



DOL News Brief

September 20, 2012

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WINNER OF PRSA'S 2012 THOTH AWARD & RAGAN'S 2012 PR DAILY AWARD — BEST ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER —

Nine Millionaires and a Plumber



Martin Patrick Durkin had the shortest tenure of any U.S. Labor Secretary, serving less than eight months. A former president of the of the Plumbers and Pipefitters Union, he had also previously served as Director of

Labor for the State of Illinois, where he worked closely with then-U.S. Labor Secretary Frances Perkins. Appointed by President Dwight D. Eisenhower, he was conspicuous on Ike's "Nine Millionaires and a Plumber" Cabinet. He also was a Democrat serving in a Republican administration. He pushed for revisions in the Taft-Hartley Act without success, which led to his resignation. He died two years after leaving office.



• [Read Ike's Letter Accepting Durkin's Resignation](#)

New Citizens



It's Constitution Week and Secretary Solis kicked the observance off by delivering the keynote address at a U.S. naturalization ceremony on Sept. 15.

More than 400 immigrants from 76 different countries became American citizens. The service was one of seven naturalization ceremonies that have been held at Kenmore Middle School in Virginia within the last month. In all, about 3,000 people from Virginia and the District of Columbia became citizens. In front of several hundred friends and family members, Solis lauded the determination and hard work of our newest citizens, saying, "I know the journey has been long. But you've studied hard. You've worked hard. And you've taken a sacred oath. You already felt like Americans in your hearts and in your minds. And today, you are officially Americans."

What's New

\$500 Million to Boost Job Training Partnerships

During a visit Sept. 19 to St. Petersburg College in Clearwater, Fla., Secretary Solis announced \$500 million in grant awards through the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College to Career Training initiative. The grants will foster partnerships between community colleges and local employers to promote skills development and employment opportunities in fields such as advanced manufacturing, transportation and health care, as well as science, technology, engineering and math occupations. "These federal grants are part of the administration's ongoing commitment to strengthening American businesses by strengthening the American workforce," said Secretary Solis. St. Petersburg College, as part of a consortium of 11 other state colleges, was awarded \$15 million to help address the critical shortage of skilled workers in the state's manufacturing industry. Altogether, a total of 54 TAACCCT grants covering nearly 300 community colleges across the country were awarded. This week's announcement is the second installment of a \$2 billion, 4-year initiative supporting President Obama's broader goal to ensure that every American has at least one year of postsecondary education and the United States has the highest proportion of college graduates in the world by 2020.



- [View the Slideshow](#)
- [Read the Secretary's Remarks](#)
- [Read the Blog Entry](#)
- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Learn More About TAACCCT](#)

National News

\$20.7 Million for States Through the Disability Employment Initiative

To improve education, training, and employment opportunities and outcomes for youth and adults with disabilities who are unemployed, underemployed and/or receiving Social Security disability benefits, the department awarded \$20.7 million to seven states on Sept. 20. The awards were made through the Disability Employment Initiative, which is jointly funded and administered by the Employment and Training Administration and the Office of Disability Employment Policy. The funding is the third round under the initiative, which supports 16 state projects. The new grants are being awarded to Florida, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Massachusetts,

- [View the Slideshow](#)

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## Jobs in Baltimore

Secretary Solis teamed up with Rep. Elijah Cummings and Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake at a jobs workshop for



community groups held at the city's Eastside Career Center on Sept. 18. The audience of about 75 community leaders, faith leaders and job seekers learned how to set up job clubs from Ben Seigel, deputy director of the Center for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships. They also learned about the resources available to job seekers through the city's One Stop Career Centers, both in person and online. In her role as America's jobs coach, Solis encouraged the audience to connect members of their communities to the department's job training and employment resources with a focus on key growth sectors, such as health care, STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) and manufacturing.

