DATA SNAPSHOT

THURSTON THRIVES ECONOMY ACTION TEAM

Thurston County Public Health & Social Services Department
July 2013

Thurston Thrives!
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INTRODUCTION

Thurston Thrives is a community initiative focusing on how healthy people are today and the factors that influence how healthy the community will be in the future. These factors are: health behavior, the physical and built environment, health services, and local social and economic conditions. Together, these factors directly impact how long local residents live and the quality of life they experience during their lifetime.

Thurston Thrives was established by the Thurston County Board of Health and is overseen with assistance of the Thurston Thrives Advisory Council. Topics that research has shown significantly influence community health are reviewed with the help of action teams. Each action team is led by a community member with in-depth knowledge of the topic area. The action teams are empowered to develop a common agenda on how best to address their topic area locally and are asked to report their recommendations to the Board of Health and Thurston Thrives Advisory Council.

ECONOMY AND HEALTH

In 2013, the Thurston Thrives Economy Action Team was formed to review the topic of the economy and its connection to health. Michael Cade, Executive Director of the Thurston Economic Development Council serves as the Economy Action Team lead.

SNAPSHOT

The purpose of this report is to provide support to those examining the connections between the economy and health.

- Data in this report provides a current snapshot of community health issues associated with income, employment and workforce development. A selected set of measures related to the topic are presented.
- Other local community data reports and plans with additional information about this topic may be available and are not integrated into the snapshot.

QUESTIONS

If you have questions about:

- The Thurston Thrives initiative contact Chris Hawkins, Coordinator, 360-867-2513, hawkinc@co.thurston.wa.us
- The Snapshot Report contact Mary Ann O’Garro, Epidemiologist, 360-867-2525, ogarrom@co.thurston.wa.us
INCOME

Access to basic needs, quality of life and health depends on income.
MEDIAN INCOME.

Median annual income reflects the economic prosperity of an area that is typically connected to lower unemployment rates and higher levels of educational attainment. The median is the point at which half of all households have an income that is lower and the other half higher. Households include family and non-family households. A family household is defined as people living together who are related by marriage, birth or adoption. The majority, 79%, of Thurston County non-family households consist of one person. (1)

MEASURE: County median annual household income.

![Median Annual Household Income: Thurston County and Washington State 2000-2012](chart.png)

Data Source: Washington State Office of Financial Management (2)

WHAT WE KNOW.

- The median household income for Thurston County has increased since 2000, but dropped after 2008. It has begun to rise again.
- The county's median household income consistently remains higher than Washington State overall.
- In 2012, Thurston County had the 4th highest median household income when compared to all other counties in the state (1st = King, 2nd = Snohomish, 3rd = Benton).
Family households are defined as two or more people living together who are related by birth, marriage or adoption. The majority, 66%, of all households in Thurston County are family households. Family households may or may not include children under the age of 18. (1)

**MEASURE:** County median annual income for families with and without children.

**WHAT WE KNOW.**
- The median income for family households within Thurston County varies substantially with female-headed families with children having the lowest annual income of all groups.
- Based on 2009-2011 data for Thurston County, there are an estimated:
  - 66,016 family households with or without children age birth to 17.
  - 19,952 family households with children age birth to 17 headed by a married couple.
  - 2,788 family households with children age birth to 17 headed by a male (no spouse present).
  - 7,399 family households with children age birth to 17 headed by a female (no spouse present).
LOW INCOME.

Income is a determinant of health, meaning it influences how healthy you are and how long you live. To be low income or living in poverty, referred to as under 200% of poverty, is to have less than double or twice the annual household income that is considered the poverty line. In 2011, a household of three would be low income or living in poverty if they had an annual income of about $36,000 or less. (3)

MEASURE: Percent of county residents who are low income or living in poverty (under 200% of poverty level).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Thurston</th>
<th>WA State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>30.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: American Community Survey (4)

WHAT WE KNOW.

♦ The number of Thurston County residents who are low income or living in poverty increased from an estimated 57,467 in 2007 to 72,535 in 2011.
  – This equates to a 26% increase in the number of county residents who are low income or living in poverty (for the 2007-2011 time period).
WHAT WE KNOW.

