



DOL News Brief

January 20, 2011

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UA Program Serving Veterans



The only way to address the challenges we face is by working together. That message was heard loud and clear by the United Association of

Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Sprinklerfitters, who started a program at Camp Pendleton in San Diego to train marines transitioning out of the military. Secretary Solis visited the Veterans in Piping program on Wednesday, which provides free training in welding, basic pipefitting, advanced entry into a fully accredited apprenticeship program and the assistance to ease the transition from military to civilian life. "A lot of our young recruits coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan are finding it very hard and frustrating because they can't find a job," Solis told a group of more than 120 people made up of recent graduates and their families. "We pledge to leave no veteran behind."

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

Solis Visits Homeless Veterans

As the newly elected chair of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, Secretary Solis continues to drive administration efforts



to end homelessness, including veteran homelessness. This week, she traveled to Long Beach, Calif., to visit with homeless veterans making a transition back into the workforce. Solis visited the U.S. Veterans Initiative, a DOL grantee that serves more than 2,000 veterans each day, to speak with veterans about the struggles and triumphs of their reintegration. She spent time with Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, in addition to several homeless female veterans who are successfully transitioning back into the workforce thanks to a DOL 2010 grant focused

What's Hot

Department Announces SGA for Career Training Programs in Colleges

A Solicitation for Grant Applications for the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Grant Program was announced by Labor Secretary Hilda Solis and Education Secretary Arne Duncan. Over the next year, DOL will award approximately \$500 million through this grant program and administer the grants. "These grants will make it possible for working Americans to receive a solid education or to enhance their previous education level and job skills," said Secretary Solis.

- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Listen to the Conference Call Audio](#)

Take Three

Secretary Solis answers three questions about the **Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Grant Program**. Solis announced a \$500 million SGA for the program on January 20.

How was the program created?

The "Recovery Act" and the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act, signed into law by President Barack Obama, amended the Trade Act to authorize this exciting new program.

Who is eligible to apply for the grants?

Applicants must be community colleges or other two-year degree granting institutions of higher education as defined in the Higher Education Act of 1965. The grants do not cover tuition. They allow eligible institutions to expand their capacity and create new education or training programs — or improve existing ones — in a way that meet the needs both of workers and local or regional businesses. By statute, every state, as well as the District of Columbia and the commonwealth of Puerto Rico, will receive at least \$2.5 million each year in grant awards.

What do you hope to achieve through the program?

It's simple. We're looking to help American workers gain the skills and knowledge they need to compete for good jobs. The program also underscores President Obama's commitment to help every American have at least one year of postsecondary education, and it furthers his efforts to ensure that by 2020 the United States—once again—has the highest proportion of college graduates in the world.

- [Learn More about the TAACCCT Program](#)

In Our Thoughts

DOL Remembers Sargent Shriver

Flags at Job Corps Centers across the country are being flown at half staff this week to honor

on homeless female veterans and veterans with families.

- [View the Slideshow](#)

Martinez Outlines Leadership

Assistant Secretary for the Office of Disability Employment Policy Kathy Martinez delivered remarks to students attending UCLA's Leadership Program for Managers with Disabilities on Thursday in Los Angeles. Martinez spoke about the importance of leadership in today's workforce and tips on how to become an effective leader in the disability community. "As leaders we are role models, decision-makers, visionaries," noted Martinez. "Be innovative, resourceful, and open. You are America's future leaders."

- [Read Martinez' Remarks](#)

OSHA Not Killing Jobs, But Stopping Jobs From Killing



In the 40 years since it was created, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration has led the way in ushering in historic declines in

workplace fatalities, injuries and illness, and continues to make a difference in the lives of millions of workers. As Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health Dr. David Michaels told a gathering this week, "OSHA is not working to kill jobs; we're here to stop jobs from killing workers." Michaels noted the significantly larger U.S. economy with a workforce twice the size it was in 1970, and reported that job-related deaths in the U.S. are down — from about 14,000 four decades ago to 4,400 in 2009. Additionally, injuries and illnesses are down — from 10.9 incidents per 100 workers in 1972 to less than 4 per 100 in 2009. "Much of our progress is due to tougher standards and greater awareness of workplace safety practices brought about by OSHA. Yet, there is still much to be done."

- [Read Michaels' Remarks](#)

Celebrating Martin Luther King Day

Secretary Solis joined local elected officials, community leaders and residents at the 26th annual Kingdom Day Parade in South Los Angeles on



R. Sargent Shriver, who died on Wednesday. Shriver led the Office of Economic Opportunity, the agency responsible for the creation and success of many social programs that are still thriving today, including Job Corps. In 1999 when Job Corps dedicated the Shriver Job Corps Center in Devens, Mass., Sargent Shriver spoke of his faith in the program to help at-risk young people, saying, "Our Job Corps graduates are proof that our original dream, our vision, was realistic."