- [View the Slideshow](#)
- [Learn About Job Clubs](#)

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## STEM for Women



Career opportunities in STEM as well as non-traditional "green" careers were the topics of roundtables hosted by the Women's Bureau last week in Cambridge

and Worcester, Mass., on Sept. 13 and 14. The roundtables focused on barriers that women may face as they explore STEM and non-traditional green educational opportunities. Participants included representatives from women's organizations, businesses, state and federal government, academia and congressional offices. Women's Bureau Regional Administrator Jacqueline Cooke said, "Participants were energized and excited to learn about each other's programs." Cooke also chaired a roundtable in Augusta, Maine, on Sept. 10, where she led a discussion on securing sustainable jobs for returning women veterans and other topics.

- [Read "Why Green Is Your Color"](#)

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## Reaching Out in Jersey

More than 150 union representatives from the private and public sectors gathered at the

Minnesota and Rhode Island. "This program represents our strong commitment to assisting people with disabilities in securing good jobs and providing career pathways," said Secretary Solis. "These grants will expand the capacity of the public workforce system to provide training and employment services to people with disabilities."

- [Read the News Release](#)

## Slight Decline in Fatal Work Injuries in 2011

New data show a small decrease in the number of fatal work injuries in the United States last year — from 4,690 in 2010 to 4,609 in 2011. In a statement, Secretary Solis said, "We will continue to collaborate with employers, workers, labor leaders, and safety and health professionals to ensure that every American who clocks in for a shift can make it home safe and sound at the end of the day." She added, "It's clear that we must maintain our commitment to ensuring our workplaces are safer and healthier for every American." The preliminary figures were released on Sept. 20 by the Bureau of Labor Statistics from the agency's annual Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries.

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

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## Green Scene

### OSHA Partners With American Wind Energy Association for Training



A three-day training program focused on the wind turbine industry was held in Elgin, Ill., last week to provide Occupational Safety and Health Administration personnel with a greater understanding of the wind turbine industry and the daily tasks performed by wind technicians. The more than

40 attendees were able to observe the internal configurations of a nacelle/rotor hub assembly, climb the ladder structure of the wind turbine, and visit a wind farm. The program was developed under the American Wind Energy Association OSHA National Alliance in coordination with OSHA's national office. The training also included presentations from owners, equipment manufacturers, independent service providers, and contractors, including AWEA Alliance members Edison Mission, UpWind Solutions, NextEra Energy, EDPR, Suzlon, Tech Safety Lines, Rope Partners and Wanzek.



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## Around DOL

### Advisory Committee on Veterans Discusses Employment Initiatives

The Advisory Committee on Veterans' Employment, Training and Employer Outreach held an all-day meeting on Sept. 19 to discuss the department's latest initiatives on veterans'

Rutgers Labor Education Center in New Brunswick, N.J.,



on Sept. 13 to attend the department's Compliance Assistance and Union Forum. The standing-room-only program, organized by Robert Asaro-Angelo, Northeast regional representative for Secretary Solis, included presentations by the Office of Labor-Management Standards, the Wage and Hour Division, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, the Employee Benefits Security Administration, Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, and the Women's Bureau.



employment. John Moran, deputy assistant secretary of labor for the Veterans' Employment and Training

Service, briefed members on a number of issues, including VETS recent Transition Assistance Program redesign, which updates the Employment Workshop and provides better tools to match military experience to jobs in the private sector. Committee member Richard Jones, senior vice president and general tax counsel for CBS Corp., briefed the panel on S3536, the VOW to Hire Heroes Extension Act, which would extend for four years tax credits to businesses which hire veterans. Kevin Schmiegel, vice president of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, made a presentation on the success of the hundreds of job fairs the Chamber, VETS and business groups have held around the country to connect veterans with employers in the country's fastest growing job markets.

- [View the Slideshow](#)

### Another Honor for DOL Newsletter!



The accolades keep coming in for the newsletter you are reading! Last week, the Public Relations Society of America/National Capital Chapter celebrated the value of public relations and honored the talent of

Washington public relations professionals at its 44th annual Thoth Awards Gala, held at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. The U.S. Department of Labor's e-newsletter won the top honor, known as the Thoth Award, in the "Newsletters and Magazines" category. In addition, the department received a prestigious Thoth Award in the "Public Service" category for its heat awareness public education campaign. The department's work promoting Labor Day and the 100th anniversary of the Triangle Shirtwaist fire were awarded Certificates of Excellence. Members of the department's Office of Public Affairs accepted the awards, which were presented by Michael Weiss, a two-time Olympian, two-time World Bronze medalist and three-time U.S. champion figure skater.

