

# NATIONAL BLACK WOMEN

In January 2015, the Institute for Policy Studies launched a national survey of black women in the labor movement. The survey was designed to give black women around the country an opportunity to share their thoughts, insights and experiences as rank-and-file members, organizers, leaders, and worker's rights activists in labor-affiliated organizations such as worker centers and community organizations with an emphasis on workers.

Through their replies to our questions, survey respondents confirm themes surfaced in our interviews with the women profiled in the report, and offer a range of other insights on leadership, organizing and policy issues.

# 467

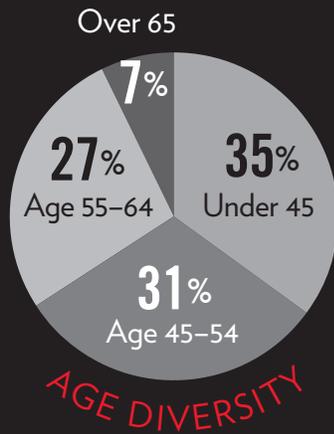
TOTAL RESPONDENTS  
Union and Labor-Affiliated

# 35+

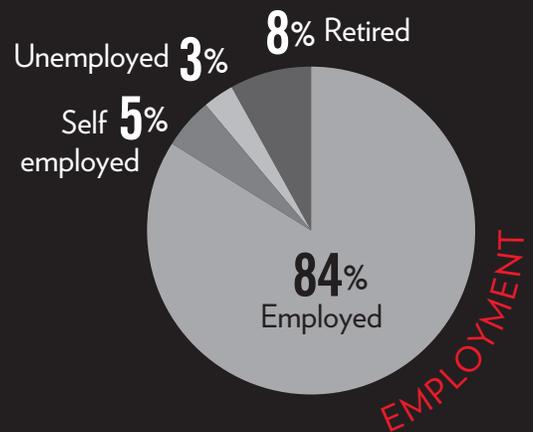
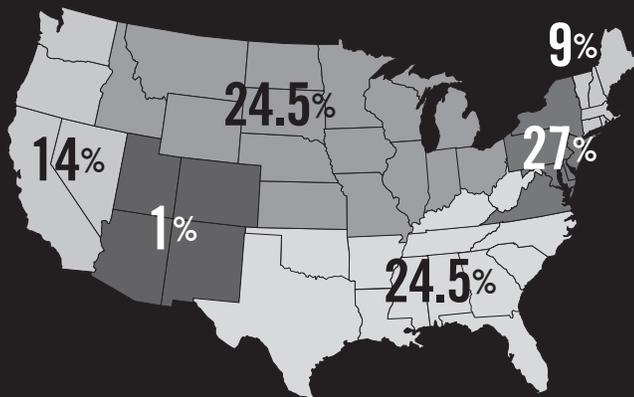
UNIONS REPRESENTED  
and the AFL-CIO

# SURVEY OF EN IN LABOR

## RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS



### WHERE THE WOMEN WORK



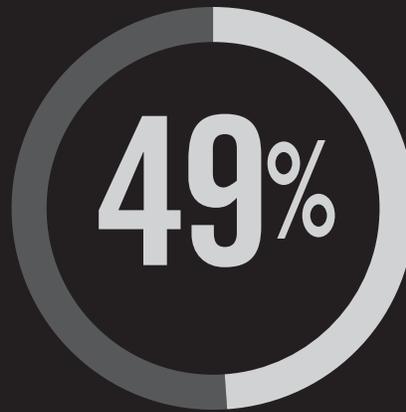
# ON LEADERSHIP

I serve (or have served) on the **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, BOARD,** or as an **ADVISOR** to the following types of organizations.

Union federation or committee	<b>23%</b>
Civil rights organization	<b>14%</b>
Religious institution	<b>12%</b>
Human rights organization	<b>11%</b>
Education institution	<b>11%</b>
Social service or service-providing organization	<b>10%</b>
Political organization	<b>8%</b>
Administration of an elected official	<b>7%</b>
Think tank or policy organization	<b>7%</b>
Foundation	<b>6%</b>
None of these	<b>43%</b>

“““

“National/ international leadership should be tracking demographics of locals and how many minority women are serving in **APPOINTED AND ELECTED POSITIONS.**”



There is a **“GLASS CEILING”** preventing me and other black women’s growth and promotion in the labor movement.\*

“““

“Higher positions and appointment of **BLACK WOMEN IN HIGHLY VISIBLE PLACES** reinforces the consideration of black women for roles locally.”

“““

“Acknowledge that we are smart and have a point of view that until this moment has been ignored or overlooked. Recognize that black women in labor ... are the **BACKBONE AND THE POWER** in the movement.”

**65%**

I have or had aspirations to become a **UNION LEADER\***

\*Percentages represent respondents who strongly agree and agree with this statement.

# ON ORGANIZING

The same **SKILLS AND TACTICS FOR ORGANIZING** white women workers will work with black women workers.\*

Union Members

24%

Labor Affiliates

16%

“““

“Labor organizers and leaders should reflect the **RACE AND GENDER** of those they’re trying to attract.”

