



## DOL News Brief

July 8, 2010

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### Harris Welcomes New Americans



On the 4th of July, Deputy Secretary of Labor Seth Harris delivered the keynote address during a naturalization ceremony at the

William Paca House and Garden in Annapolis, Md. The ceremony was part of a day-long celebration at the home of one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. Harris noted that although the participants originated from 24 different countries, they now “share a new home, this remarkable country we call America.”

- [Read Deputy Secretary Harris' Remarks](#)
- [View the Slideshow](#)

### What's Hot

#### H-2A Registry Clicks On

“When my department issued the final regulation on the H-2A program earlier this year, I underscored our commitment both to ensuring all those working hard on American soil receive fair pay and to expanding opportunities for U.S. workers. This registry is an important part of that effort,” said Secretary Solis regarding today’s launch of the H-2A on-line registry. The new electronic resource gives the public an easy-to-use single point of entry to retrieve information about temporary agricultural jobs that fall under the H-2A program. DOL estimates that more than 700 H-2A applications — for 13,000 workers — have been received since March 15, 2010, when DOL implemented the program’s new rules.

- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Visit the H-2A Job Registry](#)

#### Fix it in RI And The Other 349 Sites!

A first-ever enterprise-wide complaint was filed by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration on Tuesday against the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) for work safety violations. The complaint asks the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission to order USPS to correct electrical violations at 350 facilities. The request for enterprise-wide relief is based on the discovery of numerous, similar electrical work safety violations following the investigation of USPS mail processing and distribution facilities across the country.

- [Read the News Release](#)

#### OSHA Seeks Applications for New Safety and Health Training Grants

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is soliciting applications for \$2.75 million in Susan Harwood Targeted Topic Training Grants. For fiscal year 2010, the program offers training and education programs for workers and their employers in 28 targeted topic areas including crane safety, combustible dust, maritime, oil and gas, and eye safety. “These grants will provide workers and employers with the tools they need to create targeted training programs to ensure safe workplaces,” said Assistant Secretary for OSHA Dr. David Michaels. “The grants will enable workers to gain the knowledge and tools they need to save lives and protect their health.” Applications are due Aug. 6.

- [Read the News Release](#)

### Solis in the Mile High City

Secretary Solis delivered opening remarks at the Biennial for the America’s Roundtable in Denver on Tuesday. She also took part in “The



Americas Roundtable on Women: Drivers of the New Economy.” Later that day, the Secretary toured the Denver Green Jobs Initiative where she met with staff and students who are participating in a program that received over \$3.6 million from the Department of Labor as part of the Pathways out of Poverty Initiative. “Denver and Colorado as a whole are really taking an interest in green industries. And I’m happy to see that several employers have already reached out to the Denver Green Jobs Initiative as a pipeline for several planned transportation, retrofiting, and green construction projects,” said Solis. “Green jobs will help lead the 21st Century economy.”

- [Read the Secretary's Remarks](#)

### Recovery Highlights

#### \$43.6 Million in UIMA Funds For Nebraska

Nebraska has updated its unemployment insurance program to better meet the needs of today’s workforce and Secretary Solis has certified for release to the state \$43,625,769 in unemployment insurance modernization

### OSHA Warns of Improper Training

The Occupational Safety and Health

Administration (OSHA) is warning some oil spill cleanup workers in the Gulf of Mexico may not be receiving proper training. To supervise shoreline and marine cleanup crews, a worker must complete a 40-hour hazardous waste operations course. Because BP is not providing this training, some workers are paying out of pocket. Others are being trained by companies hoping to place those workers with BP or a contractor. OSHA has received reports of overcrowded classrooms, training that is significantly less than 40 hours, and courses that include video presentations with only limited instruction. If a worker feels the training they have received does not meet the requirements, they may contact an OSHA office to file a complaint or call 800-321-OSHA (6742) for more information.

- [Read OSHA's Statement](#)
- [See Information on Proper Training](#)
- [Find an OSHA Office](#)

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## OSHA Cites Texas Plant with Safety Violations Following Fatality

Enbridge G&P (East Texas) LP has been cited with two alleged willful and five alleged serious violations following a chemical release at the company's Bryans Mill plant in Douglasville, Texas. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) proposed \$152,100 in penalties for an incident that occurred when four workers were replacing a faulty valve in the sulfur plant. One employee died and another was left in critical condition when hydrogen sulfide was released. "If this employer had developed and implemented safe work practices, as required by OSHA standards, it is possible this tragic incident could have been avoided," said Stephen Boyd, OSHA's area director in Dallas.

