



DOL News Brief

June 2, 2011

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Workshop Commemorates World Day Against Child Labor



In an effort to protect children worldwide, the workshop "Creating Safe Futures" brought together 80 grantees in Washington, D.C., to share best practices

on preventing hazardous and exploitive child labor. Thursday's collaboration commemorates the 2011 World Day Against Child Labor, which officially will occur June 12. Workshop sponsors included the department's Bureau of International Labor Affairs, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, the World Health Organization and the International Labour Organization.

- [View the Slideshow](#)
- [Watch the Video](#)

A Conversation on Immigration

More than 300 people convened last Friday at East Los Angeles College for a conversation with Secretary Solis on the need to reform the



U.S. immigration system for the 21st century. Solis was accompanied by a diverse panel that included faith-based organizations, business leaders and students urging the passage of the DREAM (Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minor) Act to provide a pathway to citizenship for some individuals who entered the U.S. illegally as minors. Participants shared their personal stories, as well as their ideas for comprehensive immigration reform.

- [View the Slideshow](#)

VETS Success

DOL programs are helping to place veterans in meaningful employment, and some services are being upgraded to assist them even more,

What's Hot

A Small School with Big Dreams

In the rural town of Bridgeport, Wash., there are big ideas, big goals and unimaginable accomplishments being met. Students at Bridgeport High School accomplished something Wednesday that many of their parents could not: They obtained high school diplomas. In fewer than three years, the school has increased its graduation rate to more than 90 percent and, equally important, all students have taken classes that have prepared them for college. The school was one of three finalists in President Obama's Race to the Top Commencement Challenge. Secretary Solis traveled to Bridgeport to personally congratulate each of the 37 graduates and deliver their commencement speech. "Ganas – one's will – is something that will get you far in life," she told a large crowd of family and friends at the ceremony. Education, Solis emphasized, is the foundation for a brighter future. Earlier in the day, Solis met with area labor leaders and farm-worker advocates to address wage and hour issues.



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

Thousands of Veterans to Benefit from \$37 Million in DOL Grants

More than 21,000 veterans will benefit from 144 grants totaling \$37 million that were awarded by the department's Veterans' Employment and Training Service Wednesday. The Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program will provide \$28 million to continue programs for veterans who are or at risk of being homeless for job training in civilian careers. Separately, more than \$9 million will provide job training for all veterans under the Veterans' Workforce Investment Program. Secretary Solis said the grants will help veterans "access the resources they need to find good jobs and build a bright future for themselves and their families."

- [Read the News Release About \\$28M Grants](#)
- [Read the News Release About \\$9M Grants](#)

\$20 Million to Advance Employment of People with Disabilities

The Employment and Training Administration on Tuesday announced a \$20 million solicitation for grant applications to improve education, training and employment opportunities for adults and youth with disabilities. The Disability Employment Initiative is a joint project of ETA and the Office of Disability Employment Policy to fund programs that serve individuals who are unemployed, underemployed and/or receiving Social Security disability benefits. "Workers with disabilities suffer from one of the lowest employment rates of any group in the American population, even in times of prosperity,"

Veterans' Employment and Training Service Assistant Secretary Raymond Jefferson told members of the U.S. House of Representatives' Committee on Veterans' Affairs in two hearings this week. On Wednesday, addressing the topic "Putting America's Veterans Back to Work," Jefferson said that the Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program provided services to nearly 589,000 veterans last year, with 201,000 of them finding jobs. On Thursday, he shared that a Transition Assistance Program employment workshop is being redesigned, "creating experiential, effective and enduring solutions for a successful transition from military to civilian life and employment." The revamped workshop will be ready for implementation Nov. 11 – Veterans Day.

