



DOL News Brief

September 30, 2010

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**Upcoming Discussion:  
Secretary Solis and General  
Baltodano**

Please join Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis and General Alvaro Baltodano of the Nicaraguan government for a special panel discussion on the Better Work Program in Nicaragua. The event will be held Wednesday, Oct. 6, 2010 at 10 a.m. in the department's Frances Perkins Building. The Better Work Program, a DOL-funded initiative, is designed to improve labor standards compliance and competitiveness in Nicaraguan global supply chains. Participants also include the International Labor Organization, Levi Strauss, Walmart, and other stakeholders. Due to limited seating, please RSVP with Clarisse Young at [young.clarisse@dol.gov](mailto:young.clarisse@dol.gov)

- [View the Webcast Live October 6](#)

**Hearing All Workers**

At the first Las Vegas Area Asian Pacific American Workers' Rights Hearing this week, Secretary Solis spoke to more than 300 attendees about her commitment to improving the lives of Asian American and Pacific Islander workers. Solis highlighted the Wage and Hour Division's "We Can Help" campaign that was translated in multiple Asian languages to encourage workers to report wage violations. Regional staff from both the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and Wage and Hour Division also joined the Secretary at the hearing and later helped distribute OSHA and We Can Help materials in Tagalog, Chinese, Vietnamese, Thai and other languages.



- [View the Slideshow](#)

**Promotores Among  
Disadvantaged Communities**

To commemorate the six-month anniversary of the Affordable Care Act, the White House brought

**What's Hot**

**Major Reforms in Mine Safety Enforcement Underway**

Since the passage of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977, no mining operation has ever been placed on a pattern of violations, a strict enforcement tool that targets mines with a history of serious safety and health violations. That's all about to change. This week, the Mine Safety and Health Administration unveiled major new reforms that include tougher provisions for mines that chronically and persistently break the law. "We have known for some time that the current system is broken and needs to be fixed," said Joseph A. Main, assistant secretary of labor for mine safety and health. "This new system will let MSHA focus its attention on those mines that are putting miners at greatest risk."

- [Read the POV Criteria](#)
- [Read the News Release](#)

**Special Focus: NDEAM**

"October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month. Across America, there are fifty-four million people with disabilities, and their talents enrich our communities every single day. Yet opening the door to opportunity for many of these workers remains a challenge. This undermines the true strength of our economy and our nation. To that end, DOL will continue building a long-term infrastructure that helps bring together employers with jobseekers — including those who have disabilities. That commitment will endure — not just through National Disability Employment Awareness Month, but every single day," said Secretary Solis.

**\$21 Million in Disability Employment Initiative Cooperative Agreements**

The department announced an award of \$21,276,575 to nine states under the Disability Employment Initiative. The funds will improve education, training, and employment opportunities and outcomes of youth and adults who are unemployed and/or receiving Social Security disability benefits. "During these difficult economic times, we want to make it possible for all workers, especially those with disabilities, to benefit from the Labor Department's employment and retraining services that have a proven success rate," said Secretary Solis.

- [Read the News Release](#)

**\$2 Million to Improve Opportunities for People With Disabilities**

As part of its "Add Us In" initiative, the Office of Disability Employment Policy awarded four two-year cooperative agreements totaling more than \$2.4 million to consortia led by the University of Missouri-Kansas City in Kansas City, Mo.; Community Partners-Integrated Recovery Network in Los Angeles, Calif.; The Workplace Inc. in Bridgeport, Conn.; and the University

together *Promotores*, also known as community health workers, from around the country for a teleconference. The first-of-its-kind call was to empower these community leaders with the most up-to-date information under the new law.

Among the many participants was Secretary Solis, who reminded callers of the important role they play in helping disadvantaged communities. She also informed them of a new website to refer the public for more information on the Affordable Care Act.

- [Visit Healthcare.gov](#)
- [Visit CuidadoDeSalud.gov](#)

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## Solis Joins White House Summit on Community Colleges

Community colleges are increasingly the educators of choice for both new students and workers seeking to upgrade their skills. On Oct. 5, Dr. Jill Biden hosts the first-ever White House Summit on Community Colleges. This is an opportunity to bring together community colleges, businesses, philanthropists, federal and state policy leaders, and students. The summit will focus on how community colleges can help meet the job training and education needs of the nation's evolving workforce, as well as the critical role these institutions play in achieving the president's goal to lead the world with the highest proportion of college graduates by 2020. Secretary Solis will moderate a panel discussion on creating industry partnerships with community colleges.

