



DOL News Brief

September 16, 2010

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Solis Diary: Mexico's 200th



As the highest-ranking Latina in the Administration and having a father who moved to Mexico as a child, Secretary Solis' trip to Mexico City this

week to lead the U.S. Presidential Delegation for Mexico's Bicentennial Celebration had both personal and professional significance. The Secretary kept a diary of her brief Mexican adventure to remember all the special details of the trip – not just for herself, but for those across America who live both the challenges and benefits that come with the dynamic relationship between the U.S. and Mexico.

- [View the Slideshow](#)
- [Read the Secretary's Diary](#)

Ledbetter and Solis on Equal Pay

Lilly Ledbetter will join Secretary Solis on Tuesday, September 21, for a live webcast discussion on pay equity and its impact for working families. In 2009, President Barack Obama signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act to ensure that women like Ms. Ledbetter and other victims of pay discrimination can effectively challenge unequal pay. Since then many women have made great strides towards equal pay for equal work, but there is still work to be done. Tune in on Tuesday!



- [Watch The Webcast Here Sept. 21](#)

To kickoff Hispanic Heritage Month, Secretary Solis hosted a cafecito, a traditional Latin American coffee breakfast, for leaders

What's Hot

Tyson Fresh Meats Sued for Systemic Discrimination Against Women

The department filed a lawsuit this week alleging that Tyson Fresh Meats systematically discriminated against women in its hiring practices at its Joslin, Ill., plant. The complaint is based on investigations conducted by the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs that revealed Tyson utilized a hiring process and selection procedures that discriminated against women seeking entry-level positions. The complaint requests that all of Tyson's federal contracts be canceled; it be debarred from future government contracts until it has remedied the violations; and it provide complete relief, including lost wages, interest and other benefits of employment, to affected individuals. More than 750 women are believed to be owed back wages and more than 100 women should be given the option of working for the company. "Taxpayer dollars must never be used to discriminate. In our efforts to uncover workplace discrimination, OFCCP will utilize a host of remedies, including debarment, to protect workers, promote diversity and enforce the law," said Patricia A. Shiu, director of OFCCP.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Africa, Cocoa and Kids

As part of a Framework of Action to eliminate the worst forms of child labor in the cocoa industry, Secretary Solis announced a \$10 million grant to fund a new project in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire on Monday. She was joined by Senator Tom Harkin, Representative Eliot Engel, Labor Minister E.T. Mensah of Ghana, Labor Minister Emile Guirieoulou of Cote d'Ivoire, and representatives of the international chocolate and cocoa industry in making renewed commitments of resources to address the problem. "Child labor perpetuates a cycle of poverty that prevents families and nations from reaching their full potential. This new Framework of Action will focus on tackling poverty so parents do not have to rely on their children's labor," said Solis. In addition, the governments of Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire committed resources, personnel and policy support for the initiative and the international chocolate and cocoa industry pledged \$7 million.



- [View the Slideshow](#)
- [Read the News Release](#)

ODEP Announces More Than \$1 Million in Funding for Adult Center

The Office of Disability Employment Policy announced that it will award an additional \$1,150,000 to continue funding the National Technical Assistance and Research Center for Increasing the Employment and Economic Independence of Adults with Disabilities. "We must continue to find innovative ways to improve employment opportunities for people with



in the Latino community at the White House on

Wednesday. She was joined by Valerie Jarrett, senior advisor to the president; Cecilia Muñoz, White House director of intergovernmental affairs; and Tina Tchen, White House director of public engagement along with Maria Del Carmen Aponte, ambassador to El Salvador. Later, Solis addressed a crowd of more than 250 for a policy briefing with senior administration officials. Earlier in the week, Solis gave remarks at the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute's Public Policy Conference where she talked about America's economic future. On Thursday, the celebration continued at the Latina Leadership Breakfast hosted by the National Hispana Leadership Institute. "Here at the Labor Department, we want ALL women to succeed. We want Latinas to be part of the future high-growth career sectors, like green jobs, science, technology, engineering, math and healthcare," she told the crowd.

- [View the Slideshow](#)
- [View the Calendar of Events](#)

DOL at CBC Town Hall

During the National Town Hall Meeting of the Congressional Black Caucus on Thursday, Secretary Solis delivered remarks to the nearly 900



African-American leaders. She emphasized that ensuring all American workers have the opportunity to gain the skills they need for the jobs of the future was a priority for her, particularly in health care, information technology, advanced manufacturing, and clean and renewable energy. Solis also spoke to the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation's Black Elected Officials. Employment and Training Administration Assistant Secretary Jane Oates followed Solis' remarks during a panel discussion.

