

Inaugural Celebration



CENTER FOR
WORKERS'
RIGHTS

AUGUST 20, 2014

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A NEW ADVOCATE FOR WORKPLACE JUSTICE

Dear workers, friends, and community partners:

Thank you all for joining us in support and celebration of the Center for Workers' Rights. As board chair, I am honored to be a part of this exciting new venture to help bring much-needed legal services to workers in our community.


I have been involved in workers' rights advocacy at the state level for over five years. At the end of the day when I leave the Capitol and witness the kind of struggle and abuse workers in my community are facing, I know there is so much more work that needs to be done here at the local level. That is why the Center for Workers' Right is so important to me and why the work that we will be providing is so critical for the health and economic well-being of our community.

Statistics have shown that a growing number of low-wage workers are routinely denied minimum wage or overtime, are misclassified as "independent contractors," and are provided with unsafe working conditions. These practices are eroding our core workplace standards for the entire labor market and putting law-abiding employers at a competitive disadvantage. In Sacramento, there is no workers' rights organization that focuses on remedying these kinds of workplace injustices for low-wage, non-union workers.

The Center for Workers' Rights will help ensure that workers in the Sacramento area have an advocate to help improve working conditions and assist with workplace disputes. By raising workplace standards and empowering the workers we serve, we will help create a stronger and healthier community.

Today marks just the beginning for an organization that has sights set high for what can be accomplished in the coming months and years. Our first project will be providing legal services at UC Davis's first Workers' Rights Clinic, with the help of volunteer attorneys and UC Davis law students. Soon, we will expand our legal services to help more low-wage workers and their families in the Sacramento area. Eventually, we will work with our community partners and the workers we serve to help build public awareness for important worker issues and to build broader support for actions that will advance workers' rights.

On behalf of the board of the Center for Workers' Rights, I want to thank you for joining us as we start this journey and I hope that you will continue to support our work as we move forward. With help from members of the community like you, we can be sure to have the kind of long-lasting impact we all hope to see for workers in Sacramento.

Thank you,

Mariko Yoshihara

ABOUT THE CENTER FOR WORKERS' RIGHTS

Founded in March 2014, the Center for Workers' Rights strives to improve working conditions, reduce barriers to securing employment, and remedy workplace injustices for low-income workers and their families in the greater Sacramento area.

The mainstay of services provided by the Center for Workers' Rights will be legal advocacy on employment-related issues. We will counsel low-income workers on their workplace rights by framing California's employment protections in the context of each worker's own experience. We will be able to assist a diverse group of people who have an increased risk of facing employment issues. These groups include immigrants, pregnant women, caregivers, people of color, victims of domestic violence, and members of the LGBT community.

In securing, protecting, and promoting workplace justice for the most vulnerable workers, the Center will raise the floor on workplace rights for everyone.

WORKERS' RIGHTS CLINICS

The Center for Workers' Rights will coordinate with San Francisco's Legal Aid Society – Employment Law Center to provide additional Workers' Rights Clinic locations to assist low income workers in the local area.

The first Workers' Rights Clinic will be located in Davis, California with volunteers from UC Davis Law School (King Hall), who will meet with workers one-on-one, under the supervision of knowledgeable volunteer attorneys. The clinics will provide accurate, applicable, and free information to working people on their legal rights when issues arise in the workplace.

Utilizing the Employment Law Center's successful model, the clinic will use an empowerment strategy whereby advocates encourage and advise clients on steps they can take on their own. This strategy will allow the Center to assist the maximum number of clients, while providing quality legal support.

EDUCATION

The Center for Workers' Rights will educate local workers, small businesses, unions, and community members about workplace laws and remedies. Trainings will be conducted by Center staff and volunteers.

The Center plans to provide trainings for employees and employers in many of the languages spoken in the Sacramento area. Topics covered will include:

- Minimum wage
- Overtime
- Rest and meal breaks
- Discrimination
- Sexual harassment
- Taking time off from work
- Reasonable accommodations

RESPRESENTATION

The Center for Workers' Rights will represent low-wage workers in administrative processes, including unemployment benefit appeals hearings, labor commissioner wage claims, and discrimination cases.

When unable to resolve issues in other ways, the Center will selectively litigate employment cases.

ADVOCACY

To give a voice to low-wage workers in the community, the Center for Workers' Rights will also engage in advocacy projects. After identifying a recurring issue faced by workers seeking legal services from the Center, we will develop industry- or employer-targeted campaigns to improve working conditions for a greater number of workers.

Through its connection with clients and partnerships with community groups, the Center will develop organizing campaigns and provide research and legal support for those campaigns.

STUDENT TRAINING

The Center for Workers' Rights is dedicated to developing new legal advocates. Student volunteers will be provided with hands-on training in addition to information on current employment law topics. Volunteers will be encouraged to assist with administrative hearings.

