

CAPC Needs Assessment 2015 for ESPRI Education Work Group

Jefferson County Poverty Profile

15% of the population in Jefferson County lives at less than 100% of the poverty level* (ACS, 5-year estimates, 2010 – 2014). This is slightly below the poverty levels of NYS and the United States, estimated at 15.61% and 15.59% respectively. The poverty breakdown of Jefferson County is as follows:

- 6.3% of the population lives in extreme poverty – below 50% of the poverty level
- 15% of the population lives in poverty – at less than 100% of the poverty level
- 19.9% of the population lives near poverty – at less than 125% of the poverty level

Poverty level refers to the **poverty thresholds that are updated each year by the Census Bureau. The thresholds are used to define and quantify poverty in America, and thereby provide a yardstick for progress or regress in antipoverty efforts. The most recent values of the poverty thresholds are provided in the table below.*

U.S. Census Bureau Poverty Thresholds, 2014	
Size of Family Unit	Poverty Threshold
One person (unrelated individual)	\$12,071
Under age 65	12,316
Age 65 or older	11,354
Two people	15,379
Householder under age 65	15,934
Householder age 65 or older	14,326
Three people	18,850
Three people with two related children	19,073
Four people	24,230
Four people with two related children	24,008
Five people	28,695
Five people with two related children	28,960
Six people	32,473
Six people with two related children	33,303
Seven people	36,927
Seven people with two related children	38,375
Eight people	40,968
Eight people with two related children	43,179
Nine people or more	49,021

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Poverty Thresholds for 2014 by Size of Family and Number of Related Children under 18 Years, released in September 2015.

City of Watertown Poverty Profile

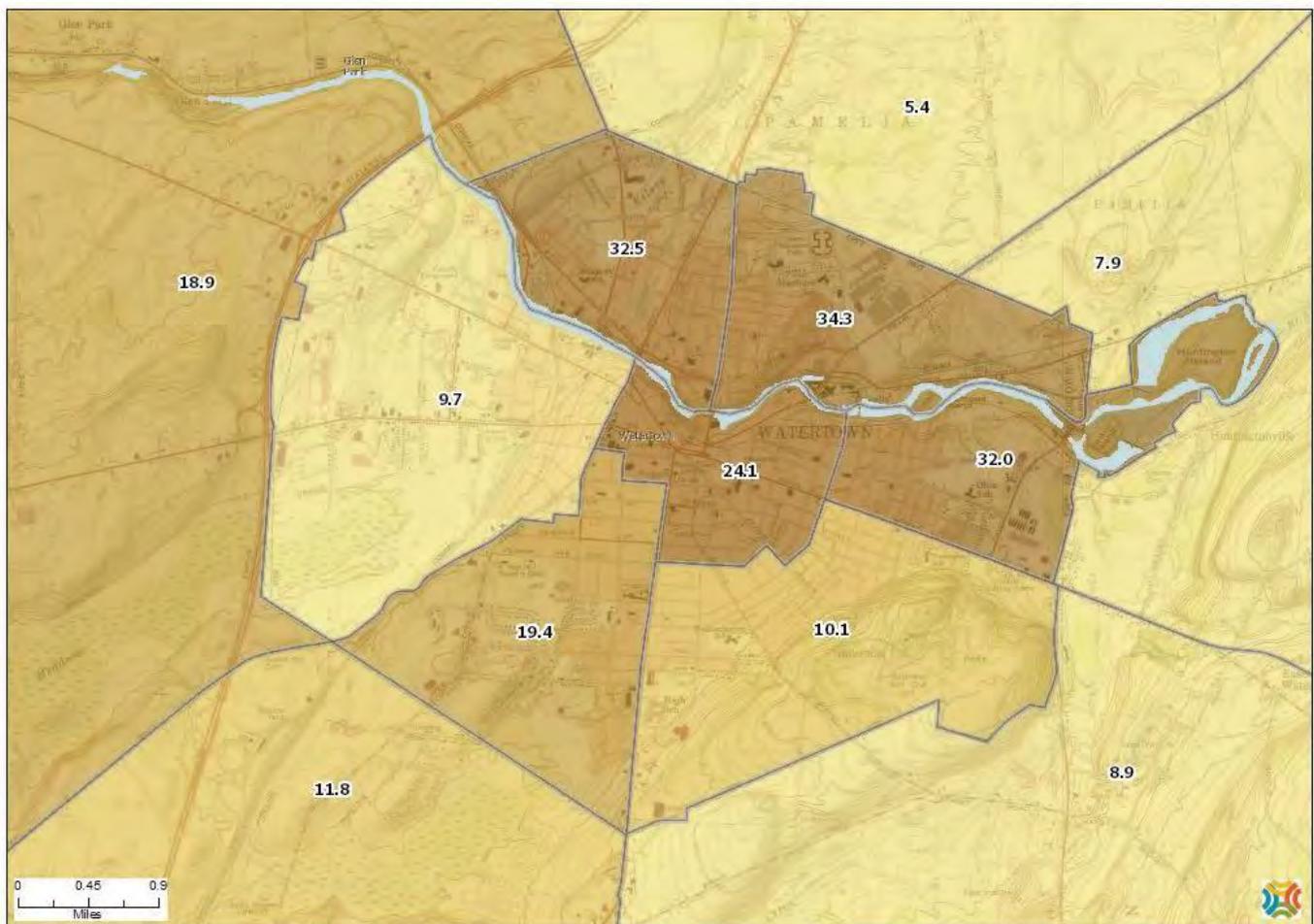
22.2% of the population of the City of Watertown lives at less than 100% of the poverty level* (ACS, 5-year estimates, 2010 – 2014). This is significantly higher than the poverty levels of NYS and the United States, estimated at 15.61% and 15.59% respectively. The poverty breakdown of Jefferson County is as follows:

- 8.7% of the population lives in extreme poverty – below 50% of the poverty level
- 22.2% of the population lives in poverty – at less than 100% of the poverty level
- 27.4% of the population lives near poverty – at less than 125% of the poverty level

33.1% of children (0 – 17) in the City live at less than 100% of the poverty level (ACS, 5-year estimates, 2010 – 2014).

The deepest pockets of poverty can be found in the portions of the City (defined by Census Tracts) to the north, northeast, city center and southwest, all well in excess of the country poverty rate of 15%.

City of Watertown Poverty by Census Tract



*City of Watertown Poverty Rates by Census Tract
American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2010 – 2014
Map Courtesy of Community Commons*

Community Needs

The Work Group's findings are summarized under the category headings: Living Wage Jobs, Transportation, Housing, Child Care, Adult Education, Mental Health Services, Substance Abuse, Youth / Family Activities, and Public Relations. Data summaries are listed under each category heading, followed by italicized statements of need, labeled as community (C), family (F) or agency (A) level. Recognizing the interconnectedness of the identified needs, the Work Group opted not to rank needs although it was agreed that lack of living wage job opportunities is integral to the other categories and to economic stability.

Adult Education

According to the Head Start Community Needs Assessment 2015, the drop-out rate for local high schools has remained stable, but there is a trend of younger drop-out students enrolling in a GED program following the one-year wait after dropping out of school.

20% of agency customers (age 24 and above) served last year have less than a high school education. This mirrors the low-income households surveyed with 19.5% reporting less than a high school education.

13% of agency customers (age 24 and above) served last year have a college degree which is on par with the low-income households surveyed with 8.8% reporting an associate's degree and 5.3% reporting a bachelor's or graduate level degree.

According to the US Census American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, 2010 – 2014, 12.2% of Jefferson County residents over the age of 25 have an associate's degree. This is higher than the state and national averages of 8.5% and 7.9% respectively. 11.8% of Jefferson County adults over the age of 25 have a bachelor's degree which is lower than the state and national averages of 19.1% and 18.3% respectively.

Jefferson Community College (JCC), located in Watertown, offers certificate programs and associate degrees. JCC has formed partnerships with a number of other institutions to offer advanced degrees; however, program options are limited. Numerous institutions around the country offer online degrees for those who have reliable Internet service. Many low-income individuals face barriers completing the necessary enrollment paperwork, navigating the financial aid system and/or accessing the Internet. In addition, attending school can be a challenge for parents and/or full-time workers.