- [Read About Our Awards](#)

### News You Can Use

#### Solis, Sperling and Borzi Take Fee Disclosure Message Online

Secretary Solis wants workers and families to know they can avoid excessive fees that can take a bite out of retirement savings. Last week, she took her message online to an audience of more than 900 who logged in to learn more about how new 401(k) fee disclosures are giving workers the information needed to make better retirement decisions. "The Retirement Savings: Saving More for Tomorrow by Paying Less in 401(k) Fees Today" webinar featured opening remarks by Solis and Gene Sperling, director of the National Economic Council and assistant to the president for economic policy. Assistant Secretary of Labor for Employee Benefits Security Phyllis C. Borzi provided details on the new disclosures and answered questions. She also announced a new resource website designed as a quick reference for anyone trying to understand the new disclosures.



- [Learn More](#)
- [Listen to the Webinar](#)

#### Safety.Data.Gov — Tapping Expertise for the Public Good



What happens when the government puts freely available safety data in the hands of innovators? "#CoolDotGov," said Seth Harris, deputy secretary of labor. Harris was one of several presenters during the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy's "Safety Datapalooza" on Sept. 14. The

event brought together nearly 100 visionaries from the private, nonprofit, and academic sectors to highlight new tools available to citizens through the

### Filling the STEM Pipeline

Science, technology, engineering and math were at the center of LATINO Magazine's Annual Latino Education Conference on Sept 20. More than 200 participants from academia, business and



government gathered at the Ronald Reagan building in Washington, D.C., to discuss how to better encourage Latino youth to pursue careers in STEM. Secretary Solis kicked-off the daylong conference, which featured three panels. "I know STEM jobs are on your agenda today. They're on mine, too. They have been for quite some time," Solis said. "I remember telling my sisters to study science when we were growing up. I knew it was our future. I was the first in my family to go to college. But I made sure I wasn't the last. Today both of my sisters are engineers and I could not be more proud."

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## VRAP at Major Milestone

The Veteran Retraining Assistance Program this week surpassed its goal of approving 45,000 applications in Fiscal Year 2012. Under the VOW to Hire Heroes Act, which established VRAP in November 2011, the Department of Veterans Affairs, in cooperation with the Department of Labor, pays for up to 12 months of retraining assistance in "high demand" occupations for unemployed eligible veterans between the ages of 35 and 60. "Our veterans have provided so many services to this country," said Secretary Solis. "This program serves them by helping unemployed veterans receive the training they need to compete for good jobs." The program aims to retrain 99,000 veterans for high-demand jobs by the end of FY 2013 and VRAP continues to accept applications. Benefits for additional approved applications will be available beginning Oct. 1.

- [Learn More About VRAP](#)
  - [Learn About VA's Efforts](#)
  - [Learn About One-Stop Centers](#)
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## Supporting Women Veterans

Helping women veterans re-integrate into their communities after the traumas of war will require the involvement of active, informed community providers. The Women's Bureau participated in roundtables last week to educate businesses, community organizations and others on the principles for providing trauma-informed care and services to women veterans. The roundtables were held in Hartford and Middletown, Conn., in conjunction with the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and the Hartford Vet Center of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Angela Rizzolo of the Women's Bureau conducted a presentation at the Hartford event on the agency's publication, "Trauma-Informed Care for Women Veterans Experiencing Homelessness."

- [Read the Trauma Guide](#)
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## SkillsUSA's Champion

White House safety.data.gov initiative. "We are tapping the creativity, ingenuity and expertise of communities through our app challenges, social media engagement and other forward-thinking efforts to harness technology for the public good," added Harris.

