



## DOL News Brief

June 17, 2010

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### Solis Gets Up Close in Gulf



At the request of President Obama, Secretary Solis visited Louisiana last week where she met with community leaders, business owners, local

elected officials and workers to see firsthand the Deepwater clean up efforts. Her concerns: worker safety, dislocated workers and communication with DOL by impacted individuals. Her visit included briefings from DOL's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and Employment and Training Administration (ETA) onsite staff regarding initiatives to support vulnerable communities and to ensure worker safety. She also met with U.S. Coast Guard and BP officials at the Incident Command Center in Schriever, and took a helicopter tour off the shore near Port Fourchon, where she met workers involved in clean up efforts. Solis also convened a series of roundtables with workers from various communities to hear their concerns and inform them of DOL services.

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

### 90 Years...Still Working

Two months before women received the right to vote in 1920, Congress established the Women's Bureau within the Labor



Department. Since then, the Women's Bureau has championed the interests of working women nationwide and sought to advance women's opportunities for profitable employment. Last Friday, more than 400 guests joined Secretary Solis and Women's Bureau Director Sara Manzano-Diaz in welcoming First Lady Michelle Obama, along with Carol Evans, President of Working Woman Media, to the department for the Women's Bureau's 90th anniversary celebration. During the

### What's Hot

#### Connecting to Healthcare Careers in the Virtual World

"The healthcare field offers fruitful career opportunities for many working Americans and I want to ensure that my department provides the required tools for national organizations working to inform and train interested individuals," said Secretary Solis in her announcement of nearly \$14 million in Recovery Act-funded career exploration grants.



The grants will support projects designed to provide healthcare training and virtual service-delivery models (like web-based services) to promote career opportunities in the healthcare sector. The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) will use \$6.6 million to design and deliver web-based healthcare training and career exploration opportunities. "The Department of Labor's investment addresses two of the nation's most pressing needs: getting more prospective workers into in-demand careers and meeting serious and growing shortages of well-trained health care professionals. Our association is eager to engage our member colleges and to collaborate with our partners," said George Boggs, President and CEO of AACC. An additional \$8.1 million will be shared among three organizations to increase workers' access to online career information.

- [Read the News Release](#)

#### \$40 Million for Michiganders Facing Layoffs in Multiple Industries

The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program provides an array of benefits to workers including funds for training. As the nation's economic recovery continues, so does the department's support for Midwest workers. During a visit to Macomb Community College in Warren, Michigan, Secretary Solis announced \$20,922,153 in TAA reserve funds to the state of Michigan to assist an estimated 9,471 dislocated workers statewide as they seek out job training leading to good jobs. Three National Emergency grant increments totaling more than \$19 million were also unveiled. These grants will allow Michigan to continue to provide training and employment services to more than 8,500 workers.

- [Read the News Release](#)

#### DOL Announces Higher Penalties for Child Labor Violations

"Work is not child's play," said Secretary Hilda L. Solis in response to the department enforcing higher penalties for illegally employing children. The penalty for illegally employing a 12 or 13-year old is now \$6000; the cost of illegally employing a child younger than 12 is \$8000. Under certain conditions, DOL could raise the penalty for employing workers younger than 14 to \$11,000. Increased penalties, along with other revisions to the child labor rules and reinvigorated enforcement by the Wage and Hour Division "will help ensure that children are safe," Solis said.

event, the Women's Bureau unveiled a special 90th anniversary logo. From the "pink collar" jobs women traditionally held in the past to the "green collar" jobs of America's future, the logo celebrates this history of accomplishment, as well as the bureau's commitment to the next generation of working women in America.