- [Learn More Here](#)
- [Read Secretary Solis' Blog Post](#)

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## Borzi Recognized



During its annual conference in Fort Lauderdale, the National Coordinating Committee for Multiemployer Plans presented the 10th

annual John L. Lewis Award to Employee Benefits Security Administration Assistant Secretary Phyllis Borzi. She was recognized for her leadership in protecting and advancing the cause of multiemployer benefit plans nationwide. "It was a tremendous honor to receive an award named for a historic and visionary labor leader who ensured that participants got the pension and health benefits they were promised and earned," Borzi said. "I am thrilled to receive this award."

of Oklahoma in Norman, Okla. "This administration is committed to expanding job opportunities for all Americans, including individuals with disabilities," said Secretary Solis. "Add Us In will expand opportunities for workers with disabilities and help ensure that everyone who wants to work can find a good job."

- [Read the News Release](#)

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## National Employer Technical Assistance Center \$1.6 Million Funding

The Office of Disability Employment Policy announced \$1.6 million to the National Technical Assistance, Policy and Research Center for Employers on Employment of People with Disabilities at Cornell University. "Employers need talented, highly skilled workers to compete in today's global economy," said Kathleen Martinez, assistant secretary of labor for the Office of Disability Employment Policy. "This employer-focused technical assistance center provides the tools and resources employers need to find these workers and promote the full inclusion of employees with disabilities in the workplace." Funding will continue the Center's efforts to develop policy options and provide technical assistance to employers and employer organizations on the recruitment, hiring, retention, and advancement of people with disabilities.

- [Read the News Release](#)

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## International Scene

### ILAB Announces Competitive Solicitation to Combat Child Labor in Egypt

Qualified organizations will be able to compete for a \$9.5 million grant to combat the worst forms of child labor in cotton and other agriculture sectors in Egypt. Applicants should focus on the specific goals for combating child labor. Information on the application requirements are available online. All cooperative agreement awards will be made by Dec. 31, 2010.

- [Read the News Release](#)

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## News You Can Use

### Benefits.gov: New Name, Increases Benefits

The former GovBenefits.gov website has been redesigned and rebranded to become Benefits.gov. Along with a new look, the site provides enhanced features to help citizens quickly navigate and locate government benefit and assistance programs. "What was already a great site is now even better," said Ed Hugler, the U.S. Department of Labor's Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management. "Benefits.gov's user-friendly design and search tools will make it easier than ever to find government assistance information."

- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Visit the New Site](#)

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## DOL Working For You

### WIA Funding Helps Chef Cook Up Success

Naikia Cherry-Hill's signature dessert dish – sweet potato crunch – was borne out of her determination to succeed as a chef after losing her job at a dental lab. The mother of four enrolled in culinary arts courses through the Tidewater (Va.) Community College's "On

## Latina Leadership Honored

The Imagen Foundation honored the Labor Department at their annual Latina Leaders event this week for being among the top federal



agencies that have several Latinas in senior positions. Secretary Solis, Chief of Staff Katherine Archuleta, Assistant Secretary for Disability Employment Policy Kathleen Martinez, as well as Women's Bureau Director Sara Manzano-Diaz, were honored for their service. "Last year we experienced a tremendous number of Latina appointments at the highest levels of government, all these women are an inspiration for our girls and young women following in their footsteps," said Helen Hernandez, president and founder of The Imagen Foundation.

- [View the Slideshow](#)

## Forum on Credentialing



The increasingly dynamic world economy demands that U.S. workers have the skills and education needed to compete. On Tuesday,

approximately 40 participants from community and technical colleges, the public workforce system, adult education system, labor, industry, policy research organizations and government came together at DOL to identify strategies for increasing the number of adults who attain industry-recognized or postsecondary credentials. Credentials result in increased earnings, employment and career advancement. They are an important part of meeting President Obama's goal of developing the best educated, most competitive workforce in the world.

- [View the Slideshow](#)

## Oates at National Journal Live

The recent recession has hit certain groups particularly hard, including men in blue collar industries and older workers. Getting these individuals, and all those impacted by the economic downturn, back to work was the focus of a National Journal Live panel discussion this

Ramp" career program which is funded by DOL through the Workforce Investment Act. There Naikia learned how to make American and international cuisine dishes and was so impressive that while still in school, she was offered a job as a chef by the ARAMARK food service company. In her spare time she also counsels young mothers about focusing on careers and completing their education. Naikia, who graduated college with honors, said the workforce program "gave me the tools to succeed."



## Around DOL

### New Plan in Action



The Department of Labor's Strategic Plan FY 2011-2016 was unveiled this week. The plan is an outline for how DOL will carry out Secretary Solis' vision of "good jobs for everyone," and will guide the work of the department moving forward. "We have rethought and refocused our efforts, with the goal of providing the best possible service to America's workers," said Secretary Solis. "This plan marks yet another step on that journey to transform our Labor Department into the most focused, efficient, and effective organization it's ever been."

Highlights of the strategic plan include measurable outcomes, increased accountability, and data and evidence driven budget development and program planning.

