



DOL News Brief

April 14, 2011

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Equal Pay for Women



Working women are paid on average 80 cents for every dollar paid to men. However, the pay gap is even larger for women of color. In her Equal Pay

Day blog, Secretary Solis described the department's initiatives to strengthen enforcement involving wage discrimination, create workplace flexibility, improve collection of data on potential wage discrimination, and provide employers with resources to comply with the law. Solis said, "I am committed to finding commonsense solutions to closing the pay gap once and for all so that our nation will be a more fair and equitable place for everyone."

- View the Secretary's Video Blog
• View the Equal Pay Toolkit
• Read Manzano-Diaz' Blog

What's Hot

Two Coal Mines Receive Unprecedented Enforcement Action

For the first time ever, the Mine Safety and Health Administration has issued a notice of a pattern of violations to two coal mining operations. This enforcement tool, covered under Section 104(e) of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977, enables MSHA to order miners withdrawn from a POV mine each time it issues a serious violation. The withdrawal order remains in place until the violation is abated. The two mines, Bledsoe Coal Corp.'s Abner Branch Rider Mine in Leslie County, Ky., and The New West Virginia Mining Co.'s Apache Mine in McDowell County, W.Va., were targeted because of their chronic and persistent health and safety violations and their inability to show improvements following the implementation of a corrective action plan submitted late last year. "We take this law and our obligation to enforce it very seriously," said MSHA Assistant Secretary Joe Main. "While we believe most mine operators in this country do as well, it is clear that some do not. If we are to prevent death, injury and illness in the nation's mines, these enforcement actions are necessary to rein in chronic and persistent violators of safety and health laws."

- Read the News Release

Promoting Employment of People with HIV/AIDS

More than 50 experts and advocates joined Secretary Solis, Assistant Secretary of the Office of Disability Employment Policy



Kathy Martinez and Jeff Crowley, director of the White House's National AIDS Policy and senior advisor on disability policy, at the Labor Department's HIV/AIDS employment roundtable last week. The event brought together a cross-section of federal and state government representatives, HIV/AIDS service providers, employers, disability employment advocates, and members of the HIV/AIDS community to discuss ways to improve employment for people living with HIV/AIDS.

- View the Slideshow

Green Scene

MINNESOTA: The North Star State Leads the Way

How did a state known for its bitter winters clinch the top spot in Money magazine's 100 best places to live? It may have something to do with the growing opportunities in health care and green jobs that are rapidly becoming Minnesota's trademarks. The North Star State's recipe is simple. Start with relentless local commitment to success. Add federal, state, local and business partners. Make the training of workers for the 21st century economy a priority. And, then...watch success rise. The full process was on display during Secretary Solis' visit to the Minneapolis-St. Paul area on Wednesday. Here are some highlights:

Need a Health Care Job? AIOIC is on the case!



Solis started the day with a visit to the American Indian Opportunities Industrialization Center in Minneapolis, where more than 40,000 have been helped since the center opened its doors in 1979. The center has deep roots in the community and, as the Secretary found out, a real knack for making everyone feel welcome. AIOIC provides courses,

externships and job placement services. It also boasts a seasoned cadre of trainers and specialist who help participants with everything from getting their GED to securing child care and transportation. Every staff member at

TAP Redesigned Effective,

VETS Jefferson Tells Senate



The department's Transition Assistance Program for veterans is undergoing a redesign to create "experiential, effective, and enduring solutions

for a successful transition from military to civilian life and employment," Raymond Jefferson, assistant secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training Service said before the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee on Wednesday. The new TAP is based on best practices in career transition with the redesign helping to assess each individual service member's readiness for employment and their career interests. TAP employment workshop content will be significantly updated, Jefferson explained, with the workshop available in an online, e-learning platform. Each participant will also have access to person-to-person phone and online transition support for 60 days after their workshop attendance.