- [View the Slideshow](#)

75th Anniversary of UI

Behind every good program stand great people. Last Friday, Secretary Solis and Assistant Secretary for the Employment

disabilities," said Kathleen Martinez, assistant secretary of labor for the Office of Disability Employment Policy. "This center focuses on strategies such as customized employment and universal design that can dramatically improve the prospects of employment success for adults with disabilities. This work is vital to ODEP's mission."

- [Read the News Release](#)

DOL Working for You

OSHA Official Dispenses "Street Corner" Health/Safety Assistance



After learning of the death of a day laborer in a trenching accident, OSHA compliance assistance specialist Michael Yarnell and some of his colleagues hung out on Staten Island, N.Y., street corners and social gathering places favored by Hispanics, spreading bilingual health and safety information and offering compliance assistance. This led to an alliance between OSHA and El Centro de Hospitalidad, a storefront center that serves the needs of the area's Hispanic community. Workers receive free health and safety literature and view safety videos. They can also take the

OSHA 10-hour training course and receive a safety certificate that allows them to work on any construction site. No fatalities have occurred among the workers who frequent El Centro, Yarnell said. Yarnell, a 36-year veteran of OSHA who works in the Avenel, N.J., office, said, "Our job is to protect the safety and health of workers."

Around DOL

European Union, U.S. Workforce Communities Come Together at DOL

Collaborating across agencies can be challenging. Collaborating across an ocean takes planning and determination. This week 20 workforce professionals from European Union nations joined department staff, along with administration and state officials to share ideas, tools and promising workforce development practices. The event was kicked-off by Gerri Fiala, deputy assistant secretary for the Employment and Training Administration; Sandra Polaski, deputy undersecretary for the Bureau International Affairs; and Wallis Goelen, head of the Employment Services and Labour Mobility Unit, European Commission. The three-day event focused on how the U.S. and EU can engage in technical knowledge transfer – the sharing of workforce tools and information – and spur employment in spite of economic challenges.



- [View the Slideshow](#)

Labor to Labor on Health

The Affordable Care Act offers new health insurance protections for Americans nationwide. As part of the Employee Benefits Security Administration's ongoing efforts to provide hands-on help in understanding the



and Training Administration Jane Oates joined Unemployment Insurance Administrator Gay Gilbert and Office of Unemployment Insurance staff in marking the

75th Anniversary of the Unemployment Insurance Program. They acknowledged both the vital importance of the program, and the hard work and commitment of DOL staff. Unemployment Insurance is one of the longest-running programs in the history of the United States. It was created by the Social Security Act of 1935 as a means of alleviating personal hardship for unemployed workers by providing temporary income support to those who lose jobs through no fault of their own.

- [Download the 75th Anniversary Poster](#)

Solis in The Sunshine State

"I know times are difficult, but we will never give up on you." That was Secretary Solis' message when she met with job seekers at Workforce



Central Florida's Kissimmee One-Stop Center on Thursday, September 9. Solis was in Florida to see DOL's employment programs in action, and to speak with local residents about the tools and services that DOL has available for them, including a new web portal for job seekers, mySkills myFuture. In Kissimmee, she met a broad array of job seekers, including military veterans, former truck drivers, construction workers, recent transplants to the sunshine state from the Midwest, New York City and Puerto Rico, and even a single mother who is taking classes at the local community college to broaden her skills set. Solis outlined the specific DOL programs that best fit their needs, and made sure to connect each one with the appropriate advisor at the One Stop. Earlier that same day, in Melbourne, Fla., she accepted the "Farmworker Fighter Award" at the National Farmworker Jobs Program Conference. Her message to the audience at that forum was also about commitment. "We owe farmworkers so much, and my department will never shy away from protecting your rights."

- [View the Slideshow](#)



new health regulations, EBSA Assistant Secretary Phyllis Borzi and her staff met with representatives of the AFL-CIO and its affiliates on September 10. The group discussed implementation issues and the timeline for future regulations.

Different and Equal in the 21st Century Workplace

In recognition its 90th Anniversary, DOL's Women's Bureau, in collaboration with the United States Studies Program of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, hosted a symposium on September 14. "Different and Equal in the 21st Century Workplace" brought together key leaders for a stimulating discussion on options that allow



women to better balance workplace and family demands and ensure their economic security. Moderated by Women's Bureau Director Sara Manzano-Díaz, the symposium featured Sonya Michel, director, United States Studies Program of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars; Joan Williams, professor of law, Hastings College; Heidi Hartmann, president, Institute for Women's Policy Research; and Valerie Rawlston Wilson, senior vice president for research, National Urban League.

