



DOL News Brief

November 10, 2010

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Solis Shares Job Success with UA



Secretary Solis delivered remarks at the United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipefitting Industry

reception in Hollywood, Florida, on Tuesday. The event, themed "Industry Partnerships for Today's Challenges," was part of the 2010 Tripartite Conference that included UA leaders from around the country as well as employers and management executives. "Everyone in this room, and Americans all across the country, know that we are facing unprecedented economic challenges today," said Secretary Solis. "In many respects your organization is planting the seeds for major gains."

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

DOL Programs Aiding Veterans

The Labor Department's Veterans' Employment and Training Service is continuing to ensure that military personnel are provided with job



training, career counseling and re-employment assistance, the agency's assistant secretary, Raymond Jefferson, told the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's "Hiring our Heroes" conference on Wednesday. VETS has begun a number of initiatives, including connecting employers with more than 2,100 local veterans' employment representatives; linking veterans with businesses through One-Stop Career Centers, and publishing dates and locations of veteran-only job fairs hosted annually across the nation. Jefferson also praised a pilot program begun this year between the U.S. Chamber and VETS to help connect veterans with prospective employers. "The pilot

What's Hot

Vote Now: DOL's Koenning is President's 2010 SAVE Award Finalist

More than 18,000 ideas were submitted this year for the President's SAVE Award and among the final four is the Labor Department's Thomas Koenning of Littleton, Colorado. Koenning, who works at the Mine Safety and Health Administration's Information Technology Center, suggested that mine operators submit reports online in lieu of the paper form that is currently utilized. This would not only save money on production costs and postage, but reduce input errors and the time it takes MSHA to act on critical data. Vote for Koenning's great idea by Friday so he can present it to President Obama at the White House.



- [Vote on the SAVE Award](#)

Online TAA Petition Now Available

When trade-related layoffs happen, timely assistance can make the difference. Trade Adjustment Assistance petitions can now be filed online. This will streamline the process for both applicants and the department and help ensure that petitions are received and processed as quickly as possible. The new online petition is part of a redesigned TAA website that also offers instant access to program data.

- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Visit the TAA Petition Website](#)

\$12 Million to Help States Link Workforce and Education Data

Better data lead to better training and employment programs. This week, the department provided \$12.2 million to 13 states through the Workforce Data Quality Initiative. These funds will enable states to build or expand longitudinal workforce databases that also link to education data. States will use this information to conduct research and analysis aimed at pinpointing the effectiveness of employment and training programs and to better serve workforce system customers.

- [Read the News Release](#)

DOL Working for You

Disabled Vet Finds Employment through DOL-Funded Programs

Disabled Army veteran Jason Pearson landed a job as a

also educates employers on the value of hiring our tremendously talented veterans," he added.

- [Watch the Video](#)

You Are What You Read



What's your bookprint? That's the question Scholastic recently asked Secretary Solis for its "You Are What You Read!" campaign. In an effort to encourage more kids and adults to value reading books, Scholastic interviewed entertainers, political figures, authors, and other high profile individuals about the five books that have influenced them the most. Dubbed a bookprint, Scholastic defines the term as a list of books that leave an indelible mark on our lives, shaping who we are and who we become. Topping the Secretary's list was *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain.

- [View Secretary Solis' Bookprint](#)

Green Scene: Oates at Manufacturing Summit

Green jobs are a good thing. Registered Apprenticeship is, too. Registered apprenticeships in green occupations can provide a great boost



to our nation's skilled workforce. On Tuesday, Assistant Secretary for the Employment and Training Administration Jane Oates provided the keynote address during the fourth annual Swiss – U.S. Manufacturing Summit in Washington, D.C. Hosted by the National Institute for Metalworking Skills and Switzerland Trade and Investment Promotion, the theme of the event was Green Collar Jobs and Apprenticeship. The summit presented an opportunity to discuss strategies for improving the skills of the U.S. manufacturing workforce, the critical role that Registered Apprenticeship programs play in this effort, and the intersection of training and green jobs.

DOL Leaders Highlight Work at ABA

Several members of the Department of Labor's leadership team participated in the American Bar Association's Fourth Annual Labor and Employment Law Section Conference last week in Chicago, Ill. Deputy Secretary Seth Harris; Solicitor M. Patricia Smith; Wage and Hour



lawyer in a matter of weeks thanks to advice and guidance he received from two DOL-funded programs in Michigan. A Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Services staffer taught Pearson how to look for employment and informed him about the Work Opportunity Tax Credit offered to employers who hire the disabled. Meanwhile, a Veterans Service representative helped Pearson rework his cover letter and resume which better highlighted his qualifications.