- Thurston County zip codes vary in the percent of residents who are low income or living in poverty.
- The 98579 zip code (Rochester) has the highest percent of residents who are low income or living in poverty.

Data Source: American Community Survey (4)
EXTREME POVERTY.

Extreme poverty compounds the challenge of meeting basic needs such as shelter, food and transportation. Those in extreme poverty are the very poor of a community. To be in extreme poverty, referred to as under 50% of poverty, is to have less than half of the annual household income that is considered the poverty line. In 2011, a household of three would be in extreme poverty if they had an annual income of about $9,000 or less. (3)

MEASURE: Percent of county residents who live in extreme poverty (under 50% of poverty level).

![Graph showing percent of residents living in extreme poverty from 2007 to 2011 for Thurston County and Washington State.]

Data Source: American Community Survey (4)

WHAT WE KNOW.

- The percent of Thurston County residents who live in extreme poverty is changing.
- The number of Thurston County residents living in extreme poverty increased from an estimated 10,569 in 2007 to 15,311 in 2011.
  - This equates to a 45% increase in the number of county residents living in extreme poverty (for the 2007-2011 time period).
WHAT WE KNOW.

- Thurston County zip codes vary in the percent of residents who live in extreme poverty.
- The 98502 zip code (Olympia) has the highest percent of residents who live in extreme poverty.
YOUTH OUTLOOK.

The way youth view their circumstances and whether they feel valued, influences their life chances. If youth think they have a future, like school, get good grades, feel good about themselves and their life - they are more likely to go further in school. The longer youth stay in school, the better off they are economically later in life. (5)

**MEASURE:** Percent of 8th grade students by income and outlook on life.

![Bar chart showing percent of 8th grade students by income and outlook on life: Satisfied with Life, Feel Good about Self, Enjoy School, Look Forward to Future, Get Good Grades.]

Data Source: Healthy Youth Survey, 8th graders are usually age 13-14. (6)

**WHAT WE KNOW.**

- Thurston County 8th graders who are low income have a less optimistic outlook on life and are at higher risk for economic disadvantages later in life.
EMPLOYMENT

Jobs provide resources that contribute to health and well-being.
The 2007-2009 recession was the longest lasting since the Great Depression, resulting in extensive job losses and higher unemployment. Being unemployed is not only financially damaging, but is a stressful life event. Prolonged stress can be toxic to your health, with both physical and emotional consequences. Individuals who are unemployed are more likely to lose access to health care due to the loss of income and/or employer-paid health benefits. The overall unemployment rate provides an indication of the strength of the economy. Though not addressed here, underemployment is also an issue of concern. (7-9)

**MEASURE:** Percent of county residents in the labor force who are unemployed.

![Unemployment Rate (Seasonally Adjusted): Thurston County and Washington State 2000-2012](image)

- Thurston County has a consistently lower rate of unemployment compared to Washington State.
  - The unemployment rate for Thurston County has begun to improve and 2013 is showing a similar pattern. The January-June 2013 average Thurston County unemployment rate was 7.3%.
- In 2012, the civilian labor force for Thurston County was 126,690 of which 9,880 people were unemployed.
WHAT WE KNOW.

- In Thurston County, about 1 in 10 employed adults do not have health insurance or had to delay needed health care because they could not afford it.
  - Unemployed adults have a disproportionately higher experience of barriers to health care. Though they may have had health insurance through their previous employer, many cannot afford to maintain coverage through COBRA (federal law that allows temporary purchase through former employer) and many do not qualify for publicly funded health coverage (e.g. Medicaid).
- Unemployed county adults are more likely to experience poor mental health and be limited in their activities due to poor health.
Adults who are disabled are less likely to be employed and more likely to be lower income or living in poverty. The labor force consists of two groups, those who are currently employed and the unemployed. (1)

**MEASURE: Percent of county adults age 18-64 with disabilities who are in the labor force.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent of Adults Age 18-64 with Disabilities by Labor Force Participation: Thurston County and Washington State 2009-2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In Labor Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: American Community Survey (1)