- [Read More about the Strategic Plan](#)

## Green Scene

### OSHA Establishes Strategic Partnership at Illinois Wind Project

In an effort to provide a safe environment for workers at the Edison Mission Energy Big Sky Wind Project, White Construction Inc. of Clinton, Ind., the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the Region V Wind Farm Response Team have established a strategic partnership. "This first-of-its-kind partnership in the wind energy industry sets a standard for future construction projects in the emerging field of alternative energy," said Kathy Webb, OSHA's area director in Aurora, Ill. White Construction expects to reduce exposure to construction hazards through increased training and compliance with OSHA standards.



- [Read the News Release](#)

### Connecting Workforce System with New Energy Cluster in Philadelphia

Renewable energy job creation is getting a boost through a new research and development project in Philadelphia. Announced earlier this week, the Greater Philadelphia Innovation Cluster for Energy Efficiency will develop new energy efficient building technologies and bring them to market. DOL will connect the workforce investment system including, One Stop Career Centers, with the project to ensure that workers are prepared for careers in

week. Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training Jane Oates joined several panelists from private industry, higher education and the military in discussing strategies for reemploying workers hard-hit by the recession. "We cannot have a training world that isn't listening to the needs of businesses," said Oates. Following the panel, Oates participated in a live web chat on the same topic.

- [Read the Web Chat Transcript](#)

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## Knowledge is Power

The U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division is holding a series of discussions with the National People's Action Network. The goal is to explain worker rights and how to file a complaint with the Labor Department when rights are violated. One such discussion was held last week with the Fuerza Laboral organization in Rhode Island. More than 100 workers and stakeholders gathered to speak with Wage and Hour officials, as well as receive information on where to go for help when denied the wages they deserve.

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## OFCCP Strengthens Efforts for Veterans, Official Tells Congress



The Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs has strengthened its enforcement capabilities,

implemented a robust regulatory agenda and identified more individual complaints through greater outreach, Deputy Director Les Jin said in testimony before a House Government Affairs Subcommittee this week. The subcommittee hearing focused on laws prohibiting federal contractors and subcontractors from discriminating against veterans. "We are educating veterans about their rights in the job market. We are showing them how to identify discriminatory practices, and we are creating avenues for two-way communication between communities of veterans and OFCCP," said Jin.

- [Read Jin's Testimony](#)

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## Helping Youth, a Global Initiative

As featured in last week's newsletter, the Albuquerque Job Corps Center had the opportunity to host 14 visitors from Saudi



energy efficient building technologies.

- [Read the News Release](#)

## BLS Releases Green Jobs Career Information



The Bureau of Labor Statistics announced the release of career information related to green jobs this week. The first report provides readers with an overview of the wind energy industry and its recent growth in the United States, and describes some selected occupations critical to wind power. For

jobseekers looking for more information on how they can find work in the wind energy industry, the report also contains typical education and training backgrounds for workers in these occupations.

- [Read the Report](#)

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## DOL in Action

### ETA Releases Allied Health Access Guidebook

Career options in healthcare go well beyond becoming a doctor or a nurse. The Employment and Training Administration has released a new guidebook that will help training providers design programs to prepare young people for careers. Allied health encompasses at least 40 different professions including dental hygienist, dietitian, occupational or physical therapist, and radiographer.



- [Read the New Guidebook](#)

### Estadísticas en Español

In honor of Hispanic Heritage Month, the Bureau of Labor Statistics announced its first-ever release of career information in Spanish. Now available online are Spanish-language descriptions of 100 occupations from the 2010-11 Occupational Outlook Handbook, as well as information concerning résumés, applications and cover letters. The Handbook is one of BLS' most widely-used publications and provides career information about the nature of work, pay, education and training, job outlook, and more for hundreds of occupations.

- [View the Materials](#)

### Lawsuit to Recover \$920,000 for California Employees

The Employee Benefits Security Administration filed suit against executives of Journey Electrical Technologies Inc., based in Laguna Hills, California, to recover more than \$920,000 in employee and employer contributions. The company failed to collect for the 401(k) plan, which covered nearly 264 employees. The money was used for purposes unrelated to the plan. Secretary Solis said, "The flagrant misuse of pension assets to subsidize corporate activities jeopardizes the retirement income of workers and will not be tolerated. We took legal action to protect the retirement security of these workers and ensure that they receive the benefits they are due."

- [Read the News Release](#)

### \$1.45 Million Grant Awarded to UMWA Career Centers

The United Mine Workers of America Career Centers Inc. will receive a \$1.45 million grant from the Mine Safety and Health Administration to fund mine rescue team training programs. Following three major mine disasters in 2006, it became apparent that the need existed for enhancing mine

Arabia last week. The visitors were invited to the United States by the Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program to study at risk youth programs throughout the country. One interesting comment from the group was how AJCC fared during the current economic crisis. The center was proud to say that students were above the national average with receiving good jobs at good wages. Before leaving the visitors expressed a keen interest in interacting with the students. Scott Lente-Kasero, a welding student who also served as the foreman for the G-20 Summit globe project last April led a tour of the facility and spoke about his experiences as a Job Corps student.