- [Watch the Video](#)
- [View the Slideshow](#)
- [Read the Secretary's WH Blog](#)
- [Read the First Lady's Remarks](#)
- [Read President Obama's Proclamation](#)

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## Caring for Children's Health

Secretary Solis highlighted the high percentage of African American and Latino children who don't have health coverage or know they are eligible for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) earlier this week. "Our work is only beginning because we can do much more" to improve children's health across the nation, she told the June 14 CHIP Working Group meeting in Washington, D.C. During the meeting, the group reviewed the draft coverage coordination for group health plan administrators and recommendations to address coordination of coverage available to families. A model form and report is expected to be submitted by the work group to the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Health and Human Services no later than August 5.

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## Protecting Retirement Security

In testimony before the Senate Special Committee on Aging, Assistant Secretary for the Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA) Phyllis Borzi discussed the actions taken by the Labor Department to explore lifetime income options for participants and beneficiaries in private-sector retirement plans. Borzi emphasized that "EBSA is committed to promoting policies that encourage retirement savings and promote retirement security for American workers." Her June 16 testimony focused on the Request for Information issued by DOL soliciting comments from the public regarding lifetime income options. She also discussed the nearly 800 comments already received by EBSA that address whether and how to provide workers with a lifetime retirement stream of income.

- [Read Borzi's Testimony](#)

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## Worker Misclassification: "Widespread and Harmful"

- [Read the News Release](#)

### Department Wins Challenge to H-2A Regulation

The North Carolina Growers Association has terminated its challenge to the H-2A regulations enacted by DOL. "The termination of this lawsuit is a vindication of the Department's approach to vigorously protect both temporary foreign workers and the domestic agricultural workforce," said Secretary Solis. The 2010 regulation restored important worker protections, including raising wages for foreign and domestic agricultural workers; requiring employers to document compliance with departmental regulations; and ensuring that domestic workers have greater access to available job opportunities. These protections had been reduced in a regulation that was issued in the last days of the prior administration.

- [Read the News Release](#)

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## DOL Working For You

### Job Corps Student Overcomes Leukemia, Becomes Role Model

Twenty-one year old Victor Perez has never given up, not when he was born into poverty in Puerto Rico and not when he was diagnosed with leukemia while attending the Shriver Job Corps in Massachusetts.



Instead, after months of medication and chemotherapy treatment forced him to take a one year's leave of absence from Shriver's nursing program, Perez rejoined it. His determination led to being selected as one of 12 National Youth Ambassadors to Job Corps, where he travels the country lecturing young people on the importance of hard work and education. Perez is continuing his studies in the clinical medical assistant program at New York's South Bronx Job Corps, and hopes to attend college.

"Job Corps taught me how to better myself and made me more responsible," Perez said.

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## News You Can Use

### "Grandfather" Rule for Health Plans

New regulations jointly announced by Secretary Solis and Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius on Monday will ensure that Americans who like their current health coverage will be able to keep it. The regulation clarifies how plans and health insurance issuers can remain exempt from certain requirements of the Affordable Care Act under the law's "grandfather" provision.

- [Read the Fact Sheet](#)
- [Read the Regulation](#)
- [Read Summary of Regulation](#)

### Check Out Career Videos – and Film Your Own to Win \$1,000

Contestants are submitting films for a chance to win \$1,000 in the department's Career Video Challenge. DOL is inviting members of the public to produce and submit short (1 to 3 minute) videos focusing on the daily activities, necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities of one of 15 high-growth occupations. The challenge runs through August 20, but don't



Highlighting a problem present in nearly every industry, Deputy Secretary of Labor Seth Harris recently testified before the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions' hearing on worker misclassification. The issue has become an increasingly common problem resulting in workers being denied benefits; an unfair advantage for employers who intentionally misclassify workers as independent contractors; and state and federal governments losing tax revenue. In his testimony, Harris outlined the scope of the problem, as well as DOL's efforts to tackle the issue and its support of Congressional action to make misclassification illegal. "We believe that addressing this issue is a win-win for those who want to ensure a level playing field in the marketplace, and protect workers as Congress intended under the law," Harris said.