- [Read the June 1 Testimony](#)
- [Read the June 2 Testimony](#)

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## Sharing Resources with LIUNA



Representatives from the Wage and Hour Division, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the Employee Benefits

Security Administration presented an informational seminar to building tradesmen at the Laborers' International Union of North America Great Plains Laborers' District Council in Iowa City, Iowa, last week. "It was a great opportunity to meet with union leaders, tradesmen and others in the building trade industry, and talk about the resources available to serve the workers in the state of Iowa through the Department of Labor," said Ken Bennett, the secretary's regional representative.

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## WHD Focused on Hospitality

As part of its enforcement initiative to protect Virginia's hotel and motel workers and increase industry compliance with Fair Labor Standards Act provisions, the Wage and Hour Division's Norfolk Area Office hosted a "Focus on Hospitality" seminar Tuesday in Virginia Beach. The day-long event included presentations by division employees and representatives from the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Virginia Department of Health and the Mexican Consulate in D.C. on topics ranging from FLSA compliance to immigration issues. WHD's Northeast Region announced a similar initiative focused on hotel and motel workers throughout Pennsylvania. "Our goal for this initiative is to identify and remedy systemic labor violations so

said Secretary Solis. "It is vital that state and local agencies work together with private sector partners to improve these statistics."

- [Read the News Release](#)

## Assistance for Missouri Storm Recovery

The Labor Department last Friday provided a \$5,822,352 National Emergency Grant to assist with cleanup and recovery efforts in the wake of tornado damage in Missouri, including the May 22 tornado that devastated Joplin. The grant was awarded to the Missouri Division of Workforce Development to create temporary jobs to assist in recovery efforts. "The incredible damage that this latest tornado has inflicted on the people of Joplin is unprecedented," said Secretary Solis. "The Labor Department's grant will assist affected Missouri communities with cleanup efforts that will help lead to a sustained recovery for the region."

- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Find out More About Disaster Assistance from DOL](#)

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## International Scene

### List of Products Made with Child Labor Revised

The Bureau of International Labor Affairs published in Tuesday's Federal Register a revised list of products that federal contractors must certify under Executive Order 13126 are not produced with forced or indentured child labor. The 2011 list sets forth one item – Ethiopian hand-woven textiles – and deletes another – Brazilian charcoal – as products the U.S. Departments of Labor, State and Homeland Security believe might have been mined, produced or manufactured by forced or indentured child labor.

- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Read the Federal Register Notice](#)
- [View 2011 List of Products](#)
- [Read the FAQs](#)

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## News You Can Use

### New Grants to Help Former Offenders Get to Work

A new round of grants to provide an employment-centered approach to reintegration of former offenders into their communities was made available this week. Ten organizations are receiving \$1,170,000 each to assist with training, employment and support services for adult former inmates returning from serving time in justice facilities. "The grants announced are an investment not just in the futures of former inmates, but also in the communities and families to which they are returning," said Secretary Solis.

- [Read the News Release](#)

### EBSA Moves to Extend Applicability Dates for Plan Disclosure Rules

The Employee Benefits Security Administration on Wednesday proposed extending the applicability dates for its two recent retirement plan fee disclosure rules. Under the proposed amendments, service providers would have until Jan. 1, 2012, to comply with the interim final 408(b)(2) regulation, which requires that service providers disclose comprehensive information about their fees and potential conflicts of interest to plan fiduciaries. For the participant-level final rule, which requires employers to disclose information about plan and investment costs to workers who direct their own investments, employers would have 120 days to comply. That regulation applies to plan years beginning on or after Nov. 1, 2011.

workers are protected against exploitation," said George Ference, regional administrator of the WHD in the Northeast.

- [Read the Virginia News Release](#) (English)
- [Read the Virginia News Release](#) (Español)
- [Read the Pennsylvania News Release](#)

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## Solis Living the Legacy

The Progressive Jewish Alliance honored Secretary Solis with its annual Living the Legacy award in Los Angeles last week for her



lifelong work in fighting for workers and their families. Solis reflected on modern day injustices in the workplace that she is committed to ending. "We've made historic progress in workplace safety in the last 40 years, but Americans are still dying every day in preventable workplace accidents," she said. "Our work will not be done until no worker has to risk her life for her livelihood." Ralph Fertig, a 1961 freedom rider and an organizer of the March on Washington, and Mitchell Kami, former president of Bet Tzedek Legal Services, also were honored.

