



DOL News Brief

September 9, 2010

[Subscribe](#) | [Send Feedback](#) | [PDF Version](#)



Solis To The Rescue



In advance of Labor Day, Secretary Solis saluted some of our nation's most dedicated workers. She paid a visit on Sunday to the

Banneker Fire Station in Columbia, Maryland, and had an opportunity to speak with several of the brave men and women and personally thank them for their service. Before leaving, Solis toured the fire house, took a ride on the bucket of a ladder truck, and sampled the famous 5-alarm chili. She even went on a medical emergency call with the crew.

- [View the Slideshow](#)

Creating a Sustainable DOL

The Department of Labor is committed to being a federal government leader in creating a clean energy economy.



Under the direction of President Obama's Executive Order 13514, DOL released a sustainability plan that will not only reduce greenhouse gases department-wide, but prioritize sustainability as an integral mode of operation. The department has a special interest and role in sustainability leadership as it works to train and increase the number of Americans for green jobs, including the work of the Job Corps program. On campus, Job Corps students live green by conserving energy with LED lighting, eating from sustainable vegetable gardens, and utilizing solar panels for energy.

- [Learn more about Sustainability@DOL](#)

Rebuilding Safely at Ground Zero

Assistant Labor Secretary for the Occupational Safety

Labor Day 2010

Obama, Solis Celebrate Labor Day



More than 100 years after the first Labor Day observance, there is still no doubt that working Americans are the foundation of the nation's continued prosperity. President Barack Obama and Secretary Solis celebrated American workers this Labor Day at Laborfest in Milwaukee, Wis., on Monday. "The problems facing working families, they're nothing new.

But they are more serious than ever. And that makes our cause more urgent than ever," said President Obama to thousands of attendees. "For generations, it was the great American working class, the great American middle class that made our economy the envy of the world. It's got to be that way again." In her remarks to the massive crowd, Secretary Solis said, "After 18 months, I have never been more confident that we are headed in the right direction, or more certain that our country must put creating jobs ahead of partisan roadblocks and petty political games. Let's all do the work that will get America working."

- [View the Slideshow](#)
- [Read the President's Remarks](#)
- [Read the Secretary's Remarks](#)
- [Read the Presidential Proclamation](#)

Labor Day Recap: Watch, Learn and Share

Even though Labor Day was on Monday, there's still an opportunity to learn about what the U.S. Department of Labor is doing on behalf of America's working families...and still a need to help spread the word. Nearly 12,000 people so far have viewed Secretary Solis' "State of the American Worker" video speech on YouTube. Viewers are encouraged to share it with friends and family by posting it on their Facebook pages and other sites. Also available on the department's special Labor Day page: video from Solis' Labor Day appearances on all the network television morning programs, excerpts from some of the dozens of radio interviews she did during the week, and articles and links to more than 70 editorials she penned for newspapers across the country.



- [Visit the Labor Day Web Site](#)

mySkills myFuture Connects Job Seekers with Training and Careers

Figuring out what jobs one is qualified for can be challenging, but a new tool is taking the guesswork out this process. On Labor Day, the department launched mySkills myFuture, a web portal that allows job seekers to match their current skills with new careers and find out what training is needed to



and Health Administration, Dr. David Michaels, toured the rebuilding at

Ground Zero in New York City last week during an event highlighting the safe and injury-free worksite. Michaels urged labor and management to adhere to the theme of "rebuilding through unity" by working together daily to discuss safety, identify hazards, come up with solutions and track progress. "Speaking not only as the administrator for OSHA — the federal agency in charge of protecting our nation's workforce — but also as a proud, native New Yorker: This site needs no more tragedy, no more wounded workers, and no more grieving families," Michaels said. "The eyes of the nation will follow your progress and their hearts will be with you. Everyone wants you to succeed — but you can only succeed by working together."

