



# NC STATE UNIVERSITY



**Duke**  
UNIVERSITY



**NC Central**  
UNIVERSITY



NOELLE SMITH

North Carolina  
Central University



WomenNC

# Unmasking Strength

The Impact of the Strong Black Woman Archetype  
on Health, Coping, and Wellness in Black Women in  
U.S. Southern Communities

Noelle Smith, North Carolina Central University

Femtor: Tiffani Reeves

# Why this project?

“

“Just because you carry it well  
doesn't mean it's not heavy.”

(Amanda Fludd, 2025)

”

# Background

**The  
Archetype**

**Cultural  
Reinforcement**

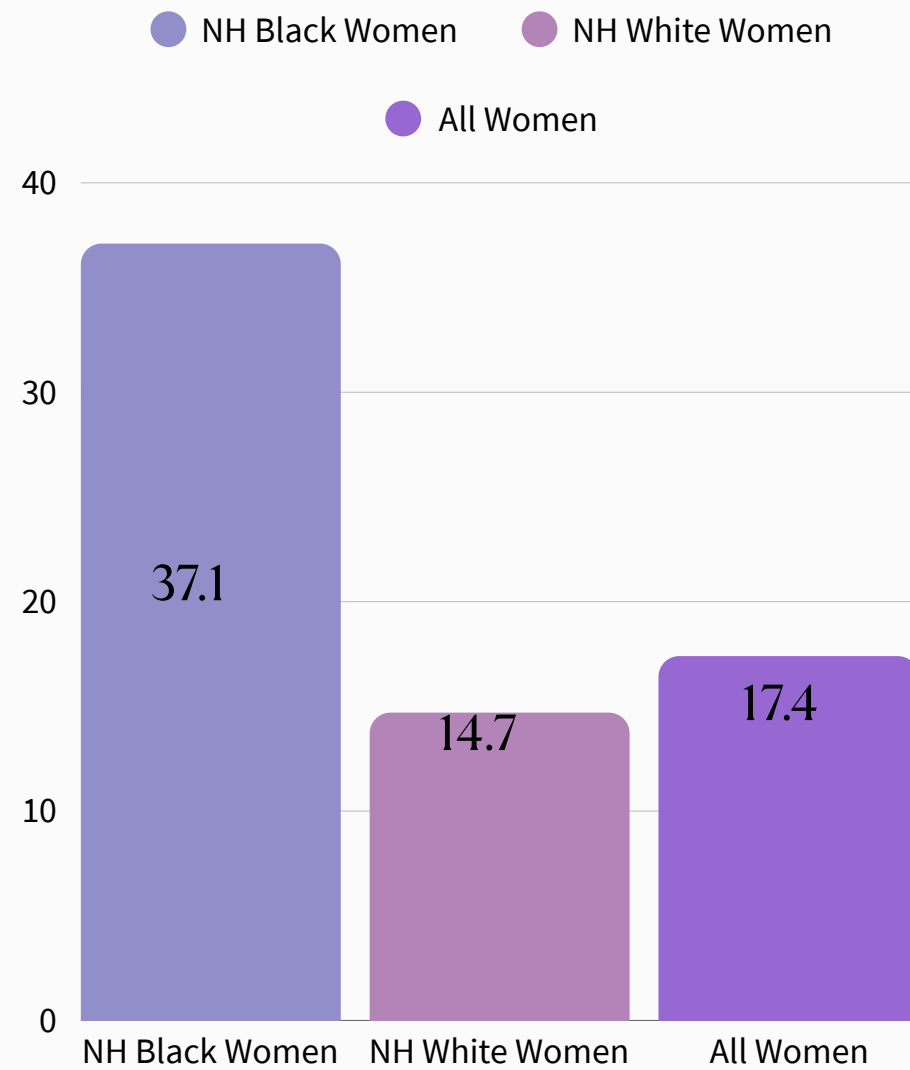


**Medical  
Mistrust**

**Historical  
Roots**



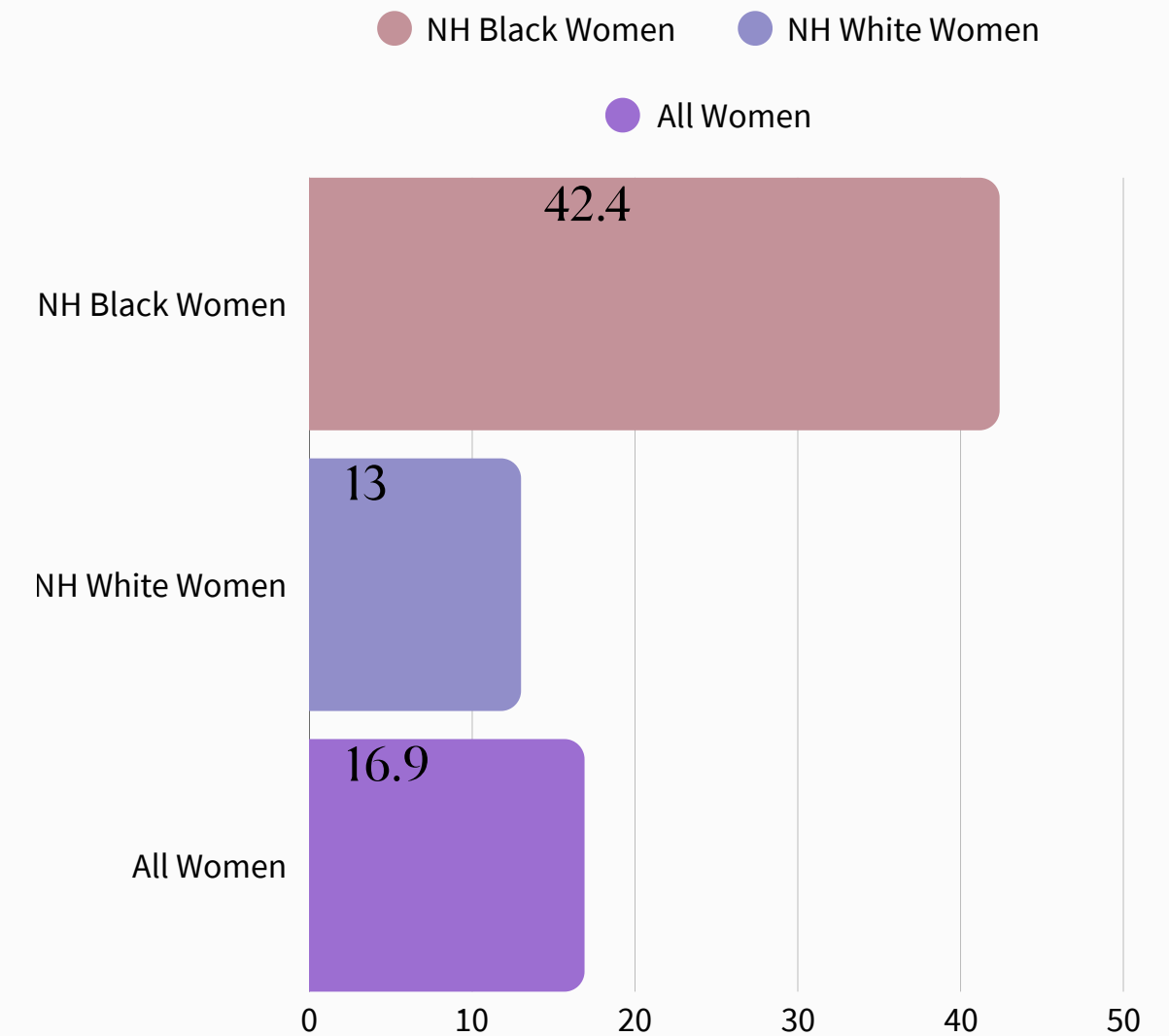
# HEALTH DISPARITIES



**Maternal Mortality Rate**  
(per 100,000 live births)

## Mental Health Studies Revealed

- Multiple qualitative studies found that Black Women adopt maladaptive coping patterns in response to the SBWA