- [Read Jefferson's Testimony](#)

Oates Testifies Before Congress

On Wednesday, Assistant Secretary for the Employment and Training Administration Jane Oates made the trip across the Mall to discuss the



department's role in administering the H-2A temporary agricultural guest worker program. Her testimony before the House Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Immigration Enforcement and Policy centered on DOL's role in providing a fair and reliable process for employers with a legitimate need for temporary, foreign agriculture workers and ensuring that U.S. workers have first access to these jobs. During her testimony she highlighted recent changes to the program which have helped to improve processing times and handle the growing volume of applications. The result as Oates said is "a reasonable balance between meeting the seasonal workforce needs of growers while protecting the rights of agricultural workers."

- [Watch or Read the Testimony](#)
- [View the Online Job Registry](#)

WHD and Mexican Consulate Sign Pact Assisting Mexican Nationals

the center is focused on helping workers succeed. And, to say that they are good at helping people find jobs in health care would be a huge understatement. In fact, the AIOIC – a DOL grantee – is so good at helping people secure full-time work in this growing industry, that the Red Cross recently asked the organization to become its partner.

- [Watch the Video of the Secretary's Visit to AIOIC](#)
- [View the Slideshow](#)

Green Jobs in Action

Already energized by the success stories of AIOIC participants and staff, Solis headed to St. Paul-based Viking Drill & Tool. There, she spent time touring the spectacularly busy manufacturing floor of one of America's foremost industrial tool manufacturers. Among ingeniously retrofitted industrial equipment – which allows Viking to save time and money while protecting the environment – Solis was able to chat with many of Vikings workers. She soon learned that many are the product of DOL-sponsored green jobs training programs, and that their up-to-date skills are making them some of the most coveted employees in the industry. Many of the workers and managers proudly sported black shirts emblazoned with Viking's logo, and a golden four leaf clover bearing the slogan "Our Safety Doesn't Depend on Luck!" As for Viking's success as a business; the company's CEO put it best during a conversation with Solis, "We're Viking and we're American. We make things, we are thriving, and we are proud of it!"



- [View the Slideshow](#)

Out-Greening the Green



As if Minnesota had not proven itself forward-looking enough already, the Secretary spent the latter part of her day in the Twin Cities with more than one hundred partners of the Blue-Green Alliance. The group – which counts Viking Drill & Tool among its growing list of sites – brings together workers, labor leaders, businesses and government officials on

projects that are good for working families, the environment and the economy. At the Blue-Green Alliance forum, Secretary Solis heard from remarkable individuals who are making life better in their communities and helping America win the future. One such example is Shayna Berkowitz, the owner of ReGo, a Minneapolis-based start-up that is hiring workers trained in DOL-sponsored green job training programs. With the help of workers like Kevin Lattimore – who was recently hired by ReGo and joined Berkowitz at the meeting with Solis – Berkowitz' company is turning 45 mile per gallon hybrid cars into 100+ mile per gallon plug in hybrids. To say green job companies like this are likely to "go far" would be, well ... twentieth century.

- [View the Slideshow](#)

Take Three: US-Colombia FTA

Recently, President Obama and Colombia's president Juan Manuel Santos Calderón agreed to an action plan that Colombia will implement to improve labor rights for Colombian workers before the two countries move forward on the US-Colombia Free Trade Agreement. The department's Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB) has been playing a critical role in this process. Secretary Solis answers three pressing questions about it.

What are some of the actions Colombia has agreed to take



The Wage and Hour Division's Southeast Region has signed an agreement with Salvador De Lara Rangel, consul general of the Mexican

Consulate in Atlanta. The agreement establishes a collaborative relationship to provide Mexican nationals in Georgia with information, guidance, and access to education and training resources on protecting their wages — particularly with regards to reducing violations of the minimum wage, overtime, recordkeeping, child labor, safe housing and transportation provisions of laws enforced by WHD. Among the initiatives, which include an outreach program, will be the establishment of a new complaint referral system. "This agreement is part of the Wage and Hour Division's commitment to ensure that the public is well aware of workplace rights and responsibilities," said Oliver Peebles III, WHD regional administrator in Atlanta.