- [Read Michaels' Remarks](#)

Help with New Health Laws

The Employee Benefits Security Administration hosted a webcast September 7 and 8 to help the employee benefit community comply with regulations governing the Affordable Care Act. Employers and providers of services to group health plans were able to get up-to-date information on the new health law and regulations including regulations relating to the grandfathered health plan rule, dependent coverage of children to age 26, and coverage of preventive services. An archive of the webcast will be available on the EBSA website in the near future.

- [Go to the Affordable Care Act page](#)

Oates Joins NIMS in Celebrating 25,000 Credentials Awarded

Industry-recognized credentials can mean job opportunities and job portability for workers. This week, Assistant Secretary for Employment and



Training Jane Oates joined the National Institute for Metalworking Standards in congratulating the recipient of NIMS twenty-fifth-thousandth credential. Darryl Robinson is a successful participant in a Registered Apprenticeship program for machinists that is run by Magna International Inc. in partnership with the Community College of Baltimore County. NIMS

transition from one job to another. Visitors to the site can also view local job postings and locate training and education providers.

- [Read the Press Release](#)
- [Visit mySkills myFuture](#)

What's Hot

OSHA Awards \$8 Million in Safety and Health Training Grants

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has awarded \$8 million in Susan Harwood Capacity Building grants to 45 organizations including nonprofit and community/faith-based organizations, employer associations, labor unions, joint labor/management associations and colleges and universities. The grants will assist the organizations in providing safety and health training, and educational programs for workers and employers.

"Ensuring that workers and employers have the information they need is critical to safe and healthy workplaces," said Secretary Solis. "These grants will help provide training and education aimed at identifying hazards, understanding rights and responsibilities, protecting health and saving lives."

- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Complete List of the 2010 Grant Recipients](#)
- [More Information on the Susan Harwood Grant Program](#)

DOL Working for You

Recovery Act Funding KEYS Healthcare Job for Maryland Teen



Eighteen-year-old Telmy Alfaro is working part-time at a Maryland hospital and studying to becoming a registered nurse thanks to funding provided by the Recovery Act. While currently attending a community college, Alfaro gains skill and experience in the patient access department of the Prince Georges, MD, Hospital Center, helping to register patients, answer the telephones, and provide translations for Spanish-speaking individuals. She plans to graduate with a degree as a registered nurse by 2013. Alfaro's success stems from collaborative federal, state and local efforts.

Recovery Act money was distributed through the department's Workforce Investment System, eventually aiding a state One Stop Center and funding the Knowledge Equals Youth Success program. Prince Georges County and a local healthcare company allowed Telmy and other KEYS youth to job shadow full-time employees in nursing and other fields. Alfaro who admits she "likes helping people" said the combined efforts "helped me succeed by placing me in the area I have the most interest in – healthcare."

News You Can Use

Career Videos Challenge Featured on Challenge.gov

Now there is one source for all government challenges and prizes. This week the White House launched a new site to serve as a gateway to challenges run by a number of federal agencies. This includes the Labor Department's Career Videos for America's Job Seekers Challenge. The challenge offers participants a chance to win \$1,000 by submitting the best career video in one of 15 categories. Entries will be accepted until November 1, but do not delay. Only top-notch video will be considered for a

provides the competency framework for the program, allowing apprentices to earn credentials that are recognized by companies across the nation.

Feds Feed Families



When the call to duty was announced, Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (Region IV - Southeast) Regional Director Richard

Brettell jumped at the chance to participate in the Second Annual "Feds Feed Families" Food Drive. Pictured are representatives of Region IV and some of the 2,500 pounds of food collected for local food bank Second Harvest in Jacksonville, Florida. Second Harvest distributes food to more than 500 member agencies in North Florida.

Upcoming Deadlines & Events

[Open Funding Opportunities](#)

Check out the grant opportunities with DOL.

Event Spotlight: Mine Safety Meetings

The Mine Safety and Health Administration will hold three public meetings to gather information about effective, comprehensive safety and health management programs at mines. The meetings will include presentations on model programs by various representatives.

