

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
WISCONSIN RAPIDS AREA**

**POVERTY STUDY**

**“The Extent of Poverty and its Effect  
on the Population of South Wood County”**

**2015 – 2017**

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS WISCONSIN RAPIDS AREA (LWWRA)**  
**POVERTY STUDY**  
**April 2017**

<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
Forward	2
Background Information	
Definition of Poverty	4
ALICE: Study of Financial Hardship	6
Interviews	
Homelessness	7
Minimum Wage	8
Education & Poverty	10
United Way Programs	11
Community Resources & Family Services	12
UW-Extension Programs	13
Summary	14
Recommendations	15
Resources	17
Appendices	
A – Federal Poverty Level Guidelines, February 2015	19
B – League of Women Voters Wisconsin Poverty Chart	20
C – Definition of Homelessness	22
D – Faces of Homelessness in Wisconsin Rapids	23
E – Economics of the Minimum Wage Debate	26
F – Wages Needed to Pay for Basic Needs in South Wood County	30
G – Students Living with Poverty	31
H – Building a Pedagogy of Engagement for Students in Poverty	33

**FORWARD**  
**“The Extent of Poverty and its Effect  
on the Population of South Wood County”**

Our League works to be an effective force in our community. Each year at our annual meeting, we adopt or extend a local study. The Poverty Study, adopted in April 2015, is the result of concern over the growing poverty in Wisconsin Rapids and the surrounding communities in South Wood County.

Poverty, as a topic, is huge, so we decided to narrow our focus to identifying a “particular unmet need”. In an attempt to find that unmet need, the committee decided to schedule six interviews with experts and organizations in the field.

Now, with the interview process completed, we are writing our reports and getting ready to present them along with our recommendations to the LWVWRA Board and subsequently to the general membership at the annual meeting in April.

For background, the impact of poverty on our city and adjoining communities is much greater than we had first thought. We have come away from this search for information with a clear belief that local organizations are fully involved and working hard to address the poverty issue.

The interview schedule, topics, and presenters are as follows:

*October 7, 2015. Faces of the Homeless.* Lonnie Seljes, Executive Director, Helping Hands Gospel Mission.

*October 27, 2015. Minimum Wage.* Kevin Neuman, Ph.D, Professor of Economics in the School of Business & Economics, University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point.

*December 9, 2015. Poverty in Schools.* Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Wisconsin Rapids School District.

*March 10, 2016. Report on United Way Call Center.* Amy Fluno, Director of 2-1-1, United Way of Inner Wisconsin.

*March 31, 2016. Family Services.* Chris Hanten, Family Services Division Administrator, Wood County Human Services.

*May 12, 2016. Local Support through the UW- Extension.* Sara Siegel, Family Living Educator, Wood County UW-Extension.

As the Poverty Study Committee wraps up its work after nearly 18 months, we feel both proud of the work we accomplished but also humbled by the realization that poverty, as a phenomenon, is far more complicated than we expected. We discovered almost immediately that there were 'holes' in our study, e.g., the impact on veterans and the correlation with mental health and addiction problems, to name a couple. The tentacles of poverty reach into so many niches that to presume that we managed to explore all aspects would be naïve. Nevertheless, our efforts certainly gave us a good 'feel' for how deeply poverty has touched our community. The solutions are likely to be equally complex.

**Poverty Study Committee Members:** Joe Ancel, Mary Dahm, Pat Keir, Clara Kubisiak, Connie Landry, Sue Mitchell, and Marion Ruelle



## **POVERTY**

Summary of report titled “Poverty and Food Security in Wood County, Wisconsin” by  
Department of Community and Environmental Sociology, University of Wisconsin-  
Madison and the University of Wisconsin–Extension  
Fall 2014

**POVERTY:** There are many definitions of poverty. In general, poverty is a condition where a person's basic need for food, clothing, shelter, healthcare and/or transportation are not being met. (Refer to Appendix A, Federal Poverty Level Guidelines.)

### **TYPES OF POVERTY:**

- Absolute poverty: destitution, cannot obtain adequate resources to support minimum health.
- Relative Poverty: people do not enjoy a certain minimum level of living standards as determined by a government, and enjoyed by the bulk of the population.

**POVERTY THRESHOLD:** indicates the income people need for a minimally adequate standard of living. (This varies according to the number of household members and their ages and is adjusted each year to account for inflation.)

- In 2012, the poverty threshold/line was \$23,050 for a family of 4 and \$11,170 for one person.
- Incomes higher than the federal poverty line still qualify for several state and federal needs based programs.
- Food and nutrition assistance programs: FoodShare, various forms of Medical assistance. Benefits such as the Earned Income Tax Credit.

### **WHERE IS POVERTY:**

- Wood County 10.1% in 2012 (up from 2000 rate of 6.5%)
- Wisconsin rate 12.5%
- National rate 14.9%

### **WHO IS IN POVERTY?**

- in the past, seniors.
- now, children, female headed households, ethnic minorities, and adults over 25 with only a high school education.

### **WHAT CAUSES POVERTY?**

- Limited earnings potential, including the inability to find sufficient work at an adequate wage.
- Wood County, 2013, unemployment rate was 7.0%.

### **WHAT IS UNEMPLOYMENT?**

- not working, has actively looked for work in the past four weeks and would be available to work if a job is found.  
OR
- have some employment but are under employed (do not have as many hours as they would prefer).
- In Wisconsin, lower educational attainment is associated with a higher likelihood of earning poverty wages.

## CONSEQUENCES OF POVERTY:

- Increases the risk of food insecurity and hunger
- uncertain access to food, due to lack of money
- run out of food, cut back the size of meals or skip meals altogether.
- Children: Poor health, and behavior, learning and academic problems.
- Adults: choose between medication, rent, heat, transportation, or food.
- Seniors: bad health
- Wood County: the proportion of the population receiving FoodShare increased from 5.8% in 2000 to 24.6% in 2013.
- School age children certified for free or reduced price meals grew from 18% to 43% between 2000 and 2013.
- Children eligible for free meals if household income is below 130% of the federal poverty line
- Children eligible for reduced-priced meals if their household income is below 185% of the federal poverty line.

## HOW CAN WE HELP?

- Complex problem without easy solutions
- Promote higher wages
- Encourage family friendly policies: parental leave, flexible scheduling of work conditions.
- Promote quality, affordable child care.
- Invest in schools and ensure all children have support necessary to succeed in school.
- Promote training and education for adults to ensure they have the skills to succeed. Safety net programs...health care, food, housing, heat and other essentials are vital.
- Provide access to affordable and healthy foods, strong federal food and nutrition assistance programs and a strong emergency food system.
- Promote grocery stores, farmers markets, community gardens and other healthy food outlets convenient to all community members.
- Promote nutrition education programs, help families stretch limited food dollars and remain healthy.
- Strengthen access to existing federal food programs: institute summer meal programs and school breakfast programs to help feed children year-round; conduct outreach to ensure families are aware of available food and nutrition assistance programs; work with schools to improve nutritional quality of school meals.
- Strengthen emergency food systems: increase the amount and nutritional value of food available at food outlets, including food pantries.

For additional information, refer to Appendix B, Poverty Chart compiled by Wisconsin League of Women Voter, and to the League of Women Voters' Poverty Studies links in the Resources section.

## **ALICE: Study of Financial Hardship**

### United Way of Wisconsin, Summer 2016

The United Way *ALICE Project* provides a framework, language, and tools to measure and understand the struggles of the growing number of households in our communities who do not earn enough to afford basic necessities, a population called ALICE (**A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained, **E**mployed). This research initiative partners with state United Way organizations, such as United Way of Wisconsin, to deliver research-based data that can stimulate meaningful discussion, attract new partners, and ultimately inform strategies that affect positive change. The complete United Way ALICE Report with county-level information is available online at [http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/unitedwaywi.site-ym.com/resource/resmgr/FINAL\\_Lowres\\_9.26.16\\_16UW\\_AL.pdf?hhSearchTerms=%22alice%22](http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/unitedwaywi.site-ym.com/resource/resmgr/FINAL_Lowres_9.26.16_16UW_AL.pdf?hhSearchTerms=%22alice%22)

“ALICE: Study of Financial Hardship” is the first report of its kind to measure the number of people in Wisconsin who are fully employed but do not make a comfortable living.

29% of Wood County homes are considered ALICE households and 9% are considered in poverty. Numbers arrived by calculating the basic cost of living in each county, including the cost of housing, food, child care, transportation, health care and taxes. It does not include savings.

This cost of living affords a family a very modest living, but does not allow for any savings. This leaves a family vulnerable to unexpected expenses, including an illness, a car or home repair, or job loss.

In Wood County, the annual cost of living amounts to \$22,104 for a single person and \$53,712 for a family of four. So a single adult needs to earn \$11.05 an hour and the wage-earner for a family of four needs a salary of \$26.66 an hour to afford the bare-minimum for expenses in Wood County.

ALICE report on Wood County:

1. More than one in three families in Wood County lives at or below the ALICE threshold.
2. In Wood County, the community with the highest percentage of families at or below the ALICE threshold is Wisconsin Rapids at 52%, while Hewitt is the lowest at 20%.
3. About 45% of Marshfield’s families live at or below the ALICE threshold.
4. The largest cost of living expense is \$1,108 per month for childcare.
5. The report assesses each county’s supply of affordable housing , jobs and community resources. Wood County ranked “good” in each category. The rankings ranged from “worst” to “best.”