- [View the Slideshow](#)
- [Watch the Symposium](#)
- [Share your Ideas and Thoughts with the Women's Bureau](#)

More than Half a Century of LMRDA

September 15 marked the 51st anniversary of the enactment of the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act which grants certain rights to union members and protects their interests by promoting democratic procedures within labor organizations. At the Department of Labor, it is the responsibility of the Office of Labor Management Standards to enforce provisions of the LMRDA. ([Read More](#))

DOL in Action

States Encouraged to Practice Fiscal Responsibility

States are encouraged to minimize the need for advances to their unemployment compensation systems under a final regulation issued this week by the Employment and Training Administration. The rule implements federal legislation requiring the Labor Department to establish criteria for states to qualify for interest-free federal loans for the payment of unemployment compensation. "The past few years have really tested the unemployment programs. For that reason, and the future health of unemployment trust funds, it is especially important that states make reasonable efforts to maintain the solvency of their unemployment compensation systems before receiving interest-free federal loans," said Secretary Solis.

- [Read the News Release](#)

\$330,000 Grant to Assist Michiganders

Workers at one company in Michigan will be getting some help following layoffs. The department has announced a \$330,000 grant to assist 60 workers affected by layoffs at Terex Handlers in Baraga, Michigan. Awarded to the Michigan Department of Energy, Labor and Economic Growth, the

DOL Leadership's Day of Service



The Capital Area Food Bank had several DOL volunteers last Friday as part of the National Day of Service.

Secretary Solis, along with Assistant

Secretaries Jane Oates and Brian Kennedy, Deputy Assistant Secretaries Jordan Barab and Junior Ortiz, and Directors Patricia Shiu and Gabriela Lemus, helped package donated food for those in need. They were joined by Office of Personnel Management Director John Berry and volunteers from California Tortilla. Founded in 1980, the food bank distributes 23 million pounds of food annually to more than 383,000 people through their partner agencies.

- [View the Slideshow](#)

Safety Is Everyone's Business

Re-energizing OSHA so the agency can achieve its mission to keep the workplace safe was the subject of Assistant Secretary David Michaels' remarks this week to a meeting of judges and lawyers hosted by the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission. Michaels outlined many challenges facing the agency as it seeks to protect 130 million American workers, including a limited budget, outdated standards, and weak penalties. "Our response is to leverage all the resources and tools available to this agency - including outreach, consultation, rulemaking and enforcement - to maximize our ability to protect our workforce," he said. Asking for help in that effort he added, "My message to you is very much the same one I have expressed to workers, employers, associations and others: OSHA cannot achieve its mission alone. To ensure that every worker returns home every day safe and healthy, it is going to take a collaborative effort, because worker safety and health is everyone's business."

- [Read Michaels' Remarks](#)

Upcoming Deadlines & Events

Event Spotlight: DEEOIC Resource Center

The Division of Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation (DEEOIC) will host traveling resource centers in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Lynchburg, Virginia, to provide information about new classes of former employees at the Los Alamos National Laboratory and BWX Technologies Inc. recently

grant will be operated by Western U.P. Michigan Works. Workers will have access to dislocated worker services, which may include skills assessment, basic skills training, individual career counseling and occupational skills training.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Feds Hiring More Veterans

The President's Interagency Council on Veterans Employment announced an increase of 2,600 veterans hired by federal agencies since last November when the president signed an executive order establishing the Veterans Employment Initiative. The council also voted to adopt a more aggressive new benchmark for veteran hiring among federal agencies. Secretary Solis co-chairs the council along with Veterans' Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki. Office of Personnel Management Director John Berry serves as vice-chair.



- [Visit the Feds Hire Vets Site](#)
- [Visit DOL's Veteran Hiring Site](#)

Mine Safety Grants Focus on Prevention and Preparedness

Training is one of the most important components of a mining operation's overall safety and health program. To that end, the Mine Safety and Health Administration this week announced \$500,000 in grant funds to six organizations that provide education and training within the mining industry. The focus of the fiscal year 2010 Brookwood-Sago grants program will be on training and training materials for mine emergency prevention and preparedness for all underground mines. Grant recipients include Bevill State Community College of Jasper, Ala., Bluefield State College of Bluefield, W.Va., Colorado Department of Natural Resources, Colorado School of Mines, Pennsylvania State University and United Mine Workers Career Centers Inc.

- [Read the News Release](#)

OSHA Takes Action On GAO Whistleblower Report



The U.S. Government Accountability Office issued a report titled, "Whistleblower Protection: Sustained Management Attention Needed to Address Long-standing Program Weaknesses" on Thursday. "OSHA has already begun taking action on items recommended in the GAO report, such as requiring all investigators and their supervisors

to complete mandatory investigator training over the next 18 months, setting strategic goals and performance measures for the whistleblower program, and providing new equipment to field staff," said Assistant Secretary for Occupational Safety and Health Dr. David Michaels. "We are still studying other recommendations from the GAO, and appreciate their review and input."