- [View the Slideshow](#)

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## Upcoming Deadlines & Events

### [Open Funding Opportunities](#)

Check out the grant opportunities with DOL.

MSHA — 2010 TRAM (Training Resources and Materials) National Mine Instructors Seminar

- [October 12-14, 2010 — Beaver, WV](#)

MSHA — Public Meeting on Mine Safety and Health Management Programs

- [October 8, 2010 — Arlington, VA](#)
- [October 8, 2010 — Sacramento, CA](#)
- [October 12, 2010 — Pittsburgh, PA](#)

OFCCP — Compliance Assistance Seminar

- [October 15, 2010 — San Antonio, TX](#)

OFCCP — Compliance Assistance Seminar for ADA

- [October 15, 2010 — Richmond, VA](#)

OFCCP — Compliance Assistance Seminar for Construction Contractors

- [October 1, 2010 — Richmond, VA](#)
- [October 12, 2010 — Mountainside, NJ](#)
- [October 12, 2010 — Mountainside, NJ](#)
- [October 14, 2010 — New York, NY](#)
- [October 14, 2010 — Hartford, CT](#)

rescue teams and developing up-to-date accident response plans. Under the cooperative agreement, training may be conducted in classrooms, mine simulation lab facilities or at mine sites with mine personnel. "The Sago, Aracoma and Darby mine disasters of 2006 indicated the need to better train and prepare mine rescue teams to effectively respond to mine emergencies at underground coal mines," said Gregory R. Wagner M.D., MSHA's deputy assistant secretary for policy. "One of the best methods for preparing miners to respond to an emergency is through simulated mine emergency training."

- [Read the News Release](#)

### OSHA Gives Report on State-Run Programs

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has concluded a special evaluation of state-run occupational safety and health programs under its jurisdiction. Enhanced Federal Annual Monitoring and Evaluation reports provide detailed findings and recommendations on the operations of state-run OSHA programs in 25 states and territories. "Our goal is to identify problems in state-run programs before they result in serious injuries or fatalities," said Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA Dr. David Michaels. EFAME reports and appendices for each of the 25 states, as well as each state's comment and fiscal year 2009 self-evaluation report, are now available on OSHA's website.

- [Read the EFAME Reports](#)
- [Read the News Release](#)

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## Spotlight on States: Iowa

Iowa Receives National Emergency Grant For Storm Cleanup

The U.S. Department of Labor has announced a \$5.8 million National Emergency Grant award to assist cleanup and recovery efforts in the wake of severe storms, flooding, and tornadoes that struck Iowa in June. "Severe storms inflicted widespread damage across the state of Iowa throughout June, and families and businesses need our support," said Secretary Solis. "Today's grant will help these citizens cleanup and repair their affected communities."

- [Read the News Release](#)

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## Recovery Highlights

\$18 million in UI Modernization Funds Awarded for District of Columbia

DOL announced \$18,421,988 in unemployment insurance modernization incentive funds to the District of Columbia. The district qualified for the funds available under the Recovery Act by making unemployment benefits available to part-time workers and by providing additional weeks of benefits to UI beneficiaries enrolled in approved training programs. "The District of Columbia has made important updates to its UI program to better meet the needs of today's workforce, and that is why the district is receiving this grant today," said Secretary Solis. "Especially in challenging times like this, it is imperative that the safety net includes part-time workers and individuals who are upgrading their skills to obtain better jobs."

- [Read the News Release](#)

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## Opportunities are Open: BLS

DOL's Bureau of Labor Statistics is the principal fact-finding agency for the federal government in the broad field of labor economics and statistics. BLS

- [October 14, 2010 — Buffalo, NY](#)

OFCCP — Compliance Assistance Seminar for Supply and Service Contractors

- [October 6, 2010 — Pittsburgh, PA](#)
- [October 7, 2010 — New York, NY](#)
- [October 8, 2010 — Richmond, VA](#)
- [October 14, 2010 — San Juan, PR](#)

OFCCP — AAP Development & Preparing for a Desk Audit

- [October 14, 2010 — Baltimore, MD](#)

OFCCP — How Do You Respond and Prepare for an Audit?

- [October 5, 2010 — Philadelphia, PA](#)

OLMS — Conducting Union Officer Elections Seminar

- [October 15, 2010 — Buffalo, NY](#)

OWCP — Town Hall Meetings to assist nuclear weapons workers

- [October 7, 2010 — Amherst, NY](#)

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