## **Homelessness in South Wood County**

### **Definition of Homelessness (HUD)**

(1) Individuals and families who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes a subset for an individual who is exiting an institution where he or she resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or a place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution; (2) Individuals and families who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence; (3) unaccompanied youth and families with children and youth who are defined as homeless under other federal statutes who do not otherwise qualify as homeless under this definition; or (4) Individuals and families who are fleeing, or are attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a family member. There is more than one “official” definition of homelessness. For the definition used by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, see Appendix C.

The Rev. Lonnie Selje, Executive Director of Helping Hands Gospel Mission (HHGM), presented her perspective from working with clients in South Wood County who are homeless. For her PowerPoint presentation on the “Faces of Homelessness in Wisconsin Rapids, go to Appendix D.

HHGM is a non-profit faith-based organization with the purpose of helping clients achieve independence and self-sufficiency. Their philosophy recognizes three levels of help: Relief, Rehabilitation, and Development. Relief is short term help for immediate emergencies such as fire or safety. Rehabilitation involves the most work, for it requires developing a trusting relationship, guiding clients towards healthier choices, and using community resources. Development is working with community agencies, churches, and local government to make positive community-wide changes to benefit those who are homeless.

The Executive Director works directly with clients to provide emotional support and makes referrals to appropriate resources. She also participates in committees and boards such as the Homelessness Coalition, Wood County Task Force, Oxford Houses, Cranberry Country Clergy and Financial Stability Coalition. Drug and alcohol problems, mental health issues, and abuse seem to be the prominent issues arising with clients who seek assistance through HHGM.

The South Wood County Homelessness Coalition is organized under the umbrella of United Way of Inner Wisconsin. It is made up of twenty-one community partners, who are working towards eliminating homelessness in South Wood County by (1) understanding the issue, (2) working together, (3) educating the community, (4) preventing homelessness, and (5) funding solutions. The Coalition is creating a South Wood County Homelessness Roadmap that will include agency contacts and program details. They are also putting together a marketing piece entitled: “State of the Homeless: A Snapshot of Homelessness in South Wood County”. This group is led by Emily Stieve, Community Impact Director for United Way of Inner Wisconsin.

## Minimum Wage

On October 27, 2015, Kevin Neuman gave a presentation on minimum wage to the LWVWRA Poverty Study committee. Mr. Neuman is a Professor of Economics in the School of Business & Economics at the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point. The slides from his presentation are provided in Appendix E.

Mr. Neuman's presentation focused on several issues related to minimum wage. These included the following:

- a. Minimum wage vs. living wage - Federal poverty levels (FPL) are used to determine a family's eligibility for certain programs and benefits, including savings on Marketplace health insurance, and Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) coverage. The 2016 FPL for a family of four is \$24,300. According to Vital Signs 2013, in South Wood County, a two-worker family of four must each earn \$15 per hour, plus benefits, to make ends meet, with no need of public or community assistance. This is equivalent to \$63,372. (Source: Wider Opportunity for Women, Basic Economic Security Tables)

Another source that compares minimum wage vs. living wage is an October 2016 report called "Waiting for the Payoff: How Low Wages and Student Debt Keep Prosperity Out of Reach" by Allyson Frederickson. According to this report, in Wisconsin the living wage for a single adult is \$15.69 per hour. This reflects what is needed to meet basic needs and maintain some ability to deal with emergencies and plan ahead. The living wage for a single adult with two children is \$31.02 per hour. For those paying off student debt after graduating from college, the living wage for a single adult increases to \$17.20, based on the state's median student debt payment. Wisconsin's minimum wage of \$7.25 does not allow working families to make ends meet. The state's minimum wage provides only 46 percent of a living wage for a single adult and less than a quarter of the living wage for a single adult with two children.

Still another source of information is from the South Wood County Homelessness Initiative Committee's September 2010 report on "Wages Needed to Pay for Basic Needs in South Wood County". The summary table on this report can be found in Appendix F.

- b. Current minimum wage – The current federal minimum wage (FMW) is \$7.25/hour and was last increased in July 2009. The federal minimum wage is not tied to inflation. States have their own minimum with some being above the federal, some the same, and some below. The Wisconsin minimum wage is the same as the FMW.

- c. Increasing the FMW – Different models show different effects. There is no consensus. There is no evidence of a strong overall negative effect. Also, there is no strong evidence of poverty reduction. This is because employers may reduce non-wage compensation or a higher minimum wage may cause welfare-type benefits to decrease.

Mr. Neuman stated that more than a minimum wage is needed to fight poverty and presented the following ideas:

- a. Raise the minimum wage and index it to something (e.g. average wage) so it increases over time.
- b. Provide tax subsidies (e.g. earned income tax credit)
- c. Implement core benefits (i.e. food, rent) across all states.

## **Education & Poverty**

On December 9, 2015, the LWVWRA Poverty Study committee met with Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, Director of Curriculum and Instruction for the Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools. In her presentation, Kathi pointed out several aspects of students living with poverty, e.g. have greater deficiencies in language and emotional responsiveness and inherit low self-esteem. For more examples, refer to Appendix G. Kathi stressed the need for awareness and a living wage to address these problems.

Kathi also provided a handout called “Building a Pedagogy of Engagement for Students in Poverty” by Paul Gorski. A copy of this handout is in Appendix H. According to Mr. Gorski, the only surefire way to eliminate the achievement gap is to eradicate poverty. Since that is not going to happen anytime soon, educators can still take many research-proven steps to foster equality of opportunity in education.

Kathi teaches a class on poverty along with Margie Dorshorst, principal at Mead Elementary School. The class is intended for teachers but others may attend if there are any openings.

## **United Way of Inner Wisconsin Programs**

Amy Fluno, Director of the 2-1-1 call center for United Way of Inner Wisconsin explained how the 2-1-1 service works. It is for non-emergency help such as finding after-school care or care for an aging parent or financial help. The help is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and is always confidential. A handout is also available with telephone numbers to find help with situations such as health insurance, applying for unemployment, rent assistance, credit counseling and getting out of an abusive relationship.

The top five referrals for Wood County in 2015 were: food pantries, rent payment assistance, electric service payment assistance, low income/subsidized private rental housing and gas money.

The top five unmet needs (calls in which 2-1-1 was unable to help) were: community shelter, gas money, automobile purchase loans, automobile repair loans, and moving expense assistance.

Other programs under the United Way of Inner Wisconsin umbrella, include the Financial Stability Coalition, the Homelessness Coalition (details included in the Homelessness section of this study), and the South Wood County Hunger Coalition.

The Financial Stability Coalition was newly formed in April 2016 to work with a variety of professionals with the goal of helping community members learn skills to become financially independent. The coalition is identifying key initiatives and action to be taken for instilling financial management skills.

The South Wood County Hunger Coalition purpose is to reduce hunger by focusing on the food supply, community awareness, research, meeting needs, and funding. The group did a Community Food System Simulation which stimulated conversations about how limited income and unreliable transportation are barriers to healthy eating.

In August 2016, local agencies and partner programs served 2,845 individuals. From January to August 2016, 21,467 individuals were provided with food.

The Hunger Coalition is also creating a food provider poster that will list all locations and services for those who need food assistance. The list will include food pantries, backpack programs, community mealsites, and stores that accept SNAP, EBT, FoodShare, and WIC benefits.



## **Community Resources & Family Services**

On March 31, 2016, a presentation on community resources and family services was given by Kris Hanten who at the time was the Family Services Division Administrator for Wood County Human Services. The website for this department can be found at <http://www.co.wood.wi.us/Departments/HumanServices/>, which contains a complete list of their programs and services.

Their community resources and assistance programs include FoodShare. FoodShare Wisconsin was created to help stop hunger and to improve nutrition and health. FoodShare helps people with limited money buy the food they need for good health.

Their services for children and families includes juvenile justice services. Juvenile court intake is a process of assessing referrals from law enforcement or school personnel for further action through the juvenile court process or Human Services. The juvenile court or juvenile justice services are defined here in Wisconsin State Statutes 938, Juvenile Justice Code.

Ms. Hanten felt that there could be better coordination of services between government agencies, church groups, mentor groups, and UW-Extension. She also suggested that to address the issue of poverty it was essential to make human connections and reach out without judgment.

## University of Wisconsin Extension Programs

Wood County has been experiencing a decrease in population. At the time of our meeting, 17% of our Wood County children were living in poverty and 34% of our children are considered to be low income. At the same time 11% of the families needed adequate housing. One of the first steps in providing assistance for a family is to provide adequate, safe housing so they have a base of operation.

The Family Living Educator concentrates her outreach in the Wallet Wise program where parents are taught to keep records, set goals, and spend wisely. The other 4 areas developed to help residents of Wood County are in family leadership, Hunger Coalition, the Homeless Coalition and transportation. Nekoosa Head Start has an educational class teaching family leadership to the parents. United Way works with the Hunger Coalition. The Homeless Coalition Has 4 areas: County wide, Clean Slate for evicted or abused individuals, Helping Hands, and a Veterans outreach. Transportation aid is provided in the form of bus and taxi tokens and gas vouchers with finances from Incourage Foundation.