- [See the Meeting Schedule](#)

EBSA — Getting It Right: Know Your Fiduciary Responsibilities

- [September 15, 2010 — Philadelphia, PA](#)

EBSA — Health Benefits Laws Compliance Assistance Seminar

- [September 14-15, 2010 — Omaha, NE](#)

MSHA — Proximity Warning Systems for Mining Equipment

- [September 15, 2010 — Charleston, WV](#)

OFCCP — 12 Reasons Why Contractors Get in Trouble

- [September 17, 2010 — Richmond, VA](#)

OFCCP — ABC's of Understanding the AAP Requirements

- [September 16, 2010 — Philadelphia, PA](#)

prize.

- [Learn More About the White House Initiative](#)
- [Visit the White House Challenge Site](#)

Around DOL

MSHA Moves to Open Data

The Department of Labor's Mine Safety and Health Administration published nearly 10 years of crucial data regarding the safety and health records of the nation's mines. The seven data sets available for download now on MSHA's website contain information about mine locations, accidents, injuries, production, violations and inspections. "President Obama has directed all federal agencies to make data more readily available to meet the administration's commitment of greater transparency and accountability," said Joseph A. Main, assistant secretary of labor for mine safety and health. "Over the coming months, MSHA intends to make even more of our public data available for downloading on MSHA's website and through the Data.gov portal." This data release is part of DOL's ongoing Open Government Initiative.

- [Download the New MSHA Data](#)
- [Visit DOL's Online Enforcement Database](#)
- [Visit www.data.gov](#)

DOL in Action

Funding to Improve State Unemployment Insurance Systems

In good times and bad, millions of Americans receive unemployment insurance benefits after losing jobs through no fault of their own. The department has released more than \$8 million in grant funding to 22 states to make automation and technology upgrades that will help to make sure benefits are delivered quickly and accurately. Improved systems can also help states handle heavier workloads during times of high demand.

- [Read the News Release](#)

States Receive Funding to Improve Integrity within UI Programs

Reducing overpayments of unemployment insurance benefits is a priority for the department's Employment and Training Administration. Now 22 states will have additional funds to reduce improper payments and prevent overpayments of benefits. \$10 million has been made available for states to make technology infrastructure improvements that will help to better prevent, detect and collect benefit overpayments.

- [Read the News Release](#)

OSHA: Nearly \$440,000 in Fines Against Lumber Company

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration fined Phenix Lumber Co. in Phenix City, Ala., \$439,400 for 53 safety and health violations. OSHA began its inspection in March, but before the agency could conclude its review, one worker died and another was seriously injured in separate incidents at the plant. "Phenix Lumber has a history of saying it will correct its safety deficiencies, yet continues to allow a hazardous environment for its workers," said Cindy Coe, regional administrator for OSHA in Atlanta, Ga. "This horrendous situation cannot continue and will not be tolerated."

- [Read the News Release](#)

New Benefit Cohorts at Energy Sites

The Office of Workers' Compensation Programs announced four new Special Exposure Cohorts in three states this week. Employees and former

OFCCP — AAP Development Workshop

- [September 15, 2010 — Pittsburgh, PA](#)

OFCCP — Best and Worst Compliance Evaluations

- [September 15, 2010 — Houston, TX](#)

OFCCP — Compliance Assistance Seminar

- [September 14, 2010 — Mountainside, NJ](#)
- [September 15, 2010 — Dallas, TX](#)
- [September 16, 2010 — Mountainside, NJ](#)
- [September 16, 2010 — Hartford, CT](#)
- [September 17, 2010 — Buffalo, NY](#)

OFCCP — Compliance Assistance Seminar for Construction Contractors

- [September 10, 2010 — Richmond, VA](#)

OFCCP — EEO Obligations of ARRA Construction Contractors

- [September 16, 2010 — Baltimore, MD](#)