- [Read Harris' Testimony](#)

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## DOL Partners for Workers' Rights



Wage and Hour Deputy Administrator Nancy Leppink and Assistant Secretary for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration David

Michaels signed Letters of Agreement with Mexican Ambassador Arturo Sarukhan on Tuesday, June 1. The signing solidifies a partnership between the respective agencies and the Mexican Embassy to better educate Mexican workers about their rights in the workplace. Among the goals of this collaboration is the development and distribution of informational materials in communities with large Mexican worker populations. With the Mexican Embassy's help, the Wage and Hour Division will be able to locate and send workers who have returned to Mexico any back wages owed to them. The department will also be able to gain the information needed to take action against U.S. employers if it's determined that the worker's labor rights were violated. OSHA's goals similarly include working with the Embassy to teach Mexican workers about their health and safety rights at work.

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## Combating Child Labor

During a recent two-day visit to Washington, D.C., Joao Soares, a Member of the Portuguese Parliament, and current President of



delay the start of your production. The department is expecting high-quality career videos, and filmmakers will need time to shoot, edit and polish each entry.

- [Submit Your Video Today](#)

## Town Hall Meetings for Former Energy Workers

The Office of Workers' Compensation Programs recently visited Las Vegas to reach out to individuals who may have become ill as a result of their work in the nuclear weapons industry. Rachel Leiton, Director of the Division of Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation (DEEOIC), hosted three town hall meetings to provide information and status updates to hundreds of former energy workers and their families. These meetings were in response to the Department of Health and Human Services designating a new class of employees to a Special Exposure Cohort, which provides some former workers with special status when filing certain cancer claims.

- [Read more about DEEOIC](#)
- [Find a DEEOIC Resource Center](#)

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## Around DOL

### WB Hosts Women Leaders from 17 Countries



Women's Bureau Director Sara Manzano-Díaz hosted an international delegation of 17 lawyers, organization leaders, health professionals, and government ministers at DOL headquarters this week. The group came from Bahrain, Bolivia, Cambodia, China, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lesotho, Maldives, Mexico,

Mozambique, Nigeria, Serbia, Sudan, Tanzania, Thailand, and the West Bank to share stories about their work and the situation of women in their countries. Topics included violence against women, microcredit and microenterprise, education, gender discrimination, and maternity and family leave. Director Manzano-Díaz noted the commonality of issues between the United States and represented countries, and spoke of the Women's Bureau's work with constituents and nongovernmental organizations to empower women to achieve economic security.

### Congratulations to Project SEARCH DC Graduates, Class of 2010!

The Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) proudly congratulated the first graduating class of Project SEARCH D.C., which provides students with disabilities in their last year of high school with job skills and training. The nine graduates -- who all worked and attended classes at DOL during the past year -- were joined by ODEP Assistant Secretary Kathleen Martinez, D.C. Public Schools Chancellor Michelle Rhee and others whose organizations collaborated this year to make the program a success. The speakers urged the graduates to be mentors to students who follow in their path. "Please take time to pass on what you've learned about what can be accomplished by people with disabilities through life and career goal planning and sustained determination," Martinez told the students.



- [Learn More About Project Search](#)
- [View the Slideshow](#)

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## DOL in Action

the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Parliamentary Assembly met with Secretary Solis. The delegation, which also included Secretary General Spencer Oliver, discussed possible co-operation on issues related to labor practices – particularly those focused on combating child labor. OSCE is the world's largest regional security organization, providing a forum for political negotiations and decision-making to its 56 member states.

- [Learn More About OSCE](#)

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## Protecting All Children



“Childhood is a time that should be spent in classrooms and on playgrounds, but for 215 million children around the world, it is a time spent working, often in dangerous and deplorable conditions. I applaud my Secretary of Labor, Hilda Solis, who has helped increase our efforts to address child labor

abroad and here at home,” said President Barack Obama in recognition of World Day Against Child Labor, which was observed around the globe on Saturday, June 12.