According to AARP, the Livability Score for Wisconsin Rapids was below the national average in access to jobs by auto. Perhaps the most alarming statistics were in the areas of health and environment. We have high rates of smoking, obesity, and lack access to exercise. Our ranking is below the national average in water and air quality, and we are exposed to higher than average industrial pollution. (See link to the Livability Score for Wisconsin Rapids in the Resource section under AARP Livability Index.)

## Summary of LWVWRA Poverty Study

The causes and effects of poverty are complex and therefore the solutions are just as difficult to articulate. During the course of our local study on poverty we learned about the extent and possible solutions to homelessness. We had a professor of economics discuss the pros and cons of raising the minimum wage as a way to alleviate poverty. The impact of poverty on children's education was explained by a local school administrator. She specializes in this topic and teaches strategies to overcome the barriers poor students face in the classroom. We also explored short term programs to address food insecurity, housing and health care needs. These programs ranged from those administered through Wood County's Community Resources and Family Services to local non-profit efforts such as the food pantry, United Way's 211 Information and Referral, and Helping Hands Gospel Mission among others.

There is a plethora of government and community programs in place to address the needs of those in poverty. Unfortunately, they have not made an appreciable dent in the statistics. According to a study completed in 2016 by the United Way of Inner Wisconsin titled, ALICE: Study of Financial Hardship, 52% of families in Wisconsin Rapids fall below their threshold for making a comfortable living. In Wood County that means a family of four earning at least \$53,712.00. At that level a family would be able to afford the cost of housing, food, childcare, transportation, health care and taxes with no cushion for emergencies. These are the working poor and reflect the larger trend of a shrinking middle class.

Will our local efforts address the issue of poverty? Yes, but not adequately. Some light on the United States' rate of poverty compared to other developed nations was reported by the Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality in 2016. The publication, Pathways: A magazine on poverty, inequality and social policy, concluded that the rate of poverty as measured by household disposable income is higher in the US compared to other rich countries. This is due for the most part because we do not, as a nation, have a policy that reduces poverty through taxes and transfers of wealth. Our absolute rate of poverty is lower here but we do not have programs in place that reduce poverty to the same extent other countries do. In other words, we do not have a national commitment for the reduction of poverty. This is something that is critically needed if poverty is to be truly addressed. \*

\*Grusky, David B., Mattingly, Marybeth J., Varner, Charles E., The Poverty and Inequality Report: The Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality. Pathways-The Poverty and Inequality Report 2016.

## Recommendations

The League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) has taken the position that our organization will support programs and policies to prevent or reduce poverty and to promote self-sufficiency for individuals and families.

“In order to prevent or reduce poverty, the LWVUS supports policies and programs designed to: increase job opportunities; increase access to health insurance; provide support services such as child care and transportation; provide opportunities and/or incentives for basic or remedial education and job training; decrease teen pregnancy; ensure that noncustodial parents contribute to the support of their children.”

([lww.org/content/social-policy-0](http://lww.org/content/social-policy-0))

As such, local Leagues are able to advocate and take action to address problems of poverty in the nation, at the state level and in our local communities.

Our recommendations are not meant to be comprehensive but result from our local study of poverty. Below are our recommendations.

### National level

- Promote universal access to affordable health care.
- Promote the concept of a living wage.
- Make a national commitment to reduce poverty.

### State level:

- Support increased funding for public education at all levels.
- Support increased funding for public transportation.
- Make quality childcare affordable.
- Promote family friendly policies in the work place including parental leave and flexible scheduling.
- Develop programs that create affordable and safe housing.
- Ensure that adequate safety net programs are in place for those struggling to meet basic needs.
- Speak with our legislators on issues related to poverty that impacts their constituents.
- Advocate for a LWVWI State study on poverty and develop a position specifically on this issue.

Local Level:

- Encourage schools/churches to develop and support programs for struggling families.
- Support local resources such as community gardens, Career Closet, food pantry, the gleaning program etc.
- Educate the public on poverty, for example, through poverty simulation activities.
- Inform ourselves on issues related to poverty by attending workshops and public forums on the topic
- Encourage voting as a means to accomplish change.

## Resources

### 1. Homelessness

- Wood County Homelessness Coalition - [http://www.uwiw.org/coalition\\_update.html](http://www.uwiw.org/coalition_update.html)

### 2. Minimum Wage

- Vital Signs 2013: Measuring the Vitality of the South Wood County Area -- [http://www.cows.org/\\_data/documents/1497.pdf](http://www.cows.org/_data/documents/1497.pdf)
- Vital Signs 2014: Pursuing Economic Opportunity & Growth in the South Wood County Area -- [http://www.cows.org/\\_data/documents/1707.pdf](http://www.cows.org/_data/documents/1707.pdf)
- Minimum wage by state -- <https://www.dol.gov/whd/minwage/america.htm>
- “Raising the Federal Minimum Wage to \$10.10 Would Give Working Families, and the Overall Economy, a Much-Needed Boost” by David Cooper and Doug Hall, Economic Policy Institute Briefing Paper #357 -- <https://schakowsky.house.gov/images/bp357--federal-minimum-wage-increase.pdf>
- Waiting for the Payoff: How Low Wages and Student Debt Keep Prosperity Out of Reach by Allyson Frederickson -- <https://jobgap2013.files.wordpress.com/2016/10/waiting-for-the-payoff-web.pdf>. The Job Gap Economic Prosperity series examines the ability of working families to move beyond living paycheck-to-paycheck in today’s economy, seeking to understand both the barriers keeping families from achieving economic prosperity and what actions policymakers can take to help families and communities thrive.

### 3. Education & Poverty

- Reaching and Teaching Students in Poverty by Paul C. Gorski
- Teaching with Poverty in Mind by Eric Jensen
- Understanding Poverty in the Classroom by Beth Lindsay Templeton
- A Framework for Understanding Poverty by Ruby Payne
- Reign of Error by Diane Ravitch
- Nickel and Dimed by Barbara Ehrenreich

### 4. United Way 2-1-1

- United Way’s 2-1-1 -- <http://www.getconnected211.org>
- The complete United Way ALICE Report with county-level information - [http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/unitedwaywi.site-ym.com/resource/resmgr/FINAL\\_Lowres\\_9.26.16\\_16UW\\_AL.pdf?hhSearchTerms=%22alice%22](http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/unitedwaywi.site-ym.com/resource/resmgr/FINAL_Lowres_9.26.16_16UW_AL.pdf?hhSearchTerms=%22alice%22)

### 5. Community Resources and Family Services

- UW-Extension Wood County, Family Living & Nutrition Education -- <http://wood.uwex.edu/family-living-and-nutrition-education/>

## **6. UW-Extension Programs**

- Poverty and Food Security in Wood County, Wisconsin --  
[http://www.apl.wisc.edu/resource\\_profiles/pfs\\_profiles/wood\\_2014.pdf](http://www.apl.wisc.edu/resource_profiles/pfs_profiles/wood_2014.pdf)

## **7. Miscellaneous**

- AARP Livability Index -- <http://www.aarp.org/ppi/issues/livable-communities/info-2015/livability-index.html>
- The Poverty and Inequality Report 2016, The Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality - <http://inequality.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/Pathways-SOTU-2016.pdf>
- **Community Health Needs Assessment Data Set 2015 - Wood County**

## **8. League of Women Voter Poverty Studies**

- League of Women Voters Manitowoc County Wisconsin Poverty Study. Preliminary Resources 2015 --  
[http://lwvmanitowoc.org/files/lwvmc\\_poverty\\_study\\_-\\_preliminary\\_resources\\_-\\_google\\_docs.pdf](http://lwvmanitowoc.org/files/lwvmc_poverty_study_-_preliminary_resources_-_google_docs.pdf)
- League of Women Voters Winnebago County. Poverty in our Midst, a Summary Report on the Extent of Poverty in Winnebago County, WI 2012-2014 -- [http://lwvwinnebago.org/files/poverty\\_report\\_summary\\_web.pdf](http://lwvwinnebago.org/files/poverty_report_summary_web.pdf)
- League of Women Voters of Pullman Washington, Poverty in Whitman County Washington -- [http://lwvpullman.org/pdf/May\\_Final\\_Report.pdf](http://lwvpullman.org/pdf/May_Final_Report.pdf)

## Appendix A – Federal Poverty Level Guidelines, February 2015

9/12/2015

Federal Poverty Level Guidelines | Wisconsin Department of Health Services



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT  
of HEALTH SERVICES

### Federal Poverty Level Guidelines

The following income levels are used to determine enrollment in Wisconsin's health care plans. To see if you may be able to enroll, go to [ACCESS.wis.gov](http://ACCESS.wis.gov) and apply today.

