



NEWS RELEASE

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CENSUS DATA RELEASED TODAY SHOWS RACIAL DISPARITIES IN INCOME AND LARGE POPULATION WITHOUT HEALTH INSURANCE IN DENVER METRO AREA: Wages remain stagnant for most, uninsurance rate significantly higher than state and nation

DENVER, CO – September 22 – The Denver-Aurora Metro area saw stagnating wages and significant racial and gender disparities between 2007 and 2008, according to new data released today by the Census Bureau. African Americans experienced a 20% drop in median wages over this period. The American Community Survey (ACS) released health insurance rates for the first time, demonstrating an insurance crisis in Denver, with over 22% of the population uninsured.

The new ACS data reflects the first few months of the economic downturn at the end of 2008 and is our first glimpse of the recession before most knew it was underway.

“In light of stagnating wages for most workers and the precipitous drop in income for African Americans, policy makers need to focus not just on job creation, but on the creation of good jobs and pathways that help individuals of color access more high-paying careers” said Carmen Rhodes, Executive Director of FRESC: Good Jobs, Strong Communities.

Median household income for the Denver-Aurora Metropolitan Area remained stagnant.

- Although nominal median household income increased from \$58,875 in 2007 to \$60,344 in 2008 real household income actually decreased by \$793 or 1.3%, factoring in the rate of inflation, for the same period of time.

The region is marked by significant gender and racial disparities in income.

- While median wages for most racial groups stagnated between 2007 and 2008, African Americans saw a significant decline in median wages of about \$8,000 or 20%.
- Median household income for African Americans/Latinos is \$31,991/\$38,355, approximately half of the \$67,809 for White residents.
- For full-time, year-round work, males had median earnings of \$49,662 a year, whereas females earned \$40,055. The overall gender gap in wages across all industries is 19%.

High median income masks income inequalities.

- Nearly a fifth of full time workers, or 19%, earned less than \$25,000 a year.
- Among the region’s households, 41.8% have an annual household income less than \$50,000.
- The top fifth of all households with the highest income claimed 50% of all income in the region, while the bottom fifth of households got a 3% sliver of the pie.



High rate of uninsured in Metro Denver. Denver county fares far worse than the Metro area, state or nation.

- 16.8% of the population is uninsured in the Denver-Aurora Metropolitan Area. There are 320,983 working aged adults (18-64 years) without health insurance in the Metro area, 20% of the 18-64 age population.
- There are 133,458 people without health insurance in Denver County or 22.6% of the population.
- Colorado, with 17.2% uninsured, fares worse than the national average of 15.1%.

2007 and 2008 Median Household Income for Metro Area counties (not adjusted for inflation)

County	2007 Median Household Income	2008 Median Household Income
Adams	\$52,110	\$55,529
Arapahoe	58,795	\$58,334
Denver	\$44,444	\$45,831
Douglas	\$92,824	\$98,871
Jefferson	\$64,416	\$66,344

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FRESC: Good Jobs, Strong Communities is a non-profit organization whose mission is to ensure that Colorado jobs pay livable wages with family-supporting benefits, and that families have access to affordable housing and a good quality of life.