- [Read Secretary Solis' Statement](#)
- [Read President Obama's Statement](#)
- [Read Job Corps Director Edna Primrose's Blog](#)

Around DOL

MSHA Briefs Families, Media in Upper Big Branch Mine Investigation

The Mine Safety and Health Administration held a briefing Tuesday evening for family members of the 29 men who died in last April's explosion at Upper Big Branch Mine. MSHA Assistant Secretary Joe Main, Coal Administrator Kevin Stricklin and Solicitor of Labor M. Patricia Smith spent nearly four hours discussing what investigators have learned over the course of the months-long investigation. The following morning, a similar briefing was held via conference call for members of the media.

- [Listen to the Call and View Accompanying Materials](#)

Worker Safety Advisory Committee Convenes at DOL



The National Advisory Committee on Occupational Safety and Health (NACOSH) met this week at the Department's Frances Perkins Building in Washington. NACOSH has advised the secretaries of labor and health and human services for nearly 40 years on worker safety issues, and DOL's emphasis on worker safety and health is greatly enhanced by the

knowledge and real-world experience NACOSH members share. The 12-member committee, which meets at least two times a year, is composed of members representing the interests of labor, management, safety and health professionals, and the public. This week the members met with Dr. David Michaels, assistant secretary of labor for occupational safety and health, and held discussions about injury and illness prevention programs, recordkeeping, and efforts to keep workers safe during the Gulf of Mexico oil spill cleanup.

- [Learn More About NACOSH](#)
- [View the Slideshow](#)

DOL Working For You

On the Job (Corps) Training Helps a Community Succeed

Low income youth at the Barrio Station community center in San Diego, Calif., can do their homework online in a safe environment thanks to the computer maintenance efforts of the local Job Corps Center's staff and students. For the past eight years, San Diego Job Corps Center IT instructor Peter Schurek and his computer tech students have serviced



Monday. Thousands of people lined the Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. parade route for the event. Solis presented DOL's specially designed MLK posters to members of SEIU United Long Term Care Workers, the Teamsters National Black Caucus, and other union members, including two of the 1968 AFSCME Memphis sanitation strikers, Alvin Turner and Baxter Leach.

- [View the Slideshow](#)
- [Download the Poster](#)

Upcoming Deadlines & Events

Event Spotlight

The department's Occupational Safety and Health Administration will conduct a regional Latino workforce outreach and education conference Tuesday, Feb. 1 in Oakland, Calif., for stakeholders, partners, organizations and institutions that represent and/or provide services to workers. Free health and safety workshops will be provided, as well as informational booths.

Latino Workforce Outreach and Education Conference

- [February 1 — Oakland, CA](#)

MSHA — Arkansas Mine Safety and Health Conference

- [February 3-4 — Hot Springs, AR](#)

MSHA — Public Hearing on Proposed Rule to End Black Lung

- [January 25 — Salt Lake City, UT](#)

OFCCP — 503 and the ADA

- [January 26 — Petaluma, CA](#)

OFCCP — Best Practices

- [January 26 — Houston, TX](#)

OFCCP — Compliance Assistance Seminar

- [February 23 — Miami, FL](#)

OFCCP — Compliance Assistance Seminar for Construction Contractors

- [January 26 — San Jose, CA](#)
- [January 26 — Orange, CA](#)
- [January 26 — Gulfport, MS](#)
- [January 26 — Portland, OR](#)
- [January 26 — San Diego, CA](#)
- [January 26 — Hartford, CT](#)
- [February 10 — Yazoo, MS](#)
- [February 10 — Seattle, WA](#)

OFCCP — Compliance Assistance Seminar for Supply and Service

and maintained for free scores of computers at Barrio Station, allowing youth ages 6 to 18 to pursue academic enrichment and avoid outside peer pressure from gangs and drugs. Schurek estimates more than 300 Job Corps students have donated thousands of hours to the cause, which also provides on-the-job training for the students to become nationally certified service technicians. Schurek says it is a win-win situation for all involved. Some of his students have gone on to work in IT for national companies such as Cox Communications and Time Warner, he said, while local youth "are being helped to secure their future."

Paid Internship Propels Vermont Grad to Full Time Job



University of Vermont graduate Rebecca Cohen (left) is on the way to her dream job – working for a socially responsible company – thanks to an internship program funded by the U.S. Labor Department. Cohen, 23, was a paid intern at AllEarth Renewables, a Vermont renewable energy systems company, which eventually hired her full-time. Cohen's

internship is part of a Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility program funded through a Workforce Education and Training grant. In three years, almost 100 students have been placed in internships paying \$10-\$15 an hour, said program official Tara Pfeiffer-Norrell (right). In noting that finding a paid internship was "something almost unheard of," Cohen said the program "gave me valuable work skills" and "important networking experiences" in the local business community.

