ALICE Connections

Issues that disproportionately impact ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) and affordability are all around us, and often a topic of news coverage. But behind the headlines, reports and studies are people making difficult choices about how to stretch their paychecks and meet everyday needs. The examples and statistics below connect issues currently in the public eye to ALICE's lived experience, helping show why affordability matters.

Largest Michigan Poll Finds Affordability Top Voter Concern

The largest poll conducted regularly of likely Michigan Voters, 1400 likely voters polled by the Michigan State University Department of Political Science, found that affordability is the major topic on voters' minds entering next Tuesday's election.

- **Key Point:** 59.7% chose lowering the cost of living and making Michigan more affordable
- **ALICE Connection:** 40% of Michigan households live below the ALICE Survival Budget Threshold. United Way and the charitable sector alone cannot eliminate the affordability crisis; we are ready to partner with elected officials

Statistics Confirm Young Homeownership Falling

Homeownership is increasingly out of reach for working households. According to the Urban Institute, the number of young adults (ages 18-45) buying homes fell by more than 26% between 2021 and 2024, even though the typical age of buyers changed very little. The issue isn't that people are waiting longer to buy a home. It's that fewer people can afford to buy one at all.

- **Key Point:** The number of young adults (ages 18-45) buying homes fell by more than 26% between 2021 and 2024
- **ALICE Connection:** Michigan's ALICE rate for households under age 25 is now 67%, the highest in the midwest.

State Report Outlines Findings and Recommendations for Postsecondary Enrollment Gender Gap

While improving resources available to men to boost their access to post-secondary education is one way to address the gender gap in education in the state, helping them succeed at a younger age will also help, according to a new report published by the Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement and Potential and the American Institute for Boys and Men. The report identifies gaps between men and women in higher education due to multiple causes that begin at a younger age and often continue after college.

- **Key Point:** The percentage of men enrolling in college within one year of high school graduation has fallen, from 65% in 2015 to 53% in 2024.
- **ALICE Connection:** 62% of ALICE workers report having a high school credential as their highest educational credential. While this data is not available by gender, the ALICE rate for single male-headed households with children has grown by 3 percentage points since 2021 (55% Below ALICE), moving closer to but still below the 73% below ALICE Rate for single female-headed households with children.
- **Extra Context:** Non-college workforce training is not measured the same way in Michigan or in the US Census/American Community Survey.

ALICE Report Featured in National Election Coverage

MAUW was featured in Bloomberg's national news coverage of how the affordability crisis of recent years is affecting young Michigan voters and other key voting blocs nationwide.

“Young people feel like they’re taking it from all sides economically right now,” said Bobby Dorigo Jones, 32, director of ALICE and public policy for the Michigan Association of United Ways. Two-thirds of Michigan households under 25 are struggling to afford the basic cost of living, according to the group.

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