- [Read the President's Statement](#)

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## Enthusiasm Drives UAW Convention



The United Auto Workers (UAW) welcomed Secretary Solis to Michigan with thunderous applause on Thursday. Solis spoke at a gathering of 1,400 UAW delegates

during the union's 35th Constitutional Convention. In her remarks, the Secretary broached the administration's continued efforts to help working families succeed, and congratulated newly elected UAW president Bob King, who assumed his new role shortly before Solis took the stage. She also commended Dr. Ed Montgomery – who joined her on the trip - for his tireless work as Executive Director of the President's Auto Recovery Task Force. Later in the day, Solis and Montgomery toured the Engineering and Advanced Technology facilities at Macomb Community College, where the Secretary announced almost \$40 million in funds for Michigan. The money includes almost \$20 million

## Coal Miner Temporarily Reinstated

An administrative law judge with the Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission has ordered the temporary reinstatement of a miner discharged from his job after complaining about hazardous workplace conditions. Ricky Lee Campbell, who worked as a shuttle car operator and bolter at a West Virginia coal mine, was fired in April from Marfork Coal Co. Inc.'s Slip Ridge Cedar Grove Mine in Raleigh County. According to Campbell, he voiced safety concerns about the shuttle car he was assigned to operate, citing faulty brakes and tram pedals. “No miner should have to risk his life for his job,” said Joseph A. Main, assistant secretary of labor for mine safety and health. “The law is clear in its protections toward miners whose actions may lead to retaliation.”

- [Read the News Release](#)

## OSHA's Severe Violators Enforcement Program Effective June 18

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) Severe Violators Enforcement Program (SVEP) directive becomes effective June 18th. The agency announced in April that it was implementing the program to focus enforcement efforts on employers who willfully and repeatedly endanger workers by exposing them to serious hazards. The directive establishes procedures and enforcement actions, including increased inspections and mandatory follow-up inspections for work sites where a company has a pattern of violations at other sites.

- [Learn More About the SVEP Directive](#)

## OSHA Dedicated to Worker Safety in Oil Spill Response

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) continues its aggressive role in the coordinated federal response to the oil spill cleanup along the Gulf Coast. The agency's resources are deployed at every staging area across the region to ensure workers are protected from all hazards associated with their cleanup work. OSHA is dedicated to ensuring workers are properly trained, outfitted with the appropriate personal protective equipment for the job, and kept safe from worksite dangers, especially the heat. OSHA continues to review air monitoring by BP and other federal agencies, and is conducting its own air sampling. The dynamic nature of the oil spill and its effects requires an ever vigilant attention to the proper ways to respond, and OSHA is and will continue to change its requirements of BP to make certain workers are safeguarded from the hazards associated with their very important work.

- [Worker Safety During Oil Spill Response & Cleanup Operations](#)

## DOL Ensures Blueberries are Produced by Fair Labor

As blueberry season approaches, the Labor Department is focusing on the Michigan blueberry harvest, stepping up enforcement efforts to ensure that growers and their farm labor contractors are complying with federal labor standards. In 2009, the Wage and Hour Division fined eight Michigan growers \$36,134 in civil money penalties for migrant housing and child labor law violations. To help enforce the law, the department added 250 new Wage and Hour field investigators last year. “Our investigators will use every tool available to end these violations” said James Smith, director of the agency's Michigan District Office.

- [Read the News Release](#)

## New Child Labor Task Force Formed

The Gulf Coast Wage and Hour District office has initiated a new task force to enforce child labor laws in southern Alabama and Mississippi. Investigators will be visiting establishments that normally employ younger workers, such as retail stores, restaurants, and construction firms to ensure that employers are not violating minimum wage, overtime, and working

in ARRA funded National Emergency Grants.