- [Read The MOU](#) (English)
- [Read The MOU](#) (Spanish)

HerStory at University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee

Nearly 120 women gathered on Monday at the University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee for the Women's Bureau, Region IV HerStory



event hosted by the university's Women in Philanthropy and Leadership. A panel moderated by Judy Sedgeman, director of the Institute for Public Policy and Leadership, consisted of women with ages spanning seven decades who shared their experiences. Dr. Eugenie Clark, a 90-year-old oceanographer and founder of the Mote Marine Laboratory, planned to leave early but became so engaged in the dialogue that she stayed for the entire event. As Sedgeman said to the audience, "Nothing can deter us from realizing our dreams as long as we sustain our vision and keep moving."

- [View the Slideshow](#)

Spriggs Skypes @Syracuse

Last week, Assistant Secretary for Policy William Spriggs was a guest speaker via Skype in the Inclusive Governance Conference at Syracuse University to discuss social

that will benefit their workers?

Colombia has agreed to strengthen workers' rights, better prevent anti-union violence, and do much more to prosecute those responsible for such violence. Under the plan, Colombia is expanding the scope of its protection program to cover threatened labor activists and organizers, in addition to union leaders. They have agreed to improve labor law enforcement and to punish with large fines and even jail time those who violate workers' right to freedom of association and collective bargaining.

What was the department's role in this process?

As the international arm of DOL, ILAB brings unique expertise to the table as the U.S. engages with Colombia on these difficult issues. ILAB has followed the labor rights situation in Colombia for many years and understands the kind of actions and reforms that can bring sustainable change for Colombian workers. They pushed very hard for those steps to be included in the action plan and will work even harder to ensure they become a reality.

How will this all impact U.S. workers?

In this global economy with global competition, the struggles of workers in the United States, Colombia, and around the world for better lives, decent jobs, and greater respect is interconnected. This is especially true between free trade partners, who eliminate all barriers to trade between their economies. Trade can bring benefits to citizens in both countries. But if labor rights abuses are tolerated in U.S. trading partners, the playing field tilts against U.S. workers, which must be prevented.

Around DOL

Women's Bureau Co-sponsors Equal Pay Day Event in Atlanta



The Women's Bureau, along with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and 9to5 Atlanta held an event at Georgia State University Women's Labor Archives on Tuesday to commemorate Equal Pay Day. Along with Women's Bureau Regional Administrator Paulette Norvel Lewis, speakers included Terri Dandy from EEOC, Cindia

Cameron, organizing director of 9to5 and Stephanie Davis, executive director of Women for a Change. Attendees received information on current efforts in Atlanta to increase women's pay along with a new fact sheet prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics that shows men's and women's earnings for both the nation and in each of the southeastern states.

- [View the Slideshow](#)
- [Read the Fact Sheet](#)

Dean Ikeda Named OSHA Regional Administrator

Dean Ikeda was recently named regional administrator for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Region 10 where he oversees five offices and 55 employees in the states of Alaska, Idaho, Ore. and Wash. Ikeda started his career with OSHA shortly after completing his graduate studies in 1977. He served OSHA as deputy regional administrator and assistant regional administrator in Seattle, area director in Bellevue, Wash., regional industrial hygienist in Seattle and San Francisco and compliance safety and health officer in Denver, Colo., and North Aurora, Ill.

News You Can Use

OSHA Issues Hazard Alert to Salons

Responding to complaints and referrals about possible exposure to



equity policies in the United States. Graduate students from the university's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs

participated in the conference. Dr. Spriggs discussed the challenges of the recovery, the role of government in social policies, and the impact of those policies on the lives of the most vulnerable in our society. The presentation was followed by a Q&A session with students.

Flexible Manufacturing

The Women's Bureau brought together employers, employees, advocates, and other stakeholders in Chicago on Thursday to discuss challenges



and solutions for making flexibility work in the manufacturing industry and to share best practices. "Policies that support the realities of work and life balance are critical to our economy," said Sara Manzano-Díaz, director of the Women's Bureau. "Improving women's working conditions, including the ability to retain employment while caring for families is essential." Anne Ladky, executive director of Women Employed, was the keynote speaker and Ellen Bravo, executive director of Family Values@Work provided closing remarks. Last month, the WB's regional office in Kansas City also hosted a National Dialogue in Kansas City focused on the retail industry. Both events build on the message and momentum of the White House Flexibility Forum in 2010.