“““

“Labor should also be spending a LOT more time, energy and capital on organizing workers—both those already in the ranks and those who could potentially build the movement nationwide. Black women in particular were fearless in my days of union organizing and often the **FIERCEST ADVOCATES** for themselves and their co-workers. They are a critical piece to finding a way to organize and build the movement in the future.”

Black women workers are, or would be, **RECEPTIVE TO ORGANIZING EFFORTS** by unions.\*

Union Members

72%

Labor Affiliates

80%

Union Members

27%

Labor Affiliates

22%

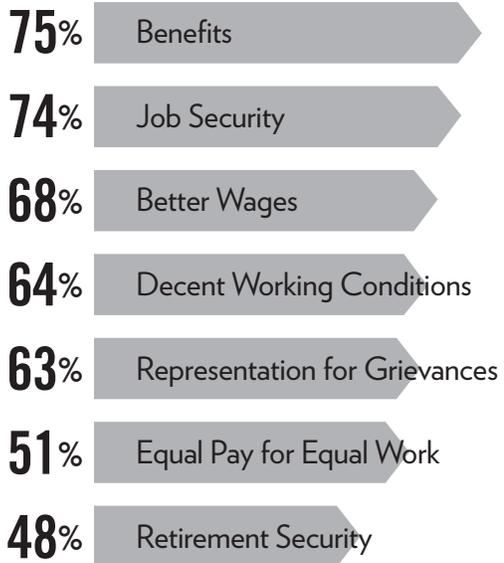
My organization (union) invests resources in **ORGANIZING BLACK WOMEN** workers.\*

“““

“One important aspect of organizing black women is not being afraid to **ORGANIZE THE UNORGANIZED** in places where our movement might typically shy away from.”

# ON ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL POLICY

## TOP RESPONSES: MY UNION HAS SECURED FOR ME\*



“

“[Labor should] support...programs to address **INCOME INEQUALITY**; [provide] more information and [encourage] aggressive, active participation of all labor organizations to help bridge the huge income gap.”

“

“The labor movement can no longer remain silent in clear cases of police brutality and the unjustifiable killing of black men. That’s the **PRIMARY ECONOMIC ISSUE OF CONCERN** for black women.”

“

“America’s working families take all shapes and forms, and women of color who are sole wage earners head many of them. These women need more opportunity for advancing their education, pay, benefits, and job security so that they can achieve **UPWARD ECONOMIC MOBILITY** to break the cycle of poverty for themselves and their families and be in a position to offer strong role models for their children.”

## TOP ECONOMIC POLICY ISSUES

(percentage of respondents who identified the issue)



## TOP SOCIAL POLICY ISSUES

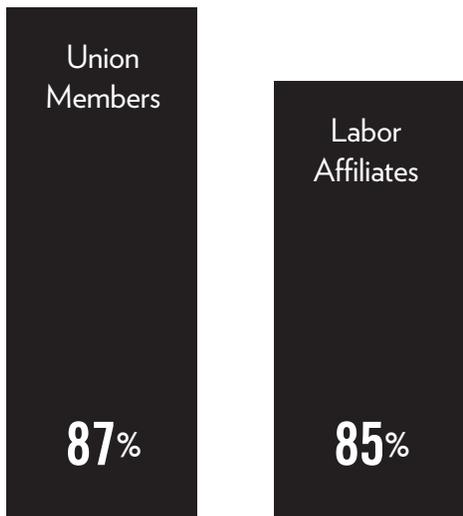
(percentage of respondents who identified the issue)



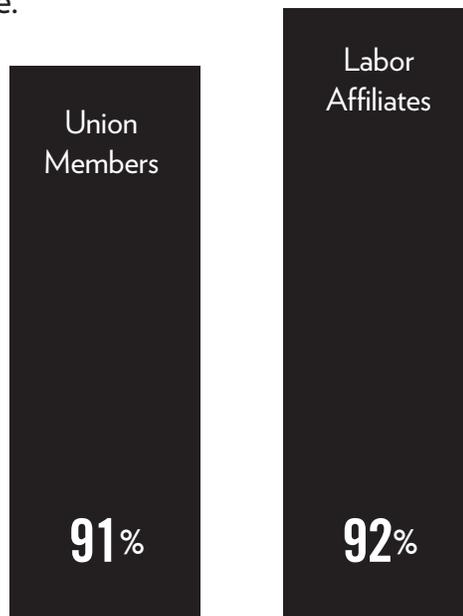
■ Union Members  
■ Labor Affiliates

# ON UNIONS, EACH OTHER & THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT

As a current, former or retired union member, organizer, staffer or labor leader I have a **POSITIVE IMPRESSION OF UNIONS**.\*



Being **CONNECTED TO OTHER BLACK WOMEN** in the labor movement is important to me.\*



I would **RECOMMEND UNION MEMBERSHIP** to a friend or family member.\*



**81%**

of labor affiliated women say I consider myself and my organization to be **PART OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT**\*.



Union Members

The **FEMINIST MOVEMENT** represents the interests of black women.\*



Labor Affiliates