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THE BATTALION is published daily, Monday through Friday during the fall and spring semesters and Tuesday and Thursday during the summer session (except University holidays and exam periods) at Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843. Offices are in Suite L400 of the Memorial Student Center.

News: The Battalion news department is managed by students at Texas A&M University in Student Media, a unit of the Division of Student Affairs. Newsroom phone: 979-845-3315; E-mail: editor@thebatt.com; website: <http://www.thebatt.com>.

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Subscriptions: A part of the University Advancement Fee entitles each Texas A&M student to pick up a single copy of The Battalion. First copy free, additional copies \$1.



According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Texas women make just 79 cents to every dollar earned by men. Cody Franklin — THE BATTALION

Not worthless. Not worth less.

Why is there still a gap in wages between men and women?

 **Jennifer Reiley**
 @jreiley1

On average, women in the United States will be paid 77 cents to every dollar earned by a man. In Texas, the rates are slightly higher, with women receiving 79 cents to the dollar, but this is not something to be celebrated.

The average difference is just 23 cents. That doesn't sound much; less than a quarter. But let's look at the long term. For every \$1,000 a man makes, a woman makes \$770. For every \$10,000, a woman makes \$7,700 and for every \$1 million a man makes, a woman makes \$770,000.

So we've gone from a difference of 23 cents to \$230,000. That difference makes a significant impact on what people can buy — the man in my math problem has the extra money to buy a car and pay off a mortgage, but the woman doesn't.

The wage gap has not moved in a decade, according to Texas A&M's Women's Resource Center. As a woman on the verge of graduating,

this is the reality I and thousands of other women have to face. As disadvantaged as I might be in the future, women of color can expect even less pay and have been statistically shown to be worse off than white women.

But why? President Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act in 1963, making sex discrimination in the workplace illegal, which includes salary discrimination. However, here we are 52 years later, still having the same arguments and concerns that have been going on for more than half a century. Why aren't companies being singled out every day for paying women workers less than men?

Part of the problem stems from the fact that salary is a taboo topic in the workplace. No one goes from office to office asking how much their co-workers get paid, and the problem is shielded by a lack of information.

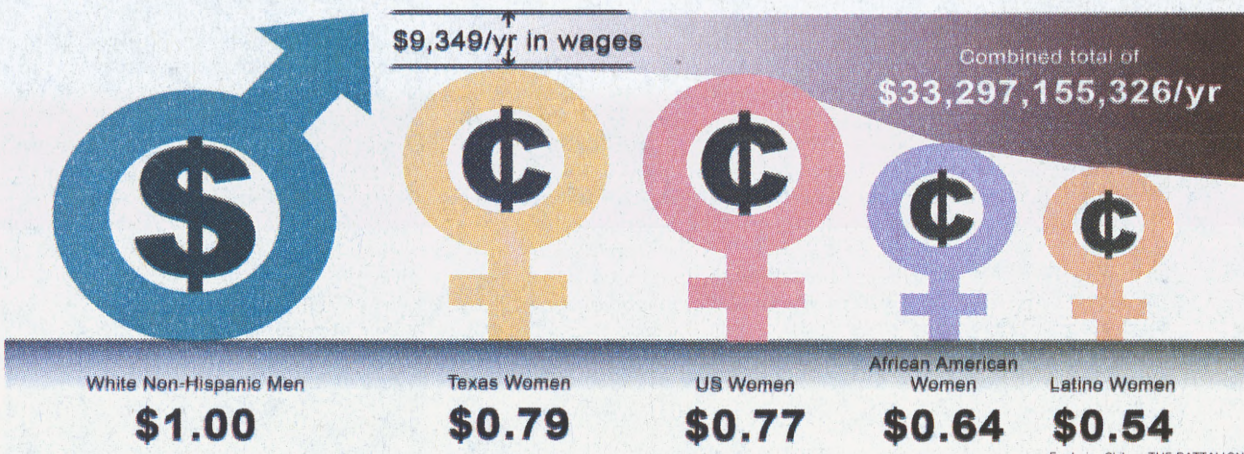
So how can we fix this part of the problem? A good place to start is with programs offered to help women be more aware of their finances. A&M offers such programs, like a Start Smart Salary Negotiations Workshop. The workshop teaches women how to negotiate for fairer wages. More programs like A&M's workshop need

to be installed at campuses and high schools across the country to empower women to stand up for their right to equal pay. Another avenue comes in the form of anonymous audits to measure salary differences and keep companies accountable.

These are good places to start, but the real problem needs more fundamental solutions. The negative societal outlook on women runs deep and will only be fixed when society adopts a different mindset.

For those that will ignore me, saying I'm just another woman whining, I have to point out this is not just a women's issue. Nearly every man has a sister, spouse, daughter, friend or some other female in their life that they value. Do you really want to look at them and tell them they're worth less as a worker in society? Because that's what a pay gap, in its most fundamental form, means. Women are not worthless, so we are not worth less.

Jennifer Reiley is a communication senior and assistant managing editor for The Battalion.



Statistics shown above are from the U.S. Census Bureau.

LGBT

LGBT reporter to share experience working with Christian-based groups

By **Wade Feielen**

▶ The GLBT Resource Center at Texas A&M will be hosting Eliel Cruz — a freelance reporter known for his pieces on religion, LGBT issues, media and culture — Wednesday for a seminar titled, "Eliel Cruz: Bisexuality and Religion."

GLBT Resource Center Program Coordinator Sidney Gardner said Cruz is a young blogger, writer and organizer who has been working in both LGBT communities and in communities of faith — particularly Christian-based communities — for a while.

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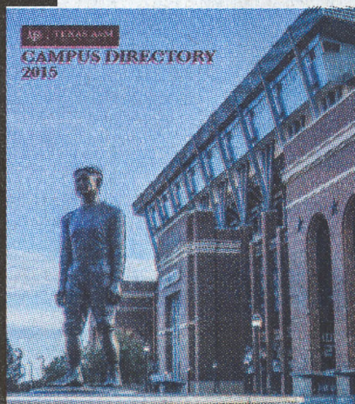
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