- [Visit Safety.Data.Gov](#)
- [Visit Challenge.Gov](#)
- [Read About Winning Apps](#)
- [Read AOL Article](#)

## EBSA Hosts Webcast for Women Nearing Retirement

Planning for retirement is not easy, and women face particular challenges. Women live longer than men, and need to save more. They are also in and out of the workforce more often and thus less likely to save enough for retirement. But with the right information, everyone striving for a secure retirement can achieve one. Last week the Employee Benefits Security Administration hosted a webcast, "Taking the Mystery out of Retirement Planning — A Focus on Women and Retirement." Nearly 300 tuned in to learn how to make the most of retirement savings, and avoid common pitfalls in the retirement investment marketplace. EBSA was joined during the event by the Social Security Administration and the Women's Institute for a Secure Retirement.

- [View the Webcast](#)
- 

## It Happened On The Hill

### TAP Redesign Responsive to Veterans

A redesign of the department's workshop to prepare transitioning military service members for civilian employment has resulted in a "well-received, well-tested curriculum that was developed to be responsive to customer input," Deputy Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans' Employment and Training Service John Moran told Congress on Sept. 20. At a House Veterans' Affairs Economic Opportunity Subcommittee hearing on the Transition Assistance Program, Moran said the new DOL Employment Workshop was tested during a three-month pilot program at 11 military installations. Feedback helped create a workshop geared towards heavy participant interaction, improvements in matching military skills to targeted civilian jobs, and increased use of social media in job searches and networking. Moran said the TAP redesign is in keeping with the department's "three P's" initiative: preparing veterans for civilian employment; providing them with resources and training to succeed, and protecting their job rights under the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act.

- [Read the Testimony](#)
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## DOL Working for You

### New Career Options for Coast Guard Veteran After Retraining



Coast Guard veteran Darin Weldon parlayed previous military experience in radar and electronic warfare into a job with one of America's leading Internet companies in California. But when he lost his job in a corporate reorganization, Weldon enrolled in the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program

at Clark College in Washington State where he is studying for a two-year degree in accounting. He said changing careers "gives me more options to

Preparing a workforce for jobs available now is a hot topic. Assistant Secretary of Labor for Employment and Training Jane Oates joined SkillsUSA on Sept. 18 at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., to honor their Champion of the Year, Nick Pinchuk, chairman and CEO of Snap-On. Pinchuk was honored for his commitment to working with local community colleges to develop a curriculum that trains students for jobs available today and in the future. Oates discussed the challenges and opportunities facing the American workforce and the need for partnership between government, education and industry. SkillsUSA, a nonprofit career and technical organization, serves teachers and high school and college students who are preparing for careers in trade, technical and skilled service occupations.

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## Refugee Resettlement

"Transforming Hope into a Brighter Future" was the 2012 theme for the Office of Refugee Resettlement's annual stakeholder consultation held Sept. 19-20 in Arlington, Va. Dr. Gabriela Lemus, senior advisor and director of the department's Office of Public Engagement, delivered opening remarks, highlighting YouthBuild grants, Job Corps training successes, and department programs that can help refugees who are joining the workforce. The Office of Refugee Resettlement, a part of the Health and Human Services Department, convenes state partners, federal agencies, community and faith-based organizations to share ideas and challenges.

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## Oil and Gas Industry Safety

In 2005, Texas City, Texas, became the site of one of the worst industrial disasters in recent years, when an explosion at a BP refinery killed 15 workers and injured 170 more. This week, representatives from the oil and gas industry and the regulatory agencies that oversee it convened there to exchange ideas about enhancing worker and environmental safety. The "Expert Forum on the Use of Performance-based Regulatory Models in the U.S. Oil and Gas Industry" brought together the Occupational Safety and Health Administration; the Department of Interior, Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement; the U.S. Coast Guard; the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Department of Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration. Officials discussed the challenges and benefits of non-prescriptive, outcome-based approaches to reducing injuries and catastrophic events. Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA Dr. David Michaels delivered opening remarks and an overview of OSHA's Process Safety Management standard. "The all-too-frequent individual fatalities and serious injuries at oil and gas facilities should

get promoted into management." Weldon is one of the first students to enroll at Clark College under VRAP, said Mike Gibson, the college's veterans affairs office director. The VOW to Hire Heroes Act, signed into law last November by the president, established VRAP. Under it, the Department of Veterans Affairs, in cooperation with the Department of Labor, pays for up to 12 months of a retraining assistance in a "high demand" occupation for unemployed eligible veterans between the ages of 35 and 60.