**WHAT WE KNOW.**

- Thurston County has a higher percent of adults age 18-64 with disabilities in the labor force compared to Washington State.
- Based on 2009-2011 data for Thurston County an estimated:
  - 6.2% of *employed* adults age 18-64 were disabled (which equates to 6,828 adults).
  - 13.5% of *unemployed* adults age 18-64 were disabled (which equates to 1,461 adults)
  - 120,456 adults age 18-64 are in the labor force.
- The median annual earnings for a Thurston County resident age 16 and up was $25,798 if they were disabled and $35,722 if they were not disabled.
**COST OF LIVING AND WAGES.**

Cost of living is influenced by the expense of basic needs such as food, housing, transportation, child care and health care. Living in Western Washington, along the I-5 corridor, generally costs more than living in other places across the state. According to the Self Sufficiency Calculator for Washington State, which is used to estimate the wage needed to meet basic monthly expenses by household type without public or private assistance, the following costs are expected for residents of Thurston County in 2013. (12-14)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monthly Expense Type</th>
<th>Household Type</th>
<th>1- Person Adult</th>
<th>2- Person 2 Adults</th>
<th>2- Person 1 Adult and 1 Infant</th>
<th>3- Person 2 Adults and 1 Infant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>$242</td>
<td>$478</td>
<td>$360</td>
<td>$588</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>$705</td>
<td>$705</td>
<td>$901</td>
<td>$901</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>$245</td>
<td>$475</td>
<td>$253</td>
<td>$483</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>$113</td>
<td>$419</td>
<td>$374</td>
<td>$431</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Care</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$678</td>
<td>$678</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>$130</td>
<td>$208</td>
<td>$257</td>
<td>$308</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxes</td>
<td>$236</td>
<td>$320</td>
<td>$491</td>
<td>$529</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total for Month</td>
<td>$1,671</td>
<td>$2,605</td>
<td>$3,314</td>
<td>$3,918</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per Year (Annual)</td>
<td>$20,052</td>
<td>$31,260</td>
<td>$39,768</td>
<td>$47,016</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per Week</td>
<td>$386</td>
<td>$601</td>
<td>$765</td>
<td>$904</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per Hour</td>
<td>$9.65</td>
<td>$15.03</td>
<td>$19.13</td>
<td>$22.60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: Self Sufficiency Calculator (13)

Based on 52 weeks in a year and assuming a 40 hour work week with expenses rounded up to nearest dollar.

Housing includes utilities. Miscellaneous includes clothing, telephone, household and personal items.

Taxes include income tax, payroll tax and sales tax.

**WHAT WE KNOW.**

- An adult living alone in Thurston County needs to earn an estimated $9.65 per hour to cover basic expenses. In 2011, 26% of county households consisted of one adult living alone. (13, 15)
- Two adults need to earn an estimated $15.03 per hour between them or by one of them to cover expenses. In 2011, 39% of county households were families with no children under 18 in the home. (13, 15)
- Families with an infant living in Thurston County need to earn an estimated:
  - $19.13 per hour to cover basic expenses for one adult and one infant and $22.60 per hour for two adults and one infant. (13)
- The 2013 minimum wage is $9.19 per hour. Assuming a 40 hour work week and 52 weeks in a year, this would equate to earning $368 per week, $1,595 per month or $19,136 per year. (16)
MEASURE: Average annual wage by type of industry and government employer.

**Average Annual Wage by Type of Industry and Government Employer:**
Thurston County 2010

Data Source: Washington State Employment Security Department (17)

 WHAT WE KNOW.

- In 2010 the average annual wage in Thurston County for all industries, including public and private employers, was $42,370 per year which equates to $3,531 per month, $815 per week or $20.38 per hour. (17)
- In 2010, a household of three would be low income or living in poverty if they had an annual income of about $35,000 or less. The average Thurston County household size is 3 people. (3, 15)
## 2010 Jobs by Industry and Employer Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Thurston County</th>
<th>Washington State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td># in 2010</td>
<td>% of Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PUBLIC</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local government</td>
<td>11,335</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State government</td>
<td>23,525</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal government</td>
<td>1,006</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRIVATE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting</td>
<td>1,370</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>3,274</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>2,986</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale trade</td>
<td>2,697</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail trade</td>
<td>11,076</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation and warehousing</td>
<td>1,642</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>991</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance and insurance</td>
<td>2,159</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real estate and rental and leasing</td>
<td>1,272</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional and technical services</td>
<td>3,244</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of companies and enterprises</td>
<td>663</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and waste services</td>
<td>3,319</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational services</td>
<td>1,271</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care and social assistance</td>
<td>11,595</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts, entertainment, and recreation</td>
<td>1,189</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation and food services</td>
<td>7,517</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other services, except public administration</td>
<td>4,431</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>96,767</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: Washington State Employment Security Department (17)
Includes only jobs covered by Unemployment Insurance. May not add to total or 100% due to rounding.

