

PENNSTATE



Center for Global Workers' Rights

CGWR, SPRING SEMESTER 2013

We are a Center! On December 1, 2012, the College of the Liberal Arts formally promoted us from a project to a research center. We are now the Center for Global Workers' Rights (CGWR) at Penn State University.

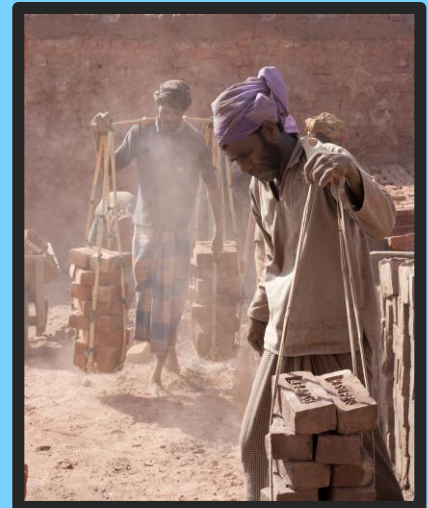
In the spring 2013 semester, the CGWR is looking forward to hosting more speakers, organizing an international workshop with US and international unionists to discuss the Global Labour University, and holding a major scholar-practitioner international symposium on precarious work. In addition, the CGWR will facilitate a series of initiatives for students, faculty, and practitioners designed to promote global workers' rights. And with the goal of increasing the impact of our research, the CGWR will continue to partner with other universities, labor unions, and NGOs to produce action-oriented research projects on topics such as workers' rights in Colombia and El Salvador.

Write us if you have any thoughts or questions about the CGWR's work and join our listserv in order to stay on top of the latest events: <globalworkersrights@la.psu.edu>.

Visit our website <http://lser.la.psu.edu/gwr/>.

Or, find us on Facebook:

"The Penn State Center for Global Workers' Rights."



Brick worker in Bangladesh;
photo by Arifur Rahman



CGWR and the Global Labour University

In order to further encourage the study of global workers' rights, the CGWR has initiated a relationship with the Global Labour University (GLU). GLU is a network of universities that offer Master's degrees in labor and globalization. GLU students are mid-career labor unionists or practitioners. Through the program, students gain knowledge of international labor standards and trade unions, sustainable development, social justice, and global institutions. Currently, GLU is operating in four countries: Germany, South Africa, Brazil and India.

On February 15, 2013, the CGWR and the Department of Labor Studies and Employment Relations will host a workshop titled, "Capacity Building for Global Labor Relations." The workshop will bring together US and international unionists with GLU representatives to explore how the CGWR might deepen its collaboration with the GLU.

More information on GLU can be found at: <http://www.global-labour-university.org/>

Center for Global Workers' Rights (PGWR) Team

Mark Anner is the Director of the Center for Global Workers' Rights (CGWR) and an Associate Professor of Labor Studies and Political Science at Penn State. He holds a Ph.D. in Government from Cornell University and a Master's Degree in Latin American Studies from Stanford University. He is the author of *Solidarity Transformed: Labor Responses to Globalization and Crisis in Latin America*.

Jill Jensen is Assistant Director for the CGWR and Visiting Assistant Professor in Labor Studies. She holds a Ph.D. in History from the University of California, Santa Barbara. She studies labor law, social policy development, and inter-governmental relations surrounding global labor markets and trade.

Daniel Hawkins is a Post-Doctoral Scholar with the CGWR. He holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Kassel, Germany. He studies work, trade unions, and the informal economy, with a particular focus on Latin America. Previous to arriving at Penn State, Daniel was a researcher at the National Trade Union School of Colombia (ENS).

Lisa Pierson is the Administrative Support Assistant to the CGWR. A native of Indiana, Pennsylvania, she worked for twenty years at S&T Bank. She joined Penn State in 2008 where she has worked with the Department of Geosciences before re-joining the Department of Labor Studies and Employment Relations.

ACTIVITIES OF THE CGWR, 2013

Speaker Series: The CGWR hosts national and international scholars who have published extensively on work issues in the global economy. Talks take place in Keller Building, room 502.

On the October 18, 2012, **Edward Webster**, Emeritus Professor of Sociology and Founder and Director of the Society, Work & Development (SWOP) Institute, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, gave a lecture on Labor's responses to globalization.

On the February 7, 2013, **Ruth Milkman**, Professor of Sociology at the CUNY Graduate Center New York and at the Joseph F. Murphy Institute for Worker Education and Labor Studies, will speak about low-wage immigrant workers in the USA. Her talk is titled, "Back to the Future? U.S. Labor Organizing in the New Gilded Age."