- [Learn More](#)

### Department's Grant Helps Army Veteran and His Daughter

The assistance Army veteran Gene Eggleston got from a department grant program not only helped him but also benefited his daughter. Eggleston worked two jobs but had trouble making ends meet. The house his mother gave him fell into disrepair as he struggled to pay taxes and utility bills and



was eventually vandalized as it sat unoccupied. Eggleston turned to Missouri's St. Patrick Center, which receives funding from the Veterans Workforce Investment Program, for help. They provided him with clothing and transportation for interviews, where he eventually landed a laborer's job with full benefits. He now has enough money to pay for his 13-year-old daughter's lessons as an aspiring gymnast. "When a vet falls, a child falls too," Eggleston said, looking back on being unemployed. The job-related assistance "gave me back my self-esteem to find a job," he said.

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## DOL in Action

### Storm Cleanup Assistance for Ohio

A National Emergency Grant of more than \$21.4 million was announced by the department on Sept. 17 to help communities in 37 Ohio counties with clean-up and recovery efforts following the severe storms and straight-line winds that hit Ohio between June 29 and July 2. Awarded to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, the funds will be used to create temporary jobs to assist in recovery efforts. "This summer's storms inflicted incredible damage across Ohio," said Secretary Solis. "The federal funding will assist with the clean-up of streambeds and waterways that are critical in preventing future flooding and subsequent damage to public infrastructure."

- [Read the News Release](#)

### Contractor to Pay \$325,000 for Hiring Discrimination

Federal contractor Meyer Tool Inc. will pay \$325,000 in back wages and interest to 60 qualified African-American applicants who were rejected for entry-level machinist positions at the company's manufacturing plant in Cincinnati. The company reached an agreement with the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs to settle findings of race-based hiring discrimination discovered during a compliance review. Under terms of the consent judgment, approved by a Labor Department administrative law judge, Meyer Tool also will also extend job offers to at least 11 members of the original class as positions become available.

- [Read the News Release](#)

### Initiative to Improve FLSA Compliance in Texas Hotel, Motel Industry

Employees servicing the Gaylord Texan Resort and Convention Center in Grapevine, Texas, will receive \$204,329 in back wages. A Wage and Hour

inspire and motivate us as we set out to develop innovative solutions to these challenges," he said.

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## Equal Pay Challenges



This spring's Equal Pay App Challenge encouraged participants to develop software applications to promote equal pay for men and women. That

conversation continued Sept. 20 at the department's headquarters in a discussion among Catalyst, a nonprofit organization that collaborated with the department and the White House Domestic Policy Council's Equal Pay Taskforce on the challenge, and one of the challenge's winning app development teams. The team from Carnegie Mellon University's Heinz College developed an app that provides data and negotiation advice to empower women negotiating for fair wages. Speakers discussed the app's benefits, praised its creators, and emphasized the importance of promoting women's advancement in today's workplace.

- [Read More About the App Challenge](#)
- 

## ECOMP and POWER

Workers' compensation and return to work issues were the focus of an interagency meeting hosted by the department's Office of Workers' Compensation Program on Sept. 20. The meeting covered improvements and updates on the Employees' Compensation Operations and Management Portal, the electronic system for filing federal employees' injury and medical benefit claims, as agencies transition to the new system before a December deadline. Next on the agenda was the Return to Work Council for POWER, the Protecting Our Workers and Ensuring Re-employment Initiative that extends prior safety and health efforts by revamping safety programs and analyzing data on the causes and consequences of workplace injury and illnesses. Gary Steinberg, acting director of OWCP, told attendees, "We can help injured or sick employees with timely filing of compensation and wage loss claims, and meet return to work rates across the board."