- [View the Slideshow](#)

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## Taking Good News on the Road



Carl Fillichio, head of DOL's Office of Public Affairs, touted the value of effective internal communications during a trip this week to the

department's Philadelphia Region. He met with members of the Philadelphia Regional Executive Committee, which represents the various agencies, to promote several of the department's award-winning internal communications efforts, including its elevator poster campaign; Frances, a monthly e-magazine; and this weekly e-newsletter, which now has more than 100,000 subscribers. While in the area, Fillichio also served as a guest lecturer during a graduate-level internal communications course at Rowan University in Glassboro, N.J.

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## Upcoming Deadlines & Events

Check out the grant opportunities with DOL.

- [Open Funding Opportunities](#)

## [Read the News Release](#)

### Preliminary Regulatory Reform Plan Under Review

Earlier this year, President Obama issued an executive order that outlined his vision for a 21st century regulatory system. Each federal agency will review regulations and remove those that are out-of-date, unnecessary, duplicative, confusing or overly burdensome. The Labor Department released a preliminary plan open for public comment via a Web page through July 1.

- [Make a Comment](#)
- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Read the Deputy Secretary's Blog Entry](#)
- [Read the Executive Order](#)

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## DOL Working for You

### Workforce Development Helps Single Mom Enter Medical Field



Single mom Marie Wright wanted to leave behind short-term jobs as a cashier and food service worker and train as a home health aide. Her education portfolio included graduating from the Job Corps Center in Edison, N.J., with a GED certificate. But she still had to improve her math and reading skills. Wright entered an adult education and literacy program provided by New Jersey's Department of Labor and Workforce Development under a grant from a local One-Stop Career Center. Now she is completing her studies as a certified nursing assistant and home health aide, and she has a job lined up upon graduation. Wright said she "is very grateful for the program" because it is giving her an opportunity "to learn as much as I can and work with the elderly."

- [Find a Local One-Stop Career Center](#)

### San Diego Job Corps Students Build and Maintain Firefighting Facility

The U.S. Department of the Navy's firefighters practice at a California training facility that has been built up and maintained by students from the San Diego Job Corps Center for the past five years. Students learning trade skills such as flooring, plumbing, electrical work, carpentry and masonry have received valuable hands-on experience building, rebuilding and maintaining facility structures, according to Pete Camarda, the center's bricklaying instructor. The Navy, in turn, has saved more than \$200,000 in construction and labor costs through the hard work of about 300 students who have gone through the program over the years, he said. Nineteen-year-old student Jesse Paredes said the Job Corps program will make him "more comfortable on a job site" because of the skills and training he has acquired at this facility.



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## DOL in Action

### Impact Inspections Target 15 Mining Operations Around US

The Mine Safety and Health Administration's impact inspection program – now more than a year old – continues to uncover dozens of violations as federal inspectors launch surprise visits at some of the nation's more

EVENTS SPOTLIGHT: Register to Join DOL in Denver on June 30

The Labor Department will hold an Informational Outreach Forum – "Promoting Good Jobs for Everyone" – on June 30 at Metropolitan State College in Denver for employers, employees, unions and community-based organizations. Staff from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the Wage and Hour Division, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, the Women's Bureau, the Office of Labor-Management Standards, the Mine Safety and Health Administration, the Office of the Solicitor, and the Veterans' Employment and Training Administration, along with the secretary's regional representative, will participate in plenary and breakout sessions offering compliance assistance and promoting workers' rights. Registration is required, and space is limited. To register, contact Cindra Thompson at [thompson.cindra@dol.gov](mailto:thompson.cindra@dol.gov) or 303-844-1288.