Caregivers in New Zealand on strike for fair pay; photo by Simon Oosterman



USAS trip to Dominican Republic; photo by Shelby Mastovich

Support for "Alta Gracia"

As part of its efforts to support production in the global economy that respects workers' rights, the CGWR has been very encouraged by the Alta Gracia factory initiative in the Dominican Republic, where workers receive a living wage, have a strong, democratic union, and enjoy collective bargaining rights. To help disseminate knowledge of Alta Gracia, the CGWR sponsored two Penn State students, Shelby Mastovich and Jessica Valverde, to visit the factory in January 2013. CGWR also funds an intern, Lili Hadsell, to promote Alta Gracia products and knowledge on campus. Lili is a Women's Studies and English Major with a minor in Media studies. Shelby, Jessica and Lili are all active members of United Students Against Sweatshops (USAS). (See page 6 for more on USAS)

The work of Guy Standing

Guy Standing's recent book, *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class*, (Bloomsbury, 2011) has been an international scholarly sensation. In it, Standing defines and discusses the composition and characteristics of the precariat, which he contends is the most important post-globalization "class in-the-making." Standing then analyzes the implications of its emergence and growth in terms of the associated political and social crises and transformations of recent times. This book follows on from Standing's seminal 2009 book, *Work After Globalization*, which critiqued the labor and political regimes in the era of Industrial Citizenship, geared as they were to deepening the alienation of workers via their incorporation into a patriarchal model of worker subservience to the demands of mass production, controlled by big capital, and regulated by a monolithic state. Standing proposes the reconfiguration of markets, worker organizations, and states so that they prioritize a social model that enhances occupational security, worker autonomy, and control of the work process, augmenting flexible and creative forms of work.



**Professor Guy Standing,
University of Bath**

International Symposium: Global Workers' Rights, Patterns of Exclusion, Possibilities for Change (March 20-22, 2013)

Members of the CGWR will host scholars, activists, and labor practitioners from various parts of the world focusing on the growing trend toward worker precarity. The aim of this symposium is to discuss existing strategies and propose alternative ways to overcome associated insecurities while seeking approaches that might help promote worker empowerment. The symposium will be inaugurated with the keynote address of **Guy Standing**, Professor in Development Studies, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London and Co-President, Basic Income Earth Network (BIEN)

This event is co-sponsored by PSU Center for Global Studies and Latin American Studies Program.

PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Opening remarks, Thursday, March 20 at 7:15 p.m. in 101 Chambers Building on Penn State Campus

Chair: Mark Anner, Director, Center for Global Workers' Rights

Speaker introduction: Paul Clark, Head of the Labor Studies and Employment Relations Department, PSU

Keynote Address by Guy Standing, "The Precariat: Building Occupational Citizenship"

Symposium panels open, Thursday, March 21, 2013, Nittany Lion Inn, Penn State Room

Welcome and symposium introduction by Mark Anner, Director, CGWR

Thursday, March 21, Panel 1: Fighting for Domestic Workers' Rights

Eileen Boris, Hull Professor and Chair Department of Feminist Studies, UC, Santa Barbara and Jennifer Fish, Professor and Chair of the Women's Studies Programs, Old Dominion University

"Slaves no more': Making Global Labor Standards for Domestic Workers"

Shirley Pryce, President, Jamaica Household Workers' Association

"Fighting for Domestic Workers Rights around the Globe"

(See page 4 for a continuation of the preliminary symposium schedule)

Global Workers' Rights, Patterns of Exclusion, Possibilities for Change preliminary schedule (cont.)**Thursday March 21, Nittany Lion Inn, Penn State Room, Panel 2: Global Production, Trade, and Activism**

Jenny Chan, Ph.D. Candidate, Faculty of History and Social Sciences, University of London

"Chinese Migrant Workers and Student Interns in Foxconn"

Ruben Cortina, UNI Americas and UNI Commerce Global Union President

"The Global Dimension and Action of the Trade Union Movement"

Michael Fichter, Senior Researcher and Lecturer, Free University of Berlin

"Global Framework Agreements and Union Networking: Quo vadis?"

Thursday, March 21, Panel 3: Migration and Work: Race, Gender, and Nation

Valerie Francisco, Postdoctoral Fellow, Public Science Project, New York City

"Transnational Family as Resource for Transnational Migrant Activism"

Solsiree del Moral, Assistant Professor Latin American and Caribbean History, Department of History, PSU

"The Great Puerto Rican Migration"

Thursday, March 21, Panel 4: Combating Exclusion of Workers in the Global Economy

Devan Pillay, Professor of Sociology, WITS University, South Africa

"Who's In, Who's Out? Elite Democracy and the Disempowerment of the Working Class in South Africa"

Olga Sanmiguel-Valderrama, Assistant Professor, Sociology, University of Cincinnati

"Waves of Resistance in the Colombian Flower Industry"

Adrienne Eaton, Chair, Labor Studies and Employment Relations Department, Rutgers University

"Union Organizational Campaigns for Informal (or non-standard) Workers"

Symposium reconvenes, Nittany Lion Inn, Penn State Room Friday morning, March 22**Friday, March 22, Panel 5: Forms of Organizing Informal Workers**

Jennifer Chun, Sociology, University of Toronto Scarborough

"Grassroots Leadership, Grassroots Expertise: Asian Immigrant Women Workers at the Center of Social Change"

Dan Hawkins, Post-Doctoral Scholar, Center for Global Workers' Rights, PSU

"Precarious Work in a Precarious Setting: Reflections on Protecting the Rights of Informal Street Vendors in Developing Country Cities"

Steven Toff, Law Student, Northeastern University

"The Professional Modeling Industry: A 'Model' for What's Wrong with Modern Precarious Employment"

Friday, March 22, Panel 6: Contingent and Precarious Work in Academia

Ian Robinson, Lecturer, Department of Sociology, University of Michigan

"Should Nontenure-track Faculty be Paid the Same per Course as Tenure-track Faculty? Arguments and Evidence from the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor"

Raymond Mazurek, Associate Professor, English, Penn State University Berks

"Whose University is it? Reflections on the Contingent Faculty Majority"

Friday, March 22, Panel 7: Where Do We Go From Here?