- [View the Slideshow](#)

Markey Examines Davis-Bacon Act

"Examining the Department of Labor's Implementation of the Davis-Bacon Act" was the topic of discussion as Thomas Markey, deputy administrator of program operations for the Wage and Hour Division, testified before the House Subcommittee on Workforce Protections Committee on Education and the Workforce on Thursday. Markey highlighted WHD's efforts to re-engineer the Davis-Bacon Survey Program and work to revitalize the enforcement of Davis-Bacon requirements on federally-funded construction projects. "The Davis-Bacon Act is simple – to ensure that the federal government's

formaldehyde, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and many state occupational safety and health agencies began investigations, resulting in a hazard alert being issued to hair salon owners and workers about potential exposure from working with some hair smoothing and straightening products. OSHA has found formaldehyde in the air when stylists used hair smoothing products, some of which do not have formaldehyde listed on their labels or in material safety data sheets as required by law. The hazard alert provides information about OSHA's investigations, the health hazards of formaldehyde and how to protect people who are working with hair smoothing and straightening products.

- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Read the Hazard Alert](#)

DOL Working for You

Staffer Creates Positive Experiences at Oregon Job Corps

Esperanzita "Tita" Montero, business and community liaison for Oregon's Tongue Point Job Corps Center, has so many student initiatives underway that a colleague once described her as a "glass and a half full kind of person." If she is not helping students build a local playground, she is arranging for them to visit senior citizens. Montero now leads a new customer service course where students are instructed in punctuality, appealing attitude and appearance, and learning skills that make them more attractive to future employers. Montero, who previously worked as a government healthcare contractor and small business owner, joined TPJCC in 2007 because "it was important for me to make a difference and help people." Student Rosa Ashagari has received Montero's tutoring. Ashagari, who emigrated from Ethiopia, will soon graduate with a health care certificate and plans to study nursing at a community college.



OSHA VPP Safety Program Helps NY Company

When Wenner Bread Products Inc. of Bayport, N.Y., sought to improve its health and safety program, it turned to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's Voluntary Protection Programs for assistance. With 70 percent of its 500 workers Spanish-speaking, the company sought to overcome language and cultural barriers and avoid accidents and injuries. Through VPP, Wenner teamed with its employees to create a new safety and health management system. Taking into account educational levels, job duties and common injuries, safety programs were revised and bilingual communications materials were produced. The company's workers' compensation costs have fallen and its injury and illness rate is below the industry's average. Wenner has continued to maintain its VPP "Star" status it first earned in 1998. The "star" status is the highest honor in OSHA's VPP. Receiving the VPP Star recognition "and being able to give back to our employees and the Hispanic community is the professional achievement that I am most proud of," said Lawrence Wenner, the company's chief operating officer.



extensive contracting activity does not have the unintended consequence of depressing workers' wages," Markey said.

- [Read Markey's Testimony](#)

Workers' Comp Reform

Reform was the theme of this week's House Subcommittee on Federal Workforce, U.S. Postal Service and Labor Policy, entitled "FECA: A Fair Approach." Acting Director of the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs Gary Steinberg and Doug Fitzgerald, director of the Division of Federal Employees Compensation, outlined the Labor Department's ideas for reforming the program, making it the model workers' compensation program for the twenty-first century, while producing a potential cost savings of \$400 million over ten years. "These reforms will allow all federal employees and federal agencies to embrace and adopt a more pro-active and progressive attitude about return to work and disability employment, and avoid any unfair interruption of benefits."

