



DOL News Brief

November 23, 2011

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Solis Talks Econ at White House



Secretary Solis and White House Senior Advisor Valerie Jarrett co-hosted the White House Women & Economy Briefing Forum last Friday. The

event was the first in a series of briefings designed to inform women from diverse sectors about the American Jobs Act and administration programs to help women. In her remarks, Solis lauded the nearly 100 local, state and national women's leaders from across the country for their contributions to America's economic recovery. "When it comes to securing equal rights and opportunities for women," Solis said, "our country has made great progress in just a few short years because of the good work you do every day."



- [View the Slideshow](#)

What's Hot

USProtect to Pay Workers Across the Country \$8 Million

Investigations by the department's Employee Benefits Security Administration and Wage and Hour Division have led to a settlement recovering almost \$8 million in wages, 401(k) assets and fringe benefits for former employees of USProtect Corp. Investigators found that the defunct Silver Spring, Md., company, which provided security services for federal buildings across the country, did not pay hundreds of employees for their final weeks of work. In other cases, employees were not paid the prevailing wage for their geographic areas. The company also failed to remit employee contributions to 401(k) plan accounts.

- [Read the News Release](#)

DOL Working for You

Grant Helps Prepare STEM Teacher



Amanda Bowman was laid off after 16 years as a teacher in Long Beach, Calif. But thanks to a Department of Labor National Emergency Grant, Bowman is taking courses in science and mathematics at the local California State University. The grant was given to the California Multi-Sector Workforce Partnership under the leadership of the South Bay Workforce Investment Board in Hawthorne, Calif. Dislocated teachers like Bowman are being trained in math and science to meet President Obama's goal to have 100,000 science, technology, engineering and

mathematics teachers to prepare students for the 21st century global economy. Bowman said her STEM course work will "give me a certain edge" when applying for a new job and promises "hope for a better future" in the education field.

Texas Job Corps Grads Find Steady Work

Sioneesha Fuller felt the security field would be an interesting, steady source of employment. Mark Cabrera was good with his hands and sought a machinist trade slot. Both are now gainfully employed thanks to the education and training they received at the Gary Job Corps Center in San Marcos, Texas. Fuller took courses at Gary in handcuffing, baton use, and weaponry, graduating with security and protective trade skills.



She now protects municipal buildings for an Austin security firm, and recently moved into her first

Martinez Briefs Hill on Toolkit



Office of Disability Employment Policy Assistant Secretary Kathy Martinez hosted a briefing last week for congressional staff and other participants to discuss the agency's Integrated Employment toolkit – an online resource that provides

comprehensive information on jobs held by people with disabilities in typical settings where they earn at least minimum wage and are paid directly by their employer. A component of the event was a panel that featured Brendan O'Neill, a person with a disability who has been successfully employed at Valley Medical Center

in Washington State for nearly 18 years; his mother Joanne O'Neill, vice president of Human Resources Steve Losleben of Valley Medical; and Trish Borden, the executive director of service provider Trillium, Inc. Additional speakers included congressional staffers, the director of Developmental Disabilities and a prominent researcher.

- [View the Slideshow](#)
- [View the Toolkit](#)

DOL Discusses Oil Spill Response

Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs Deputy Director Les Jin addressed the National Asian Pacific American



Bar Association's second annual Pro Bono/Public Interest Summit last Thursday in Atlanta. Speaking on a panel about APA leadership during major or catastrophic events, Jin discussed the department's efforts to support workers affected by the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill. "In the aftermath of this disaster, DOL agencies were on the ground coordinating with local, state and federal partners to provide assistance to displaced workers and ensure that working conditions were safe, fair and equitable," said Jin. "We made sure our services were not only available, but also accessible – culturally and linguistically – for the hard-hit Asian American communities." Nearly 50 APA Bar leaders from across the country attended the session.

