



WINNER OF 2014 AVA DIGITAL GOLD AWARD

BY THE NUMBERS

18.3 million people received employment services through an **American Job Center** resource in the last year alone.

What's New

On the Road to Raise the Minimum Wage

A 10-state bus tour campaign to increase the minimum wage came to a close April 3 in our nation's capital. The bus tour, led by Americans United for Change, highlighted the stories of workers throughout the country who are struggling to put food on the table and buy medicine for their children. U.S. Secretary of Labor



Thomas E. Perez joined the April 3 event, where Ruben Jones, a full-time cook at a restaurant, had the crowd in tears when he told his story about how he has two children and four grandchildren, yet lives with his 82-year-old mother and cannot afford basic necessities. Gina Schaefer, owner of nine independent Ace Hardware stores in Washington, D.C., and Maryland, told the crowd that paying employees an honest wage for an honest day's work is good for business. Schaefer attributes the success of her business to the fact that it pays employees above the minimum wage, which leads to better customer service. Also in attendance were Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi, Sen. Tom Harkin, Sen. Al Franken, Rep. George Miller, and American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees President Lee Saunders. Perez also caught up with the bus March 28 in Cleveland, Ohio, where he fired up the crowd. "Nobody who works full-time in this country should have to live in poverty," Perez said. "I talk to many people across this county making choices between a gallon of milk and a gallon of gas, making choices as to whether they buy food or they buy medicine, all because the purchasing power of the minimum wage is 20 percent less than it was 30 years ago. America needs a raise, that's the bottom line."

- [Read the Blog Post](#)
- [View the D.C. Slideshow](#)
- [View the Cleveland Slideshow](#)
- [Learn More About Minimum Wage](#)

WORKPLACE MYTH BUSTER

Myth: It's too early to start saving for retirement.
Not true: It's never too early (or too late) to start saving for retirement — and the earlier you begin, the more money you'll have to support yourself. As traditional pensions become increasingly rare, many workers are shouldering a larger portion of their retirement costs. And with lifespans and living costs on the rise, retirement can be an expensive responsibility. Fortunately, employees can take simple steps to start saving for their futures today. Two easy options include making automatic contributions, so the money is withdrawn from every paycheck before it hits your bank account, and taking full advantage of employer matches, so you don't leave "free" money on the table.

- [Learn About Saving for Retirement](#)

(Work in Progress) The Best of Our Blog

Each week, this space will bring you the best from our [\(Work in Progress\)](#) blog.

- [Sí Se Puede: The Legacy of César Chávez:](#) Secretary Perez pays tribute to one of the labor movement's leading lights on what would have been his 87th birthday.
- [When Protecting the Workforce, We Mean Business:](#) John DuMont, the director of the Wage and Hour Division's district office in Pittsburgh,

Affordable Care Act Is Changing Lives

With the open enrollment deadline for quality, affordable health insurance just days away, Secretary Perez joined Rep. Marcia Fudge in Cleveland on March 28 to talk to Ohioans at MetroHealth Center about the need to sign up for health insurance before the March 31



Pa., tells the story of the agency's persistence in recovering back wages for tax-preparers at an accounting firm.

- [Promoting Innovation in Skills Development](#): Eric Seleznow, acting assistant secretary of labor for the Employment and Training Administration, writes a round-up of some of the department's activities to connect ready-to-work Americans with ready-to-be filled jobs — and to connect employers with skilled workers.



This week's phrase is H is for H-Visas. Employers can use H-visas as a legal means of hiring temporary foreign workers with critical skills, while also protecting the wages and working conditions of U.S. workers. The Office of Foreign Labor Certification within the Employment and Training Administration manages the

process of certifying employer requests for temporary foreign workers.

- [Learn About Foreign Labor Certification](#)
- [See all the A-Z terms](#)

Deputy Secretary Confirmed

Christopher P. Lu was confirmed as deputy secretary of labor by the U.S. Senate on April 1. "Chris is an enormously capable manager and a devoted public servant, whose commitment to President Obama's opportunity agenda is second to none," Secretary Perez said, adding that "I look forward to working with him on all of our priorities — from job training to wage protection to worker safety to benefits security." Lu, a senior fellow at the Center for the Study of the Presidency and Congress, has served in the White House as assistant to the president and Cabinet secretary and on Capitol Hill as legislative director and as acting chief of staff to then-Sen. Barack Obama. Lu earned his bachelor's degree at Princeton University and his law degree at Harvard. He began his career as a law clerk to Judge Robert E. Cowen on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit and as an attorney at Sidley Austin. Lu also served as co-chair of the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