- [Read Steinberg's Testimony](#)

Shiu Revisits Oil Spill Workers



As the first anniversary of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill approaches on April 20, Pat Shiu, director of the Office of Federal Contract Compliance

Programs held a follow-up meeting in New Orleans with several leaders representing communities impacted by the accident. Shiu heard from several community leaders whom she met with last year on issues that still need to be addressed. Shiu also visited the Hope Center, Inc., which launched the DOL-funded affected worker re-training program. The initiative assists individuals who are permanently laid-off or self-employed individuals whose businesses ceased due to the oil spill get training and certifications in construction, broadband technology, and solar panel installation.

- [View the Slideshow](#)

Michaels and Main on Safety

Earlier Thursday morning, Assistant Secretary for Occupational Safety and Health David Michaels and Assistant Secretary for Mine Safety and Health Joe Main testified in front of the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Committee on Appropriations. Both laid out their

DOL in Action

WHD Fines Logging Company for Employing Minors

WHD has issued a \$50,000 fine against Randy Morris Logging of Waterloo, Ala., the maximum penalty allowed by the Fair Labor Standards Act for employing a minor in a prohibited hazardous occupation that caused the young worker's death. The worker was killed in May 2010 when a tree fell on him while he was logging near Waynesboro, Tenn. The company was also assessed an additional \$7,750 penalty for employing a second minor. "The Wage and Hour Division is focused on protecting young workers who are vulnerable to exploitation due to their general lack of experience and knowledge of employment laws," said Nettie Lewis, acting director of the division's Nashville District Office. "This tragic incident is the third since 2002 involving minors doing logging work in Tennessee."

- [Read the News Release](#)

DOL Sues Software Services Company to Restore 401(k) Plan Losses

Following an Employee Benefits Security Administration investigation, the department's Office of the Solicitor is suing computer software services company CSG Group, and the company's owner, Thomas Wimberly, to restore losses suffered by the Duluth, Ga., company's 401(k) retirement plan. According to the complaint, between 2005 and 2010 the defendants allegedly withheld \$15,562 in employee contributions but never forwarded them to the plan and allegedly failed to forward an additional \$163,295 in employee contributions to the plan in a timely manner, causing employees to lose earnings and opportunity costs on those funds. "Employees make contributions to their 401(k) plan with the intention of using those funds for their retirement, not to be used as an involuntary interest-free loan to the company," said Isabel Colon, EBSA acting regional director in Atlanta.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Five Companies Expose Workers to Hydrogen Sulfide

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has cited five companies for serious safety and health violations following a combustible dust flash fire that released hydrogen sulfide at the Eustace Gas Processing Plant in Eustace, Texas, and sent five workers to the hospital. The agency's investigation found the following Texas entities did not follow OSHA's safety and health regulations to adequately protect their employees: Alvin-based Team Industrial Services; Kilgore-based Benchmark Industrial Services, doing business as Waterblastco and RHI Co., doing business as Canon Safety; Eustace-based Tristream East Texas and Maybank's Crane Services Implement. "If management had ensured that proper health and safety measures were followed during vacuuming of explosive dust, it is possible this incident could have been avoided," said Stephen Boyd, OSHA's area director in Dallas.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Texas Restaurant Chain Agrees to Pay Back Wages, Civil Penalties

Darden Restaurants Inc., doing business as Olive Garden in Mesquite, Texas, has agreed to pay \$25,000 in back wages to 140 servers following an investigation by the department's Wage and Hour Division which found violations of the Fair Labor Standards Act. The restaurant was also assessed \$30,800 in civil money penalties. The investigation determined that the employer allowed workers to clock in once customers were seated instead of at the start of their scheduled work shifts, resulting in shorter compensated hours and fewer wages paid. "The resolution of this case demonstrates that we will use every available enforcement tool, including

budgets and talked to members of the committee about the important work that their respective agencies do to keep workers safe and their work with private industry to ensure safety and viability. Michaels told the members, "This year marks the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the OSHA, and I think by any measure, this agency has been one of the true successes of government efforts to protect workers and promote the public welfare. Winning the future requires a successful competitive market where all firms are playing by the rules to keep workers safe." Main also discussed the compatibility of safety and profitability in the mining industry. "We owe it to those operators who play by the rules to do what we can to encourage all operators to live up to their obligations to provide a safe and healthful workplace," he said. Main also outlined MSHA's priorities regarding enhanced enforcement of the most egregious and persistent violators, education and outreach, and the administration's commitment to end Black Lung.

