



Women + Girls Research Alliance Report Identifies Key Findings on Issues Affecting Women and Girls in Charlotte

CHARLOTTE, N.C., (June 20, 2023) – The [Women + Girls Research Alliance](#), a unit of UNC Charlotte’s [urbanCORE](#), unveiled key findings on issues impacting women and girls across the Charlotte metropolitan region. The alliance presented its findings during the “Taking Space Without Apology: A Women and Girls Leadership Café Data Report Luncheon” held Monday.

Top findings, which resulted from the 2022 Leadership Café hosted by the W+GRA, revealed:

- High rates of poverty and economic insecurity, particularly among women of color and single mothers
- High rates of certain health conditions, such as mental health disorders and maternal mortality and morbidity
- Caregiving challenges, such as lack of paid parental leave and affordable childcare options
- Harassment and violence including domestic violence
- Disparities in healthcare access, quality and affordability
- Workplace and school-based inequities, including gender-based pay gaps and exposure to career paths

W+GRA Executive Director, Michelle Meggs, Ph.D., stated, “The café serves as an extension of the work that the W+GRA does to improve the lives of women and girls in the Charlotte metropolitan area by facilitating partnerships with researchers, community leaders and civic

investors that produce data-based transformative outcomes. I not only believe in providing safe spaces, but brave spaces, where women and girls can be heard and be authentic.”

Brandon Wolfe, Ph.D., associate vice chancellor for diversity and inclusion and chief diversity officer, in opening remarks for the luncheon, outlined multiple strategies in addressing structural barriers that hamper women from equitable access, full participation and availing of benefits.

“Conducting research through the lens of racial equity tackles the misconception that women and girls are a monolithic group,” he said. “The research and findings are critical in identifying opportunities to engage in cross-sector collaborations to close equity gaps while improving the overall well-being and social mobility of women and girls throughout the Charlotte metropolitan area and beyond.”

The UNC Charlotte Urban Institute compiled the Leadership Café findings and provided in-depth analysis on the themes that emerged. The W+GRA is using the research findings and recommendations to set its research agenda for the upcoming year.

“The alliance remains committed now, more than ever, to highlight the socioeconomic, educational and health-related concerns impacting women and girls, ” said Meggs.

Monday’s event also featured discussions in assessing, prioritizing and exploring strategic solutions to address poverty, economic insecurity and health-based challenges for women including:

- Barriers and facilitators to economic mobility
- Mental health and social support, including school safety
- Racial equity lens throughout the research process

Patricia Massey Hoke, executive director for the Women’s Impact Fund and member of the W+GRA Advisory Board, noted, “Developing solutions through the lens of racial equity is absolutely essential for developing effective solutions. By including women and girls with lived

experiences in the issues we seek to address, we build trust and develop solutions that can be supported and promoted in communities, thus making those solutions more likely to be effective.”

In-depth research findings from the study are available at [2022-2023 Women + Girls Research Alliance Commission Study](#).

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