Volunteer attorneys are encouraged to mentor students they meet through the Workers' Rights Clinic and help introduce them to the legal field.

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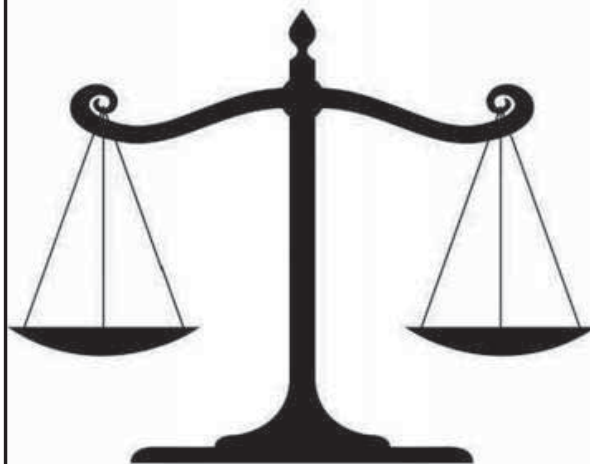
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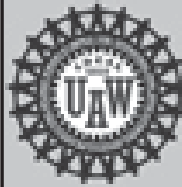
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Felix De La Torre
and Brooke Pierman



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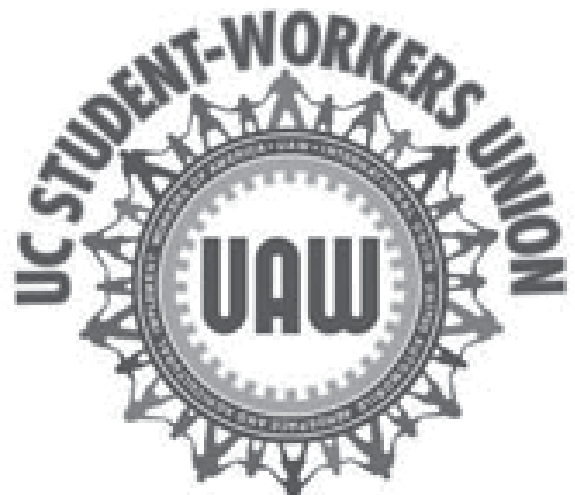
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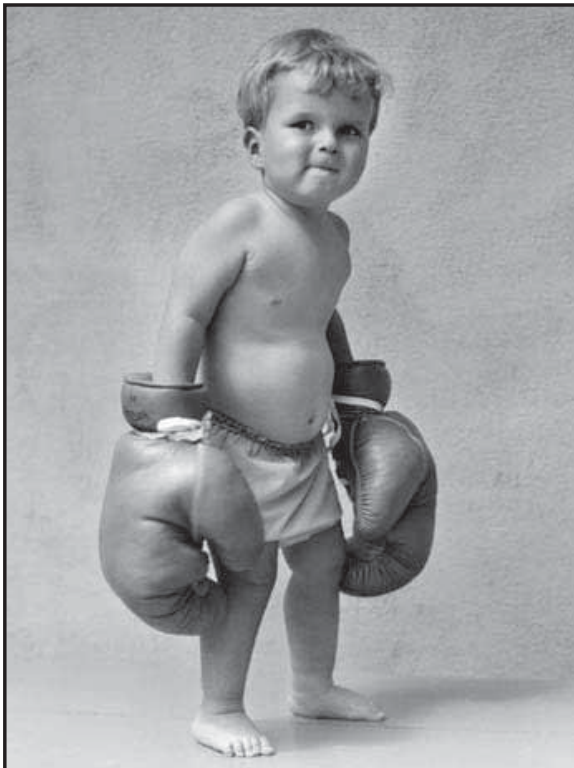
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We offer a variety of volunteer opportunities:

Clinic Supervising Attorneys: Attend workers' rights clinics and supervise law students in order to provide advice to low-income workers. Clinic supervising attorneys commit to attending one clinic each semester.

Administrative Advocates: Help represent clients in administrative hearings at the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement and the California Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board.

Law Clerks: Law students and recent graduates dedicated to workers' rights can clerk for a semester or year. The Center is committed to the education and training of new legal advocates.

Firms: Help expand our capacity to serve people with co-counsel and pro bono opportunities.

Outreach Volunteers: Help us connect with the community, build coalitions, and extend our services to workers in need.

Clerical Positions: Volunteers assist staff with office clerical projects and special projects as the need arises.

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The Center for Workers' Rights is dedicated to improving conditions for low-wage workers and improving our community in the process. We have an ambitious vision to bring change, but our success depends on the generosity of foundations, individuals and institutional donors.

We appreciate your support. Please make checks payable to "Center for Workers' Rights".

For more information contact Daniela Urban at daniela.urban@rightscenter.org or visit our website at www.rightscenter.org/donate



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