- [Read Michael's Testimony](#)
- [Read Main's Testimony](#)



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- [Make the Commitment](#)

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Check out the grant opportunities with DOL.

- [Open Funding Opportunities](#)

EBSA Event

The department's Employee Benefits Security

the assessment of civil money penalties, to bring violators to justice and deter all restaurants in the area from committing future labor violations," said Cynthia Watson, regional administrator for WHD in the Southwest.

- [Read the News Release](#)

OSHA Fines Synthetic Rubber Manufacturer in Baton Rouge

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has cited Baton Rouge, La.-based Lion Copolymer LLC with one willful, 19 serious and three other-than-serious violations for exposing workers to possible fires, explosions and other hazardous conditions. Proposed penalties total \$182,000. The investigation was part of the agency's National Emphasis Program on Chemical Process Safety Management which emphasizes the management of highly hazardous chemicals and establishes a comprehensive management program that integrates technologies, procedures and management practices.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Contractor Debarred for Violating Laws

The department has debarred HWA Inc., President John Wood and Vice President Barbara Wood from future government contracts for three years, due to significant and repeated violations of the McNamara-O'Hara Service Contract Act and the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act. Seattle-based HWA provided security services as a contractor to various federal facilities, government offices and public works projects in the states of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Missouri and New York. "The Labor Department will not allow federal contractors to misuse public funds and exploit hardworking laborers by denying their rightful wages," said Secretary Solis. "Debarring violators such as HWA from future contracts ensures a level playing field, so that honest companies are not placed at a competitive disadvantage for playing by the rules, and paying their workers full and fair prevailing wages." Since 2001, the Wage and Hour Division has conducted more than 15 investigations of HWA, finding significant back wages were owed to hundreds of workers nationwide.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Appeals Court Upholds OSHA Directive

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit rejected a challenge by the National Roofing Contractors Association to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's December 2010 directive on the use of fall protection in residential construction. The directive withdrew an earlier one that allowed certain residential construction employers to bypass some fall protection requirements. The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that an average of 40 workers are killed each year as a result of falls from residential roofs. "Fall protection saves lives," said OSHA Assistant Secretary David Michaels. "We applaud the court's decision upholding this updated, commonsense directive." Construction and roofing companies have until June 16, 2011, to comply with the new directive.

- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Read the Directive](#)

OSHA Cites NJ Manufacturer for Failing to Correct Previous Hazards

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has cited Bedrock Granite Inc. for exposing workers to workplace safety and health hazards, including several hazards that were previously identified at its Edison, N.J., facility. Proposed penalties total \$112,530. "By not abating past violations, Bedrock Granite leaves its employees vulnerable to hazards that can cause injuries and possible death," said Patricia Jones, director of OSHA's Avenel Area Office. The repeat violations include an inadequate hearing

Administration and the Texas Department of Insurance will co-host a free health law compliance assistance seminar May 17 and 18 at the University of Texas at Austin. Registration is on a first-come, first-serve basis. Space is limited so register today!

- [Register Here](#)

EBSA — COBRA and HIPAA Compliance Workshop

- [April 21 — Chicago, IL](#)
- [May 17-18 — Austin, TX](#)

EBSA — Understanding Your Fiduciary Responsibilities Under ERISA Workshop

- [April 21 — Chicago, IL](#)

OFCCP — AAP Development Workshop for Supply and Service Contractors

- [April 20 — San Diego, CA](#)

OFCCP — ABCs of the AAP

- [April 15 — Los Angeles, CA](#)

OFCCP — Community Outreach and Education Event

- [April 28 — Richmond, VA](#)

OFCCP — Construction Compliance Assistance Seminar

- [April 19 — Mountainside, NJ](#)
- [April 21 — Seattle, WA](#)

OFCCP — Information Session for Asian American/Pacific Islander Community Based Organizations

- [April 27 — Denver, CO](#)

OFCCP — Open House

- [April 28 — Dallas, TX](#)

OLMS — Compliance Assistance Seminar

- [April 27 — Marksville, LA](#)

OSHA — Greater Philadelphia Area Action Summit for Latino/Immigrant Construction Worker Health and Safety

- [April 15 — Philadelphia, PA](#)

OSHA — Maritime Advisory Committee for Occupational Safety and Health (MACOSH) Meeting

- [April 19-20 — Washington, DC](#)

WB — Women Working Together Writing the Next Chapter of HerStory

conservation program and employee exposure to silica.