Effective February 1, 2015

Family size	Annual	100% FPL	120% FPL	135% FPL	150% FPL	185% FPL	200% FPL	250% FPL	300% FPL
1	\$11,770	\$980.83	\$1,177.00	\$1,324.13	\$1,471.25	\$1,814.54	\$1,961.67	\$2,452.08	\$2,942.50
2	\$15,930	\$1,327.50	\$1,593.00	\$1,792.13	\$1,991.25	\$2,455.88	\$2,655.00	\$3,318.75	\$3,982.50
3	\$20,090	\$1,674.17	\$2,009.00	\$2,260.13	\$2,511.25	\$3,097.21	\$3,348.33	\$4,185.42	\$5,022.50
4	\$24,250	\$2,020.83	\$2,425.00	\$2,728.13	\$3,031.25	\$3,738.54	\$4,041.67	\$5,052.08	\$6,062.50
5	\$28,410	\$2,367.50	\$2,841.00	\$3,196.13	\$3,551.25	\$4,379.88	\$4,735.00	\$5,918.75	\$7,102.50
6	\$32,570	\$2,714.17	\$3,257.00	\$3,664.13	\$4,071.25	\$5,021.21	\$5,428.33	\$6,785.42	\$8,142.50
7	\$36,730	\$3,060.83	\$3,673.00	\$4,132.12	\$4,591.25	\$5,662.54	\$6,121.67	\$7,652.08	\$9,182.50
8	\$40,890	\$3,407.50	\$4,009.00	\$4,510.13	\$5,011.25	\$6,180.54	\$6,681.67	\$8,352.08	\$10,022.50
9	\$45,050	\$3,754.17	\$4,505.00	\$5,068.13	\$5,563.25	\$6,945.21	\$7,508.33	\$9,385.42	\$11,262.50
10	\$49,210	\$4,100.83	\$4,921.00	\$5,635.13	\$6,151.25	\$7,586.54	\$8,201.67	\$10,252.08	\$12,302.50
Each additional person	\$4,160	\$346.67	\$416.00	\$468.00	\$520.00	\$641.33	\$693.33	\$866.67	\$1,040.00
Program Limits		QMB	SLMB	SLMB+	MAPP premium		QDWI & lower	MAPP	

These amounts are based on the 2015 federal guidelines, which may increase by a small percentage each year.

Last Revised: February 6, 2015



## Appendix B – League of Women Voters Wisconsin Poverty Chart

	Ashland Bayfield	Beloit	Manitowoc	Ripon Area
<b>POVERTY - TOPICS &amp; SUBTOPICS</b>	2017-		2015-17	2014 -17
<b>A. Income/Economic Inequality</b>	+	+		
<b>B. Geographic Area of Concern</b>			Two Rivers, Manitowoc Area	Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Waushara Co.
<b>C. % in Poverty within that area</b>			47-48% of working poor	
<b>D. Food Security</b>				
<b>E. Housing Security</b>			+	
<b>F. Transportation</b>	+	+		
- Public		+		
- Personal		+		
- DL or D Card		+		
<b>G. Health Care -</b>			+	
- Physical				
- Dental				
- Mental			+	+ (Opioid Epidemic)
<b>H. Effect on</b>				
- Families				
- Schools, public	+ Vouchers effect			
- Individ. Male				
- Individ. Female				
<b>I. Possible Allied Interest Groups</b>			United Way	United Way

<b>J. General Economic Factors</b>			+	
<b>K. Local LWV Contacts ( # involved in study)</b>	Jan Penn (?) Linda Jorgenson JoAnne Katzmarek		Julie Grinde, Mary Wallace Linda Gratz (13)	

**Dane Co.** – Wage Theft

**Door Co.** - Yes, the Door County chapter has been exploring the viability of a poverty study locally, perhaps following some of the work that Manitowoc did. We have talked at the Board level about whether we can contribute to a better understanding of the situation. In November, a small group of interested members had a meeting with Women's Fund representatives to learn what they had already/are doing. Next week, the executive director of United Way will present a program re: ALICE which has just started up here. These fact-finding discussions will help us see where efforts can best be focused. We are a small group, and need to ensure there are a sufficient number of members and friends who want to join Board members in taking this on.

As the potential for a poverty study continues to take shape, I'll be happy to keep you in the loop.

**Winnebago Co/Oshkosh, City of Oshkosh** – 2012-2014 Housing & Food Insecurity and Health Care issues were the focus of the study. A full report and summary of their report are available from Ann Marshall, who shared both with Louise Petering.

**Greater Green Bay** - Programs and services related to the needs of the educationally, socially, and economically disadvantaged; Presently only monitoring this area of concern and attempting to educate and make League members more aware. Example: We had Robyn Hallet from GB/BC Housing Authority, Bev Scow from Wise Women, and Cheryl Detrick from NEWCAP, Inc. talk about Homes First at our spring picnic. None of these speakers are League members. ....So, sorry to say, officially we have no one in charge. I do attend the Homes First meetings as a League representative, but this is only one small part of "economically disadvantaged".

File: 16 11 Poverty chart & Info

## Appendix C – Definition of Homelessness

### What is the official definition of homelessness?

There is more than one “official” definition of homelessness. Health centers funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) use the following:

A homeless individual is defined in section 330(h)(5)(A) as “an individual who lacks housing (without regard to whether the individual is a member of a family), including an individual whose primary residence during the night is a supervised public or private facility (e.g., shelters) that provides temporary living accommodations, and an individual who is a resident in transitional housing.” A homeless person is an individual without permanent housing who may live on the streets; stay in a shelter, mission, single room occupancy facilities, abandoned building or vehicle; or in any other unstable or non-permanent situation. [Section 330 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C., 254b)]

An individual may be considered to be homeless if that person is “doubled up,” a term that refers to a situation where individuals are unable to maintain their housing situation and are forced to stay with a series of friends and/or extended family members. In addition, previously homeless individuals who are to be released from a prison or a hospital may be considered homeless if they do not have a stable housing situation to which they can return. A recognition of the instability of an individual’s living arrangements is critical to the definition of homelessness. (HRSA/Bureau of Primary Health Care, Program Assistance Letter 99-12, Health Care for the Homeless Principles of Practice)

Programs funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) use a different, more limited definition of homelessness [found in the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009 (P.L. 111-22, Section 1003)].

- An individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence;
- An individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground;
- An individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including hotels and motels paid for by Federal, State or local government programs for low-income individuals or by charitable organizations, congregate shelters, and transitional housing);
- An individual who resided in a shelter or place not meant for human habitation and who is exiting an institution where he or she temporarily resided;
- An individual or family who will imminently lose their housing [as evidenced by a court order resulting from an eviction action that notifies the individual or family that they must leave within 14 days, having a primary nighttime residence that is a room in a hotel or motel and where they lack the resources necessary to reside there for more than 14 days, or credible evidence indicating that the owner or renter of the housing will not allow the individual or family to stay for more than 14 days, and any oral statement from an individual or family seeking homeless assistance that is found to be credible shall be considered credible evidence for purposes of this clause]; has no subsequent residence identified; and lacks the resources or support networks needed to obtain other permanent housing; and
- Unaccompanied youth and homeless families with children and youth defined as homeless under other Federal statutes who have experienced a long-term period without living independently in permanent housing, have experienced persistent instability as measured by frequent moves over such period, and can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period of time because of chronic disabilities, chronic physical health or mental health conditions, substance addiction, histories of domestic violence or childhood abuse, the presence of a child or youth with a disability, or multiple barriers to employment.

Hence different agencies use different definitions of homelessness, which affect how various programs determine eligibility for individuals and families at the state and local level. Health centers use the HHS definition in providing services.

## Appendix D – Faces of Homelessness in Wisconsin Rapids

10/12/2015

### The Faces of Homelessness in Wisconsin Rapids

October 12, 2015  
Presented by Lonnie Selje  
Helping Hands Gospel Mission

### Federal Definition of Homelessness

A homeless individual is defined in section 3601(g)(5)(A) as "an individual who lacks housing (without regard to whether the individual is a member of a family), including an individual whose primary residence during the night is a supervised public or private facility (e.g., shelters) that provides temporary living accommodations, and an individual who is a resident in transitional housing." A homeless person is an individual without permanent housing who may live on the streets; stay in a shelter, mission, single room occupancy facilities, abandoned building or vehicle; or in any other unstable or non-permanent situation. (Section 330 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C., 1340))

### 5 Categories

- An individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence;
- An individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for sleeping (car, park, abandoned building, or camping ground);
- An individual or family living in a supervised shelter;
- An individual who is exiting an institution where he or she temporarily resided;
- An individual or family who will imminently lose their housing (as evidenced by a court order resulting from an eviction action);
- Unaccompanied youth and homeless families with children and youth defined as homeless (includes instability, substance addiction, domestic violence, disabled, mentally ill)

### History of Government Assistance

- Biblical times
- Elizabethan Poor Laws
- Puritans brought to America
- Case workers by late 19<sup>th</sup> century
- Great Depression introduced social security, WIC, AFDC, etc

