



CENTER FOR GLOBAL WORKERS' RIGHTS

The Tenth Anniversary of the Labor and Global Workers' Rights Master's Program

In August 2014, the Center for Global Workers' Rights and the School of Labor and Employment Relations welcomed its first group of students to the Master of Professional Studies (MPS) program in Labor and Global Workers' Rights (LGWR). Students from Italy, Jamaica, China, and the United States were part of the 2014–2015 academic year.

**PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY MPS IN
LABOR AND GLOBAL WORKERS' RIGHTS**



The LGWR program remains unique because it provides students with both academic and practitioner-oriented skills, a faculty with rich experience in the global labor movement and labor-related research, and tuition waivers and stipends for international labor activists to study global workers' rights.

This 12-month master's program has had more than 60 admitted students since 2019 from 24 countries in 5 different continents. It is part of the Global Labour University (GLU) network, which has similar in-person programs in Germany, India, South Africa, and Brazil.

Visit bit.ly/LERMPSinLGWR to learn more about the LGWR Program.

The Twentieth Anniversary of the Global Labour University

This year marks the Twentieth Anniversary of the Global Labour University (GLU), which offers a network of in-person master's programs related to labor and globalization in Germany, South Africa, Brazil, India, and—with the program at Penn State—the United States.

The LGWR Program at Penn State is the fifth postgraduate program of GLU. Several LGWR Alumni actively participate in strengthening this important international network. GLU also has massive open online courses ([MOOCs](#)), short programs for unionists ([ENGAGE](#)), and labor column where scholars and activists reflect on challenges in the world of work ([Global Labour Column](#)).

The GLU network is rooted in partnership among trade unions, universities, the International Labour Organization, and labor support organizations across the world. It contributes to the labor movement's analytical and strategic capacity in debating and acting for social justice.



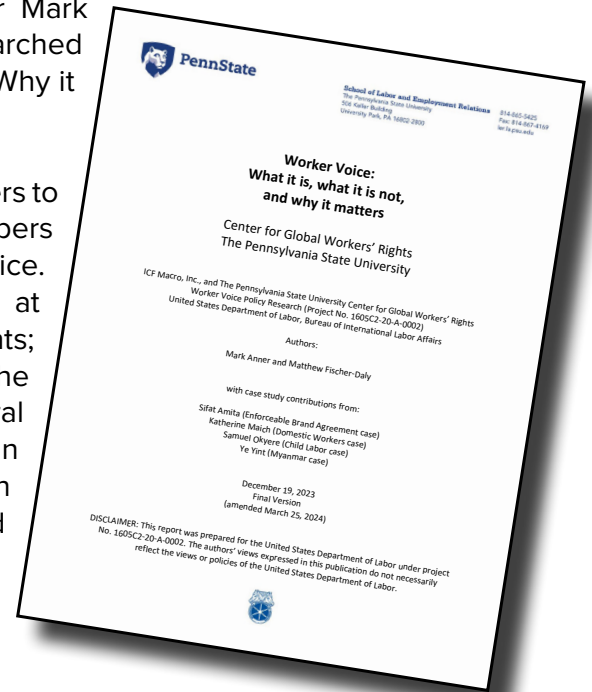
Some of the upcoming GLU online courses include “Future is Public”—for which current LGWR student Mercy Nabwire will conduct a video lecture—and “Labour History.”

[Click here](#) to learn more about the GLU Network.

New Report Launched by CGWR and USDOL on Worker Voice

As part of a U.S. Department of Labor grant, CGWR Director Mark Anner and assistant research professor Matthew Fischer-Daly researched and wrote the report “Worker Voice, What it is, What it isn’t, and Why it matters.”