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

Sharing Workforce Perspectives

The National Urban League launched its 11th Annual Legislative Policy Conference in Washington, D.C., this

enrollment deadline. Perez and

Rep. Fudge heard firsthand from Lori Smith about how the Affordable Care Act has changed her life. On Easter Sunday 2012, Lori's husband Patrick, 48, went into septic shock and was rushed to MetroHealth. They struggled financially to pay the medical bills and she had to sell her car and wedding ring to cover the medical costs. Because of the Affordable Care Act, they can now afford the best care for Patrick. "In the United States of America, you shouldn't have to sell your wedding ring for health care coverage," said Perez of Lori's story. The secretary also toured the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at MetroHealth and met a triplet who has been in the hospital for almost a year. Her medical bills are close to \$2 million, and because of the Affordable Care Act, she is no longer faced with a lifetime cap. More than 7.1 million people have signed up for health insurance under the Affordable Care Act.

- [View the Slideshow](#)

In Ohio, an Unemployed Woman Asks, 'Where Is the Light?'

Secretary Perez met with a dozen workers outside of Cleveland on March 28 who have been unemployed for weeks, months and even years to discuss their struggles and how the department can help them get back on their feet again. One worker, Harriet, has an MBA and doesn't have enough money to feed herself. She asked the secretary, "Where is the light?... I'm not looking for a handout. I'm looking for an opportunity." Due to Congress' inaction, these workers are no longer receiving the critical lifeline of emergency unemployment benefits that expired on Dec. 28, impacting 2.3 million Americans. Perez told the group that the administration is not going to wait for Congress to act. "There are a lot of us who are working day in and day out to find that light," said Perez of the president's year of action. Earlier this year, President Obama issued a memorandum to make sure that the long-term unemployed receive fair treatment for employment by federal agencies. In addition, more than 300 leading companies committed to best practices to give the long-term unemployed a fair shot when they hire.

National News

Building a More Collaborative Workforce System



The National Association of Workforce Boards held its 2014 forum in Washington, D.C., from March 29 to April 1, with the theme "Dialogue for Workforce Excellence." On March 31, Secretary Perez provided the keynote address to an audience of more than 1,200 guests, consisting of representatives

from business, labor and higher education and the workforce system. The workforce system has played a critical role in getting America back to work in the wake of financial collapse in 2007-2009. Perez used this opportunity to thank them for their work and challenged them to do even more in the year ahead. Collaboration between the workforce system, educational organizations and employers has helped ensure training leads to occupations that need to be filled. Perez's call-to-action: "Let's expand existing sector and regional partnerships to engage more employers and more workers. Let's develop new partnerships in places or growing industries where there is a need for skilled workers."

Grants Available to Help Women Enter Nontraditional Occupations

The department has made \$1.8 million in grant funding available for the



week, which included a meeting with Secretary Perez on April 2. Approximately 40 members of the NUL's senior leadership participated in the meeting. NUL President Marc Morial and Saroya Friedman-Gonzalez, vice president for workforce development, provided the secretary with an overview of their workforce training programs and highlighted their success and challenges in operating programs funded by the department. Perez provided attendees with an overview on departmental issues and priorities as it relates to apprenticeship, skills and workforce training, and the president's My Brother's Keeper initiative. Eric Seleznow, acting assistant secretary for employment and training, joined the discussion and talked about strategies to increase engagement on workforce issues.

• [View the Slideshow](#)

Bloggng on Big Issues

Five influential bloggers sat down with Secretary Perez on April 1 for a discussion about the needs of working women and what the department is



doing to meet those needs. Women's Bureau Director Latifa Lyles also joined, kicking off the conversation with an update on the June 23 White House Summit on Working Families and a series of related regional events to stimulate more dialogue around supporting working families. Secretary Perez then answered questions about how the department is working with states to promote paid leave and family-friendly workplace policies; improving the pay and working conditions of women in low-wage positions, starting with raising the minimum wage, and why more women should consider entering "nontraditional" fields that pay well, such as advanced manufacturing.