**Pregnancy-Related Mortality Rate**  
(per 100,000 live births)

# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

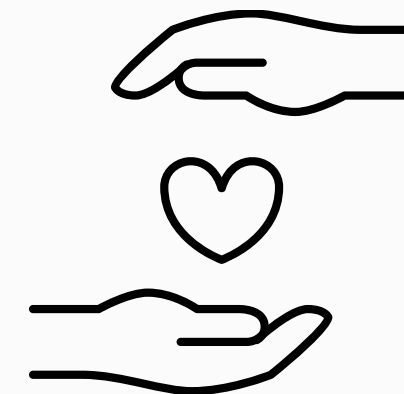
1 **Respectful Maternity Care (RMC)**



2 **Medicaid Funded Doula Services**



3 **Community-Based Cardiovascular  
and Stress Prevention Programming**

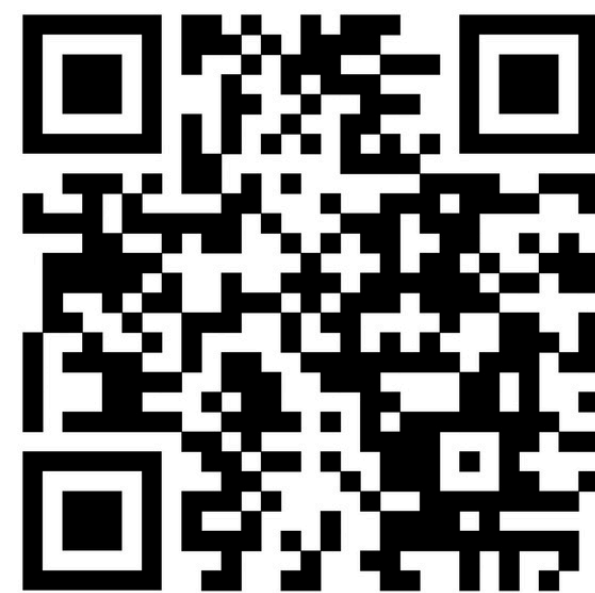


**WomenNC**

**Thank You!  
Questions?**

**Contact Me!**

**Email: [nsmit151@eagles.nccu.edu](mailto:nsmit151@eagles.nccu.edu)**



**Connect with me on LinkedIn!**

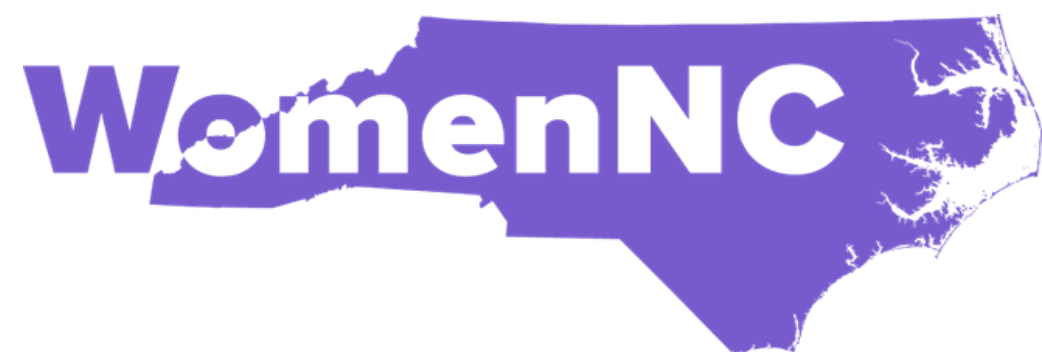