Spotlight on States: Tennessee

\$2.9 Million to Continue Tennessee Flood Recovery Efforts

Floods recede away, but cleanup and recovery can take time. The department has announced a \$2,921,500 National Emergency Grant increment to continue cleanup and recovery efforts in the wake of flooding that struck Tennessee in May. The funding, awarded to the Tennessee

added to the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act's (EEOICPA) Special Exposure Cohort.

- [Learn About the Los Alamos TRC](#)
- [Learn About the Lynchburg TRC](#)

MSHA — Seek Refuge: Your Third Line of Defense

- [September 22, 2010 — Ebensburg, PA](#)

OFCCP — 12 Reasons Why Contractors Get in Trouble

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

OFCCP — 45th Anniversary of the Executive Order 11246

- [September 24, 2010 — San Francisco, CA](#)

OFCCP — AAP Development & Preparing for a Desk Audit

- [September 23, 2010 — Baltimore, MD](#)

OFCCP — Affirmative Action Program

- [September 21, 2010 — Jacksonville, FL](#)

OFCCP — Compliance Assistance Seminar

- [September 20, 2010 — San Juan, PR](#)
- [September 21, 2010 — Dallas, TX](#)
- [September 21, 2010 — New York, NY](#)
- [September 22, 2010 — Nashville, TN](#)
- [September 23, 2010 — Mountainside, NJ](#)
- [September 23, 2010 — San Antonio, TX](#)

OFCCP — How to Compile an AAP and Support Data for a Compliance Review

- [September 24, 2010 — Richmond, VA](#)

OFCCP — Veterans Program

- [September 22, 2010 — Hamilton, MT](#)

OFCCP — Updates & Workplace Accommodations

- [September 22, 2010 — Columbia, SC](#)

WHD — Wage and Hour Division's Prevailing Wage Conference

Department of Labor and Workforce Development, will continue to provide for temporary jobs to assist in recovery efforts related to devastation caused by severe storms, straight-line winds, flooding and tornadoes that occurred across several counties this spring.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Green Scene

Tongue Point Job Corps Center Reduces Its Landfill Carbon Footprint

Thanks to a food pulper affectionately called "Matilda," the Tongue Point, Ore., Job Corps Center is limiting its carbon footprint by reducing mountains of food waste into smaller amounts which are then used for composting. Oregon's Department of Environmental Quality estimates Oregonians dispose of almost one-half million tons of food each year, which crowd landfills and creates methane gas and toxic wastes.



Photo Copyright Alex Pajunas.



Photo Copyright Alex Pajunas.

Tongue Point, whose project was funded through the Recovery Act, uses its pulper to grind up food, napkins, plastic utensils and paper generated by the 550 people it serves in its cafeteria each day. This action has reduced the amount of garbage it produces from 18 to 20 bags of garbage per day down to two to three bags per day.

Recovery Highlights

Training Young People for Energy Efficient Building

In Bridgeport, Connecticut, Youthbuild participants will have the opportunity to earn the Pre-Apprenticeship Certificate Training of the Home Builder's Institute. Participants who receive a PACT certificate have the skills necessary to secure entry-level employment in their chosen trade (carpentry, electrical, plumbing, landscaping, masonry, and facilities maintenance). Completion of the YouthBuild program will qualify participants to enter an apprenticeship in the Carpenter's Union Local 210 as a second year apprentice. In addition to training more than 50 participants, the project will create five new project staff positions (Project Manager, Union Liaison, Adult Basic Education Instructor, and two Instructors). This initiative is one of 100 to be featured in an upcoming White House report on the top Recovery Act funded projects nationwide.

- [Learn More](#)

Opportunities are Open: ¿Sabes Español?

Wednesday, September 15 marked the beginning of Hispanic Heritage Month. From now through October 15, Americans celebrate the culture and traditions of individuals who trace their heritage to Spanish-speaking countries. Explore the bilingual opportunity below or [view all](#) the rewarding careers at the department.

1. Position in Tarrytown, NY
[Safety and Occupational Health Specialist \(English/Spanish\)](#)
DE-10-NY-OSHA-77
Close: 09/16/2010

- [September 21-23, 2010 — New Orleans, LA](#)
-

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- Statement by DOL's OSHA Assistant Secretary Dr. David Michaels on GAO whistleblower protection program report [09/... <http://bit.ly/ansZPy> about 4 hours ago
- Just passed 10k followers, thanks! Check out the DOL blog for a great diary of @HildaSolisDOL's visit to Mexico <http://s.dol.gov/B9> about 5 hours ago

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