Alliance With Hair Salons



The Georgia Concerned Beauty Professionals in Atlanta and the department's Occupational Safety and Health

Administration has formed an alliance to provide hair salon owners and workers with information, guidance and training to protect employees from exposure to products that contain hazardous chemicals, such as formaldehydes. The agreement was signed on March 31, at the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta. OSHA has found formaldehyde in the air at salons where hair smoothing products are used. The agency

Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations program to help recruit, train and retain women in high-skill occupations, including advanced manufacturing, transportation and energy. The funding will help approximately four eligible community development organizations develop resource centers to support women interested in entering these occupations. "These grants will remove barriers for women entering nontraditional fields. Having half of our population underrepresented in the high-skill, high-paying jobs of the future isn't good for the economic prosperity of our country," said Secretary Perez when announcing the grant availability.

• [Read the News Release](#)

Protecting Those That Work On or Near Electrical Power Lines

A long overdue update to a 40-year-old construction standard for electric power line work that will save nearly 20 lives and prevent 118 serious injuries every year was announced by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration April 1. The rule will improve workplace safety and health for workers performing electrical power generation, transmission and distribution work by bringing it more in line with the corresponding general industry standards, while also making revisions to the construction and general industry requirements themselves. The updated standards will provide new or revised provisions related to fall protection, electrical arcs, approach-distances for live power lines and adequate electrical protective equipment. The rule will become effective 90 days after publication in the Federal Register.

• [Read About the Rule](#)
• [Read the News Release](#)

International Scene

Combatting Child Labor in the West African Cocoa Sector

As part of the department's leadership in efforts to combat the worst forms of child labor in the West African cocoa sector, Secretary Perez opened an April 1 briefing at the department with stakeholders and members of the Child Labor Cocoa Coordinating Group. The Group brings together the department,



offices of Sen. Tom Harkin and Rep. Eliot Engel, governments of Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, and the chocolate and cocoa industry to implement the 2010 Declaration of Joint Action on child labor in cocoa production. Following Perez's opening, Sen. Harkin, Rep. Engel, Ministers Nii Armah Ashietey of Ghana and Anne Désirée Ouloto of Côte d'Ivoire, and Larry Graham of the National Confectioners Association each made remarks. The briefing included updates on government efforts in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, and on projects funded by the department through the International Labor Organization and by industry, focusing on progress in addressing the Declaration's goal of reducing the worst forms of child labor in the sector by 70 percent by 2020. Perez and the other speakers paid tribute to Sen. Harkin for over a decade of leadership on this effort, as he prepares to retire at the end of this congressional session. The senator, in turn, affirmed his continued commitment to the cause even after he leaves government.

has conducted air testing that indicated formaldehyde levels greater than OSHA limits in salons, even though products that were tested had formaldehyde-free labels.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Pulling Together for Temp Workers



Workers' rights was the focus of the Coalition for Latin-American Migrants and Immigrants monthly meeting, hosted March 28 by the Philadelphia

regional offices of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the Wage and Hour Division. Representatives from community and advocacy groups joined regional staff to address issues affecting temporary workers, including knowing their rights, workplace safety and health hazards, and wage theft. Department presenters highlighted national initiatives focused on assisting temporary workers. The coalition consists of approximately 30 community-based organizations in the greater Philadelphia area that are focused on promoting an environment of quality and supportive services to Latino immigrant communities.

- [View the Slideshow](#)

Protecting Farm Workers

The Wage and Hour Division is reaching out to California's Employment Development Department in a renewed and targeted effort to expand current levels of awareness of resources regarding farm workers' labor and safety protections under the law. The division conducted a statewide training session on the requirements under federal labor laws, including the step-by-step process necessary for the intake of labor complaints. Participants from all WHD district offices in California participated in the call. California's Employment Development Department is mandated by state law to protect all labor rights of farm workers. The March 25 training was hosted by the EDD and is part of the Wage and Hour Division's set of initiatives and outreach programs along with partnership arrangements targeting the protection of, and assistance to, vulnerable workers.

- [Learn About Migrant Worker Protection](#)

Coalition for a Common Purpose

The Common Purpose Project's Big Table Meeting took place April 1 in Washington, D.C. with Secretary Perez attending to discuss efforts to increase the minimum wage. The Common Purpose Project is a coalition of more than 200 community groups from all across the country that come together to discuss and collaborate on public policy issues. Perez discussed the Harkin-

- [Read the Annual Report](#)
- [View the Slideshow](#)

Joint Declaration With Mexican Secretary of Labor and Social Welfare



In a ceremony at the department in Washington, D.C., Secretary Perez and Mexican Secretary of Labor and Social Welfare Jesús Alfonso Navarrete Prida signed a joint declaration to help inform Mexican workers about their labor rights under U.S. laws. The declaration will carry out consultations under the

provisions of the North American Agreement on Labor Cooperation, the labor side agreement to the North American Free Trade Agreement. Under the terms of the declaration, the department and the Mexican Secretariat intend to use the department's Consular Partnership Program, which has been in place since 2004 with the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its consulates in the United States, to conduct educational and outreach activities to inform Mexican workers in the United States and their U.S. employers about workers' workplace rights and employers' responsibilities. "Today's signing of the joint declaration is another important step forward in helping ensure that all workers in the United States know their rights and that all employers know their responsibilities under the law," said Secretary Perez.

