

## **Watertown ESPRI Survey Results**

Prepared May 13, 2017 by Dawn Cole

### **Methodology**

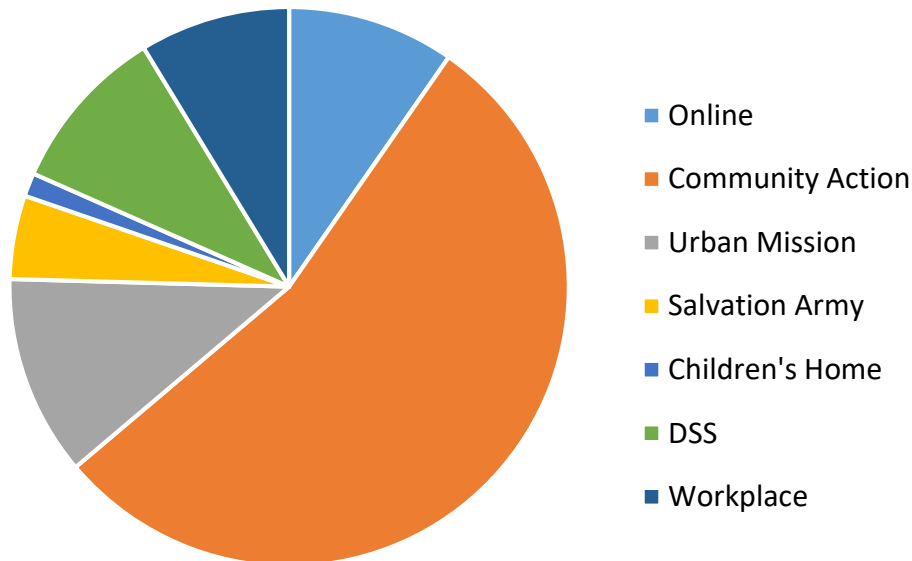
As part of the Watertown Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative (ESPRI), a survey was conducted April 17 through May 10, 2017. A total of 517 individuals responded, including 381 City of Watertown residents. The purpose of the survey was three-fold: (1) to engage the community-at-large (2) to ensure that people living in poverty have ample opportunity to provide input and (3) to identify barriers preventing people from moving out of poverty.

Comprised of 14 questions, the survey was made available in both electronic and paper formats. The electronic version was posted to the Watertown ESPRI website and shared with partner agencies of the United Way of NNY. A paper survey was distributed to customers of Community Action Planning Council, Watertown Urban Mission, Salvation Army, Children's Home of Jefferson County, Department of Social Services, and Jeff-Lewis Workplace.

### **Data Summary**

Following is a summary of the data gleaned from the survey:

#### **Responses by Source**



#### **Household Size**

23%	HH of 1	15%	HH of 4
24%	HH of 2	10%	HH of 5
18%	HH of 3	10%	HH of 6+

55% of respondents reported one or more children living in the household.

Gender of Person Completing Survey

72% Female  
28% Male

Age of Person Completing Survey

10% 18 – 23  
56% 24 – 44  
27% 45 – 64  
7% 65+

Place of Residence

74% City of Watertown  
26% Other

Highest Level of Education Achieved

16% Less than high school  
42% High school or equivalent  
5% Vocation or trade school  
17% Some college or still in school  
7% 2-year degree  
8% 4-year degree  
5% Graduate degree

Estimated Annual Income

48% \$0 – \$10,000  
25% \$10,001 – \$20,000  
8% \$21,000 – \$30,000  
5% \$31,000 – \$40,000  
5% \$41,000 – \$50,000  
9% \$50,000+

Employment

52% of respondents indicated one or more adult member of the household is employed.

38% of respondents indicated one or more adult member of the household is seeking employment.

***Assuming jobs are available, what is the top issue making it difficult for people to gain employment? (Please select only one.)***

	<u>All (470)</u>	<u>City of Watertown (346)</u>
Cannot afford child care	20%	19%
Physical disability / illness	14%	11%
Lack of necessary skills	11%	14%
Transportation problems	9%	9%
Lack of work experience	9%	8%
Lack of high school education	7%	9%
Mental health problems	7%	8%
Criminal history	6%	7%
Lack of college education	5%	6%
Working means loss of benefits	4%	4%

A total of 32 individuals indicated “Other”. The most common answers were *all of the above* and *don’t know*. Other responses included *health*, *work ethic*, and *lack of full-time jobs*.

## Housing

61%	Rent
18%	Own
9%	Subsidized housing
3%	Living with parents / other relatives
2%	Homeless
1%	Senior housing
1%	Living with friends
1%	Living in temporary housing

### **Which of the following housing issues apply to your household? (Please check all that apply.)**

	<u>All (498)</u>	<u>City of Watertown (346)</u>
No housing problems	56%	51%
Cannot find affordable place to live	16%	18%
Rent increases if I make more income	12%	14%
Landlord does not make repairs	8%	10%
Poor credit makes it difficult	8%	8%
Affordable housing is substandard	7%	9%
Don't know where to get help w/housing	4%	4%

A total of 34 individuals indicated "Other". The most common responses were *unable to afford repairs* and *landlord issues*. Other comments referenced *bed bugs*, *utility costs*, *rising taxes* and *looking for another place to live*.

### **Which of the following transportation issues apply to your household? (Please check all that apply.)**

	<u>All (473)</u>	<u>City of Watertown (346)</u>
No transportation problems	48%	47%
Cannot afford to buy a vehicle	26%	30%
Do not have driver's license	21%	24%
Have a vehicle / cannot afford repairs	15%	12%
Bus does not go where I need it to	8%	8%
Bus takes too long to get there	5%	6%
Do not know where to get help w/transportation	3%	3%

A total of 31 individuals indicated "Other". The most common responses were *unable to afford gas* and *bus schedules*.

**Do any of the adults (18 and over) in your household need help with the following? (Please check all that apply.)**

	<u>All (457)</u>	<u>City of Watertown (336)</u>
No help needed	44%	43%
Finding a job	24%	26%
Transportation	16%	18%
Finding a better job	13%	14%
Budgeting / saving money	13%	13%
Learning new job skills	12%	13%
Finding child care	11%	11%
Figuring out what services are available	9%	8%
Finding a place to live	7%	7%
Earning high school equivalency	7%	7%
Cost of education	6%	5%
Keeping a job	5%	6%

A total of 19 individuals indicated “Other”. The most common responses were *finding food / food pantry* and *looking for work*.

***Please list any other barriers preventing people from moving out of poverty or ideas you may have for reducing poverty.***

A total of 153 individuals responded, summarized as follows:

- 22% of comments pertain to jobs – lack of sustainable wage jobs, need for more training, and help finding a job.
- 14% of comments pertain to housing – lack of affordable housing and quality of affordable housing.
- 9% of comments pertain to education – assistance achieving educational goals.
- 9% of comments pertain to benefit cliff – benefits end too quickly after employment.
- 8% of comments pertain to child care – affordability and availability.
- 5% of comments pertain to disability – unable to work / generate income.
- 4% of comments pertain to employers – lack of support / flexibility.