- [Read the News Release](#)

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## Upcoming Deadlines & Events

The Department of Labor is currently seeking applicants for available grant opportunities. Each year the Occupational Safety and Health Administration announces the Susan Harwood Training Grants to provide training and education programs on the recognition, avoidance, and prevention of safety and health hazards in workplaces. The Employment and Training Administration has announced the availability of more than \$12 million in competitive funding for states to create longitudinal workforce databases and improve the quality and breadth of the data within existing systems.

[View All The Funding Opportunities](#)

incentive funds. "The UI modernization provisions recently adopted by Nebraska help unemployed workers who have entered the workforce recently, work part-time or need training to become re-employed receive the benefits they deserve," said Solis. With the changes to its laws, Nebraska qualified for a full share of the funds available under the Recovery Act.

- [Read the News Release](#)

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## DOL Working For You

### Job Corps Grad Aids Oil Spill Cleanup Effort

Only a few weeks removed from his Edison, New Jersey, Job Corps graduation, Guiseppe Cage has been thrust into the front lines of the Gulf coast oil spill cleanup effort. Armed with certificates in nursing, emergency training and first responder skills, Cage, who is 23, was hired by American Medical Response, a large medical transportation provider. Cage is now stationed in Alabama as an EMT medical assistant. He provides help to cleanup workers who are battling toxic fumes and high heat. A self-described "patient advocate,"

Cage hopes to go to nursing school and eventually become a cardiologist. He says Job Corps has given him "the resources to be successful and achieve my goals."



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## International Scene

### DOL On Domestic Worker Issues



Representatives from DOL played a leading role in the U.S. government delegation to the International Labor Conference in Geneva June 2 through 18. The annual conference is held by the United Nations' International Labor Organization. Tandra Leonard of the Solicitor's Office, Robert Shepard of the Bureau of International Labor Affairs, and

Michel Smyth of the Wage and Hour Division were instrumental in developing a standard for domestic workers. The group extended provisions that promoted equality of treatment between domestic workers and other wage earners while addressing the need for protections against abuse and exploitation. According to Shepard "domestic workers play a valuable role in our economies but they're often underappreciated, and frequently lack the protections that other workers receive." This is the first of a two-year effort to develop an international standard on domestic workers. The concluding meeting will take place in June 2011.

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## News You Can Use

### Your Future In Geospatial Technology

This week, DOL's Employment and Training Administration announced an industry competency model for Geospatial Technology. Competency models offer workers an opportunity to learn what it takes to enter a particular field. "The geospatial model serves as a guide for those who want to both find a good job and map out a long-term career pathway in any of several fields, including surveying and mapping as well as computer and information science," said Secretary Solis. The model was developed by researching and analyzing publicly available resources, existing skill standards, and certifications. It identifies the skills needed by employers and serves as a resource for those looking to enter in-demand professions in this exciting

## EBSA — COBRA Compliance Workshop

- [July 13, 2010 — Salt Lake City, UT](#)

## EBSA — Health Benefits Laws Compliance Assistance Seminar

- [July 14-15, 2010 — New York, NY](#)

## EBSA — Understanding Your Fiduciary Responsibilities Under ERISA

- [July 13, 2010 — Salt Lake City, UT](#)

## EBSA — Voluntary Fiduciary Correction Program Workshop

- [July 12, 2010 — Philadelphia, PA](#)
- [July 13, 2010 — Silver Spring, MD](#)

## MSHA — A Miner's Town Hall Meeting: Seek Refuge-Your Third Line of Defense

- [July 14, 2010 — Greensburg, PA](#)

## MSHA — Kentucky Mine Safety and Training Competition

- [July 13-15, 2010 — Pikeville, KY](#)

## MSHA — Seek Refuge: Your Third Line of Defense

- [July 14, 2010 — Greensburg, PA](#)

## OFCCP — AAP Development Workshop

- [July 14, 2010 — Pittsburgh, PA](#)

## OFCCP — Agency Update: Long Island Industry Liaison Group Meeting

- [July 14, 2010 — Farmingdale, NY](#)

## OFCCP — Compliance Assistance for Construction Contractors

- [July 9, 2010 — Richmond, VA](#)

## OFCCP — Compliance Assistance Seminar

- [July 13, 2010 — Philadelphia, PA](#)
- [July 14, 2010 — Boston, MA](#)

## OFCCP — Compliance Assistance Seminar Requirements Under ADA

- [July 16, 2010 — Richmond, VA](#)

## OFCCP — EEO Obligations of ARRA Construction Contractors

- [July 15, 2010 — Baltimore, MD](#)

## OFCCP — Informational & Outreach Forum

- [July 9, 2010 — El Paso, TX](#)

## OFCCP — So You Have Been Scheduled for a Compliance Evaluation: How to Respond When You Get the Scheduling Letter

field.