CAROLINE JOO

Duke University



# THE SMILE GAP

***How Medicaid insufficiency  
hurts oral health for pregnant  
women and single mothers in  
North Carolina***



*Caroline Joo, Duke University  
FEMtor: Lori Bunton, WomenNC*

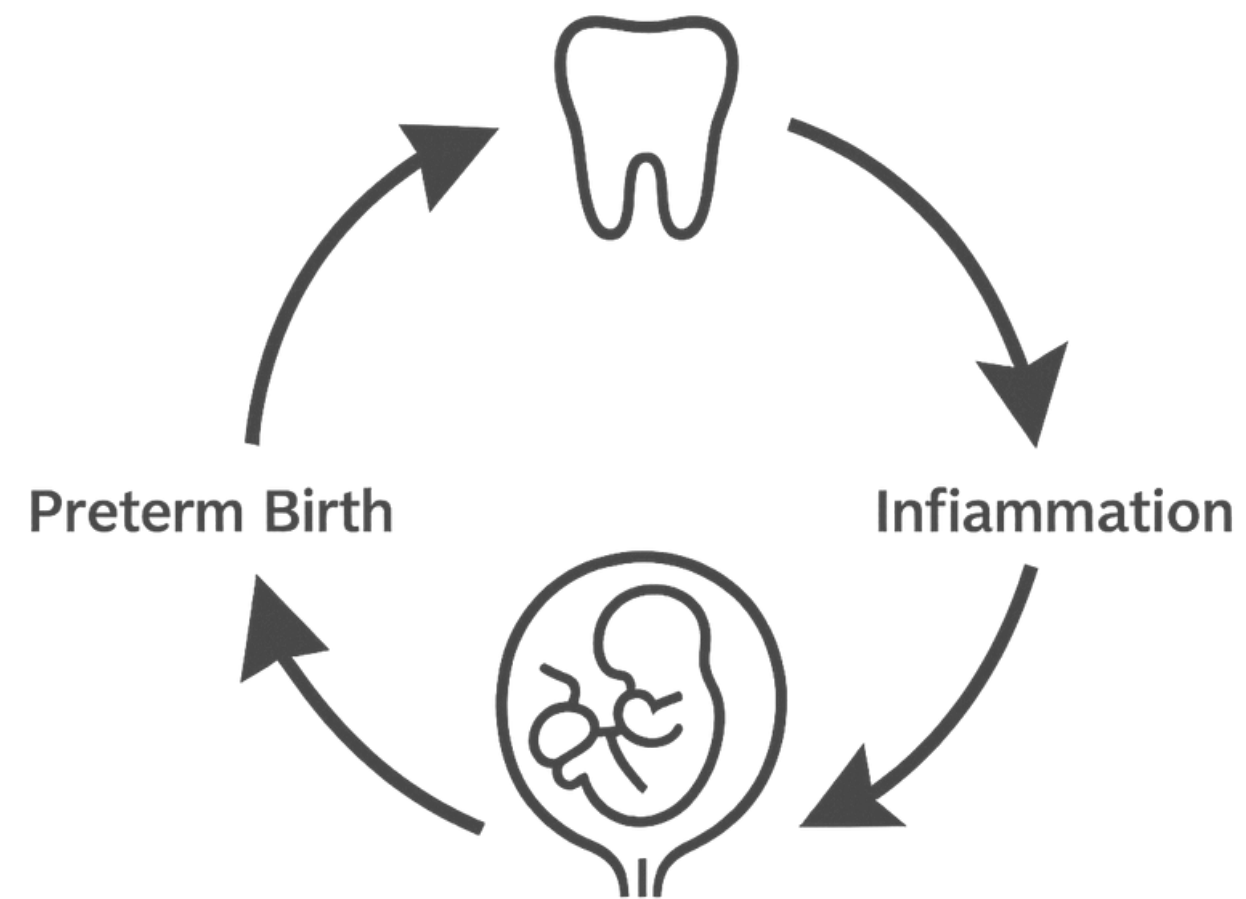
*March 2026*

# WHY TEETH?

- *Pre-dental student majoring in sociology*
- *Teeth as a social marker*
- *The emotional and financial burden of “bad teeth”*