Shortly after, Pearson received a job interview with Michigan's Dale Sprik & Associates law firm. When he made the employer aware of the WOTC, he was offered a job. Having recently passed the bar, Pearson said he hopes to do pro bono legal work with veterans in the future. The two programs funded by the department "gave me a chance to reach my full potential," Pearson said.

Job Corps Students Gain Experience, Maintain Frances Perkins Building

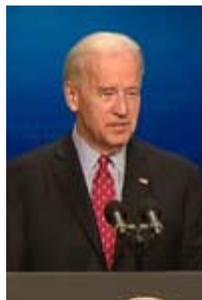
Daily renovation and maintenance of the Frances Perkins Building is providing Job Corps students with on-the-job work experiences as they sharpen their trade skills in areas such as carpentry, electrical wiring and facilities management. "Ever since I was little, I wanted to know how electricity worked," so I enrolled in the program, said 21-year-old Irving Phillips of Washington, D.C.'s Potomac Job Corps Center as he installed new televisions in the building's fitness center. "We are learning actual skills in the workplace, not a classroom," said 22-year-old Cherrell Tucker, also of Potomac, as she replaced window weather stripping in Secretary Solis' office.



The Home Builders Institute offers trades training to Job Corps students, and its DOL work-based learning program has existed at the department for more than 30 years. In recent projects, Job Corps students have demolished walls, built new offices, weather stripped doors, repaired furniture and helped install wiring, according to Gary Shavlik, HBI's site supervisor for the students. Working in the building gives students "an opportunity to get experience, interact with people, learn their trade and enter the workforce prepared," Shavlik said.

News You Can Use

Training and Lower Energy Costs



"High quality training prompts broader access to job opportunities for those looking to enter the growing field of home energy efficiency upgrades. It also helps keep workers safe while fostering maximum return on the investments of homeowners who are looking to decrease their energy costs." That's how Secretary Solis explained proposed workforce guidelines for home energy retrofitting during a Middle Class Task Force forum at the White House. The Tuesday event was hosted by Vice President Joe Biden, who announced a series of federal actions designed to lay the groundwork

for a strong and self-sustaining home energy efficiency retrofit industry. The workforce guidelines outlined by Secretary Solis are a central component of this effort and the result of close collaboration between DOL and the U.S. Department of Energy.

- [Read More About the Middle Class Task Force](#)

Division Deputy Administrator Nancy Leppink; and Assistant Secretary for the Employee Benefits Security Administration Phyllis Borzi all spoke on panels before audiences of employment lawyers and other government officials to highlight the department's strategic goals, past efforts, and upcoming agenda.

Addressing OSHA's Outdated PELs

Assistant Secretary for Occupational Safety and Health Dr. David Michaels participated in a panel discussion this week at the American Public Health Association's annual meeting, where he discussed OSHA's progress in addressing outdated workplace chemicals permissible exposure limits (PELs). OSHA held a Web forum in August to solicit nominations on the top chemicals of concern and received more than 130 nominations for initial efforts to focus on in this initiative. Most of OSHA's PELs were adopted when the agency was first created and have remained unchanged even though health data indicate hazards below the levels permitted by many of OSHA's PELs. The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health's John Howard, the Mine Safety and Health Administration's Dr. Gregory Wagner and the U.S. Chemical Safety Board's Rafael Moure-Eraso were also on the panel to discuss current agency policy and research initiatives, efforts to reduce occupational health disparities and advance worker rights and protections.

Flexibility in Health Care

The Women's Bureau continued its "National Dialogue on Workplace Flexibility" on Wednesday at Emory University in Atlanta. The forum focused on flexible workplace options in the health care industry. Educators, health care service providers, and representatives of women's advocacy groups gathered to discuss both the challenges and solutions in this growing employment sector. "Work-life balance, including flexible workplace policies, is not just a women's issue, it's a necessity for all working families," said Women's Bureau Director Sara Manzano-Diaz. "Ensuring that our nation's workers are able to balance their work and home lives without worry that they will lose their jobs is critical to our economic success as a country."

- [Learn More About the National Dialogue on Workplace Flexibility](#)

WHD Goes to Career Fest

More than 3,000 employers, employees,

- [Read the Report on "Recovery Through Retrofit"](#)
- [Comment on the Workforce Guidelines](#)
- [Watch the Video](#)

New National Resource Directory State Widget

The National Resource Directory, an online resource for service members, veterans, and those who support them, now has a state widget. With this new feature, organizations can support veterans and service members with NRD state widgets customized with employment resources from the Labor Department. These include information on One-Stop Career Centers, the Family and Medical Leave Act, the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act, job training, federal contractor programs, and employment services, among many other topics. The widget also allows individuals and organizations to display resources tailored by state and subject area on their own websites, blogs or Facebook fan pages.