- [Read about ECOMP](#)
  - [Read about POWER](#)
- 

## Upcoming Deadlines & Events

### [Open Funding Opportunities](#)

### Town Halls in Ohio

The Office of Workers' Compensation Programs will host two town hall meetings and

Division multiyear enforcement initiative aimed at strengthening labor law compliance in Texas's hotel and motel industry found violations of the Fair Labor Standards Act's minimum wage, overtime and record-keeping provisions among five companies providing workers to Gaylord Texan. Upon being notified of the division's findings, Gaylord Entertainment Co. agreed to promote FLSA compliance among its vendors at all four of its locations. Gaylord Texan is owned and operated by Gaylord Hotels, a division of Gaylord Entertainment.

- [Read the News Release](#)

### Penalties Proposed for Lack of Cave-in Protection

Cave-in hazards of up to 9 feet at a Chelsea, Mass., worksite have resulted in \$40,700 in proposed fines for an Everett, Mass., contractor. An inspection by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's Andover Area Office found employees of Cavalieri Construction Co. Inc. working in an unprotected trench, a condition for which OSHA had cited Cavalieri earlier this year at a different location. The contractor also was cited for not keeping piles of excavated material at least 2 feet back from the trench's edge, to prevent it from rolling into the trench.

- [Read the News Release](#)

### Safety Violations Found at Processing Plant After Worker Fatality

Omega Protein Inc. was cited by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration with 25 safety and health violations based on an April inspection of the company's processing plant in Moss Point, Miss. OSHA's Jackson Area Office initiated the inspection after the death of a worker who had been caught in a rotating screw conveyor. "This terrible incident could have been avoided if the employer had followed OSHA's standards for energy control procedures," said Clyde Payne, the area director in Jackson.

- [Read the News Release](#)

### Ohio Couple Sentenced for Embezzlement From Union

Marqueeta Tibbs, former office secretary for Carpenters Local 437 in Portsmouth, Ohio, and her husband Zeffrey Tibbs were both recently sentenced for conspiring to embezzle \$84,903.53 in union funds. Marqueeta Tibbs was sentenced to one year and one day in prison, three years of supervised release, and was ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$34,903.53. Zeffrey Tibbs was sentenced to six months of home confinement and five years of supervised release. Earlier in 2012, both pled guilty to one count of conspiracy to embezzle union funds. An Office of Labor-Management Standards investigation revealed that between March 2010 and October 2010, Marqueeta prepared, endorsed, and negotiated 25 unauthorized union checks totaling \$34,903.53 payable to herself or her husband. On November 1, 2010, she made an electronic transfer of \$50,000 in union funds from the union's savings account to the union's building fund account and wrote another unauthorized check on the building account for \$50,000. The union froze those funds before the Tibbs could withdraw the money.

- [Read the Department of Justice Release](#)

### West Virginia Construction Company Faces Fine for Fall Hazards

Roger Shortridge Construction in Mt. Lookout, W.Va., has been cited by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration for one willful and two serious violations. OSHA's investigation was initiated after a compliance officer observed fall hazards while conducting an inspection of another contractor at a worksite in Tridelfia, W.Va. Violations included the company's failure to ensure that employees use fall protection when working

send its travelling resource center to Hamilton, Ohio, on Sept. 25. There it will provide former Feed Materials Production Center employees with information about a new class of employees recently added to the Special Exposure Cohort of the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act.

