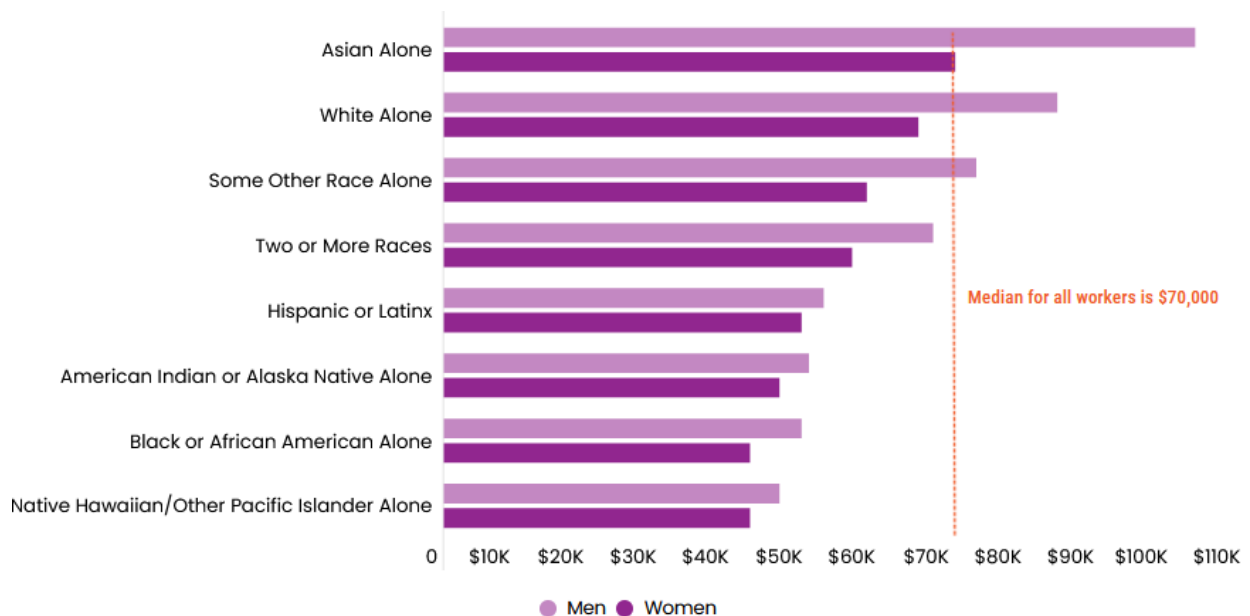


High-Paying Jobs Still out of Reach for Many People of Color



While the region is making strides in racial equity, there is still a vast difference in median pay between different racial and ethnic groups in the central Puget Sound region.

Median Wages by Race and Ethnicity in the Region



Source: Public Use Microsample 2022 5-year data, fields SEX, RAC1P, WAGP, ESR, WKHP>30. The region includes King, Kitsap, Pierce and Snohomish counties.

It's important to note that the broad racial and ethnic categories used in this Trend don't represent the experiences of all individual groups. Median wages by detailed

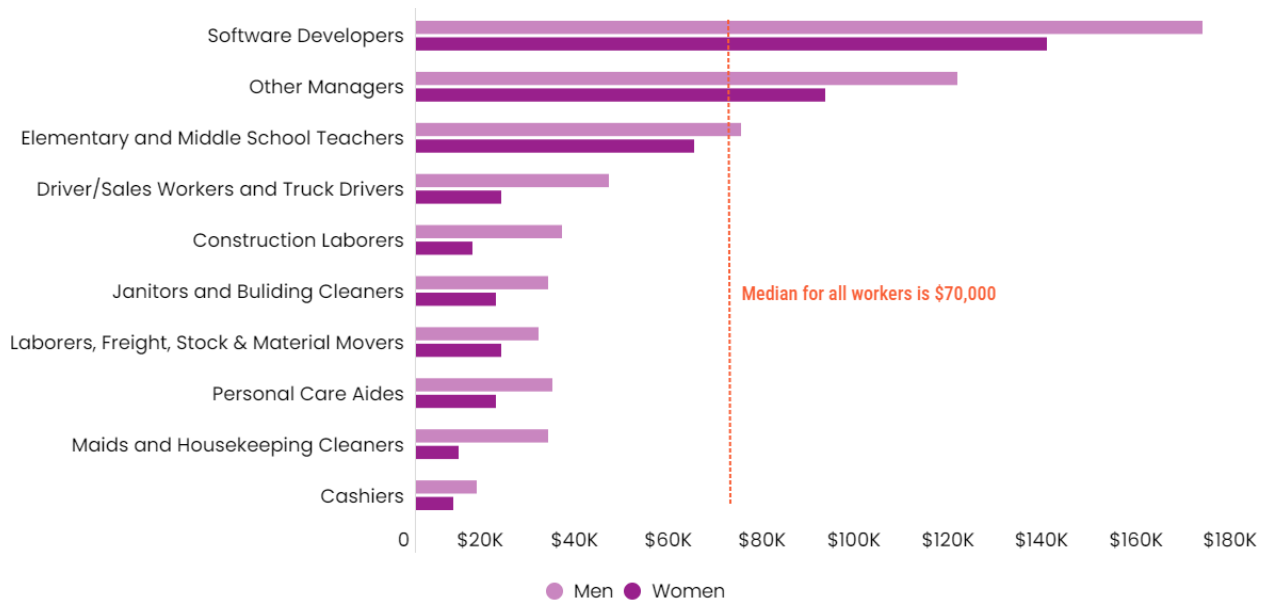
race and ethnic groups cover a wide spectrum, as PSRC noted in [this blog post](#).