The report finds that mechanisms that enhance the ability of workers to elect, represent, protect, include, enable, and empower their members and their organizations are the most effective forms of worker voice. The report explores these themes of worker voice by looking at seven case studies related to Enforceable Brand Agreements; the USMCA’s Rapid Response Labor Mechanism in Mexico; the struggles of domestic workers; worker voice in U.S. agricultural employment practices; transnational labor rights corridors in Central America, Mexico, and the United States; worker voice in authoritarian regimes including Myanmar; and approaches to child labor. Center-affiliated assistant professor, Katherine Maich, and recent LGWR graduates, Sifat Amita and Ye Yint contributed to the case studies.



Visit the links to read the [Report](#) and the [Literature Review](#).

Strategic Worker-driven Co-research in Mexico

In March, Center Director Mark Anner, traveled to Querétaro, Mexico, where he facilitated a workshop on strategic corporate research with Eduardo Vargas of the Solidarity Center.



Mark then traveled to San Luis Potosí to work with newly-formed independent unions at 3M and Goodyear to research recent corporate financial developments.

This work is part of a CGWR research grant focused on disseminating worker-driven co-research methodologies in Mexico.

Photo, from left to right:
 Marco Antonio Saucedo Baez,
 Maria Félix Hernández,
 Mark Anner,
 Adriana Barbosa Carranza,
 and Israel Aguila Briones.

Research in Honduras

In March, Alejandra Flores Mejía, a LGWR student, and Assistant Research Professor Matthew Fischer-Daly traveled to Honduras to research labor rights' practices in the country's palm oil sector.

The data-gathering trip was part of a CGWR research grant on workers' rights in the Honduran palm oil sector. During this research trip, workers recounted how they first organized trade unions in this sector and the resistance they have faced. At the AGROGUAY farm owned by the Jaremar Group, when workers only had four clauses left to negotiate in the country's first collective bargaining agreement in the sector, workers showed up to find their jobs effectively outsourced. While the company claims the farm was "occupied," workers observed a manager removing equipment the days prior, and AGROGUAY continues to obtain fruit from it, which it processes and markets as palm oil products. AGROGUAY does not recognize the workers at the farm as its employees, let alone any obligation to negotiate a union contract.

In another region in Honduras, known as Bajo Aguán, the other important palm oil company, Dinant, has, according to worker testimony, established a company-controlled "union" in order to evade collective bargaining. Workers also showed the CGWR the extreme occupational safety and health risks that they experience in the fields and in the processing factories where they work, ranging from poisonous snake bites to toxic chemicals and explosions at the plants. One of the more serious cases was that of a 31-year-old palm fruit harvester lost his hands, an arm, and toes after slicing through electricity wires hidden in the dense palm oil trees. Stay tuned this summer for a CGWR report on the struggle of palm oil workers in Honduras.



Source: FESTAGRO

CGWR Visiting Scholars: Danilo Contreras and Javier Salinas



Danilo Contreras has been a Visiting Scholar at the School of Labor and Employment Relations at Penn State since August 2023. The purpose of his twelve-month stay at the university is to complete a book manuscript on ethno-racial politics in the Dominican Republic and to begin a second book on remittances and social policy.

Danilo was an assistant professor in the Department of Political Science at Wellesley College, where he taught courses on comparative politics, Latin American politics and social policy, Latin American studies, and democracy consolidation.



Javier Salinas—the Academic Secretary of the Autonomous University of Querétaro, Mexico (Universidad Autónoma de Querétaro, UAQ), and Director of the UAQ Labor Center—is a visiting professor with the CGWR in late March and early April 2024. He is a Research Affiliate at the UCLA Institute for Research on Labor & Employment.

Javier's research focuses on the challenges and possibilities of collective representation and shared governance in higher education.

LGWR Students Participate in the SEIU Healthcare Pennsylvania Leadership Assembly

LGWR students participated in the Service Employees International Union's (SEIU) Pennsylvania Leadership Assembly 2023 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, on October 25 and 26, 2023. It provided a wonderful opportunity for these students to engage with more than four thousand unionists and to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the SEIU Healthcare Pennsylvania union.