- [Read the News Release](#)

It Happened on the Hill

In the Fiscal Year 2015 Budget, an Agenda for Opportunity

The president's proposed fiscal year 2015 budget for the department was the focus of testimony by Secretary Perez before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies on April 2. "The president's budget sets forth concrete, practical



investments and proposals to achieve his vision by growing the economy, strengthening the middle-class, and empowering all those hoping to join the ranks of the middle-class," Perez said in his opening remarks. "It is an agenda of opportunity, action, and optimism. It is the agenda for our work at the Department of Labor over the next three years." Highlighted programs in the budget include a range of skills and training programs to help put ready-to-work Americans in jobs that employers need to fill. He also summarized the budget requests for individual agencies within the department, noting the ways that proposed funding will help them continue to execute the department's critical mission.

- [Watch the Hearing](#)
- [Read Perez's Testimony](#)
- [View the FY 2015 Budget](#)

Around DOL

Talking Job-Driven Workforce Solutions

Miller bill, which would raise the minimum wage to \$10.10 per hour, with a group of approximately 75. If passed, the bill would benefit, directly and indirectly, more than 28 million people and lift 2 million out of poverty. More than half of those who would benefit are women, making a minimum wage increase an important tool for addressing the gender pay gap. White House Director of Public Engagement Paulette Aniskoff attended the meeting as well.

• [Learn More About Minimum Wage](#)

The Changing Workforce

Disability management professionals, insurance vendors and HR practitioners gathered at National Harbor outside Washington, D.C., to discuss disability employment and our rapidly "graying" workforce. They were joined by Assistant Secretary of Labor for Disability Employment Policy Kathy Martinez. "As the workforce ages, so does the image of disability employment," said Martinez. "And I'd argue that this expanded view offers a real opportunity for America's employers and employees to rethink what it means to be an inclusive organization." The discussion took place at the Disability Management Employer Coalition's FMLA/ADAAA Employer Compliance Conference. The conference highlighted workplace flexibility and return-to-work programs as exemplary practices that benefit workers and employers alike.

• [Learn About the Older Workforce](#)

Discussing Families and Poverty

Fifty years after President Lyndon B. Johnson declared the "war on poverty," the conversation continues. Women's Bureau Regional Administrator Jacqueline Cooke joined students and staff at North Shore Community College to discuss equal pay. Cooke noted that more work needs to be done to eliminate the gender wage gap and lift families out of poverty. The discussion was part of a forum, "Waging the War on Poverty Fifty Years Later," held on March 26 in Lynn, Mass. The forum also addressed the need to increase the minimum wage and for paid sick leave to allow Americans to care for themselves and their families.

• [Learn About Equal Pay](#)

A Date With Data

Data doesn't have a particularly glamorous reputation, but it is the foundation on which good governance is built. At a March 27 conference on retirement law and employee benefits hosted by Marquette University School of Law, Phyllis C. Borzi discussed the department's dependence on quality data. "Good research makes for good policy," said Borzi, the assistant secretary for employee benefits security, in a keynote address that also touched on agency successes and regulatory efforts. At a related event, Borzi met



With so much discussion about the importance of skills training going on across the country, senior leaders from across the components of the Employment and Training Administration came together on April 1 to identify a path forward to identify the best job-driven workforce solutions. Secretary Perez was

on hand to kick off the half-day session where he talked about the critical role that ETA's work on skills development is playing to help expand opportunity for all Americans. "I'm excited — and I hope you are too — to be working together with our colleagues across government to help more Americans on a faster path to valuable skills, good jobs, and meaningful careers," said Perez. As part of the effort, the group talked about the importance of spurring innovation while also gathering the best data possible to identify what works and take it to scale across the country.