Solis Goes the Extra Mile



The National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce honored Secretary Solis with the NGLCC/American Airlines Extra Mile Award at their 9th Annual Dinner on Friday. The Extra Mile Award is the highest honor of the evening and celebrates a leader that has

gone the distance for LGBT equality despite incredible odds. The NGLCC is the business advocate and direct link between LGBT business owners, corporations, and government, representing the interest of more than 1.4 million LGBT businesses and entrepreneurs. In heartfelt remarks, Solis spoke about the Department of Labor's efforts to expand the Family Medical Leave Act to cover same-sex couples; to add



apartment. Job Corps "taught me how to take charge of and prioritize my life," she said. Cabrera took hands-on courses in how to read measuring tools and work lathes and drill presses. He now makes over \$15 an hour as a machinist for a local manufacturer, producing couplings used to make mobile homes and oil pipelines. His Job Corps experience "taught me the basics of how to speak to people and manage my money," Cabrera said.

Around DOL

Philadelphia Office Toasts Public Affairs Interns

The Philadelphia Regional Office of Public Affairs held an intern reunion and networking event last Friday to celebrate eight successful years of its internship program. Nearly 20 former and current interns came out to re-acquaint with former colleagues, establish new personal and professional contacts, and share memories of their internship days. Since the start of the program in 2003, the office has provide learning opportunities to nearly 40 college interns from colleges throughout the Philadelphia metropolitan area, including The University of Pennsylvania, Temple, Drexel and Rutgers.



DOL in Action

Texas Oil Company Fined Following Worker Electrocution

Tye, Texas-based Ringo Drilling I LP has been cited by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration with serious and repeat safety violations after an employee was electrocuted while performing repair work on an oil drilling rig at the company's Ozona, Texas, worksite. Proposed penalties total \$130,200.

- [Read the News Release](#)

N.J. Gas Station Workers Receive More Than \$1 Million in Back Wages

The Wage and Hour Division has recovered \$1,014,895 in back wages for 295 gas station workers throughout New Jersey who were denied fair compensation for their work. As part of a multi-year enforcement initiative focused on the industry, the division conducted 74 investigations of New Jersey gas station facilities during fiscal year 2011. The department's initial findings revealed a culture of noncompliance; the Wage and Hour Division will continue to monitor this industry.

- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Read the Blog Entry](#)

Knoxville Transportation Company Ordered to Reinstate Whistleblower

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has ordered Knoxville-based Heartland Transportation Inc. to reinstate a former employee and pay the individual \$62,090 in compensatory and punitive damages plus more than two years of back wages, interest, benefits and reasonable attorney's fees. The order follows OSHA's determination that the company, which is a contract mail carrier for the U.S. Postal Service, violated the employee's rights under the whistleblower provisions of the Surface Transportation Assistance Act by terminating the employee for complaining about defective

legal protections at DOL for transgender employees and job-seekers; and to promote job opportunities for LGBT individuals with disabilities.

- [View the Slideshow](#)
- [Read the Secretary's Blog Entry](#)
- [Read the Secretary's Speech](#)

Serving Up Holiday Goodies

Philadelphia Job Corps Center culinary students and their chef instructor prepared and served free holiday pastries and desserts during a



cooking demonstration at La Cucina at the Market in Philadelphia's famed Reading Terminal Market. The scrumptious menu included puff pastry swans, gingerbread cookies, turnovers and pumpkin cheesecake. As part of giving back to the community, Job Corps invited seniors from local civic and community organizations to the event to sample the fare.

- [View the Slideshow](#)

Martinez on Vets Disability Policy

As our wounded soldiers return home, partners from nonprofit organizations and federal, state and local governments are pooling resources to meet the needs of those with physical disabilities, post traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury. Kathy Martinez, assistant secretary of the Office of Disability Employment Policy, participated in Operation Confidence's "United We Stand" event in Los Angeles on Saturday to discuss the resources available from her agency. She discussed ODEP's involvement in veterans' issues and the "America's Heroes at Work" program designed to help employers develop strategies to help returning veterans succeed in the workplace.