- [Learn more about the NRD](#)
- [Make your Own Widget](#)

Around DOL

ETA's Massey Wins Charitable Service Award

Whether it is collecting shoes for the Haitian earthquake victims, clothing for the homeless or donations to fight cancer and Multiple Sclerosis, departmental employees are used to being asked by the Employment and Training Administration's Curtis Massey to contribute to one of his many charitable projects. His latest efforts involved raising funds to provide scholarships to disadvantaged students attending his alma mater, North Carolina Central University in Durham. Curtis sponsored fish fries and cocktail parties out of his own pocket, and sold raffle tickets. Those efforts eventually raised more than \$8,000 for the scholarship program. Now because of his tireless charitable efforts, Curtis has just been awarded the "Mr. Alumni" award by his school's National Alumni Association. He will spend the year representing NCCU at historically black college events and talk to prospective students. Curtis said he was honored to have won the award from a university that had given him so many opportunities to succeed in life. "You have to give back the blessings you receive," he said of his charitable efforts.



DOL in Action

DOL Settlement to Restore up to \$8 Million to Oregon 401(k) Plan

In a settlement with the Labor Department this week, C&K Market Inc. of Brookings, Oregon, agreed to restore \$3 million in cash plus interest and to sell property owned by the supermarket chain's 401(k) plan. The department sued the plan trustee and a former officer of the company for using plan assets to make a series of imprudent loans and extensions of credit to develop and manage a proposed resort property known as Rogue Landing. "The steps taken by the Labor Department will help correct imprudent management of those funds by the people entrusted to protect the welfare of their workers," said Secretary Solis. C&K Market operates approximately 50 supermarkets in southern Oregon and northern California.

- [Read the News Release](#)

On-The-Job Injuries/Illnesses Cost State/Local Gov't Workers

students and parents attended the Fourth Annual Hillsborough County College and Career Fest in



Hillsborough County, Florida, where DOL's Wage and Hour Division staff distributed information about the federal labor laws that the department enforces. The event, which was an overwhelming success, provided a venue for staff to answer questions from attendees on a range of issues from child labor to the "We Can Help" campaign. Career Fest is an annual event sponsored by the Hillsborough Education Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to serving area students, teachers and schools.

Upcoming Deadlines & Events

[Open Funding Opportunities](#)

Check out the grant opportunities with DOL.

Event Spotlight: Latino Summit In NYC



The Occupational Safety and Health Administration will host a New York Action Summit for Latino/Immigrant Worker Safety and Health on November 16 at Lehman College-Lovinger Theater in NYC. The conference will bring together representatives from employer associations, labor groups,

community organizations, worker centers, safety and health professionals, educators, government officials, consulates, the media and other non-traditional partners to develop new partnerships, target and expand outreach and share the most effective strategies to reach Latino immigrant workers.

- [Learn More about the Summit](#)

OFCCP — 12 Reasons Why Contractors Get in Trouble

- [November 12 — Richmond, VA](#)

OFCCP — ABC's of the AAP

- [November 17 — Houston, TX](#)

OFCCP — ADA and Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended Seminar

- [November 24 — Richmond, VA](#)

OFCCP — Compliance Assistance Seminar for Construction Contractors

- [November 17 — Houston, TX](#)

More Time

According to the Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics, the number of reported nonfatal occupational injury and illness cases that required days away from work to recuperate decreased by 9 percent to 1,238,490 cases in 2009 for private industry, state government and local government. However, BLS also reported that local and state government employees had much higher rates of injuries and illnesses requiring days away from work than those in private industry. "Injuries and illnesses requiring time away from work to recuperate can be costly to both employers and employees alike, often resulting in lost productivity for employers and lost wages for workers," said Dr. David Michaels, assistant secretary for occupational safety and health. Dr. Michaels called it "troubling" that the rate among local and state government workers was higher than that in private industry, and noted that half of government employees are in states where public workers lack OSHA coverage.

- [Read Michaels' Statement](#)
- [Read the BLS Report](#)

Republic Engineered Products Fined for Fall Hazards

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has cited Republic Engineered Products Inc., a steel manufacturing company in Lorain, Ohio, with one alleged willful, four repeat and eight serious safety violations. The company was cited for exposing its workers to fall hazards, failing to provide protective equipment and failing to maintain equipment at its Lorain facility. Penalties total \$143,000. "Steel mills are very dangerous working environments, and Republic Engineered Products Inc. has repeatedly demonstrated a blatant disregard for its employees' safety," said OSHA Area Director Jule Hovi.