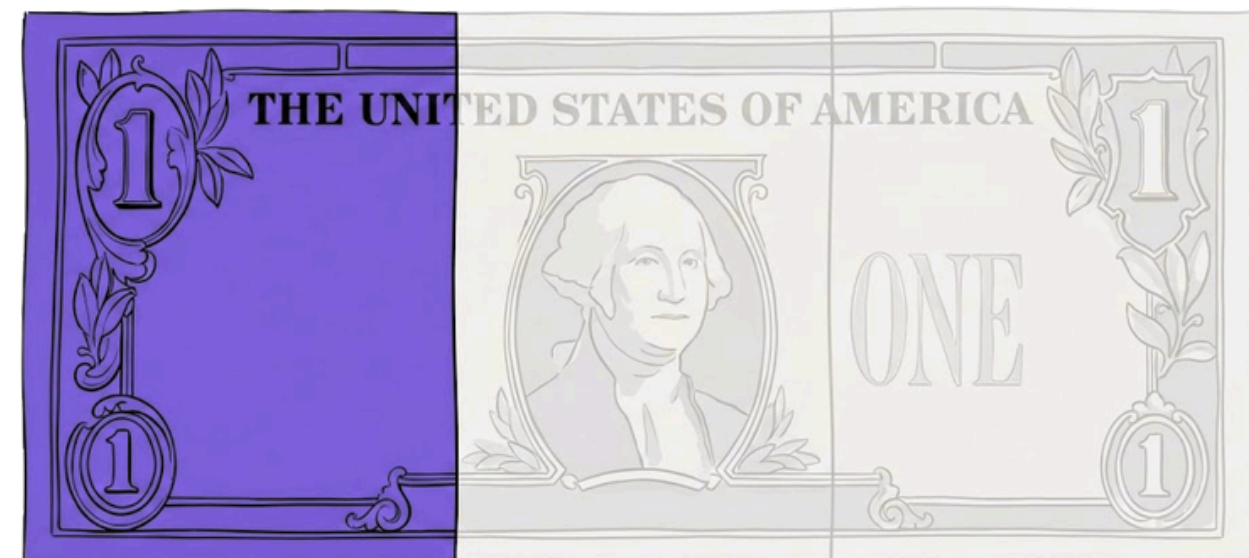
# THE PROBLEM



- ***Systemic barriers to oral care for women of vulnerable populations***
- ***Detrimental prenatal health complications***

# THE PROOF

- ***Policy failures***
  - ***Cuts to Medicaid & Low utilization***
- ***Logistical challenges***
  - ***Dental Deserts***
  - ***Ghost Networks***

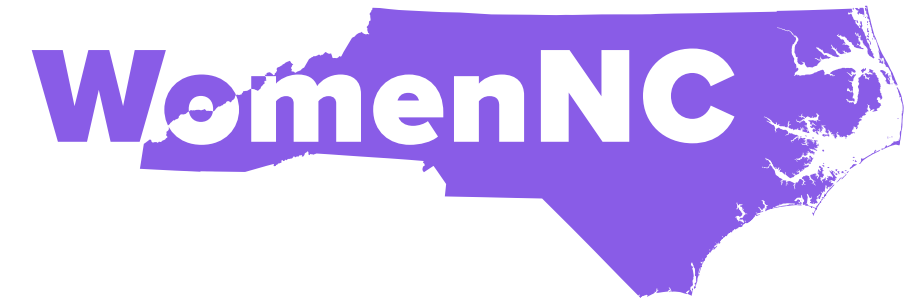


# HOW TO FIX IT

- 1. *Modernize reimbursement.***
- 2. *Integrate “warm handoffs”***
- 3. *Invest in patient logistics***