Mercy Nabwire, an LGWR student and a member of the Kenya Medical Pharmacists and Dentists Union, gave a speech at the general assembly in which she shared her personal experiences.

LGWR students actively participated in training workshops on digital organizing, embracing diversity, direct action, local politics, and women leading women.

Photo from left to right:
Jiayi Yao (China),
Haoju Lu (China),
Dorcas Owusua (Ghana),
Muzammal Afzal (Kashmir/
Pakistan/United States),
Alejandra Flores (Honduras),
and Mercy Nabwire (Kenya).



CGWR Speaker Series: Colombian Waste Picker Leader Silvio Ruiz Grisales Visits Penn State

Around the world, fifteen million people eke out a living by salvaging recyclable and reusable materials from dumps, streets, and buildings. Since the 1980s, waste pickers in Colombia and other countries have collectively organized on the national and international levels to improve their working conditions.

Silvio Ruiz Grisales, a leader in the global movement for waste picker rights, gave a talk entitled "Recycling without Waste Pickers is Garbage! Organizing for Workers' Rights and Environmental Justice." During the presentation, hosted on January 31 by CGWR and the Penn State Sustainability Institute, Silvio shared his experience with graduate and undergraduate students at Penn State. He is a member of the Asociación de Recicladores de Bogotá (The Association of Recyclers of Bogotá), and he talked about the challenges of organizing waste pickers, the new global networks that protect waste pickers, and the production of plastic wood to build affordable houses in Colombia.



Photo from left to right:
Freyca Calderon
(interpreter), Silvio Ruiz, and
Manuel Rosaldo (CGWR).

The 2023 LGWR Master Program Alumni Reunion

The Labor and Global Workers' Rights Program (LGWR) online Alumni Meeting took place on December 2, 2023.

Former and current LGWR students from Asia, Africa, Europe, South America, and the United States shared their recent experiences as union leaders, labor activists, and academics. It was a great opportunity to talk about how the LGWR program has helped them personally and professionally. Most of the alumni continue to work on labor issues and they shared that the LGWR Program helped them to have a global perspective on labor relations.



Photo from left to right, top to bottom: Mark Anner, Elaine Hui, Danna Seballos, Carlo Tabia, Rodolfo Soares, Anna Popovych, Manuel Rosaldo and Becky Tarlau, Paul Whitehead, Kofi Asianowa, Margaret Marfo, Sherif Olanrewaju, Timothy Adekeye, Weixiang Chen, Kaye Liang, Jafar Iqbal, Alejandra Flores, Jini Park, Paul Macharia, Haoju Lu, Luis Mendoza, Akufuna Mwafuluka, Zhihang Ruan, Keegan Conrad, Michelle Wong, Sifat Amita, Mikael Ruukel, Gia Yuan, Ye Yint, Sergio Saravia, Saulo Galicia, Bashiratu Kamal, Dorcas Owusua, Hyunsu Hwang, Muzammal Afzal, Kayi Yiu, and Allie Petonic.

Recent Publications by Center Team Members

Anner, Mark and **Matthew Fischer-Daly**. 2024. "Worker Voice: What it is, what it is not, and why it matters," with case study contributions from Sifat Amita, Katherine Maich, Samuel Okyere, and Ye Yint. Center for Global Workers' Rights, Pennsylvania State University.

Fischer-Daly, Matthew and **Mark Anner**. 2024. "Worker Voice: A Literature Review." Center for Global Workers' Rights, Pennsylvania State University.

Hui, Elaine Sio-leng. 2023. "The development of labor policies in china: From passive revolution to eroding hegemony." In *Handbook on Critical Political Economy and Public Policy* edited by Ana Garcia, Christoph Scherrer, Joscha Wullweber. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Rosaldo, Manuel. 2023. "Dilemas de Coprodução: como os catadores de rua em São Paulo foram excluídos da reciclagem inclusiva." *Política y Trabalho: Revista de Ciências Sociais*.

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