Low-income households surveyed by the agency indicated an interest in learning new skills. More than one-third of respondents indicated an interest in learning financial / budgeting skills. Health / nutrition and computer skills also topped the list as topics of interest.

Adult education – including budgeting/financial planning, job skills and parenting skills – was identified by community partners and staff as an agency priority over the next three to five years.

Budgeting/coupons and nutrition education were topics of discussion among focus group participants.

Anecdotally, agency staff report that customers struggle to purchase healthy food options which tend to be more costly than prepared and processed foods. The Head Start Community Needs Assessment 2015 noted an increase in the number of children in the obesity range as measured on the body mass index.

The agency is home to one of 18 food pantries in Jefferson County. Pantries are accessible and well used. Most rely on donations from the community, and while greatly appreciated, food donations often largely consist of prepackaged nonperishable items that tend to be higher in sodium, fat and preservatives.

Statements of Need

The community has limited opportunities for higher education beyond the associate's level (C)

Low-income individuals lack access to higher education (F)

Low-income individuals lack the ability to maintain good health and financial stability (F)

Customer Survey Summary

Customer Survey – Synopsis of Aggregated Data March through May 2015

Between March 9 and May 15, 2015, a total of 520 households completed the survey which was distributed in paper and electronic forms. The survey was completed by a variety of agency customers, representative of all program areas. Additionally, the survey was made available to individuals participating in the Job Club at the Jefferson-Lewis Workplace, the area's one-stop employment center.

A summary of data follows with comparisons against the previous customer survey, conducted in 2011.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE and HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

Gender of Person Completing Survey

75.3%	Female
24.7%	Male

Age of Person Completing Survey

9%	18 – 23
53%	24 – 44
13%	45 – 54
15%	55 – 69
10%	70+

Ethnicity of Person Completing Survey

93.5%	Non-Hispanic
6.5%	Hispanic

Race of Person Completing Survey

92.5%	Caucasian
4.1%	African American
1.6%	Multi-Racial
1.4%	Native American/Alaskan
0.6%	Asian

Income (403 Households Reporting)

20%	Up to 50% of Poverty Level
17%	51 – 75% of Poverty Level
18%	76 – 100% of Poverty Level
16%	101 – 125% of Poverty Level
8%	126 – 150% of Poverty Level
6%	151 – 175% of Poverty Level
7%	176 – 200% of Poverty Level
8%	200+% of Poverty Level

Household Size

25.3%	HH of 1
15.5%	HH of 2
13.7%	HH of 3
17.3%	HH of 4
16.7%	HH of 5
5.1%	HH of 6
3.1%	HH of 7
1.8%	HH of 8
1.4%	HH greater than 8

Highest Level of Education of Person Completing Survey

26.5%	High School Graduate
21.4%	Some College (or still in College)
19.5%	Less than High School Diploma
11.7%	GED or High School Equivalency
8.8%	Two-Year Degree
7.0%	Vocational or Trade School
3.9%	Four-Year Degree
1.4%	Graduate Degree

Primary Language Spoken in HH

98.6%	English
1.4%	Spanish

Home Community of HH

53.8%	Watertown (Survey did not differentiate between City and Town of Watertown)
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Other most commonly reported home communities are: Clayton – 9.2%, Carthage – 4.1%, Adams/Adams Center – 4.9% Dexter – 3.7%, Fort Drum – 2.3%, Theresa – 2.5%, and Antwerp – 2.1%

Military in HH

19.5% report that a member of the HH has served in the military

Aging Parent in HH

5.6% report having an aging parent who lives in the HH

INFORMATION/LITERACY

Most Common Skills People are Interested in Improving

	2011	2015
Financial Budgeting	39.0%	35.3%
Health/Nutrition*	N/A	32.1%
Computer Skills	46.8%	30.3%
Earning a GED	27.6%	20.2%
Math	20.4%	19.7%
Job Search Skills	31.8%	18.8%
Parenting Skills*	N/A	16.5%
Writing	18.3%	15.6%
Reading	18.0%	13.3%
Learning English	3.3%	3.2%
Citizenship	3.0%	0.9%

*Responses new to 2015 survey.