# THANK YOU!



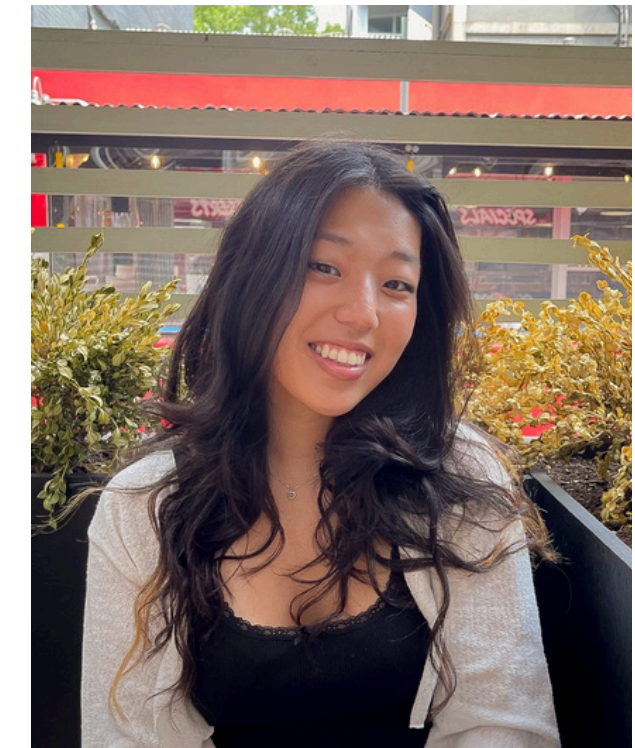
***Please reach out with any comments or questions!***

***Caroline Joo, Duke University***

***Phone: 551-427-5227***

***Email: [cej40@duke.edu](mailto:cej40@duke.edu)***

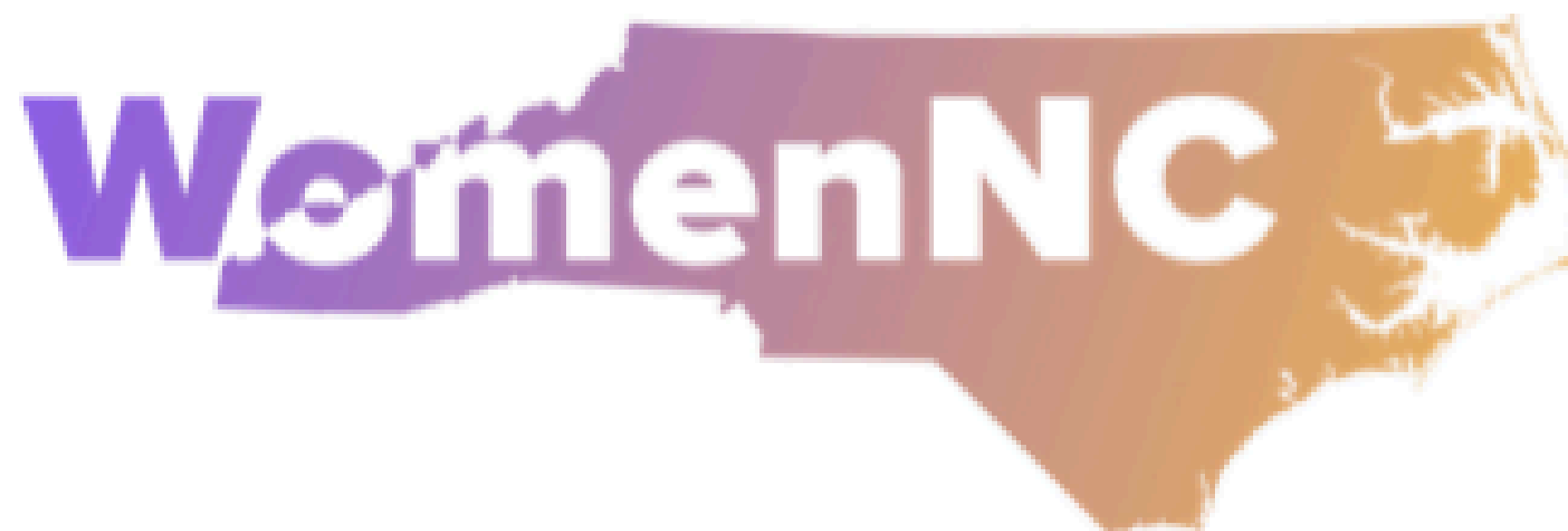
***Scan to connect on LinkedIn!***





CHALINA  
MORGAN-LOPEZ

North Carolina  
State University



**WomenNC**

# **Resource Access for Latinx Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) in NC**

**Chalina L. Morgan-Lopez, NC State University  
FEMtors: Dr. Wendee Wechsberg and Dr. Felicia  
Browne**

# My Rationale for This Project



Personal connections to IPV



Non-profit and advocacy background in sexual assault prevention and TitleIX



Focus on a relatively understudied population



Recent national and state-level immigration laws

# Defining the Issue



## What is IPV?



Latinx women are less-likely to report it when compared to their white counterparts

**1 IN 3  
LATINAS**

will experience intimate partner violence in her lifetime, and 1 in 12 Latinas have experienced IPV in the past 12 months.