**WHAT WE KNOW.**

- In Thurston County, 1 in 3 jobs are in the public sector and 2 in 3 jobs are in the private sector.
- In 2010, private industries with the highest number of jobs in Thurston County were:
  - 1st Health care and social assistance
  - 2nd Retail trade
  - 3rd Accommodation and food services
**HOURS WORKED.**

The average number of hours worked per week and number of weeks worked during the year vary by industry, occupation and employee characteristics. The number of hours worked per week and year-round employment has implications for wages and eligibility or availability of employer benefits, such as health insurance.

**MEASURE:** Percent of county residents age 16-64 who usually worked 35 or more hours a week.

![Percent of Workers Age 16-64 by Usual Number of Hours Worked Per Week: Thurston County 2007 and 2011](chart)

Data Source: American Community Survey (15)
Includes workers who do and do not work year-round.

**WHAT WE KNOW.**

- The percent of Thurston County workers age 16-64 working 35 hours or more a week has declined in recent years. A decline also occurred statewide, however not at the same pace.
  - In 2011, 70% of Thurston County workers age 16-64 worked 35 or more hours a week compared to 74% for Washington State.
  - In 2007, 76% of Thurston County workers age 16-64 worked 35 or more hours a week compared to 76% for Washington State.
- In 2011, 59% of Thurston County and Washington State workers age 16-64 worked 35 or more hours a week and worked year-round.
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

A resilient workforce is needed for a rapidly changing economic environment.
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT.

One aspect of a skilled workforce involves level of educational attainment. At minimum, a high school diploma or GED is needed, however most jobs today require additional vocational training and/or a degree beyond high school. (18)

MEASURE: Percent of county adults age 25 and up with more than a high school education.

![Bar chart showing the percentage of adults aged 25 and up with different levels of educational attainment in Thurston County and Washington State (2009-2011)].

Data Source: American Community Survey (1)

WHAT WE KNOW.

- Among Thurston County adults age 25 and up, 70% had more than a high school education (66% for Washington State).
- Thurston County has a lower percent of adults age 25 and up with a high school diploma/GED or less compared to Washington State.
  - Among Thurston County adults age 18-24, 16% do not have a high school diploma/GED.
WHAT WE KNOW.

- Earnings from employment are connected to the number of completed years of education.
- Thurston County adults attaining an education level above a high school diploma or GED are less likely to be low income or living in poverty. In 2011, a household of three would be low income or living in poverty if they had an annual income of about $36,000 or less. (3)
- Among employed Thurston County adults in 2011: (19)
  - 50% worried about having enough money to pay their rent or mortgage in the past year.
  - 34% worried about having enough money to buy food in the past year.

Data Source: American Community Survey (15)
MAP GALLERY

Health in detail.
% Low Income or in Poverty: Thurston County = 25%, Washington State = 29%

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey
% in Extreme Poverty: Thurston County = 5%, Washington State = 6%

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey
% Women Giving Birth in Past Year in Labor Force: Thurston County = 60%, Washington State = 56%

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey
# in Thurston County Labor Force: 126,690 in 2012

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey
% of Thurston County Labor Force Unemployed: 7.8% in 2012
Percent of Employed County Residents whose Workplace is in Thurston County
Thurston County Zip Codes 2007-2011 Estimates

% Working in County: Thurston County = 72%, Washington State = 81%
Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey
CITATIONS.


(6) Healthy Youth Survey. 2012. Thurston County Public Health & Social Services Department.