### Poverty Guidelines for 2015-16

Number of people in household	2015	2016	2017
1	\$11,770	\$14,720	\$15,550
2	15,030	19,920	16,230
3	20,080	25,120	22,110
4	24,250	30,320	27,690
5	28,410	35,520	32,670
6	32,570	40,720	37,450
7	36,730	45,920	42,230
8	40,890	51,120	47,010
9	45,050	56,320	51,790
10	49,210	61,520	56,570
11	53,370	66,720	61,350
12	57,530	71,920	66,130
13	61,690	77,120	70,910
14	65,850	82,320	75,690
15	69,990	87,520	80,470
16	74,150	92,720	85,250
17	78,310	97,920	89,990
18	82,470	103,120	94,730
19	86,630	108,320	99,470
20	90,790	113,520	104,210
21	94,950	118,720	108,950
22	99,110	123,920	113,690
23	103,270	129,120	118,430
24	107,430	134,320	123,170
25	111,590	139,520	127,910
26	115,750	144,720	132,650
27	119,910	149,920	137,390
28	124,070	155,120	142,130
29	128,230	160,320	146,870
30	132,390	165,520	151,610
31	136,550	170,720	156,350
32	140,710	175,920	161,090
33	144,870	181,120	165,830
34	149,030	186,320	170,570
35	153,190	191,520	175,310
36	157,350	196,720	180,050
37	161,510	201,920	184,790
38	165,670	207,120	189,530
39	169,830	212,320	194,270
40	173,990	217,520	199,010
41	178,150	222,720	203,750
42	182,310	227,920	208,490
43	186,470	233,120	213,230
44	190,630	238,320	217,970
45	194,790	243,520	222,710
46	198,950	248,720	227,450
47	203,110	253,920	232,190
48	207,270	259,120	236,930
49	211,430	264,320	241,670
50	215,590	269,520	246,410
51	219,750	274,720	251,150
52	223,910	279,920	255,890
53	228,070	285,120	260,630
54	232,230	290,320	265,370
55	236,390	295,520	270,110
56	240,550	300,720	274,850
57	244,710	305,920	279,590
58	248,870	311,120	284,330
59	253,030	316,320	289,070
60	257,190	321,520	293,810
61	261,350	326,720	298,550
62	265,510	331,920	303,290
63	269,670	337,120	308,030
64	273,830	342,320	312,770
65	277,990	347,520	317,510
66	282,150	352,720	322,250
67	286,310	357,920	326,990
68	290,470	363,120	331,730
69	294,630	368,320	336,470
70	298,790	373,520	341,210
71	302,950	378,720	345,950
72	307,110	383,920	350,690
73	311,270	389,120	355,430
74	315,430	394,320	360,170
75	319,590	399,520	364,910
76	323,750	404,720	369,650
77	327,910	409,920	374,390
78	332,070	415,120	379,130
79	336,230	420,320	383,870
80	340,390	425,520	388,610
81	344,550	430,720	393,350
82	348,710	435,920	398,090
83	352,870	441,120	402,830
84	357,030	446,320	407,570
85	361,190	451,520	412,310
86	365,350	456,720	417,050
87	369,510	461,920	421,790
88	373,670	467,120	426,530
89	377,830	472,320	431,270
90	381,990	477,520	436,010
91	386,150	482,720	440,750
92	390,310	487,920	445,490
93	394,470	493,120	450,230
94	398,630	498,320	454,970
95	402,790	503,520	459,710
96	406,950	508,720	464,450
97	411,110	513,920	469,190
98	415,270	519,120	473,930
99	419,430	524,320	478,670
100	423,590	529,520	483,410
101	427,750	534,720	488,150
102	431,910	539,920	492,890
103	436,070	545,120	497,630
104	440,230	550,320	502,370
105	444,390	555,520	507,110
106	448,550	560,720	511,850
107	452,710	565,920	516,590
108	456,870	571,120	521,330
109	461,030	576,320	526,070
110	465,190	581,520	530,810
111	469,350	586,720	535,550
112	473,510	591,920	540,290
113	477,670	597,120	545,030
114	481,830	602,320	549,770
115	485,990	607,520	554,510
116	490,150	612,720	559,250
117	494,310	617,920	563,990
118	498,470	623,120	568,730
119	502,630	628,320	573,470
120	506,790	633,520	578,210
121	510,950	638,720	582,950
122	515,110	643,920	587,690
123	519,270	649,120	592,430
124	523,430	654,320	597,170
125	527,590	659,520	601,910
126	531,750	664,720	606,650
127	535,910	669,920	611,390
128	540,070	675,120	616,130
129	544,230	680,320	620,870
130	548,390	685,520	625,610
131	552,550	690,720	630,350
132	556,710	695,920	635,090
133	560,870	701,120	639,830
134	565,030	706,320	644,570
135	569,190	711,520	649,310
136	573,350	716,720	654,050
137	577,510	721,920	658,790
138	581,670	727,120	663,530
139	585,830	732,320	668,270
140	589,990	737,520	673,010
141	594,150	742,720	677,750
142	598,310	747,920	682,490
143	602,470	753,120	687,230
144	606,630	758,320	691,970
145	610,790	763,520	696,710
146	614,950	768,720	701,450
147	619,110	773,920	706,190
148	623,270	779,120	710,930
149	627,430	784,320	715,670
150	631,590	789,520	720,410
151	635,750	794,720	725,150
152	639,910	799,920	729,890
153	644,070	805,120	734,630
154	648,230	810,320	739,370
155	652,390	815,520	744,110
156	656,550	820,720	748,850
157	660,710	825,920	753,590
158	664,870	831,120	758,330
159	669,030	836,320	763,070
160	673,190	841,520	767,810
161	677,350	846,720	772,550
162	681,510	851,920	777,290
163	685,670	857,120	782,030
164	689,830	862,320	786,770
165	693,990	867,520	791,510
166	698,150	872,720	796,250
167	702,310	877,920	800,990
168	706,470	883,120	805,730
169	710,630	888,320	810,470
170	714,790	893,520	815,210
171	718,950	898,720	819,950
172	723,110	903,920	824,690
173	727,270	909,120	829,430
174	731,430	914,320	834,170
175	735,590	919,520	838,910
176	739,750	924,720	843,650
177	743,910	929,920	848,390
178	748,070	935,120	853,130
179	752,230	940,320	857,870
180	756,390	945,520	862,610
181	760,550	950,720	867,350
182	764,710	955,920	872,090
183	768,870	961,120	876,830
184	773,030	966,320	881,570
185	777,190	971,520	886,310
186	781,350	976,720	891,050
187	785,510	981,920	895,790
188	789,670	987,120	900,530
189	793,830	992,320	905,270
190	797,990	997,520	910,010
191	802,150	1002,720	914,750
192	806,310	1007,920	919,490
193	810,470	1013,120	924,230
194	814,630	1018,320	928,970
195	818,790	1023,520	933,710
196	822,950	1028,720	938,450
197	827,110	1033,920	943,190
198	831,270	1039,120	947,930
199	835,430	1044,320	952,670
200	839,590	1049,520	957,410
201	843,750	1054,720	962,150
202	847,910	1059,920	966,890
203	852,070	1065,120	971,630
204	856,230	1070,320	976,370
205	860,390	1075,520	981,110
206	864,550	1080,720	985,850
207	868,710	1085,920	990,590
208	872,870	1091,120	995,330
209	877,030	1096,320	1000,070
210	881,190	1101,520	1004,810
211	885,350	1106,720	1009,550
212	889,510	1111,920	1014,290
213	893,670	1117,120	1019,030
214	897,830	1122,320	1023,770
215	901,990	1127,520	1028,510
216	906,150	1132,720	1033,250
217	910,310	1137,920	1037,990
218	914,470	1143,120	1042,730
219	918,630	1148,320	1047,470
220	922,790	1153,520	1052,210
221	926,950	1158,720	1056,950
222	931,110	1163,920	1061,690
223	935,270	1169,120	1066,430
224	939,430	1174,320	1071,170
225	943,590	1179,520	1075,910
226	947,750	1184,720	1080,650
227	951,910	1189,920	1085,390
228	956,070	1195,120	1090,130
229	960,230	1200,320	1094,870
230	964,390	1205,520	1099,610
231	968,550	1210,720	1104,350
232	972,710	1215,920	1109,090
233	976,870	1221,120	1113,830
234	981,030	1226,320	1118,570
235	985,190	1231,520	1123,310
236	989,350	1236,720	1128,050
237	993,510	1241,920	1132,790
238	997,670	1247,120	1137,530
239	1001,830	1252,320	1142,270
240	1005,990	1257,520	1147,010
241	1010,150	1262,720	

### Point in Time Count

1-3% were homeless in Wis. in 2014

- 55% were single vs. families
- 2012 reports indicated nationally, chronic homelessness is on the decline; Wisconsin was the opposite
- HUD reported a decrease in homeless veterans except Wisconsin (2012)
- Domestic violence laws prohibit reporting; shelters in Wisconsin indicate an increase between 2009-2012