- [Read the News Release](#)

DOL Fines Nickerson Farms in Arizona for Child Labor Violations

Wage and Hour Division investigators found seven children between the ages of nine and 13 working during this past summer's okra harvest at Robert Nickerson Farms near Yuma, Ariz. Investigators determined that Robert Nickerson Farms employed three 13-year-olds, one 12-year-old, one 11-year-old and one 9-year-old to weed okra fields between June and August of this year. Another 11-year-old was hired to set gopher traps and dispose of the dead animals. "Having children under the legal age of employment work in agriculture without written parental consent is not only wrong but against the law," said George Friday Jr., regional administrator of the Wage and Hour Division's Western Regional Office.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Spotlight On States

OSHA Safety "Stand-Down" at 1,170 Construction Sites in Georgia

Concerned about the number of fatal and nonfatal injuries occurring to construction workers, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's Southeast Region sponsored an early morning safety stand-down on Tuesday at 1,170 work zones involving 8,056 employees around Georgia. Partnering with contractor organizations and state and local governments, the goal of hour-long safety meetings was to increase employees' awareness that objects and vehicles striking workers are a leading cause of construction-related deaths. "We want to raise the ability of employees to

- [November 18 — San Juan, PR](#)
- [November 23 — Mountainside, NJ](#)

OFCCP — Compliance Assistance Seminar for Supply and Service Contractors

- [November 16 — Mountainside, NJ](#)
- [November 17 — Boston, MA](#)
- [November 17 — Nashville, TN](#)
- [November 18 — New York, NY](#)
- [November 18 — Hartford, CT](#)
- [November 18 — Buffalo, NY](#)
- [November 24 — Nashville, TN](#)
- [November 30 — Mountainside, NJ](#)

OFCCP — EEO Obligations of Construction Contractors

- [November 18 — Baltimore, MD](#)

OFCCP — How to Compile an Affirmative Action Program and Support Data for a Compliance Review

- [November 19 — Richmond, VA](#)

OSHA — New York Action Summit for Latina/Immigrant Worker Safety and Health (Cumbre de Accion de New York para le Seguridad y Salud del Trabajador Latino)

- [November 16 — Bronx, NY](#)

OWCP — Traveling Resource Center to assist Nuclear Weapons Workers

- [November 16 — Joliet, IL](#)

VETS — Supporting Women Who Have Served in the Military

- [November 17 — Boston, MA](#)

Follow USDOL on 

- Statement by Solicitor of Labor M. Patricia Smith regarding ongoing investigation of Upper Big Branch Mine explo... <http://bit.ly/gyS3YZ> 59 minutes ago
- Mining deaths rise in 2010 [01/13/2011] <http://bit.ly/g77s3S> about 23 hours ago

identify and eliminate work-related hazards by emphasizing to them that approximately 75 percent of struck-by fatalities involve heavy equipment, such as trucks or cranes," said Cindy Coe, OSHA's regional administrator for the Southeast.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Funding for Minnesota Flood Recovery

Putting a community back together after a disaster takes time and effort. Additional resources can help as well. This week the department provided an award of more than \$1.1 million in National Emergency Grant funds to Minnesota. The grant will be used to create temporary jobs for Minnesotans involved in clean-up and recovery efforts following September storms and flooding.

- [Read the News Release](#)

OSHA Launches Grain Handling Emphasis Program in Kansas

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has launched a local emphasis program in Kansas aimed at reducing injuries, illnesses and fatalities in the grain handling industry. Under the program, OSHA's Wichita Area Office will target establishments that specialize in grain elevators and storage bins, rail cars, milling, fertilizer, feed, chemicals and farm machinery operations, as well as equipment repair and maintenance. "The hazards associated with grain handling operations are well recognized, and allowing workers to enter grain storage facilities without proper equipment, precautions and training can cost workers their lives," said Charles E. Adkins, OSHA's regional administrator in Kansas City, Mo.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Opportunities are Open: Sciences

Many people would be surprised to learn that the Department of Labor has careers available in the science field. Whether it is in physical, information, or social science, opportunities are open at DOL. Explore the positions below or [view all](#) the rewarding careers at the department.

1. Positions in Washington DC Metro Area
[Medical Officer \(Occupational Medicine\)](#)
DE-10-OSHA-146
Close: 11/16/2010
2. Position in Washington DC
[Director, Information Technology Center](#)
DOL-SES-OASAM-11-03
Close: 11/18/2010
3. Position in Baltimore MD Metro Area
[Economic Assistant](#)
DE-10-PHIL-BLS-0096-OC
Close: 02/09/2011

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