



DOL News Brief

April 28, 2011

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12+3.3= 2 many

workers die on the job every day. million workers are seriously injured on the job every year.

WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY 2011

Solis Honors Fallen Workers

"Every day in America, 12 people go to work and never come home," said Secretary Solis in a sobering speech given to commemorate Workers



Memorial Day. Solis traveled to Las Vegas, Nev., where she was joined by U.S. Rep. Shelley Berkley and other officials in an event at the Sheet Metal Workers Joint Apprenticeship Training Center. Prior to the event, Solis met with a group of families whose loved ones had died on the job, pledging to fight for the health and safety of all America's workers. Before a crowd of 100, Solis reiterated her commitment in the names of all workers who have been killed or injured on the job. "As long as I am the labor secretary, we will fight in their names to make workplaces safer and more secure for every working American."

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

What's Hot

Summer's Hot: Campaign to Beat the Heat

"If you're working outdoors, you're at risk for heat-related illnesses that can cause serious medical problems and even death," said Secretary Solis at stops in Anaheim, Calif.; Tucson, Ariz., and Las Vegas, Nev. "But heat illness can be prevented. This Labor Department campaign will reach across the country with a very simple message – water, rest and shade." Each year, thousands of outdoor workers experience heat illness, which often manifests as heat exhaustion. If not quickly addressed, heat exhaustion can become heat stroke, which killed more than 30 workers last year. Heat can be a real danger for workers in jobs ranging from agriculture and landscaping to construction, road repair, airport baggage handling and even car sales. OSHA has developed heat illness educational materials in English and Spanish, as well as a curriculum to be used for workplace training.



- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Learn More about the Heat Campaign](#)
- [View The Slideshow](#)

OSHA Remembers Workers Lost



As Secretary Solis was giving remarks in Las Vegas, the Labor Department's Occupational Safety and Health

Administration held a tree planting ceremony at the Frances Perkins Building in Washington, D.C., to commemorate Workers Memorial Day and OSHA's 40th Anniversary. Dr. David Michaels, assistant secretary for occupational safety and health was joined by Deputy Secretary Seth Harris, Solicitor Patricia Smith, Mine Safety and Health Administration Assistant Secretary Joe Main, staff members and various stakeholders. "April 28 is Workers Memorial Day, a day we set aside to remember the dead and fight for all living

News You Can Use

OSHA Forum to Protect Workers from Combustible Dust Hazards

Since 1980, nearly 150 workers have been killed and more than 850 injured in combustible dust explosions. To explore methods for preventing such explosions, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration has invited outside experts to participate in a Combustible Dust Expert Forum May 13. OSHA will gather the experts' views on possible regulatory options for addressing combustible dust hazards. Discussions will include identifying regulatory options that can minimize the costs to small-and medium-sized businesses of reducing or preventing combustible dust hazards, while protecting workers from these hazards. Representatives from various industries, academia, research groups, insurance-underwriter organizations, labor, and government will comprise expert representation. The forum will be held at 9 a.m. EDT at the Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Department Announces Protocols for Certifying U Visa Applications

The Labor Department has announced protocols to complete the portion of

workers," said Michaels. "So today we are planting an American dogwood tree to serve as a living symbol of the roots of OSHA's commitment to every worker in America for the last 40 years. As new leaves grow each spring, they will symbolize the hope we hold for better days ahead for workers everywhere."

- [View the Slideshow](#)

Commemorating Equal Pay Day

Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs Director Patricia Shiu, Wage and Hour Division Acting Administrator Nancy Leppink and Women's Bureau Director Sara Manzano-Diaz represented DOL at an April 28 national commemoration of Equal Pay Day held in Washington, D.C., by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Director Shiu discussed OFCCP's proactive efforts to curb pay inequity pointing out that "according to a leading economist, if we could close the pay gap between men and women, we could cut in half the number of children living in poverty in America." OFCCP has set a goal to drastically increase enforcement on pay discrimination cases in 2011 and is correcting bad policies and practices that prevented effective enforcement against it. Shiu also emphasized the renewed commitment to collaboration among DOL, EEOC and the Department of Justice, as the agencies work together to refer cases, share best practices and pilot enforcement programs.