OFCCP — EID Celebration

- [September 16, 2010 — New York, NY](#)

OFCCP — New Jersey Industry Liaison Group Meeting

- [September 10, 2010 — Newark, NJ](#)

OFCCP — Veterans Administration Town Hall Meeting

- [September 16, 2010 — Bronx, NY](#)

OLMS — Compliance Assistance Seminar

- [September 10, 2010 — Washington, DC](#)
- [September 13, 2010 — Philadelphia, PA](#)
- [September 14, 2010 — New Iberia, LA](#)
- [September 14, 2010 — Harrisburg, PA](#)

employees of Bethlehem Steel in Lackawanna, N.Y., University of Rochester Atomic Energy Project in Rochester, N.Y., St. Louis Airport Storage Site in St. Louis, Mo., and Mound Plant in Miamisburg, Ohio, who became ill as a result of working in the nuclear weapons industry, may be eligible for benefits under the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Act. To date, the Labor Department has distributed more than \$6 billion in benefits nationwide under the EEOICPA.

- Read [Bethlehem](#), [Rochester](#), [St. Louis](#), or [Mound Plant](#) Release
- [Learn more about EEOICPA](#)

Employer Fined \$466,400 for Exposing Workers to Hazardous Dust

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has cited Indiana-based U.S. Minerals LLC for willfully exposing its workers to dangerously high levels of hazardous dust and not providing adequate breathing protection at its facility located in Baldwin, Ill. The company, which manufactures abrasive blasting and roofing materials, has been issued a total of 35 health and safety citations with proposed penalties of \$466,400. "U.S. Minerals has severely jeopardized the health of its workers by exposing them to extremely high levels of dust containing silica," said Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA Dr. David Michaels. "Even with employees covered head to toe in dust, the company still failed to provide breathing protection and other controls."

- [Read the News Release](#)

Spotlight on States: Texas

\$5.4 Million For Workers Affected by Aerospace Layoffs

Nearly 600 workers impacted by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's retirement of the Space Shuttle program will receive assistance from a \$5,367,340 grant awarded by DOL this week. "The grant will give the talented and high-skilled workers of Texas the opportunity to find new jobs in expanding sectors of the state's economy," said Secretary Solis. "Our goal is to provide the necessary tools for these workers to identify and prepare for other career opportunities that will place them in new and permanent jobs." The grant will provide affected workers with access to dislocated worker services, which may include skills assessment, basic skills training, individual career counseling and occupational skills training.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Opportunities are Open: Get Into Training

DOL's Employment and Training Administration is providing the resources necessary to train and retool our workforce for 21st century jobs. Explore the positions below or [view all](#) the rewarding careers at the department.

1. Position in Washington, D.C., Metro Area
[Management and Program Analyst](#)
DE-10-ETA-229
Close: 09/14/2010
2. Position in Washington, D.C., Metro Area
[Supervisory Workforce Analyst](#)
DE-10-ETA-221
Close: 09/14/2010
3. Position in Chicago, Ill.
[Workforce Program Specialist](#)
DE-10-CHI-ETA-0182
Close: 09/15/2010

Follow USDOL on 

- DOL announces \$5.4 million grant to assist workers in Texas affected

by aerospace layoffs [09/09/2010]
<http://bit.ly/dsdrLv> about 6 hours ago

- OSHA awards \$8 million in safety and health training grants [09/09/2010] <http://bit.ly/axZGnv> about 6 hours ago

[Previous Issues](#) | [Follow us on Twitter](#) | [Subscribe](#) | [Send Feedback](#) | [Unsubscribe](#)

U.S. Department of Labor, Frances Perkins Building, 200 Constitution Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20210
www.dol.gov | Telephone: 1-866-4-USA-DOL (1-866-487-2365) (1-866-487-2365) | TTY: 1-877-889-5627 | [Contact Us](#)