



WORKER RIGHTS CONSORTIUM

Annual Meeting of the WRC University Caucus

Suite 3300, Harris Building, 3300 Whitehaven St. NW

Georgetown University, Washington, DC

Thursday, April 28, 2011 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Meeting Agenda

8:30 a.m. Light breakfast

9:00 a.m. **Welcome and Introductions**

9:15 a.m. **Worker Rights Consortium: 2010-2011**

An overview of the WRC's work around the world over the last year, covering new cases and projects, and providing updates on ongoing work. Topics will include: Gildan (Dominican Republic), Shahi Exports (India), implementation of the Nike and Russell Accords, implementation of minimum wage remediation in India, the persecution of labor rights advocates in Bangladesh, the Designated Suppliers Program and supply chain reform, and updates on Alta Gracia Apparel, including an overview of the forthcoming results of a major academic study of the impact of living wage on workers and their families.

Presentations by Executive Director Scott Nova; the WRC's India Field Representative, Manodeep Guha; and Professor David Rehkopf of the Stanford University School of Medicine, who will discuss the Alta Gracia research.

10:45 a.m. Coffee Break

11:00 a.m. **Fire Safety in the Apparel Industry, 100 Years After the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire -- and the Implications for the College Market**

An analysis of the worker safety crisis that confronts the apparel industry, particularly in Bangladesh and India. We will discuss recent fatal fires, their causes, the implications for the 150-plus university licensees sourcing from the region, and ongoing efforts to bring about reform. The discussion will be prefaced by a presentation on the Triangle Shirtwaist fire, which occurred on March 25, 1911, and the role of that fire in spurring workplace reform in the United States.

Presentations by Joe McCartin, Executive Director of the Kalmanovitz Initiative at Georgetown; and WRC staff.

12:00 p.m.

Contending with Company Unions: How Management-Controlled Worker Bodies are Used to Thwart Associational Rights, and Effective Strategies for Remediation

A review of one of the toughest issues facing labor rights monitors: the use of company unions to block associational rights. The discussion will cover the various forms of company-controlled and influenced unions, citing specific cases at collegiate factories, and will emphasize how labor rights monitors can most effectively tackle this growing problem. We will have a presentation from a former apparel worker and current union organizer in the Dominican Republic who will discuss his direct experience in the Gildan case.

Presentations by Reynaldo Corporan of the Dominican Federation of Free Trade Zone workers; and the WRC's General Counsel, Ben Hensler.

1:00 p.m.

Lunch (Lunch Speaker TBD)

2:00 p.m.

Open Discussion

This is an opportunity to discuss any issues, projects and/or cases of interest to meeting participants.

3:00 p.m.

Coffee Break

3:15 p.m.

Wage Trends and Worker Responses

We will discuss an issue of central importance to collegiate apparel workers: the wages they earn and the degree to which wages are increasing over time. The WRC will share data we are gathering on wage trends in key countries, discuss living conditions for apparel workers, and provide an overview of cases of national labor strife related to wage issues.

4:15 p.m.

Wrap-Up and Adjournment