## SWC Homeless #s (UWIR)

Nutrient Concentrations										
	WY	W3	W4	W5	W6	W7	W8	W9	W10	W11
NO <sub>3</sub> -N	mg/L	0	1	2	6	1	6	2	6	10
NO <sub>2</sub> -N	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ammonia-N	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PO <sub>4</sub> -P	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SiO <sub>2</sub>	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fe	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Al	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ca	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mg	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
K	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Na	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cl	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
O	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
P	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
K	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Na	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cl	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
O	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
P	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
K	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Na	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cl	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
O	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
P	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
K	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Na	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cl	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
O	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
P	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
K	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Na	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cl	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
O	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
P	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
K	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Na	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cl	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
O	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
P	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
K	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Na	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cl	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
O	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
P	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
K	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Na	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cl	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
O	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
P	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
K	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Na	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cl	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
O	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
P	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
K	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Na	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cl	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
O	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
P	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
K	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Na	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cl	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
O	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
P	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
K	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Na	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cl	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
O	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
P	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
K	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Na	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cl	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
O	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
P	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
K	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Na	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cl	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
O	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
P	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
K	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Na	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cl	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
O	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
P	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
K	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Na	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cl	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
O	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
P	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
K	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Na	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cl	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
O	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
P	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
K	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Na	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cl	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
O	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
P	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
K	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Na	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cl	mg/L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S	mg/L	0								

## Homeless Stats

- 2015 has seen about a 40% increase in calls/clients
- The number reported to UWIW is less than half the calls we receive (i.e. 20% of calls are not reported)
- We work with our clients for 4 – 8 months on average before they are self-sufficient
- Over 25% of the calls we receive do not want help, but are looking for a handout
- The majority of people who could stay at a shelter refuse to go, asking for a motel room instead

### Current Area Shelters

(a place to stay for free)

- Salvation Army – *Stevens Point*
- Hannah Center – *Marshfield* (faith-based pregnant women)
- Destiny Point – *Blenker* (faith-based 12 month program)
- Shirley's House of Hope – *Marshfield* (faith-based Domestic Violence)
- Family Center – *Wisconsin Rapids* (domestic violence)
- VA – housing of homeless – *Tomah or King*
- Mary's Place – *Marshfield* (boarding house)
- Ozanam Shelter – *Marshfield* (transitional housing – families only)
- Nearest warming house – *Wausau* (Nov.– April only)


### Wisconsin Rapids Shelter Options

FREE

- Family Center (Domestic Violence)
- Motel (Paid for by friends or agencies while funding lasts)
- Jail

### Minimal Rent

- **Rapids Oxford House** (men's sobriety house)
- **Cranberry Oxford House** (opening Dec.; women's sobriety house)

 **Helping Hands Gospel Mission**  
Caring for the hurting.

### Philosophy of Care

- Faith-based
- Help vs. Enable ("Helping is doing something for someone that they could not do for themselves...while enabling is doing something that they not only could, but should be doing for themselves.")
- Three levels of help:
  - Relief,
  - Rehabilitation, and
  - Development
- Holistic approach
- Life is about choices
- Team Approach

### HHGM Partners

- United Ways 2-3-4
- ADRC
- Area Churches
- Area Landlords
- City of Wisconsin Rapids
- Cranberry Country Clergy
- Crisis Intervention
- Dept. of Aging & Disability
- District Attorney's office
- Energy Assistance
- Family Center
- PSET
- Grand Rapids PD
- Hannah Center (Marshfield)
- Hope's Door
- Job Center/DVR
- Local Motels
- MSTC (MidState Tech. Coll.)
- NCCAF (Comm. Action Prog.)
- Helix PD
- Oasis (Disability Advocacy)
- Oxford House
- Probation & Parole
- Public Defenders Office
- River Cities Cdy/Wheels of Independence
- Salvation Army (Stevens Point)
- Shepherd's Loft (Salor St. Comm. Ch.)
- Shirley's House of Hope (Marshfield)
- Social Security
- SWEPS (food pantry)
- UWEX
- Veterans Office
- Veterans & Light Commission
- Wisconsin Rapids PD
- Wood County Dispatch
- Wood County Jail
- Wood County Sheriff

 **Helping Hands Gospel Mission**  
Caring for the hurting.

### Who are the Faces?

Families      Criminals who've served their time

Single Adults

Teens      People waiting for disability

Mentally ill      Trafficking Victims

Addicts

2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> generation "welfare" families

Domestic Violence Victims

### How Do We Fix This?

Finding employers willing to take chances

Don't enable crime or addictive behavior

Our children need better parenting      Budgeting for fixed income

Shortage of mental health professionals

Shelters are Temporary      Acknowledge trafficking & take action



Teach basic life skills to all ages

Addressing entitlement attitudes      Fix transportation issues for jobs

### Suggestions When Helping

- Set guidelines beforehand
- Assume you are not hearing the whole truth
- Ask for photo ID
- Do background check on line (court records)
- Learn about programs that exist (refer them)
- Never give cash
- If they are on a corner with a sign, "homelessness" is likely their "occupation" not their situation

### Recommended Reading

---

## Economics of the Minimum Wage Debate

Kevin Neuman, Ph.D.  
Professor of Economics  
School of Business & Economics  
(715) 346-3875  
kneuman@uwsp.edu



---

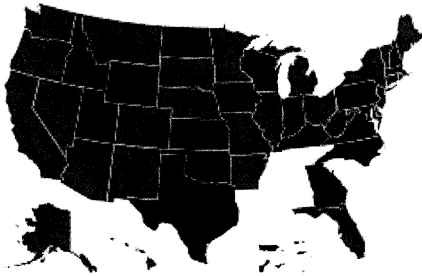
### History of the Federal Min. Wage

- Established in 1938 at \$0.25 per hour under the Fair Labor Standards Act
- Currently the minimum wage is \$7.25 (\$2.13 tipped employees), last increased in July 2009
- Federal Minimum Wage not tied to inflation
- States have their own minimums

*SSC tied to consumer prices rather than wages*

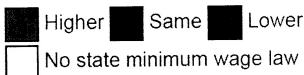


## Minimum Wage by State



Minimum wage by U.S. state and territory, as of January 1, 2015.

Versus the federal rate:



- Compared to Federal Minimum Wage:
  - 29 states and DC above
  - 14 states the same
  - 2 states below
  - 5 states with no minimum

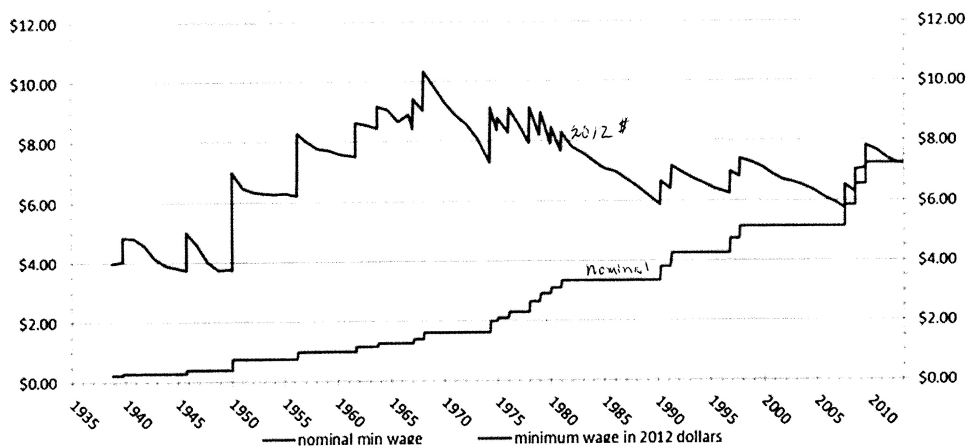
- Highest wage prevails

Source: Department of Labor.  
<http://www.dol.gov/whd/minwage/america.htm>



School of Business & Economics  
 College of Professional Studies  
 University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

## Minimum Wage Value



Source: United States Department of Labor. "About Minimum Wage." <http://www.dol.gov/minwage/minwage-gdp-history.htm>. Accessed on October 10, 2014.



School of Business & Economics  
 College of Professional Studies  
 University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point



## Minimum Wage Value (cont.)



Source: Cooper, David and Doug Hall. 2013. "Raising the Federal Minimum Wage to \$10.10 Would Give Working Families, and the Overall Economy, a Much-Needed Boost". Economic Policy Institute Briefing Paper #357



School of Business & Economics  
College of Professional Studies  
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

## MW Effects: Employment

- Classic competitive model: raise wages, employers hire fewer workers
  - Depends on responsiveness to wage increases
- Monopsony employer power model: raise wages, employers hire more workers
  - Power offset by standardizing low wage labor market
- Job search model: raise wages, workers search for jobs more intensely and fill more positions
  - Perhaps fewer jobs, but more efficiently filled



School of Business & Economics  
College of Professional Studies  
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

---

## MW Effects: Other Issues

- Employers may reduce non-wage compensation to offset MW, keeping costs the same
  - No employment effect, but no worker benefit either
- Higher MW may increase labor income, but cause welfare-type benefits to decrease
  - Little worker benefit, if any, of increased earnings
- Workers earning MW not low income workers
  - Paying higher wages to lose who do not need it



School of Business & Economics  
College of Professional Studies  
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

---

## Empirical Evidence

- Employment
  - No consensus on effects
  - Small, if any, negative effects on employment
- No evidence of strong overall negative effect, but narrow areas of reduction
  - Health insurance, pensions eligibility, & training
- No strong evidence of poverty reduction



School of Business & Economics  
College of Professional Studies  
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

