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Soledad O'Brien Tackles Gender Wealth Gap With Financial Literacy, Empowerment

Mar 18, 2022 12:30 pm By Lawrence Banton



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The gender wealth gap is a topic that has garnered public outcry and the attention of policymakers over the years, yet progress on leveling the playing field between men and women has been slow. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, women still make only 83 cents on the dollar — an improvement off just 6 cents from a decade ago — compared to men.

For the award-winning journalist, entrepreneur, and host Soledad O'Brien, financial literacy has become paramount to closing the gap even further. She recently partnered with Edelman Financial Engines to launch her new podcast Everyday Wealth, which aims to help everyone of all genders become better money managers. With Equal Pay Day arriving this week in the U.S., O'Brien noted the importance of financial empowerment and having control over your own "personal economy."

"This doesn't mean you have to be a financial expert - but it does mean knowing how to get the right education, resources, and planning help," she told Cheddar. "We're having conversations about what wealth really means. Wealth is more than just a number. It's about values, goals, dreams, and achieving the life you want to lead."

Each week O'Brien and her co-host Jean Chatzky sit with wealth planners from Edelman Financial Engines and discuss ways people can plan their financial futures. She said strategizing your next move and letting your values lead the way is key. This has become particularly evident for women amid the pandemic where they left the labor force in larger numbers in order to keep their own families and homes afloat.

"This is especially important for women, who are typically juggling a number of responsibilities and have historically faced greater financial obstacles," O'Brien said. "Be proactive and get involved in the financial planning process. Don't leave it up to your spouse or partner."

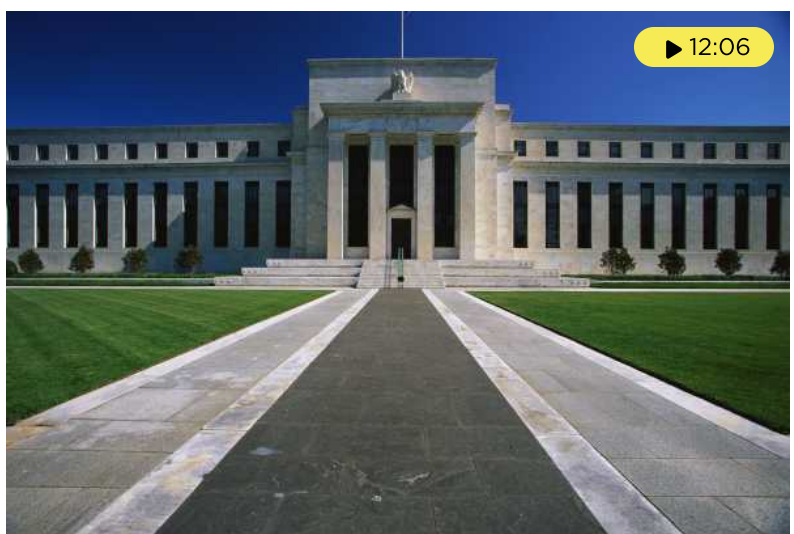
O'Brien, whose journalism career spans three decades, isn't just providing financial advice to her audience. She is also sharing her expertise with women on how to navigate the professional landscape when obstacles slow career growth. She echoed sentiments similar to those of Microsoft U.S. president, Deb Cupp, in that having a core group of people to bounce ideas off and seek guidance from is an excellent way to begin planning your next move.

"My parents were both immigrants to this country. They worked hard, they saved, they put all six of their children through college, [and] they achieved so many of their personal and professional dreams. It was a great example for me to follow as I grew my career in television and ultimately started my own media company. It showed me that I could do anything I wanted if I put my mind to it," O'Brien told Cheddar.

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