- [View Publications on Veterans](#)

Upcoming Deadlines & Events

Check out the grant opportunities with DOL.

- [Open Funding Opportunities](#)

Event Spotlight: Federal Advisory Council on Occupational Safety and Health

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration will hold a meeting of the Federal Advisory Council on Occupational Safety and Health Dec. 1, in Washington,

vehicles.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Guam Golf Club Cited for Workplace Hazards

Guam International Country Club has been cited by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration for 17 safety violations following an inspection at the club's maintenance shop in Dededo, Guam. Among the violations found by investigators were multiple electrical hazards, including exposing workers to live electrical parts. Proposed fines total \$32,900.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Texas Computing Co. to Restore Workers' Pension Funds

An investigation by the Employee Benefits Security Administration found that employee contributions to the Plano, Texas-based DS3 Computing Solutions Inc. 401(k) Plan were not timely remitted, violating provisions of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act. The department entered a consent judgment and order in federal district court requiring that the company and owner restore all monetary losses with interest to the pension plan. Further, the company is enjoined from violating ERISA in the future and must pay a penalty equal to 20 percent of the amount to be restored to the plan.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Illinois Construction Firm Penalized for Fall Hazards

Gire Construction Inc. has been cited by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration for six violations, including five willful infractions, for failing to provide fall protection to roofers working on commercial and residential projects. The Champaign, Ill.-based company faces penalties totaling \$144,100 as a result of four separate safety inspections. OSHA initiated an inspection under a local emphasis program for fall hazards.

- [Read the News Release](#)

MSHA Slaps 11 Mines With 226 Citations

Eleven mines from around the country were the subject of impact inspections last month. The Mine Safety and Health Administration issued 226 citations and orders during the latest round of targeted inspections, including five withdrawal orders and two citations at Abner Branch Rider Mine in Leslie County, Ky. The underground coal mine is one of only two mining operations ever to have been placed on a pattern of violations. During October's inspection, inspectors found loose, unsupported drawrock and coal ribs, accumulations of combustible material, and the operator's failure to conduct a pre-shift examination of the active mining section.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Odom Industries Cited for Altering Injury and Illness Logs

The department's Occupational Safety and Health Administration has cited Odom Industries in Milford, Ohio, for 38 safety and health violations, including three willful violations for allegedly amending the company's OSHA 300 injury and illness logs. OSHA initiated an inspection of the fabrication plant after receiving a complaint alleging that injured workers were moved to other jobs to avoid recordable injuries on the logs. Proposed fines total \$90,760.

- [Read the News Release](#)

New Initiative to Crack Down on N.C. Agricultural Violations

Since 2008, the Wage and Hour Division's Raleigh District Office has conducted more than 260 investigations of agricultural operations in North Carolina. However, violations continue, so the district office has begun a

D.C. The meeting will be held from 2 to 4:30 p.m. in Room N-3437 A/B/C, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C., 20210. Comments and requests to speak must be submitted by Nov. 25, 2011. See the Federal Register notice for submission details. FACOSH advises the secretary of labor on matters relating to the occupational safety and health of federal employees.

- [December 1 — Washington, DC](#)
- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Read the Federal Register Notice](#)

OFCCP — Beyond the Affirmative Action Plan Webinar

- [November 30 — Online](#)

OFCCP — Building Partnerships for the Community

- [November 29 — Baltimore, MD](#)
- [December 1 — Memphis, TN](#)
- [December 1 — Charlotte, NC](#)
- [December 6 — Baltimore, MD](#)
- [December 8 — Memphis, TN](#)
- [December 15 — Memphis, TN](#)
- [December 20 — Baltimore, MD](#)
- [December 22 — Memphis, TN](#)
- [January 10 — Baltimore, MD](#)
- [January 12 — Charlotte, NC](#)
- [January 24 — Baltimore, MD](#)