## Appendix F – Wages Needed to Pay for Basic Needs in South Wood County

### Wages Needed to Pay for Basic Needs In South Wood County\* April 2010

See below for further Explanation on 1 through 15		One Adult Household	One Adult and One Child (age 6)	Two Adults and Two Children (ages 3 & 12)
1	Rent	\$ 473	\$ 586	\$ 713
2	Utilities	\$ 292	\$ 292	\$ 292
3	Food	\$ 200	\$ 367	\$ 668
4	Health Care	\$ 172	\$ 232	\$ 258
5	Child Care	\$ 0	\$ 546	\$ 821
6	Transportation	\$ 299	\$ 304	\$ 391
7	Personal Care Items	\$ 50	\$ 100	\$ 200
8	Miscellaneous	\$ 50	\$ 100	\$ 200
9	Monthly Expenses Total Lines 1 – 8	\$ 1,536	\$ 2,527	\$ 3,543
10	Annual Expenses Line 9 x 12 months	X 12 \$18,432	X 12 \$30,324	X 12 \$42,156
11	Est. Social Security & Medicare Taxes	\$ 1,669	\$ 2,637	\$ 3,478
12	Est. Federal Income Taxes	\$ 1,454	\$ 318	(\$1,114) Refund due to Additional Child Tax Credit
13	Est. WI Income Taxes	\$ 257	\$ 1,193	\$ 942
14	Gross Wages Needed to Cover Lines 10 - 13	\$21,812	\$34,472	\$45,462
15	<b>Hourly Rate of Pay Needed to Meet Expenses:</b>			
a.	Line 14 ÷ 2,080 hours	\$10.49	\$16.57	\$21.86
b.	Line 14 ÷ 2,028 hours	\$10.76	\$17.00	\$22.42
c.	Line 14 ÷ 1,976 hours	\$11.04	\$17.45	\$23.01
d.	Line 14 ÷ 1,924 hours	\$11.34	\$17.92	\$23.63
e.	Line 14 ÷ 1,872 hours	\$11.65	\$18.41	\$24.29
f.	Line 14 ÷ 1,820 hours	\$11.98	\$18.94	\$24.98

#### Key

- Based on 2009 HUD 50 percentile median rent in Wood County (heat not included in rent)
- Based on Food Share Limited Utility Allowance
- Based on Food Share 2010 allotment estimates
- Based on [www.health-insurance-2008.org/Wisconsin](http://www.health-insurance-2008.org/Wisconsin) average single health insurance premium of \$859 with the employee paying 20% of the premium on an after-tax basis (Head of Household +1 @35% higher) (Family @ 50% higher)
- Average 2009 child care costs in South Wood County per CCRRCW website (Two adult and two children based on one child 3+ full time care and one child 6+ part time care (each costing at least \$3,000))
- Self-Sufficiency Standard for Wisconsin (2004 report + \$100 due to the cost of fuel)
- Estimate
- Estimate
- Self-explanatory
- Self-explanatory
- Line 14 times 7.65%
- Calculated on Line 14 wages using 2009 tax rules (excluding the 2009 only Making Work Pay Credit)
- Calculated on Line 14 wages using 2009 tax rules (for the two adult family assumed one adult earned \$20,000 and the other the remainder)
- \$7.25 is the minimum wage in Wisconsin
- Based on 35-40 hours worked per week

\*Source: South Wood County Homelessness Initiative Committee, September 2010

## Appendix G – Students Living in Poverty

SOURCE: Teaching With Poverty in Mind (Eric Jensen)

**students living with poverty...** have a 35% chance of dealing with six or more critical risk factors  
have greater deficiencies in language and emotional responsiveness **have more crowded homes**  
**experience higher crime rates** have higher tardiness and absentee rates **inherit negative school views**  
**give up for fear that no one cares** are more impulsive **die younger** have less infant nurturing  
have mentality adapted to suboptimal conditions **inherit low self-esteem** have more teen depression  
**experience more physical punishment** suffer more acute and chronic stress **have overstressed parents**  
have a 50% chance of dealing with evictions, utility disconnection, overcrowding or lack a fridge  
**interact with aggressive peers 40% more often in the community and 25% more often in child care**  
experience more authoritarian parenting styles **move more often and experience transitional stressors**  
**display more depressive symptoms** have less access to parks and recreational facilities **watch more TV**  
visit fewer museums and libraries **go on few vacations and cultural outings** have lower IQ scores  
**experience half the rate of language acquisition at age 3** receive less government educational funding  
have below average scores in reading, math, science and writing **own fewer books** sleep less  
**more often live in sub-standard housing** have higher rates of asthma, tuberculosis, hearing loss and obesity  
have less access to health care **live with parents who experience more health stresses at work**  
**have less access to music and art lessons** play on few community sports teams, and join fewer clubs  
benefit less from quality pre-school programs **experience greater pedestrian risks** suffer more injuries

**COGNITIVE LAGS**

A – Theory & Research:

B – Effects on School Behavior and Performance:

C – Action Steps:

**EMOTIONAL & SOCIAL CHALLENGES**

A – Theory & Research:

B – Effects on School Behavior and Performance:

C – Action Steps:

How poverty affects behavior and academic performance

**ACUTE & CHRONIC STRESSORS**

A – Theory & Research:

B – Effects on School Behavior and Performance:


C – Action Steps:

**HEALTH & SAFETY ISSUES**

A – Theory & Research:

B – Effects on School Behavior and Performance:

C – Action Steps:



# **Building a pedagogy of engagement for students in poverty**

The only surefire way to eliminate the achievement gap is to eradicate poverty. Since that's not going to happen anytime soon, educators can still take many research-proven steps to foster equality of opportunity in education.

**By Paul C. Gorski**

**I** started kindergarten in 1976, a decade before personal computers were in vogue for people who could afford them. The image of largesse I remember from elementary school was the 64-count box of crayons — the one with the built-in sharpener. I didn't have language for it then, but I knew that box denoted privilege.

I also remember when poster board was the hot commodity. I watched some students tremble when teachers assigned projects requiring it. Russell, a classmate, was shamed into outing himself as poor when the teacher asked the class, "Who needs help getting poster board?" The teachers I most admired were subtler, dumping everybody's crayons into community bins and keeping a few sheets of poster board tucked behind a filing cabinet, distributing it discreetly to students whose families couldn't afford it. My family fell in-between. We could afford poster board, but I settled for boxes of 16-count crayons.

During a recent visit to a high-poverty school, I asked 8th graders how many of them had a working computer and Internet access at home; only a few of the 40 students raised their hands. Then I asked how many of them had been assigned homework that required access to computers and the Internet since the last grading period ended; everybody raised their hands.

Even before the e-revolution, Russell and other students who had no say in their families' financial conditions were at a disadvantage. That's when poster board was the commodity. Now it's computers. And the Internet. And printers.

It can be difficult to remember that many poor families simply cannot afford these technologies. It can be even more difficult to remember that the same families have reduced access to a bunch of other resources that influence learning, such as health care, recreational opportunities, and even clean air. And given shifting demographics and

the recent recession, their numbers are growing, especially in suburban schools where many of us are unaccustomed to teaching low-income students.

That's important because, as David Berliner (2009) reminds us, the only sure path to educational equity is eliminating poverty itself. As long as inequality abounds, so will those pesky achievement gaps. Unfortunately education practitioners can't eliminate poverty on their own. And we can't afford to wait, and poor families can't afford to wait, for poverty to be eliminated. Even as I work toward that bigger change, I have to commit to doing what



**PAUL C. GORSKI** (pgorski1@gmu.edu) is an associate professor of integrative studies (education and social justice concentrations) at George Mason University, Fairfax, Va. He is author of *Reaching and Teaching Students in Poverty: Erasing the Opportunity Gap* (Teachers College Press, 2013) and coeditor of *The Poverty and Education Reader: A Call for Equity in Many Voices* (Stylus Press, 2013).

**Low-income youth learn best when pedagogy is driven by high academic expectations for all students — where standards aren't lowered based on socioeconomic status.**

**A study of 400 teachers in low-income schools  
found that those who rejected a deficit view of their students  
were happier with their jobs.**

I can to address the inequities that students are experiencing right now.

This is why I've spent much of the past five years reading every bit of research I can find on what works when it comes to mitigating the effects of economic inequality in schools. This is the question guiding my research: What can teachers and administrators do today, not to raise low-income students' test scores — as that obsession, itself, is a symptom of one of those bigger societal things that needs to change — but to improve educational opportunity?

**Promising practices and a couple caveats**

Before considering my suggestions, remember that low-income people are infinitely diverse. No researcher knows your students better than you know them. So, no matter how tempting the easy solution may seem, there simply is no silver bullet, no nicely wrapped bundle of strategies that work for all low-income students everywhere. Aside from advocating for the social change necessary to eliminate poverty, the best thing we can do in the name of educational equity is honor the expertise of people in poor communities by teaming with them as partners in educational equity.

Second, more important than any strategy are the dispositions with which we relate to low-income families. Any strategy will be ineffective if I believe poverty is a marker of intellectual deficiency (Robinson, 2007). So I need to check my own biases even as I enact these strategies.