Inequity is rooted in many factors, including discriminatory governmental policies and generational wealth transfers. In large part, it is also fueled by occupational segregation—under- or over-representation of a group of workers in a job category.

Most Common Occupations in the Region, by Worker Race and Ethnicity

Race or Ethnicity	Women	Men
American Indian or Alaska Native Alone	Cashiers	Janitors and Building Cleaners
Asian Alone	Software Developers	Software Developers
Black or African American Alone	Personal Care Aides	Driver/Sales Workers and Truck Drivers
Hispanic or Latinx	Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	Construction Laborers
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Alone	Cashiers	Laborers and Freight, Stock Material Movers
Some Other Race Alone	Laborers and Freight, Stock Material Movers	Other Managers
Two or More Races	Cashiers	Software Developers
White Alone	Elementary and Middle School Teachers	Software Developers

Median Wages of These Occupations for All Groups



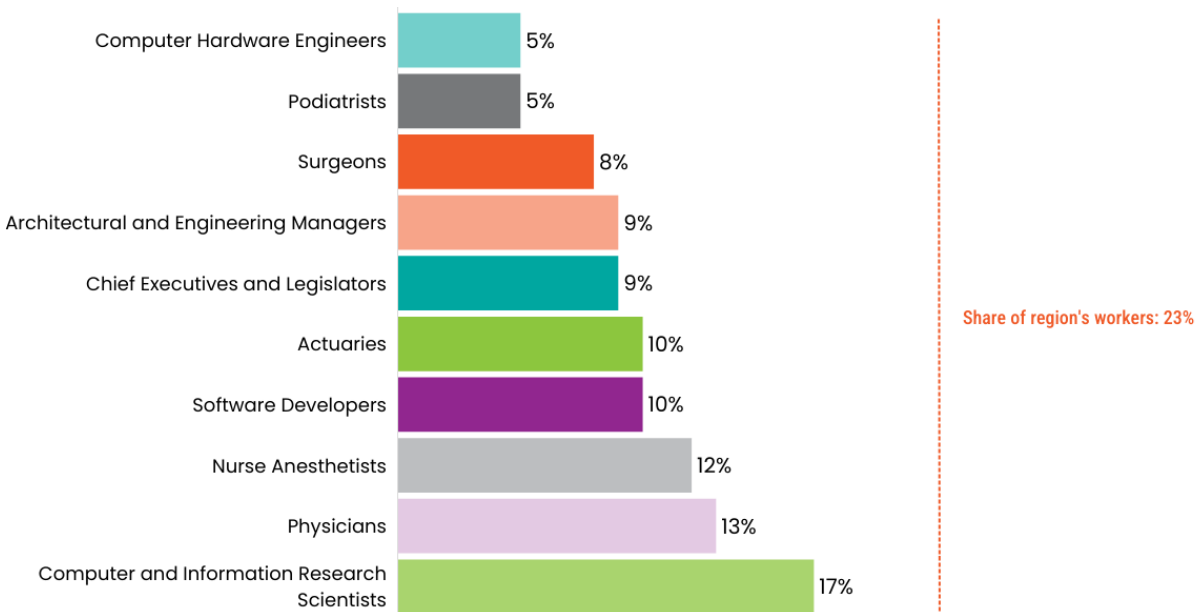
Source: PUMS 2022, 5-year data SEX, RACIP, HISP, SOCP. The region includes King, Kitsap, Pierce and Snohomish counties.

The route to occupational segregation begins early in life with [unequal education opportunities](#). Households with limited wealth often can't afford to live in areas with high-quality schools or invest in educational resources like computers or tutors. This reduces the likelihood that their children will go to college.

Another factor that often stands in the way of higher education is family wealth. Black families had a median wealth of \$23,000 in 2019, [according to PSRC's legacy of structural racism report](#). Latinx family wealth was \$38,000. By comparison, white families had a median wealth of about \$184,000.

Many racial and ethnic groups have less access to the region's highest-paying jobs due to occupational segregation. This compounds the racial wealth gap and limits economic growth because some people may be well-suited to doing certain jobs, but face significant hurdles to participation.

Percent of Black, Hispanic, Multiracial, American Indian and Other Non-Asian People of Color in the Region's Highest-Paying Occupations



Source: PUMS 2022, 5-year data SEX, RAC1P, HISP, SOCP, WAGP. The region includes King, Kitsap, Pierce and Snohomish counties.

Black, Hispanic, multi-racial, American Indian and other non-Asian people of color workers make up almost a quarter of the region's workforce (23%), but they are a much smaller percentage of doctors, software developers and other high-paid positions.

PSRC recognizes the continued underrepresentation of people of color in careers that pay living wages. We continually review [our plans](#) and hiring practices through an equity lens.

We also host a Summer Planning Academy where local high school students from all backgrounds can learn about careers in planning and data analysis. Applications are open now for the August 2024 program. For more details, [visit the Summer Planning Academy web page](#).

[A spreadsheet with all of this Trend's data is online.](#)

Photo credits, left to right: Tim Evanson, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Military Sealift Command, Carl Campbell