- [View the Slideshow](#)

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## Praise For Safety and Health Pros

Speaking before 2,500 safety and health professionals at the American Society of Safety Engineers in Baltimore, Md., on Monday, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Assistant Secretary David Michaels discussed a number of pertinent issues and praised the group's efforts to keep workers safe. Topics included modernizing OSHA, open government, the Injury and Illness Protection Program, a regional emphasis program on grain handling, accurate reporting of injuries and illnesses, increasing penalties, updating permissible exposure limits pertaining to hazardous chemicals, at-risk workers who speak little or no English, and the BP oil spill.

- [Read Dr. Michaels' Remarks](#)

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## Women in the Workforce

Assistant Secretary for the Office of Disability Employment Policy Kathy Martinez gave the keynote address on Thursday for the Department of Homeland Security's Diversity Forum. The theme of the event was "*Building a Community for Women in the Federal Government*." Women from across the administration and federal agencies came together to identify barriers and best practices for women in the workforce. "You all are a part of this goal – changing the landscape of our workforce and weaving in the experiences, talents and strengths of people who happen to have a disability," said Ms. Martinez.

- [Read Kathy Martinez's Remarks](#)

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## Upcoming Deadlines & Events

### [Open Funding Opportunities](#)

#### Event Spotlight: OSHA Virtual Stakeholder Meeting

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has scheduled the first-ever virtual stakeholder meeting on June 28 to seek input about combustible dust workplace hazards. This virtual meeting format provides quick and easy access to a broader audience who would otherwise not be able to participate. Comments from the meeting will be used to help the agency develop a proposed standard on combustible dust.

#### OSHA — Combustible Dust Virtual Stakeholder Meeting

- [June 28, 2010 — Washington, DC](#)

hours rules. They will also be checking to ensure that minors are not employed in hazardous occupations. "Young workers can benefit from good work experiences, but that positive experience includes being employed in a safe job that meets federal rules for minimum wage and overtime," said District Director Ken Stripling.

- [Read the News Release](#)

#### Back Pay For EG&G Workers

Thanks to an investigation by the U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division in Portland, Ore., EG&G Technical Services reimbursed \$4.2 million dollars in back wages owed to 603 employees. In some cases, EG&G deducted pay for lunch breaks, in violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act. "This Labor Department will not hesitate to pursue wage violations", said Secretary Solis. "I am proud of the hard work of our investigators in recovering back wages for those working families." Due to a related investigation, a separate EG&G plant in Arkansas paid \$1,508,036 in back wages owed to 404 employees.

- [Read the News Release](#)

#### More Funding for Women in Apprenticeship Programs

More women are needed in apprenticeship programs, and the department is working to make this happen. Earlier this week, organizations in California, Illinois, Maryland, New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania shared \$2 million in grant funds as part of the Women in Apprenticeship and Non-traditional Occupations Grants program. Funding will support partnerships between the grantees and existing Registered Apprenticeship programs to ensure that more women enter non-traditional occupations in growing sectors of the economy. Through these projects, women will be trained for careers in fields such as construction and manufacturing.

- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Learn More About Registered Apprenticeship Programs](#)

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## Recovery Highlights

#### Rhode Island Receives Recovery Funds to Assist the Unemployed

Secretary Solis was joined by Senator Jack Reed during a call on Tuesday to announce more than \$7.8 million in Unemployment Insurance Modernization Funds for Rhode Island. The Ocean State qualified for funding by updating state unemployment insurance laws to qualify recent entrants to the workforce as eligible for benefits. Funds will be used to pay unemployment compensation, and if appropriated by the Rhode Island legislature, to administer the state unemployment insurance program.

- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Learn More About Unemployment Insurance Modernization](#)

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## Green Scene

#### Women on Green Building and Energy Efficiency

The fourth teleconference in the Women's Bureau's effort to connect women with green jobs is fast approaching. "Green Building and Energy Efficiency" will take place on June 24 from 1 to 2:30 p.m. EDT. In recent months, employment has grown in green construction and energy efficiency. This teleconference will provide an overview of the industry today, with information on industry workforce data; the opportunities and expectations of the industry, including career pathways; and examples of women being successfully connected to employment in green construction and energy efficiency. Participation is limited, so register early!