- [View the Slideshow](#)

Harris' Virtual Tour of RECs



This week, Deputy Secretary Seth Harris completed a month-long virtual tour of DOL Regional Executive Committees around the country. As part of an ongoing effort to expand staff communication at DOL, Harris spent time discussing departmental management issues, and soliciting feedback

from each of the ten committees of regional leaders. Topics included ongoing efforts to modernize DOL IT Infrastructure, improve customer service throughout the department, and how the Labor Department will be affected by the recent budget deal between the president and Congress.

the U visa nonimmigrant status application requiring certification by a law enforcement agency that the applicant is a victim of a qualifying crime and willing to cooperate with law enforcement. U visas, as they are known, are designed to help victims of qualifying criminal activities who have suffered substantial physical or mental abuse.

- [Read the News Release](#)

OSHA Provides Technical Advice on Recovering from Disaster Safely

When disasters strike, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration transforms itself and swings into technical assistance mode for affected areas. This week, after devastating storms pounded a large number of southern states, OSHA deployed teams of technical advisors to the affected areas of Mississippi, Alabama and Georgia. OSHA staff contacted incident commanders at the various county emergency management centers, as well as power companies that will be involved in the cleanup. They also do assessments of the safety needs for recovery workers. Dangers from downed electrical power lines and fallen trees are only two of the many hazards facing workers. "Storm recovery work encompasses a wide range of safety and health hazards, which can be minimized by knowledge, safe work practices and personal protective equipment," said Cindy Coe, OSHA's regional administrator in Atlanta.

- [Learn More about Storm Recovery](#)
- [Read the News Release](#)

DOL Working for You

Navy Veteran Embarks on Green Jobs Career



After failed business ventures caused Navy veteran Harold Coleman to lose his home and his property improvement company to go belly up, he found himself poor and homeless. Coleman's fortunes turned for the better after he heard about and enrolled in the department-funded Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program at St. Patrick Center in St. Louis, Mo. There he was taught about the promise of green jobs, and he worked hard and achieved a certificate as a building energy auditor. His success story has come full circle, as he now is employed as a training instructor teaching

energy efficiency to veterans and the unemployed. Coleman said the program provided him resources "to achieve my goals and set me on a path of success."

WIA Helps Teen Bank on New Career

Nineteen-year-old Jason Locke of Lynn, Mass., has always had a knack for working with numbers, but he couldn't afford college and he had limited employment experience. Locke achieved success by entering a Workforce Investment Program which matches local employers with job seekers who take targeted training at community colleges. Over a 20 week training period, Locke improved his computer skills then learned about banking and finance. After attending a job fair, he eventually landed a full-time job as a teller in a bank in Peabody, Mass., where management views him as reliable, enthusiastic and accurate. College may be in his future some day, but right now Locke is focused on learning the business and drawing a salary. "The program gave me a foot in the door and pushed me to be great," he said.



Mine Safety Chief Addresses Industrial Minerals Companies

Assistant Secretary of Labor for the Mine Safety and Health Administration Joe Main addressed members of the Industrial Minerals Association – North America at its 2011 spring meeting. The gathering, held Thursday in Washington, D.C., brought together officials from companies around the country that extract and process raw minerals such as barite, bentonite, calcium carbonate, feldspar, kaolin, magnesia, soda ash and talc. Main took the opportunity to reflect on the day's other special event – Workers Memorial Day, which honors workers who have lost their lives in occupational accidents or suffer from occupational illnesses. "This is a time for us to rededicate ourselves to ensure that we have safe and healthful workplaces in every industry throughout this country," said Main. The assistant secretary also discussed his goals for a mining industry free of injuries, illnesses and accidents; the obligations of mine operators to keep their workers safe and healthy; the ongoing investigation into last year's explosion at Upper Big Branch Mine; and a variety of strategic actions MSHA has undertaken to improve compliance with mine safety laws.

Finding Faith in Philadelphia

The White House Office for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships kicked off its "Connecting Communities for the Common Good"



national tour in Philadelphia, Pa., earlier this week. Nearly 500 faith and community leaders from the metropolitan area attended the full-day event, which was co-hosted by Mayor Michael Nutter, to participate in conversations with administration staff about opportunities for partnering with government. Ben Seigel, deputy director of DOL's Center for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships was joined by Secretary Solis' regional representative Rob Angelo and the Employment and Training Administration's Lenita Jacobs-Simmons, regional administrator, region two, on several panels to talk with groups about how they can partner with DOL's One-Stop Career Centers, job training programs, and youth employment and mentoring programs. Seigel also participated in the luncheon plenary session for a discussion on youth development, including DOL's Summer Jobs Make a Commitment program.

- [Make a Commitment to Summer Jobs](#)
- [Read the Partnership Guide](#)

Around DOL

Happy Birthday OSHA! 40 years strong!