DOL in Action

EMTs Receive Back Wages for On-Call Hours

The department has recovered more than \$77,000 in back wages for 21 Sanford Regional Hospital emergency medical technicians who were denied compensation for their "on-call" work hours. The public health care facility, located in Worthington, Minn., is owned and operated by the Sanford Health Network. "Ignorance of the law is not an excuse. Employers are legally obligated to ensure that those they hire are properly compensated for their full work periods," said Jose Medina, Wage and Hour district director in Minneapolis, Minn.

- [Read the News Release](#)

ETA Announces H-2B Wage Rate Final Rule

The Employment and Training Administration announced a final rule that improves the H-2B temporary nonagricultural worker program and more fully protects the job opportunities and wages of U.S. workers by addressing the calculations used to set wage rates for H-2B workers. The H-2B program allows the entry of foreign workers into the U.S. when qualified U.S. workers are not available and when the employment of foreign workers will not adversely affect the wages and working conditions of similarly employed U.S. workers. The department anticipates issuing a future rulemaking that will address other aspects of the H-2B program.

- [Read the News Release](#) (English)
- [Read the News Release](#) (Spanish)
- [Read the Federal Register Notice](#)

DOL to Require Sewer Contractor to Notify OSHA of Jobsites

DOL is seeking an administrative court order requiring Gerardi Sewer & Water Co., an Illinois excavation contractor, to provide a monthly report of its work locations to OSHA, permit unannounced jobsite audits by qualified independent consultants and to provide workers annual cave-in protection

Contractors

- [January 25 — Mountainside, NJ](#)
- [January 25 — East Point, GA](#)
- [January 25 — Jacksonville, FL](#)
- [January 25 — East Point, GA](#)
- [January 26 — Marietta, GA](#)
- [January 26 — Nashville, TN](#)
- [January 27 — Marietta, GA](#)
- [January 27 — Memphis, TN](#)
- [February 2 — Nashville, TN](#)
- [February 3 — Memphis, TN](#)
- [February 8 — Itta Bena, MS](#)
- [February 8 — Mountainside, NJ](#)
- [February 9 — Orange, CA](#)

OFCCP — Community Connections

- [January 26 — Jackson, MS](#)
- [January 26 — Miami, FL](#)
- [February 2 — Raleigh, NC](#)
- [February 2 — Atlanta, GA](#)

OFCCP — Contractors Connecting with Recruitment Sources

- [February 1 — Anchorage, AK](#)

OFCCP — Pre-Construction Meeting

- [January 26 — Rocky Hill, CT](#)
- [January 27 — Rocky Hill, CT](#)

OLMS — Compliance Assistance Seminar

- [February 15 — Springfield, IL](#)
- [February 18 — Burr Ridge, IL](#)

OSHA — Annual Safety Day

- [February 15 — Cincinnati, OH](#)

training for the next two years. "The company's severe violator history has led us to seek this order to ensure that these worksites are safe for employees. Cave-ins are the leading cause of death in trenching operations," said Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA Dr. David Michaels. "This is only the second time that the department has invoked the statutory authority to order 'other appropriate relief,'" said Solicitor of Labor M. Patricia Smith. "All available legal tools will be used where necessary to protect workers from future harm." The company contested 13 OSHA citations and the \$360,000 in penalties issued on Dec. 17, 2010.

- [Read the News Release](#)

OSHA Withdraws Proposed Interpretation on Occupational Noise

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration is withdrawing the proposed interpretation for its occupational noise standard, which would have clarified the term "feasible administrative or engineering controls" and make enforcement of the hearing conservation standard consistent with enforcement of other OSHA standards. "Hearing loss caused by excessive noise levels remains a serious occupational health problem in this country," said Dr. David Michaels, assistant secretary of labor for occupational safety and health. "However, it is clear from the concerns raised about this proposal that addressing this problem requires much more public outreach and many more [agency] resources than we had originally anticipated. We are sensitive to the possible costs associated with improving worker protection and have decided to suspend work on this proposed modification while we study other approaches to abating workplace noise hazards." The agency's other approaches will include a robust outreach effort to provide enhanced technical information and guidance on the many inexpensive, effective engineering controls for dangerous noise levels.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Miami Company Cited for Exposing Employees to Lead

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has issued 32 citations and proposed \$307,200 in penalties against Lead Enterprises in Miami, Fla., for threatening the safety and health of its employees. "This company was well aware of what it needed to do to protect its workers from a well-known hazard but failed to provide that protection," said Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA Dr. David Michaels. "Lead exposure can cause many serious health issues including brain damage, kidney disease and harm to the reproductive system. Such a blatant disregard for OSHA's lead standard is shameful and will not be tolerated."

- [Learn More about Lead Exposure](#)
- [Read the News Release](#)

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- #OSHA renews strat. partnership w/ power transmission & distribution trade assoc. to reduce worker injuries, deaths <http://s.dol.gov/CN> 29 minutes ago
- New on the Blog - Mine Safety Best Way to Honor Sen. Byrd <http://bit.ly/gJCsNo> about an hour ago

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