#### **OWCP — Town Hall Meetings to Assist Nuclear Weapons Workers**

- [September 25 — Hamilton, OH](#)
- [Learn More](#)

#### **OWCP — DEEOIC Meetings to Assist Nuclear Weapons Workers — Hamilton, OH**

- [September 26 — Nashville, TN](#)

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

- [September 26 — Nashville, TN](#)

#### **OFCCP — Developing Written Affirmative Action Plans**

- [September 26 — Columbus, OH](#)

#### **OFCCP — Regulation Review**

- [October 11 — Chicago, IL](#)

#### **OFCCP — Seminar for First Time Service and Supply Contractors**

- [September 23 — Philadelphia, PA](#)

#### **OFCCP — Workforce Solutions Conference and Resource Fair**

- [October 19 — San Francisco, CA](#)

#### **OLMS — Trustee Workshop**

- [September 25 — Appleton, WI](#)

#### **OSHA — Expert Forum on the Use of Performance-based Regulatory Models in the U.S. Oil and Gas Industry, Offshore and Onshore**

- [September 20-21 — Texas City, TX](#)

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[USDOL Statement by Secretary of Labor](#)

on a steep roof and failure to initiate and maintain a safety and health program, as well as to ensure the use of eye protection. Proposed penalties total \$47,400.

- [Read the News Release](#)

#### **Construction, Installation Company Cited for Repeat Fall Hazards**

SEI Group of Norcross in Alpharetta, Ga., has been cited by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration for exposing workers to fall hazards. Four repeat safety violations included failing to ensure workers were using fall protection when engaged in residential construction and failing to provide training on recognizing fall hazards and on the proper use, placement and care of ladders. Similar violations were cited at a company work site in Suwanee, Ga., in May 2012. "Falls continue to be a leading cause of workplace fatalities in the construction industry," said Bill Fulcher, director of OSHA's Atlanta-East Area Office. Proposed penalties total \$84,700.

- [Read the News Release](#)

#### **Penalties Proposed for New York Contractor After Injury**

Blade Contracting Inc., based in Staten Island, N.Y., is facing \$136,290 in proposed penalties from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration for fall hazards at a Jersey City, N.J., worksite. OSHA's investigation found one willful, two repeat and four serious violations, including failure to protect workers on scaffolds from fall hazards and the use of makeshift devices on top of scaffolds to increase the level height for working. The agency's investigation was initiated after a worker with the masonry contractor was injured by falling from a sixth floor balcony while attempting to access a suspension scaffold.

- [Read the News Release](#)

#### **Hazards Found at Delaware Manufacturer**

Formosa Plastics Corp. USA was cited by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration with two repeat and 14 serious safety and health violations at its Delaware City, Del., site. OSHA proposed \$148,700 against the manufacturer for violations involving electrical hazards, a deficient process safety management program, and failure to ensure that PVC dust did not accumulate on surfaces and the floor of a bagging area. The agency's March investigation was a follow-up to two inspections opened in October 2009.

- [Read the News Release](#)

#### **EBSA Investigators Participated in Probe of Investment Officer**

Laura Pendergest-Holt, the former chief investment officer of Houston-based Stanford Financial Group, was sentenced on Sept. 20 to 36 months in prison for her role in obstructing a U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission investigation into Stanford International Bank, the Antiguan offshore bank owned by convicted financier Robert Allen Stanford. The investigation leading to the plea and sentencing was conducted by multiple federal agencies, including the department's Employee Benefits Security Administration. In January 2009, the SEC sought testimony and documents related to SIB's entire investment portfolio. Although she was incapable of testifying about the vast majority of that portfolio, Holt nevertheless agreed to testify before the SEC. In her guilty plea, Holt acknowledged that her eventual appearance and sworn testimony before the SEC was a stall tactic designed to frustrate the SEC's efforts to obtain important information about SIB's investment portfolio. Holt admitted she took this action intentionally, knowing that her testimony would impede the SEC's investigation and help

Hilda L. Solis on fatal occupational injuries in 2011 [1.usa.gov/VhEMdI](http://1.usa.gov/VhEMdI)  
4 hours ago · reply · retweet · favorite

SIB continue operating.

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



Join the conversation

### Storm Cleanup Assistance for New York

The department awarded a \$5,790,739 National Emergency Grant increment to assist with continuing cleanup and recovery efforts in New York in the wake of Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee in 2011. "While much progress has been made, cleanup and recovery efforts continue in New York following the back-to-back hurricane and tropical storm," said Secretary Solis. The latest increment completes the total amount of funding awarded.

- [Read the News Release](#)

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