour by Educational Attainment*

	<b>No Formal Education</b>	<b>High School Diploma/ GED</b>	<b>Some College</b>	<b>Associate's Degree</b>	<b>Bachelor's Degree</b>	<b>Master's Degree</b>	<b>Doctoral Degree</b>
<b>Black Women</b>	71%	43%	47%	37%	32%	9%	0%
<b>White Women</b>	67%	38%	37%	20%	13%	9%	8%
<b>Black Men</b>	55%	38%	36%	36%	10%	13%	0%
<b>White Men</b>	52%	29%	26%	11%	11%	5%	3%

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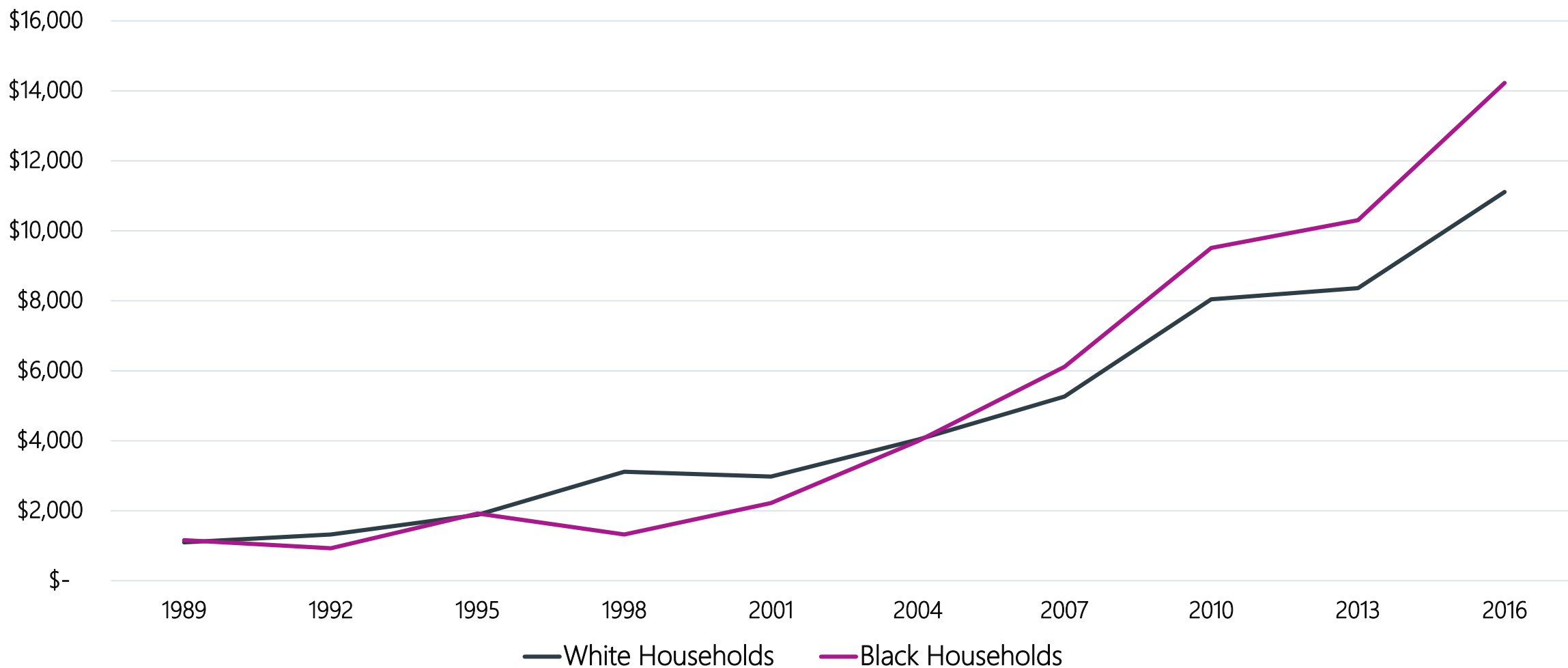
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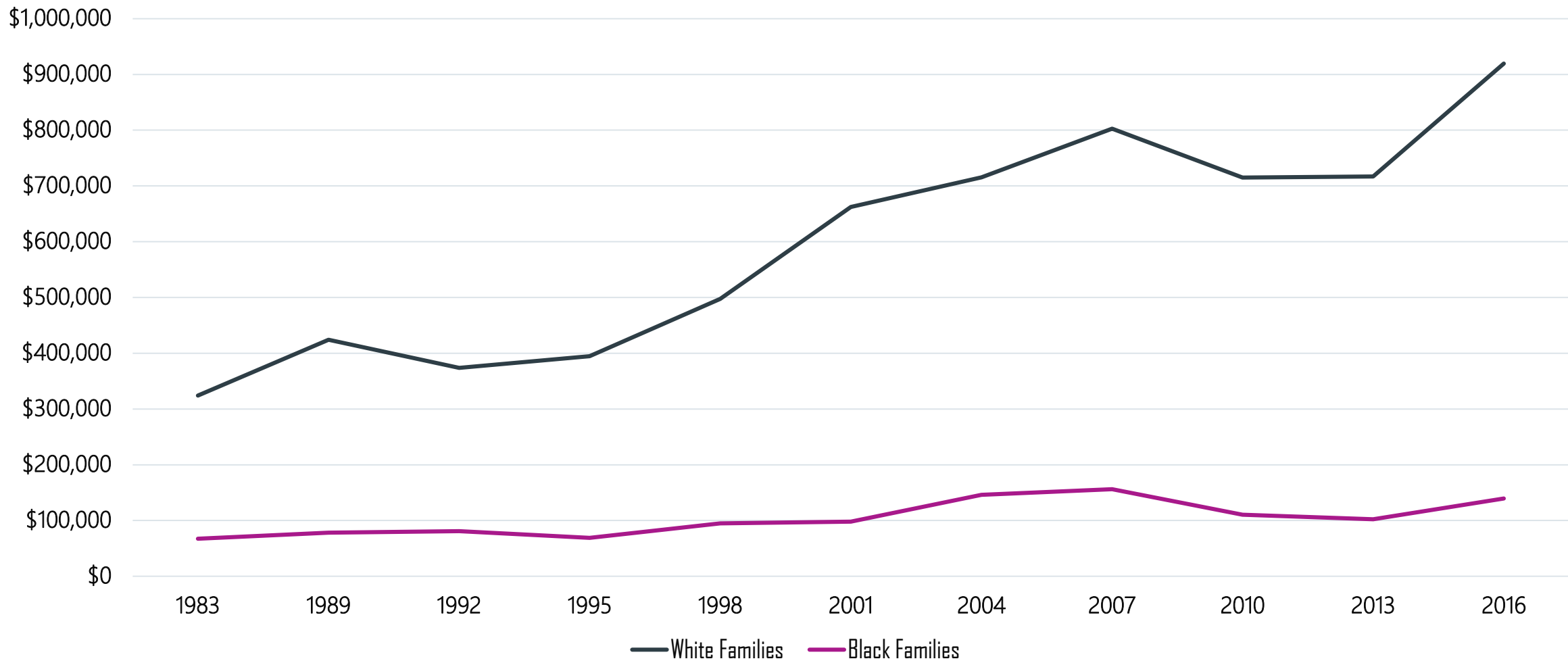
### Average Household Student Loan Debt for Those Age 25-55, 1989-2016



Source: Urban Institute calculations from Survey of Consumer Finances 1983-2016  
Note: 2016 dollars. Age is defined as the age of the household head.



### Average Household Wealth by Race, 1983-2016



Source: Urban Institute calculations from Survey of Consumer Finances 1983-2016



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## *Policy Recommendations*

- ▶ Ensure a Living Wage and Access to Comprehensive Benefits

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- ▶ Reform the Public Benefits System to Ameliorate the Cliff Effect

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- ▶ Adopt and Expand Pay Equity Legislation

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- ▶ Institutionalize Gender and Racial Equity to Inform Policy Decisions

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# *Questions?*