So much history, so much accomplished and at 40-years-old there's still so much for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to do. Check out the OSHA at 40 website for a timeline that highlights key milestones in

occupational safety and health history since the creation of OSHA; a short video of old and new footage that highlights key moments in the nation's progress in occupational safety and health protection; a public forum at the Center for American Progress with Assistant Secretary for OSHA Dr. David Michaels; and a special message from Dr. Michaels about OSHA's journey over the past 40 years and priorities for the future.

- [View the OSHA at 40 Website](#)

DOL Feds Get 'Fur Ever' Fit with Fido

Naomi Barry-Perez, deputy director of the department's Civil Rights Center and Ralph DiBattista, deputy director of Job Corps, led a spirited group of 65 employees and contractors on a walk with Humane Society shelter dogs around the Capitol Hill grounds April 27. Barry-Perez said her love of dogs and the chance to give these less fortunate pooches some



exercise motivated her to volunteer, sentiments echoed by DiBattista. Samuel Clark of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer said "I love dogs, and being outside in the sunshine with them is a win-win for all of us here." For the third consecutive year, the walk was sponsored by the Department of Labor's Fitness Association. DOLFA Assistant Director Karen Krieg said that the exercise not only benefits the dogs, but employees too. "Studies have shown that being around a dog reduces stress and anxiety and lowers blood pressure levels," she said.

- [View the Slideshow](#)

DOL Daughters and Sons Visit



More than 100 girls and boys participated in DOL's Take Your Daughters and Sons to Work Day on Thursday. The day began with a welcome from Deputy Secretary Harris, followed by group tours of the building including the DOL Fitness Center, Audiovisual Studio and Secretary Solis's Office, as well as agency-organized interactive activities and

games. Special guest speaker Angie Ange, a local radio personality, provided luncheon remarks and the event concluded with a visit from former Redskin player Ken Harvey. Harris noted, "Here at the Labor Department, our job is to help people where they work - make sure they're getting paid what they deserve; prevent people from getting sick, hurt or even killed at their jobs; and make sure that people save money for when they retire. The members of all of your families help us do that." DOL regional offices throughout the country were also filled with excited children of all ages during their annual events held this week.

- [View the Slideshow](#)

DOL in Action

DOL Committed to Fair Treatment and Equal Opportunity

Benefits.gov is a 2011 Laureate



Last week, the IDG Computerworld Honors Program announced that the department's

Benefits.gov program was a 2011 Laureate. The annual award program honors visionary applications of information technology promoting positive social, economic and educational change. Benefits.gov, the official benefits website of the U.S. government, provides all Americans with personalized eligibility prescreening services and application information for over 1,000 federal and state government benefit programs.

- [Visit Benefits.gov](#)

Green Scene: Earth Day 2011

DOL's Frances Perkins Building on April 22 was host to demonstrations of green technologies celebrating Earth Day.



Electrical students from the Woodstock Job Corps Center in Woodstock, Md., demonstrated to Job Corps National Director Edna Primrose wind and solar energy and how both are generated. The students also demonstrated how electricity is saved by using new compact fluorescent lamp light bulbs. Representatives from the Department of Labor Fitness Association distributed information on the cardio and ecological benefits of biking to work, while staff from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management discussed how the department is meeting its green technology initiatives. Other exhibitors included American Forests, a nonprofit that protects habitats and UNICOR, a Department of Justice initiative that provides green vocational training to prison inmates.

- [View the Slideshow](#)
- [Read the Secretary's Statement on Earth Day](#)

Connecting Working Women



Nearly 75 attendees participated in the Philadelphia region Women's Bureau Women Working Together - Writing the Next Chapter of

HerStory conference on Monday. Women's

The Labor Department announced its full commitment to implement Equal Employment Opportunity policies for all department employees and applicants regardless of race; color; religion; national origin; sex, including pregnancy and gender identity; age; disability, physical or mental; genetic information; status as a parent; sexual orientation or other non-merit factor. New robust statements signed by Secretary Solis now include updated policies on prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex, including gender identity and pregnancy. "I am expressing my personal commitment to ensure that the U.S. Department of Labor is a model workplace free from unlawful discrimination and fosters a work environment that fully utilizes the capabilities of every employee," said Secretary Solis. "It is my goal that we achieve and maintain a high quality, diverse workforce at all organizational levels throughout the department."