#### OFCCP — AAP Development & Preparing for a Desk Audit

- [June 24, 2010 — Baltimore, MD](#)

#### OFCCP — Compliance Assistance: Basic Supply and Service Technical Assistance with ARRA Updates

- [June 24, 2010 — Seattle, WA](#)

#### OFCCP — Compliance Assistance Seminar for Construction Contractors

- [June 18, 2010 — Richmond, VA](#)
- [June 25, 2010 — Richmond, VA](#)

#### OFCCP — Connecticut Construction Group Meeting

- [June 22, 2010 — Hamden, CT](#)

#### OLMS — Trustee Workshop

- [June 24, 2010 — Nashville, TN](#)

#### OLMS — Webinar: OLMS Presents the Electronic Filing System (LM-2 Reports)

- [June 24, 2010 — Washington, DC](#)

#### OSHA — Stakeholder Meeting on Injury and Illness Prevention Program

- [June 29, 2010 — Washington, DC](#)

#### OWCP — Town Hall Meetings to Assist Nuclear Weapons Workers

- [June 29, 2010 — Washington, DC](#)
- [June 30, 2010 — Emeryville, CA](#)

#### WB — 2010 Annual Asian American Women's Coalition Banquet (AAWC)

- [June 18, 2010 — Philadelphia, PA](#)

#### Follow USDOL on

- DOL, Interior and Agriculture jointly announce new federal partnership to provide support for youth to work in the... <http://bit.ly/9utbli> about 21 hours ago
- Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis announces \$20 million in grants to prepare high school dropouts and young adult ... <http://bit.ly/cSIVUX> 3 days ago

- [Register Today](#)

#### Veterans to Receive Green Jobs Training Through Grants

The department's Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) has awarded 22 grants, totaling more than \$9 million, to provide veterans with green jobs training. The grants, given under the Veterans' Workforce Investment Program will "give an estimated 4,000 veterans who have served our country the opportunity to receive training on and participate in the growing renewable energy economy," said VETS Assistant Secretary Raymond Jefferson. These grants will serve veterans in 19 states and the District of Columbia and were given to state and local workforce investment boards, local public agencies and nonprofit organizations. Services veterans will receive include skills assessments; individual job counseling; labor market information; classroom or on-the-job training in green jobs, skills upgrading and retraining; placement assistance and critical follow-up services.

- [Read the News Release](#)

#### Apprenticeship Training Program Going Green

The Employment and Training Administration's Office of Apprenticeship recently recognized Wind Turbine Technicians as the first new 'green' career to be added to the official list of apprentice occupations. This recognition fell just days prior to President Obama's remarks regarding U.S. efforts to transition away from a dependency on fossil fuels. "For decades, we've talked and talked about the need to end America's century-long addiction to fossil fuels. The transition away from fossil fuels is going to take some time, but over the last year and a half, we've already taken unprecedented action to jumpstart the clean energy industry," President Obama said. "As we speak, old factories are reopening to produce wind turbines, people are going back to work installing energy-efficient windows, and small businesses are making solar panels."

- [Learn More About the Recognition of Wind Turbine Technicians](#)
- [Read President Obama's Remarks](#)

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#### Opportunities are Open: Sr. Executive Service

Apply your management skills to public service. The Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program is designed to train and develop future candidates for the Senior Executive Service within the Department of Labor. The program will provide a series of intensive developmental experiences, including formal courses and seminars, as well as developmental assignments for 20 selected candidates who have high potential for assuming executive responsibilities. Explore the opportunity below or [view all](#) the exciting and rewarding careers at DOL.

- 20 Vacancies - Throughout the Nation  
[Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program — GS-0340-14/15](#)  
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