



Happy New Year!

January, 2010

***Greetings and Best Wishes from all of us at UCLA-LOSH.*** With the new decade upon us, we have been reflecting on the challenges and successes in advancing worker health and safety and the opportunities that lie ahead. We look forward to partnering with you as we implement our education, research and policy initiatives in the future.

### **Worker Education and Leadership**

The cornerstone of our work is to build leadership skills and empower workers to improve health and safety on the job. To this end, LOSH continues as the lead organization for the five-university Western Region Universities Consortium to provide hazmat training from the U.S.-Mexico border to Alaska and the Pacific Islands. With funding from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), our consortium trained close to 15,000 workers in the last five years --from longshore workers at West coast ports to school and car wash workers—teaching skills to identify hazardous materials and protect themselves and their communities. In November, we completed a grant proposal to NIEHS to expand our training program to new groups of workers in the coming five years.

In California, we work with our partners at U.C. Berkeley-LOHP and U.C. Davis Western Center for Agricultural Health and Safety through the WOSHTEP Program to create a statewide network of health and safety leaders, strengthen health and safety committees in California workplaces, and support community efforts initiated by worker centers, church groups and others. With funding from the California Commission on Health and Safety and Workers' Compensation, we provide 24-hour leadership courses, shorter courses for small businesses, an annual three-day academy for young workers and technical assistance to groups ranging from office workers to janitors to refinery workers. Since 2003, we have trained more than 1,000 health and safety leaders in the 24-hour course and reached several thousand more through shorter trainings and presentations. A follow-up evaluation demonstrated that our efforts help empower workers to participate in health and safety programs at their workplace.

### **Good, Green, Safe Jobs – Community Scholars Report**

In 2009, Los Angeles City Council passed a groundbreaking green building retrofit Ordinance and established a workforce development program. Led by LOSH with the UCLA Labor Center, the 2009 Community Scholars program brought together graduate students, labor and community leaders to create recommendations to implement the Ordinance. We worked with the LA Apollo Alliance to focus on three areas of sustainability--the environment, health, and the economy--with the goal of revitalizing LA's underserved communities. For information about the class, City Hall briefing, community conference, and Community Scholars report, "Green Buildings, Good Jobs, Safe Jobs: Pathway to a Sustainable LA", see: <http://www.losh.ucla.edu/projects/green-jobs-conference.html> and [www.losh.ucla.edu/pdf/green-jobs-report.pdf](http://www.losh.ucla.edu/pdf/green-jobs-report.pdf).

We continue our work to ensure that green jobs are also good, safe jobs. We are fortunate to be recipients of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding through NIEHS to develop worker training and education materials on green buildings and green chemistry.

### **Low Wage Workers, Immigrant Workers, and the Informal Sector**

On average, a worker dies every three days in Los Angeles County, many of them low wage or immigrant workers. Many more are injured -- a new IRLE study demonstrates that more than 1 in 10 low wage workers experience a serious on-the-job injury but less than 5% ever receive any workers' compensation: <http://www.irle.ucla.edu/events/2010/pdf/LAwagetheft.pdf>

LOSH programs reach taxi drivers, day laborers and truck drivers as well as car wash, hotel, domestic, nail salon and restaurant workers. We collaborate with labor, community groups and small businesses to build their capacity to educate workers who historically lack resources and support. To better reach these underserved populations, we work with our partners to meet the distinctive language and literacy needs of the workers they serve. We also work with SoCalCOSH to build the skills of community leaders and health promoters to reach workers where they congregate - at consulates, health fairs, and street corner day laborer sites. In the coming year we will expand our work through a statewide initiative to prevent work-related heat illness.

LOSH collaborates with the California Department of Public Health to translate and disseminate factsheets about work-related fatalities and how they can be prevented: [www.losh.ucla.edu/resources-publications/FACE-fact-sheets.html](http://www.losh.ucla.edu/resources-publications/FACE-fact-sheets.html). And, we worked with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) to create an assessment tool to create effective educational materials in Spanish: [www.losh.ucla.edu/projects/spanish-resources.html](http://www.losh.ucla.edu/projects/spanish-resources.html)

## Students and Interns

We sponsored another year of amazing interns through the national Occupational Health Internship Program (OHIP). The students researched job stressors facing household cleaners, the effect of ports truck driver employment relations on job safety conditions, and the hazards and benefits of green building retrofit jobs (see Community Scholars Report, Appendix). For information about OHIP, see: [www.losh.ucla.edu/about/ohip-internships.html](http://www.losh.ucla.edu/about/ohip-internships.html). We also teach a course in the School of Public Health and collaborate with UCLA professors to provide student internships: <http://www.losh.ucla.edu/youngworkers/about/internship.html>

## LOSH Website and Publications

Last January, we launched our redesigned LOSH website: [www.losh.ucla.edu](http://www.losh.ucla.edu). Look for the LOSH Spanish website to go live in the next couple months!!

LOSH publications address critical issues affecting workers' health and safety -- from the global economy to the disproportionate impact of workplace hazards on immigrant workers to green buildings and good, safe, green jobs. Recent reports and publications include:

- "Cananea Copper Mine: An International Effort to Improve Hazardous Working Conditions in Mexico," *International Journal of Occupational and Environmental Health*, January 2009: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19267122>
- "Risk Amid Recovery: Occupational Health and Safety of Latino Day Laborers in the Aftermath of the Gulf Coast Hurricanes," *Organization and Environment*, December 2009: <http://www.coba.usf.edu/jermier/TOC22four.html>
- "Green Buildings, Good Jobs, Safe Jobs: Pathway to a Sustainable LA," 2009: <http://www.losh.ucla.edu/pdf/green-jobs-report.pdf>
- A special issue of the journal *New Solutions* featuring articles from the Fifth International Congress on Women, Work and Health in Zacatecas, Mexico, forthcoming: <http://www.newsolutionsjournal.com>

**For information about upcoming LOSH courses and events, see:**

<http://www.losh.ucla.edu/training-events/index.html>

## New OSHA Leadership

In conclusion, as we prepare for the coming decade, we are thrilled to welcome David Michaels as the new Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA. Check the OSHA website ([www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)) for new initiatives, including a [Hispanic Worker Health and Safety Conference](#) April 14-15 in Houston. We look forward to sharing our experiences from LA at the conference and collaborating with the OSHA leadership team on this and other events.

With warmest wishes,

*The Staff of UCLA-LOSH*

UCLA-LOSH is a part of the Center for Occupational and Environmental Health and the Institute for Research on Labor and Employment