- [Read the News Release](#)

2011 National Disability Awareness Theme Announced

Office of Disability Employment Policy Assistant Secretary Kathy Martinez unveiled the official theme of the October 2011 National Disability Employment Awareness Month. The theme, "Profit by Investing in Workers with Disabilities," promotes the contributions of workers with disabilities and serves to inform the public that these workers represent a highly skilled talent pool that can help employers compete in a global economy. The early announcement of the theme is intended to give stakeholders nationwide the opportunity to plan a series of events that showcase the invaluable skills of workers with disabilities. Martinez said, "Workers with disabilities represent all skill sets and are ready to get the job done. This year's theme focuses on improving employment opportunities that lead to good jobs and a secure economic future for people with disabilities and the nation as a whole."

- [Read the News Release](#)

OSHA Cites Georgia Sheet Metal Fabricator After Fatality

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has cited Don Park USA LP in Conley, Ga., for 42 safety and health violations with \$127,200 in proposed penalties after an employee died when he was crushed by a large steel frame weighing approximately 1,550 pounds. The company was cited for one serious safety violation related to the fatality: failing to exercise caution or planning when moving heavy, unstable loads in a vertical position. "Exposing workers to life-threatening safety and health hazards is unpardonable. Many of these hazards can easily be corrected," said William Fulcher, director of OSHA's Atlanta-East Area Office. "No worker should have to risk his or her life for a paycheck."

- [Read the News Release](#)

Strengthening Commitments to Protected Veterans

The department's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs published a proposed rule this week seeking comments on how best to strengthen affirmative action requirements of federal contractors and subcontractors for veterans protected under the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974. Veterans protected by VEVRAA include those with disabilities and those recently discharged, as well as those who served during a war, campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge is authorized. "At the Labor Department, we support veterans as they seek meaningful ways to apply their talents to expand the American economy. By re-examining our affirmative action requirements, we will ensure that our nation's veterans are protected against discrimination and provided equal opportunity in the workforce," said OFCCP Director Patricia A. Shiu.

- [Read the News Release](#)

OSHA Southeast Focusing on Reducing Needlestick Hazards

Bureau Director Sara Manzano-Díaz joined a panel of established and emerging professional women for an intergenerational dialogue on the past and present challenges facing Philadelphia's working women. "This event was a great opportunity to promote mentorship and dialogue across generations and cultures," said Lucia Bruce, administrator of the Women's Bureau's Philadelphia Regional Office.

- [View the Slideshow](#)

Upcoming Deadlines & Events

Check out the grant opportunities with DOL.

- [Open Funding Opportunities](#)

EBSA — HIPAA and Other Health Benefits Laws: Compliance Assistance Seminar,

- [May 17-18 — Austin, TX](#)

EEOMBD — Energy Employee Ombudsman Town Hall Meetings

- [May 3 — Aiken, SC](#)

MSHA — 4th Annual New Mexico Mine Health and Safety Conference

- [May 2-4 — Socorro, NM](#)

MSHA — Spring Thaw Workshop

- [May 5 — Phoenix, AZ](#)

OFCCP — AAP Development Workshop for Supply and Service Contractors

- [May 4 — Pittsburgh, PA](#)

OFCCP — Building Partnerships for the Community

- [April 29 — Charlotte, NC](#)
- [April 29 — Raleigh, NC](#)
- [May 10 — Yazoo City, MS](#)

OFCCP — Community Outreach and Education Event

- [May 12 — Richmond, VA](#)

OFCCP — Compliance Assistance Seminar (Trustee Workshop)

- [May 11 — Syracuse, NY](#)

OFCCP — Compliance Assistance Seminar for Construction Contractors

- [May 10 — Mountainside, NJ](#)
- [May 12 — Seattle, WA](#)

OFCCP — Compliance Assistance Seminar for Supply & Service Contractors

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has announced a new regional emphasis program in Alabama, Florida, Georgia and Mississippi that is focused on reducing the number of needlestick and sharps injuries at ambulatory surgical care centers, freestanding emergency care clinics and primary care medical clinics that provide acute, chronic and emergency care on an as-needed or walk-in basis. The program began April 25 and will continue until Sept. 30, 2012. "Needlestick and other sharps-related injuries that expose workers to bloodborne pathogens continue to be an important public health concern," said Cindy Coe, OSHA's regional administrator in Atlanta. "Employers must take seriously their responsibility to protect workers from these health risks."