DOL Working for You

Army Veteran a Good Fit for State Job in Pennsylvania

Her time in the Army processing travel requests and duty orders taught Rainey Jones how to ask the right questions and pay attention to detail. And she later used those skills for 16 years as a tax accountant. But when her job was eliminated because of a poor economy, Jones, a single parent, fell behind on her household expenses as she went from one temporary job to another in Pennsylvania. Desperate, she searched the Internet for career links and services for



veterans. Eventually, she found the contact information for Disabled Veteran Outreach Program specialist Gloria Smith, also an Army veteran, who immediately came to Jones' assistance. Jones' resume "showed good math and interviewing skills" and was a perfect fit for a job advertised on Pennsylvania's website, Smith said. Smith "pushed me to go" for the job, said Jones, who now works providing energy assistance to low-income individuals.

DOL in Action

\$2.3 Million in Fines for Exposing Workers to Asbestos and Lead

Fines of more than \$2.3 million have been proposed against Olivet Management LLC, a real estate development and management company, for 45 willful violations of workplace health and safety standards. The company owns the former Harlem Valley Psychiatric Center in Wingdale, N.Y. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration cited Olivet for exposing its employees, as well as employees for 13 contractors, to asbestos and lead hazards during cleanup operations in preparation for a tour of the site by potential investors. OSHA determined that Olivet knowingly failed to take basic safety precautions. Olivet neither informed its employees nor the contractors about the presence of asbestos and lead,

with Marquette law students to discuss the Affordable Care Act.

- [Learn About EBSA](#)

Empowering Working Women

Women's empowerment topped the agenda recently for Women's Bureau Director Latifa Lyles. Lyles spoke on income inequality, the economic status of women of color, and the upcoming White House Summit on Working Families to about 200 attendees at the Black Women's Roundtable's Women of Power National Summit on March 28 in Arlington, Va. The next day she spoke at the Feminist Majority Foundation's 2014 National Young Feminist Leadership Conference in Crystal City, Va. The conference aimed to equip young women and men with knowledge and skills for pursuing social, political and economic justice for women and girls. Addressing more than 600 college students from around the nation, Lyles discussed how the Summit on Working Families will address many of these issues.

- [Learn About Working Families](#)
- [Read About Working Women of Color](#)
- [Visit the Equal Pay Website](#)

The Future of Savings

Creating incentives to save and encouraging a financial literacy curriculum for college students — those were two of the iOme Challenge ideas of a prize-winning Texas Tech University team. The ideas were presented to Assistant Secretary of Labor for Employee Benefits Security Phyllis C. Borzi at a Washington, D.C., forum on April 2. Each year, iOme challenges students to address financial literacy issues via a research paper and a short video to compete for a \$10,000 award and a trip to present their findings in the capitol. Borzi moderated the team's discussion with Dallas Salisbury, president and CEO of the Employee Benefit Retirement Institute, and emphasized the importance of savings for students. "I love the energy and fresh view these students bring to the table for encouraging saving," Borzi said.

- [Learn About iOme](#)
- [Read Advice for Young Workers](#)

Weekly UI Claims

The department reported that the advance figure for seasonally adjusted initial Unemployment Insurance claims was 326,000 for the week ending March 29, an increase of 16,000 from the previous week. The four-week moving average was 319,500, up 250 from the previous week's revised average.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Upcoming Deadlines & Events

[Open Funding Opportunities](#)

OFCCP — Compliance Assistance

despite knowing that both hazards existed. As a result, Olivet did not: train employees, monitor their exposure levels, provide appropriate respiratory protection and post warnings. The company also did not provide clean changing and decontamination areas for workers, many of whom wore their contaminated clothing home to households with small children.

- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Learn About Asbestos](#)
- [Learn About Lead Exposure](#)

Guidance for Mine Operators With Serious Compliance Issues

Mine operators with chronic compliance problems are encouraged to implement corrective action plans to get their operations back on track. To that end, the Mine Safety and Health Administration has issued guidance to the mining industry on how to develop such plans, reduce serious violations and, ultimately, make the workplace safer and healthier for miners.