- [Read the News Release](#)

More than \$18K in Back Wages for Workers at Sunrise Hospitality

DOL has recovered \$18,792 in back wages for 96 current and former workers at 16 hotels operated by Wauseon, Ohio-based Sunrise Hospitality Inc. in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Pennsylvania. An investigation by the department's Wage and Hour Division found the chain had violated the Fair Labor Standards Act by failing to pay its employees minimum wage and overtime compensation for all hours of their work. The company also violated the act's record-keeping provisions. "One of the most common violations in the hospitality industry is the failure of employers to properly record and compensate employees for all hours worked," said George Victory, director of the division's district office in Columbus.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Grant Assists Workers Impacted by Layoffs In Kentucky

The department has provided an \$808,316 National Emergency Grant to assist about 128 workers affected by multiple small dislocations at 77 companies throughout eastern Kentucky. The companies from which workers have been laid off represent a variety of industries, including construction, mining, auto parts, computer/IT services, trucking, manufacturing, tax services, education, health, law, banking, retail and pharmacy, among others. Awarded to the commonwealth of Kentucky, this community impact grant will provide the affected workers with a full range of re-employment and training services.

- [Read the News Release](#)

OSHA Cites Howard Industries of Ohio, with 23 Safety Violations

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has cited Howard Industries, a chemical blending facility in Columbus, Ohio, with 23 safety violations, including failing to protect workers from electrical hazards and to implement an effective lockout/tagout program to prevent the unexpected operation of machinery and equipment, among others. The company faces penalties totaling \$71,280. "Failing to provide employees with training and personal protective equipment to guard against electrical hazards creates an unnecessary safety risk," said Deborah Zubaty, OSHA's area director in Columbus. "Employers are responsible for knowing what hazards exist in their facilities and must take appropriate precautions by following OSHA standards." Just days after the citations were delivered, OSHA was back at the facility investigating a fire.

- [Read the News Release](#)

WHD Recovers More Than \$162,000 in Back Wages for 35 Employees

The Wage and Hour Division has recovered \$162,201 in back wages for 35 employees in Los Angeles, Calif., after an investigation found that Ayara Thai Cuisine paid the majority of its employees below the minimum wage. The workers were paid in cash at a flat rate for all hours worked and without regard to overtime for hours worked in excess of 40 in a week, as required under the Fair Labor Standards Act. "Many restaurant workers in the Los Angeles area are subject to unacceptable wage practices and irregularities and we are determined to make sure that these and many other vulnerable workers in the restaurant industry get paid the way they should," said Kimchi Bui, director of WHD's Los Angeles District Office.

- [Read the News Release](#)

[April 25 — Philadelphia, PA](#)

WB — Good Jobs for Everyone: An Examination of Flexible Workplace Practices

- [April 18 — Trenton, NJ](#)

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<http://s.dol.gov/EC>
#MakeTheCommitment [about 8 hours ago](#)

Grant Awarded to Wisconsin Workers Affected by Layoffs

A \$3,972,529 National Emergency Grant incremental award to continue re-employment services for about 2,580 workers affected by layoffs and plant closures at 80 companies throughout Wisconsin, predominantly in the manufacturing sector, was announced last Friday. "Wisconsin's manufacturing sector has been hit hard by layoffs, and many workers have lost jobs through no fault of their own," said Secretary Solis. "The Labor Department is committed to getting all Americans back to work, and this grant will provide workers with continued access to career search services and training programs that can lead to good jobs in growing industries."

- [Read the News Release](#)

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