**Classroom strategies**

*Express high expectations through higher-order, engaging pedagogies.* According to Lee and Burkam (2003), students labeled "at-risk" who attend schools that combine rigorous curricula with learner-centered teaching achieve at higher levels and are less likely to drop out than their peers who experience lower-order instruction. Like everyone else, low-income youth learn best at schools in which pedagogy is driven by high academic expectations for all students — where standards aren't lowered based on socioeconomic status (Ramalho, Garza, & Merchant, 2010), and in classrooms where they have access to dialogic,

inquiry-driven, collaborative pedagogies (Georges, 2009; Wenglinsky, 2002). Critical pedagogies and the development of critical literacies can be particularly helpful when it comes to school engagement among low-income students. Provide them with opportunities to tell stories about themselves that challenge the deficit-laden portrayals they often hear.

*Enhance family involvement.* Make sure opportunities for family involvement are accessible to parents and guardians who are likely to work multiple jobs, including evening jobs, who may not have access to paid leave, who may struggle to afford child care, and who may rely on public transportation. Start by providing transportation and on-site child care (Amatea & West-Olatunji, 2007; Van Galen, 2007).

*Incorporate arts into instruction.* Among the most instructionally illogical responses to the test score obsession is the elimination of arts programs — most commonly in lower-income schools — to carve out additional time for reading, writing, and math. Exposure to art, theater, and music education bolsters learning, engagement, and retention for all students and especially for low-income youth, whose families generally can't afford music lessons or art camp (Catterall, Chapleau, & Iwanaga, 1999; Pogrow, 2006). Take advantage of local artists and musicians, who might consider working with your students or helping you think about the arts in discipline-specific ways.

*Incorporate movement into instruction.* Low-income students also are losing access to recess and physical education. The lack of recreational facilities and green space in poor communities, costs associated with recreational sports, and work and family obligations, often means that recess or P.E. is the only opportunity for low-income youth to exercise. Students who are physically fit fare better in school, and childhood physical fitness is an indicator of how healthy a person will be as an adult (Fahlman, Hall, & Lock, 2006). Anything you can do to incorporate movement into learning will help mitigate these disparities.

*Focus intently on student and family strengths.* Having high expectations is not pretention. When teachers adopt a deficit view of students, performance



declines. The opposite happens when teachers focus on student strengths (Haberman, 1995; Johns, Schmader, & Martens, 2005). It will be better for you, too. Robinson (2007) found in a study of 400 teachers in low-income schools that those who rejected a deficit view were happier with their jobs.

*Analyze materials for class bias.* Poor families often are depicted in stereotypical ways in picture books and other learning materials (Jones, 2008). A variety of useful tools exist to help us uncover these sorts of biases, such as the checklist of the National Association for the Teaching of English Working Party on Social Class and English Teaching (1982). Engage students in an analysis of the biases you uncover. And please retire that obnoxious picture of the “hobo” from your vocabulary wall. It’s 2013.

*Promote literacy enjoyment.* According to Mary Kellert, “If we . . . acknowledge that literacy proficiency can be a route out of poverty . . . the most powerful strategy is to . . . promote reading enjoyment. This is likely to make the biggest impact on literacy proficiency” (2009, p. 399). This means literacy instruction should not focus solely on mechanics and should avoid practices that give students negative associations with literacy, such as forcing them to perform literacy skills publicly.

*Reach out to families early and often.* Many low-income parents and guardians experienced school as a hos-

tile environment when they were students (Gorski, 2012). Any hesitance we experience when we reach out is not necessarily ambivalence about school. It might reflect reasonable distrust for the system we represent. It might be about long work hours or a lack of access to a telephone. Be persistent. Build trust. Most importantly, demonstrate trust by nurturing positive relationships. We can do this by facilitating ongoing communication rather than reaching out only when something is wrong, creating an equitable classroom environment across all dimensions of diversity, and refusing to invalidate concerns about inequalities that are raised by low-income families (Hamovitch, 1996).

#### **A few higher-level strategies**

As we grow our spheres of influence, we might consider taking on some bigger battles for class equity.

*Advocate universal preschool.* Investment in early childhood education might be the most critical educational advocacy we can do, as disparities in access to early educational interventions compound throughout children’s lifetimes (Bhattacharya, 2010).

*Nurture relationships with community agencies, including health clinics and farms (for fresh food).* Susan Neuman (2009) found that of all types of educational interventions for poor families, those based on coordinated efforts among educational, social, and health services were most effective.

*Reduce class sizes.* Despite the illusion of a debate, research shows that class size matters (Rouse & Barrow, 2006).

*Increase health services in schools.* Start by broadening vision screenings to include farsightedness, which relates to up close (book) reading (Gould & Gould, 2003). Other services and screenings should focus on risks that are elevated in low-income communities, such as asthma (Davis, Gordon, & Burns, 2011). Fight to keep nurses in low-income schools, where



**Even as I work toward eliminating poverty, I have to commit to doing what I can do now to address the inequalities facing the people right in front of me.**

**Literacy instruction should  
not focus solely on mechanics but should  
promote the enjoyment of reading.**

they are needed desperately (Telljohann, Dake, & Price, 2004).

**Conclusion**

It bears repeating that teachers are not trained and schools are not equipped to make up for societal inequalities. This is why we should commit to doing all that we can in our spheres of influence toward class equity. And once we have done that, we can expand those spheres.

**References**

- Amatea, E.S. & West-Olatunji, C.A. (2007). Joining the conversation about educating our poorest children: Emerging leadership roles for school counselors in high-poverty schools. *Professional School Counseling, 11* (2), 81-89.
- Berliner, D. (2009). *Poverty and potential: Out-of-school factors and school success*. Tempe, AZ: Education and the Public Interest Center & Education Policy Research Unit.
- Bhattacharya, A. (2010). Children and adolescents from poverty and reading development: A research review. *Reading & Writing Quarterly, 26*, 115-139.
- Catterall, J., Chapleau, R., & Iwanaga, J. (1999). Involvement in the arts and human development: General involvement and intensive involvement in music and theater arts. In E.B. Fiske (Ed.), *Champions of change: The impact of the arts on learning* (pp. 1-18). Washington, DC: Arts Education Partnership, President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities.
- Davis, D.W., Gordon, M.K., & Burns, B.M. (2011). Educational interventions for childhood asthma: A review and integrative model for preschoolers from low-income families. *Pediatric Nursing, 37* (1), 31-38.
- Fahlman, M.M., Hall, H.L., & Lock, R. (2006). Ethnic and socioeconomic comparisons of fitness, activity levels, and barriers to exercise in high school females. *Journal of School Health, 76* (1), 12-17.
- Georges, A. (2009). Relation of instruction and poverty to mathematics achievement gains during kindergarten. *Teachers College Record, 111* (9), 2148-2178.
- Gorski, P.C. (2012). Perceiving the problem of poverty and schooling: Deconstructing the class stereotypes that misshape education policy and practice. *Equity & Excellence in Education, 45* (2), 302-319.

Gould, M.C. & Gould, H. (2003). A clear vision for equity and opportunity. *Phi Delta Kappan, 85* (4), 324-328.

Haberman, M. (1995). *Star teachers of children in poverty*. Irvine, CA: Kappa Delta Pi.

Hamovitch, B. (1996). Socialization without voice: An ideology of hope for at-risk students. *Teachers College Record, 98* (2), 286-306.

Johns, M., Schmader, T., & Martens, A. (2005). Knowing is half the battle: Teaching stereotype threat as a means of improving women's math performance. *Psychological Science, 16*, 175-179.

Jones, S. (2008). Grass houses: Representations and reinventions of social class through children's literature. *Journal of Language and Literacy Education, 4* (2), 40-58.

Kellett, M. (2009). Children as researchers: What we can learn from them about the impact of poverty on literacy opportunities. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 13* (4), 395-408.

Lee, V. & Burkam, D. (2003). Dropping out of high school: The role of school organization and structure. *American Educational Research Journal, 40*, 353-393.

National Association for the Teaching of English. (1982). Checklist for class bias and some recommended books. *English in Education, 16*, 34-37.

Neuman, S.B. (2009). Use the science of what works to change the odds for children at risk. *Phi Delta Kappan, 90* (8), 582-587.

Pogrow, S. (2006). Restructuring high-poverty elementary schools for success: A description of the Hi-Perform school design. *Phi Delta Kappan, 88* (3), 223-229.

Ramalho, E.M., Garza, E., & Merchant, B. (2010). Successful school leadership in socioeconomically challenging contexts: School principals creating and sustaining successful school improvement. *International Studies in Educational Administration, 38* (3), 35-56.

Robinson, J.G. (2007). Presence and persistence: Poverty ideology and inner-city teaching. *Urban Review, 39*, 541-565.

Rouse, C.E. & Barrow, L. (2006). U.S. elementary and secondary schools: Equalizing opportunity or replacing the status quo? *The Future of Children, 16* (2), 99-123.

Telljohann, S.K., Dake, J.A., & Price, J.H. (2004). Effect of full-time versus part-time school nurses on attendance of elementary students with asthma. *Journal of School Nursing, 20* (6), 331-334.

Van Galen, J. (2007). Late to class: Social class and schooling in the new economy. *Educational Horizons, 85*, 156-167.

Wenglinsky, H. (2002). *How teaching matters: Bringing the classroom back into discussions of teacher quality*. Princeton, NJ: Milken Family Foundation.