Cathy Fiengold, AFL-CIO International Department Director

Peter Evans, Senior Fellow, Watson Institute for International Studies, Brown University

PGWR Action-oriented research

One of the key objectives of the CGWR is to contribute to the monitoring and denouncement of attempts by firms or states to violate or make more difficult the fulfillment of workers' rights. The members of the Project will be taking part in research initiatives that examine developments on the ground associated with worker freedom and organization as well as general working conditions. Presently, the Project's team is involved in two research projects.

Daniel Hawkins, Colombia: Post-Doctoral scholar Daniel Hawkins recently finished a report on precarious work and union organization at the Buenaventura seaport in Colombia. This report forms part of an international study, which examines best practices of organizing and formalizing non-standard workers in five countries: South Africa, Vietnam, Cambodia, Colombia, and Tunisia. The project is being coordinated by scholars from the School of Management and Labor Studies at Rutgers University, New Jersey and is funded by the International Center for Labor Solidarity in Washington D.C. (See below.)



Stevedores loading sugar sacks at the Buenaventura Port, Colombia; photo by Daniel Hawkins

Report from the Field: Workers' Rights in Colombia:

As South America's second most populous country, Colombia has a long history of violent anti-union practices, evidenced by the 2,944 unionists killed between 1979 and 2010. The nature of these practices contributed to a five-year freeze on the US-Colombian Free Trade Agreement (FTA) as it languished in the US Congress. As a means of defrosting this FTA, the Obama and Santos administrations negotiated and signed The Labor Action Plan, in April 2011. This Plan included major policy reforms aimed at protecting labor rights and union activity in Colombia. Specifically, alongside the reconsolidation of a depleted Labor Ministry, the Action Plan centered on the special monitoring of five key sectors, all plagued by hostile anti-union business practices: mining, African palm oil, ports, sugar, and cut flowers. Daniel's report traces recent work-related developments at the Buenaventura port, particularly focusing on the proliferation of non-standard work "arrangements", based on labor intermediation, which practically eliminated formal employment contracts, leaving port workers earning misery wages, with little or no stability, and a lack of legal employment protections. After a dearth in union activity at the port due to intense employer and state anti-union practices, 2009 marked the arrival of a new national port union, the Union Portuaria, which focused on organizing workers and formalizing work contracts. The Labor Action Plan offered the normative openings for such a campaign but, despite initial union success, the report highlights the still wide gap between legal norms and their actual enforcement, with employers adopting new tactics to evade direct work contracts and undermine unionization.



**Apparel worker, El Salvador; photo
by Mark Anner**

Mark Anner, Workers' Rights in El Salvador: Mark Anner, the CGWR's Director, in partnership with the Worker Rights Consortium (WRC), traveled to El Salvador in December 2012 to investigate patterns of worker rights abuses in Salvadoran export processing zones, where factory owners have been using coercive tactics, such as the formation of company unions, to block legitimate attempts by workers to organize. An action-oriented report on this topic will be put out by the CGWR and the WRC later in the spring 2013 semester.

Post-Doctoral Scholarship

The CGWR provides opportunities for a new generation of scholars engaged in related research by supporting a yearly post-doctoral scholarship. Post-doctoral scholars help organize CGWR events and teach in the Department of Labor Studies and Employment Relations. To apply for the postdoctoral scholarship before the March 1, 2013 deadline, please visit our website.

Opportunities for student funding

The CGWR encourages the development of student projects that examine themes related to the protection of workers' rights in the global economy. As part of this effort, the CGWR offers funds in support of individual or collaborative undergraduate and graduate student research on associated themes. If you are a student interested in research on a topic related to global workers' rights, please contact Center director, Mark Anner at msa10@psu.edu.

STUDENT ACTIVISM: United Students Against Sweatshops: Penn State chapter

USAS is a student organization that is committed, through direct action, to holding the university and the brands that produce university logo apparel responsible for ethical business practices. It advocates for workers' rights in the global economy, particularly in regards to workers' rights to form unions, bargain collectively and receive appropriate benefits and a living wage. This semester USAS is calling on Penn State to suspend its contract with Adidas until such time that this firm ensures full respect for workers' rights in its supply chain. USAS meets every Monday at 7pm in 218 Willard.

For more information, contact Lili Hadsell, lqh5089@psu.edu.



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For additional information: <http://lser.la.psu.edu/global.workers.rights.home.htm>