EBSA — Choosing a Retirement Solution for Your Small Business Workshop

- [June 14 — Webinar](#)

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

- [June 7-8 — Dover, DE](#)
- [June 28-29 — Raleigh, NC](#)

MSHA — Joseph A. Holmes Association 2011 National Meeting and Training Seminar

- [June 21 - 23 — San Antonio, TX](#)

OFCCP — AAP Development and Preparing for a Desk Audit

- [June 23 — Los Angeles, CA](#)

OFCCP — Building a Diverse Workforce Together

- [June 9 — Atlanta, GA](#)

OFCCP — Building Partnerships for the Community

- [June 29 — Charlotte, NC](#)
- [June 29 — Raleigh, NC](#)

OFCCP — Community Outreach and Education Event

- [June 9 — Richmond, VA](#)
- [June 23 — Richmond, VA](#)

OFCCP — Compliance Assistance Seminar for Construction

troubled mining operations. Last month, inspectors issued 255 citations and orders to 15 mines. One of those was Wilcoal Mining Inc.'s Tri State One Mine in Claiborne County, Tenn. After capturing and monitoring the phones to prevent advance notification of their arrival, inspectors issued 15 citations and five closure orders for infractions that included accumulations of combustible materials, inadequate roof support and noncompliance with the mine's ventilation plan. "MSHA inspectors continue to find and cite serious violations at mines we have targeted during previous impact inspections," said MSHA Assistant Secretary Joseph Main. "We will continue to level this enforcement tool until repeat offenders demonstrate they take their responsibilities for the safety and health of miners seriously."

- [Read the News Release](#)

Decree Gives Union's Training, Health Plan Funds New Oversight

The Employee Benefits Security Administration has obtained a consent decree appointing an independent fiduciary to manage the Craftsman Training Plan and the Health Welfare and Hospitalization Plan of the Craftsman Independent Union Local 1 in Cape Girardeau, Mo. The court's action removed defendants William Kitchen, Randy Kitchen, Nelson Fiedler, Terrance Kelley and Jerry Dewrock as trustees of the plans. It also removed Fred Kelley as administrator of both plans and the Midtown Family Medical Center LLC, which was owned and operated by the health plan. "We are pleased that the hard-earned benefits of these workers will no longer be jeopardized," said James J. Purcell, EBSA's acting regional director in Kansas City, Mo. The defendants agreed to restore \$25,000 to the training plan and \$175,000 to the health plan.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Assistance for Workers Affected by Oklahoma Base Closures  
DOL has provided a \$1,690,122 National Emergency Grant increment to continue services to 885 individuals dislocated by the realignment of military installations in Oklahoma, including training in aerospace occupations. The funding will assist state and local workforce investment boards in meeting the needs of workers, communities and businesses affected by the decisions of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission. "Today's grant will give workers affected by the base closures an opportunity to obtain training in order to enhance their marketable skills," said Secretary Solis. "As a result, these workers will be better positioned to compete for the jobs of the future."

- [Read the News Release](#)

Storm Recovery Help Continued for Oklahoma

A \$471,150 National Emergency Grant was awarded to the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission to create temporary jobs for cleanup and recovery efforts in the wake of the severe storms, tornadoes and associated flooding that struck in April. "Communities in Oklahoma are suffering from the devastation of recent storms," said Secretary Solis. "This grant will help the many people who have been affected begin to repair their lives."

- [Read the News Release](#)

OLMS to Oversee New Union Election in Illinois

Officers of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers Local Lodge 49 in Crete, Ill., agreed to a new, supervised election for union president after an Office of Labor-Management Standards investigation found that union funds and equipment had been used to promote the incumbent candidates in the union's December election. OLMS offers voluntary compliance agreements to encourage corrective action when an investigation reveals violations of the law have occurred that may

## Contractors

- [June 16 — Nashville, TN](#)
- [June 30 — Memphis, TN](#)

## OFCCP — Compliance Assistance Seminar for Construction and Supply and Service Contractors

- [June 29 — San Diego, CA](#)