According to the guidelines established by MSHA, CAPs must contain concrete, meaningful measures to reduce significant and substantial violations, be specifically tailored to the mine's compliance problems, and contain achievable benchmarks and milestones for implementation.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Wisconsin Foundry Workers Exposed to Respirable Silica Dust

Grede Wisconsin Subsidiaries LLC has been cited by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration for three violations, including one repeat, for failing to evaluate worker exposure to respirable crystalline silica dust and other hazards at the Browntown, Wis., iron foundry. Worker inhalation of silica particles can lead to the development of disabling lung diseases, such as silicosis and cancer. OSHA initiated the complaint inspection in November 2013 and has proposed penalties of \$50,600. A similar violation was cited at the Browntown plant in 2012. Two serious violations include improper ladder caging and failing to provide proper eye protection.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Trenching Hazards Cited at Illinois Work Site

Fischer Excavating Inc. has been cited for four safety violations, including one willful, for exposing workers to trenching hazards at a work site in Rockford. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration initiated the November 2013 inspection under the National Emphasis Program for trenching and excavation. Penalties of \$58,100 have been proposed. One willful violation was cited for failing to provide cave-in protection to workers installing a sewer line in a trench approximately 11-feet deep. OSHA standards mandate that all excavations 5 feet or deeper be protected against collapse. In 2013, trenching hazards resulted in 30 deaths nationwide.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Fall and Scaffolding Hazards Found at New Jersey Site

Garfield, N.J.-based East Coast Stucco & Construction Inc. was cited by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration for six safety violations. The agency's November 2013 inspection found four repeat and two serious violations related to fall and scaffolding hazards at a work site in North Brunswick, N.J. The masonry contractor faces \$58,520 in penalties for violations including not bracing scaffolds properly, lack of fall protection, and failure to erect scaffolds on a firm foundation and provide a competent, trained person for scaffolding work. OSHA cited the company for similar violations in 2010.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Calif. Nursing Home Sued for Unpaid Wages

A complaint has been filed in federal district court against Oxnard Manor nursing home in Oxnard, Calif., and its administrator, Steven Rieder, after

Seminar

- [April 23 — Columbus, OH](#)

OFCCP — Construction Compliance Evaluations in 16 Steps

- [April 22 — Atlanta, GA](#)
- [April 24 — Columbia, SC](#)

OFCCP — Everything You Want to Know About Adverse Impact

- [April 15 — Birmingham, AL](#)
- [April 15 — Jackson, MS](#)

OFCCP — What to Expect During an OFCCP Audit

- [April 15 — Atlanta, GA](#)
- [April 15 — Orange, CA](#)

OWCP — Town Hall Meetings to assist nuclear weapons workers

- [April 8 — Albuquerque, NM](#)
- [April 9 — Albuquerque, NM](#)

WHD — Prevailing Wage Seminar

- [April 22 — San Diego, CA](#)
- [April 23 — San Diego, CA](#)
- [April 24 — San Diego, CA](#)

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an investigation by the Wage and Hour Division. The investigation found that the employer violated the overtime, record-keeping and anti-retaliation provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. The lawsuit alleges that the employer required employees to work off-the-clock, deducted hours worked from their timecards, and paid only straight time instead of time and one-half the employee's regular rate for hours worked beyond 40 in a workweek. The lawsuit seeks lost wages and the reinstatement of an employee who was terminated because the employer believed she had spoken to investigators about the wage violations.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Contractor to Pay 3 Female Carpenters Who Were Harassed

Constructora Santiago II Corp., a federal construction contractor in San Juan, Puerto Rico, will make a lump sum payment of \$40,000 to three female carpenters who were sexually harassed, retaliated against and denied regular and overtime work hours comparable to those of their male counterparts. The settlement follows an investigation by the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs. OFCCP investigators determined that the company violated Executive Order 11246 by discriminating against women in compensation and by permitting sexual harassment and retaliation against employees who complained about a hostile work environment. Additionally, OFCCP found that Constructora Santiago did not provide adequate restroom facilities for female employees and that female workers were subjected to unwelcome, sexually charged comments, teasing, jokes and pressure to go out on dates. "No person — male or female — should have to put up with the degrading and inappropriate treatment these women faced just to get a paycheck," said OFCCP Director Patricia A. Shiu.

- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Learn About OFCCP and Executive Order 11246](#)

New York Manufacturer Cited for Dust, Chemical Hazards

Workers at Salko Kitchens Inc. were exposed to fire and explosion hazards and a potential occupational carcinogen due to deficient required safeguards, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration has found. The New Windsor, N.Y., plant, which manufactures cabinetry and countertops, was cited for 13 serious violations and faces proposed fines totaling \$51,800. An inspection by OSHA's Albany Area Office found that combustible dust accumulated on plant pipes, equipment, supports and ductwork, and an inadequate system did not collect and remove the dust safely. In addition, while spraying adhesives on countertops and molding during the manufacturing process, employees were overexposed to the hazardous chemical methylene chloride.

- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Learn About Combustible Dust](#)
- [Learn About Methylene Chloride](#)

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