Need help now? We're here for you.  
Text "START" 88788



# Study Findings

- Limited English proficiency and lack of bilingual service providers
- Fear of immigration and customs enforcement
- Economic and transportation barriers
- Cultural stigma and norms including *familismo* and *marianismo*

“ Relief washes over these survivors once they come into contact with me. ”

“ People don't report even after brutal acts of violence out of fear of deportation. ”

# Policy Recommendations



1.

Expand linguistically and culturally responsive services



2.

Strengthen protections between IPV services and immigration enforcement




3.

Stabilize funding for legal and mental health service providers especially in rural areas

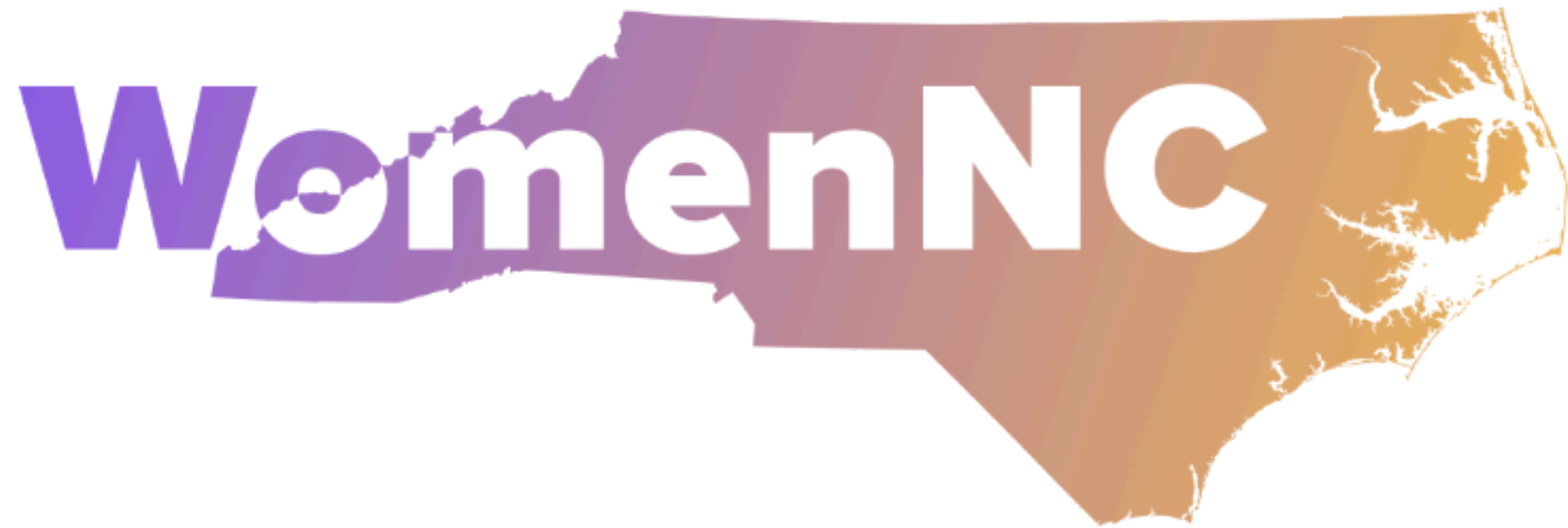
# Thank You! Questions or Comments?

**Chalina Morgan-Lopez**

PHONE   
(984) 354-6015

EMAIL   
clmorga4@ncsu.edu

LINKEDIN 



**NC STATE**  
UNIVERSITY