OFCCP — Community Based Organizations Roundtable Collaboration

- [November 30 — Pittsburgh, PA](#)
- [December 14 — Pittsburgh, PA](#)
- [January 5 — Pittsburgh, PA](#)
- [January 18 — Pittsburgh, PA](#)

OFCCP — Community Outreach and Education Event

- [December 1 — Richmond, VA](#)
- [December 8 — Richmond, VA](#)
- [December 15 — Richmond, VA](#)
- [January 15 — Philadelphia, PA](#)

OFCCP — Filing Complaints

- [December 6 — Portland, OR](#)

OFCCP — Supply and Service AAP Development Seminar

- [December 7 — Pittsburgh, PA](#)
- [January 11 — Pittsburgh, PA](#)

OFCCP — Supply and Service Educational Seminar for Small and

new initiative focused on producers of hand-harvested crops, an industry where WHD previously has found widespread labor violations.

- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Learn More About Worker Protection](#)

Remington Arms Cited for Mechanical, Electrical and Chemical Hazards

Remington Arms Co. Inc. has been cited by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration for 35 alleged serious violations of workplace safety and health standards at its Ilion, N.Y., manufacturing plant. The firearms manufacturer faces a total of \$170,000 in proposed penalties for a variety of mechanical, electrical and chemical hazards identified during inspections by OSHA's Syracuse Area Office.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Missouri Union Official Sentenced for Wire Fraud

Charles McDaniel, former general chairman of the United Transportation Union's General Committee of Adjustment 341 in St. Joseph, Missouri, was sentenced to five years probation last week and ordered to pay more than \$68,000 in restitution for embezzlement. McDaniel pleaded guilty in April to wire fraud after an Office of Labor-Management Standards investigation found he defrauded the union by submitting false and duplicated expense claims.

- [Financial Safeguards for Union Funds](#)

New Jersey Sponge Processor Fined for Safety Violations

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has cited Supply Plus NJ Inc. for 25 serious, one willful and two other-than-serious safety violations for failing to guard machines and exposing workers to fall and electrical hazards at the company's facility in Paterson, N.J. Proposed penalties are \$126,000. Additional violations found through OSHA's investigation included failure to develop a written hazardous communication program, provide personal protective equipment for workers handling chemicals, and keep required records.

- [Read the News Release](#)

United Contracting Fined \$149,200 for 14 Safety Violations

United Contracting in Wis., has been cited by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration for 14 safety violations, including willful violations for failing to provide a scaffold designed by a qualified person and fall protection for workers at two separate job sites in Fond du Lac. Proposed fines total \$149,200. The inspection was initiated after an OSHA compliance officer saw a worker, who was part of a bridge painting crew, straddling the parapet of a highway bridge overpass at Scott Street and U.S. Highway 41.

- [Read the News Release](#)

On the Job! Workers' Compensation Claims Examiner

What they do: The Office of Workers' Compensation Programs administers four major disability compensation programs which provide wage replacement benefits, medical treatment, vocational rehabilitation and other benefits to certain workers or their dependents that experience work-related injury or occupational disease. Claims Examiners ensure timely and accurate claims adjudication and provision of benefits and restore injured workers to gainful work when their injury permits. They also review evidence in support of claims and determine if the claimant meets eligibility requirements.

New Contractors

- [December 13 — Baltimore, MD](#)

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- "The conditions at the Abner Branch Rider Mine underscore the importance of adequate pre-shift examinations," said...
<http://t.co/5uvqS3AD> 3 minutes ago
- Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims Report [11/23/2011]
<http://t.co/6r099r4Z> about 6 hours ago

How to qualify: Claims Examiners mostly need strong analytical skills and a basic knowledge of medical illnesses and conditions related to the workers that fall under the laws administered by OWCP. They also need a basic understanding of multidisciplinary medical treatment programs and their associated costs, along with potential alternative treatments.

Learn more about other job opportunities at the Labor Department at www.dol.gov/jobs.

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