- [Read the Alabama News Release](#)
- [Read the Mississippi News Release](#)
- [Read the Georgia News Release](#)
- [Read the Florida News Release](#)

OSHA Cites North Dakota Wind Turbine Blade Manufacturer LM Wind Power Blades Inc. in Grand Forks, N.D., formerly LM Glasfiber Inc., has been cited by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration with 11 alleged health and safety violations for exposing workers to unsafe conditions. Proposed penalties total \$136,500. The company failed to ensure that entry supervisors canceled the confined space permit and terminated the entry operation when prohibited conditions were found, and to ensure entry attendants immediately ordered the evacuation of a confined space upon discovery of conditions dangerous to life or health. "The employer is well aware of OSHA requirements and has continued a pattern of failing to comply with them," said Tom Deutscher, OSHA's area office director in Bismarck. "Despite having been cited for similar infractions in the past, the company continues to place workers in harm's way by allowing hazards to exist."

- [Read the News Release](#)

DOL Recovers Nearly \$100,000 for 33 Communications Workers

Covad Communications has paid \$99,537 in back wages to 33 field technicians employed by a now-defunct California contractor following an investigation by the Wage and Hour Division. Certified Securities Integrators Inc. of San Leandro, Calif., missed two payrolls, violating the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. "In these tough economic times, we want workers to know that bankruptcy does not necessarily mean that they will be left uncompensated for their work," said George Friday Jr., administrator for WHD's Western Regional Office. Covad Communications chose to pay the technicians the full amount of the missed payrolls and agreed to future compliance with the FLSA. In addition to California, workers were located in Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Maryland, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Texas and Virginia.

- [Read the News Release](#)

\$1.76 Million Judgment for Poultry Workers with Disabilities

The department's Wage and Hour Division has obtained a partial summary judgment requiring Texas-based Hill Country Farms, doing business as Henry's Turkey Service, and President Kenneth Henry to pay more than \$1.76 million in back wages and liquidated damages for violating the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the federal Fair Labor Standards Act. The U.S. District Court concluded that the defendants willfully violated the FLSA by failing to properly pay 31 workers with disabilities. "Working on a poultry processing line is a particularly difficult and dangerous job," said Secretary Solis. "Henry's Turkey Service exploited vulnerable employees

- [May 4 — Nashville, TN](#)
- [May 5 — Memphis, TN](#)
- [May 11 — Birmingham, AL](#)

OFCCP — Dawson Technical Institute Construction Committee Meeting

- [May 2 — Chicago, IL](#)

OFCCP — Information Session with Faith Based Organizations

- [May 11 — Denver, CO](#)

OFCCP — Industry Liaison Group Meeting

- [May 11 — Nashville, TN](#)

OFCCP — Partnering with the U.S. Department of Labor

- [May 5 — Boston, MA](#)

OFCCP — Responsibilities and Resources Forum - Supply & Service/Construction Contractors

- [May 12 — Millington, TN](#)

OSHA — Asian American and Pacific Islander Worker Protection Summit

- [May 10 — San Francisco, CA](#)

OSHA — Combustible Dust Expert Forum

- [May 13 — Washington, DC](#)

WHD — Prevailing Wage Conference 2011

- [May 10-12 — Melbourne, FL](#)

who have a right to, and deserve, every penny that they earned."

- [Read the News Release](#)

Additional Funding to Help Former Offenders Gain Job Skills

The department provided approximately \$7.2 million in funds for 18 third-generation grantees to continue assistance for adult offenders who are returning to communities from incarceration. The purpose of the grants is to provide an employment-centered approach to reintegration that improves long-term labor market prospects for former offenders. "To successfully reintegrate into communities and find stable employment, former offenders need jobs skills and moral support," said Secretary Solis. "This continued funding aims to connect these individuals with organizations that can provide invaluable guidance as they transition into the labor force."

- [Read the News Release](#)
- [View the Full List of Grantees](#)

ETA Convenes Career Pathways Institute to Support Grantees

Grantees from Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Minnesota, Montana, New Mexico, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Gila River Indian Community, and Tucson Indian Center in Arizona gathered in Washington, D.C., this week as part of the Career Pathways Technical Assistance Initiative Institute. The session brought grantee teams together with subject matter experts, state and local practitioners and federal staff to discuss how to integrate credential attainment into career pathway approaches by mapping out a clear sequence of related credentials, occupations and education, and training opportunities and developing a strategic plan for aligning and articulating them into a comprehensive career pathway. The initiative, which is co-sponsored by DOL's Employment and Training Administration and Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, leverages the latest research and best practices to support the development of career pathway systems.

- [Visit Career Pathways Technical Assistance Initiative Institute](#)

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