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

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## DOL in Action

### Imperial Sugar to Pay More Than \$6 Million, Change Safety Practices

Litigation with Imperial Sugar Co., stemming from the February 2008 explosion at its Port Wentworth, Ga. plant and subsequent safety and health violations at the company's Gramercy, La. facility, was resolved Wednesday. "The 2008 explosion took the lives of 14 people and seriously injured dozens of others. Clearly, health and safety must become this company's top priority," said Solis. "This agreement requires Imperial Sugar to make extensive changes to its safety practices, and it underscores the importance of proactively addressing workplace safety and health hazards." In the agreement, Imperial Sugar will pay \$4,050,000 in penalties for the 124 violations found at its Port Wentworth plant, plus an additional \$2 million for the 97 violations found in March 2008 after an inspection of its Gramercy facility. The citations alleged, among other safety and health hazards, that the company failed to properly address combustible dust hazards.

- [Read the News Release](#)

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## Around DOL

### 75th Anniversary of the National Labor Relations Act

July 5th marked the 75th anniversary of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), also known as the Wagner Act. The NLRA was a key component of President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, which also included Social Security, Unemployment Insurance, a federal minimum wage and laws regulating child labor. While we now take them for granted, many of the New Deal's central concepts were controversial at the time. The NLRA, for one, protected workers' rights to join or form unions and engage in collective bargaining.

- [Read Secretary Solis' Blog Post](#)
- [Visit the NLRA Anniversary Website](#)
- [View the Poster](#)



### A "Work in Progress" Enters the Blogosphere



Overwhelmed by "Farmville" requests on Facebook? Too long winded for Twitter? Love reading the newsletter every week but wish you could comment on stories? Welcome to the Department of Labor's new blog – Work in Progress. As part of our ongoing effort to better connect citizens with the

valuable resources of the Department, the blog will feature the latest news and commentary from Secretary Solis and DOL's senior leadership team, as well as highlight innovative projects from around the Department. Most importantly, the blog is another chance for you to interact with YOUR Department of Labor.

- [Submit a Comment](#)
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- [July 14, 2010 — Denver, CO](#)

#### OLMS — Compliance Assistance Seminar

- [July 13, 2010 — Colfax, NC](#)

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

- [July 15, 2010 — Washington, DC](#)

#### OSHA — MACOSH Meeting

- [July 13-14, 2010 — Long Beach, CA](#)

#### OSHA — Hydraulics Level I (Hydraulics Training: Safety & Practical)

- [July 13, 2010 — Cullman, AL](#)

#### OSHA — Seminar on Florida's Workers' Compensation Laws and Workplace Safety

- [July 13, 2010 — Fort Meyers, FL](#)
- [July 15, 2010 — Miami, FL](#)

#### WB — NAACP 101st Annual Convention

- [July 10, 2010 — Kansas City, MO](#)

#### WB — CETS Competitive Grantee Training Conference

- [July 13, 2010 — Atlanta, GA](#)

## Opportunities are Open: Office of Solicitor

DOL's Office of the Solicitor (SOL) is ramping up its efforts to protect workers. This week, SOL was instrumental in requesting the first-ever enterprise-wide remedy for workplace safety violations. Explore the positions below or [view all](#) the rewarding opportunities with DOL.

1. Three Positions(Philadelphia Metro Area; Alexandria / Arlington & Falls Church - Ft. Myer & Rosslyn, VA)  
[Paralegal Specialist](#)  
DE-10-PHIL-SOL-0084-OC  
Close: 07/19/2010
2. Position in Washington DC Metro Area  
[General Attorney \(Labor\)](#)  
SOL-10-PBS-General ATTY  
Close: 07/15/2010
3. Position in Washington DC Metro Area  
[Human Resources Specialist](#)  
DE-10-SOL-04  
Close: 07/20/2010

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### Follow USDOL on

- working closely w/ local & state officials, contractors and community groups to ensure fair & = hiring practices. #DOLintheGulf [2 minutes ago](#)
- Msg from DOL - here as long as necessary to help affected communities get local jobs, in oil cleanup or other occupations #DOLintheGulf [4 minutes ago](#)

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U.S. Department of Labor, Frances Perkins Building, 200 Constitution Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20210  
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