## OFCCP — Compliance Assistance Seminar for Supply & Service Contractors

- [June 8 — Nashville, TN](#)
- [June 8 — Birmingham, AL](#)
- [June 9 — Memphis, TN](#)
- [June 14 — Mountainside, NJ](#)
- [June 15 — Nashville, TN](#)
- [June 21 — Jacksonville, FL](#)
- [June 23 — Memphis, TN](#)
- [June 29 — Nashville, TN](#)
- [June 29 — Portland, OR](#)

## OFCCP — Compliance Assistance Seminar for Reasonable Accommodations

- [June 16 — Miami, FL](#)

## OFCCP — DOL Forum - Promoting Good Jobs for Everyone

- [June 30 — Denver, CO](#)

## OFCCP — Nuts & Bolts of OFCCP Compliance

- [June 8 — Webinar](#)

## OFCCP — Preparing for a Construction Evaluation

- [June 15 — Houston, TX](#)

## OLMS — Compliance Assistance Seminar

- [June 6 — San Francisco, CA](#)
- [June 16 — Hato Rey, PR](#)
- [June 23 — Birmingham, AL](#)

## OSHA — Federal Advisory Council on Occupational Safety and Health Meeting

- [June 7 — Washington, DC](#)

## OSHA — Southern New Jersey Action Summit for Latino and Immigrant Workers

- [June 5 — Bridgeton, NJ](#)

## OWCP — Town Hall Meetings to assist Nuclear Weapons Workers

- [June 7 — Bolingbrook, IL](#)

have affected the outcome of a union officer election. OLMS will oversee the new round of voting, which is expected to be conducted by the end of August.

## Former APWU Officer Sentenced in Embezzlement Case

When labor union officials do not uphold their duty to use union funds solely for the benefit of the union and its members, the Labor Department steps in. On May 25, John McGovern, former secretary-treasurer of American Postal Workers Union Local 190, the largest APWU local in New Jersey, was sentenced to 20 months in prison and ordered to make restitution of \$783,931 for conspiring to embezzle union funds. His prison term will be followed by three years of supervised release. An investigation by the Office of Labor-Management Standards disclosed that the embezzled union money was being used for gambling, leading to prosecution by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of New Jersey.

- [Read the Justice Department's News Release](#)

## Apex Enterprises Cited for Multiple Safety and Health Hazards

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration cited San Antonio-based Apex Enterprises Thursday with 11 serious violations for hazards at the company's worksite in Pflugerville, Texas. Violations include failing to ensure employees were wearing personal fall protection devices, to provide fall protection training for employees working on roof edges and to ensure ladders extended 3 feet above the landing surface. "Fall, electrical and struck-by hazards cause nearly two-thirds of all construction fatalities," said Casey Perkins, OSHA's area director in Austin. Proposed penalties total \$40,200.

- [Read the News Release](#)

## DOL Seeks Back Wages, Damages for 17 Chicago Hotel Workers

A complaint has been filed in a Chicago federal court seeking to recover back wages and damages for 17 workers at the Chicago O'Hare Garden Hotel. A WHD investigation determined that the hotel, parent company A & A Hospitality LLC of Chicago and owner Anshoo Sethi violated the Fair Labor Standards Act by failing to pay workers minimum wage and overtime compensation. More than \$21,000 in back wages is owed.

- [Read the News Release](#)

## OSHA Fines Montana Company for Grain Handling Violations

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has cited Lakeland Feed and Supply in Hamilton, Mont., for exposing workers to grain handling and fall hazards, along with other safety and health violations. Proposed fines total \$122,500. "The hazards associated with grain handling operations are well recognized," said Christine Webb, OSHA's area director. "All employers, and especially those in high hazard industries such as the grain industry, must take the steps necessary to eliminate hazards from the workplace." The inspection was initiated under OSHA's regional emphasis program that targets grain handling establishments in Montana.

- [Read the News Release](#)

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