



## Start off 2011 by Committing to Fight for Labor Rights

The year is off to a busy and exciting start already! Keep reading to find out how to start off the year by supporting worker rights globally.

- [Introducing ILRF's New Executive Director](#)
- [Remember the Triangle Fire: Join with ILRF and Organize Your Own Event](#)
- [Thank You for Your Support in 2010](#)
- [Order your \*Dark Side of Chocolate\* DVD](#)
- [Victory in Seattle](#)
- [Solidarity with Workers in Bangladesh](#)
- [Presente Collection Available for Exhibit](#)
- [We're Hiring: Development and Communications Manager](#)

### Introducing ILRF's New Executive Director Judy Gearhart

This year ILRF is welcoming a new Executive Director to the organization, Judy Gearhart!

*Dear ILRF Colleagues,*



*Democracy, Social Justice, Human Development. These core principles that move progressive politics are all direct outcomes of labor rights: living wages, non-discrimination, safe workplaces, and, most importantly, the rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining. No justice without fair pay, no development without rising incomes, and no democracy without participation in corporate decision-making.*

*Some argue that respect for labor rights is a consequence of development or democratic institutions. I am convinced that it is the other way around: labor rights are the corner stones of progress. Labor rights come first. ILRF through its staff, board, and network of partners all over the world has a proud history of reminding governments and corporations of the priority of labor rights. **I am deeply honored to have the opportunity to continue this mission as the incoming director of ILRF.***

[Click here](#) to view the rest of Judy's letter to ILRF's community.

[Back to top](#)

## Remember the Triangle Fire: Join with ILRF and Organize your Own Event

March 25, 2011 will be a remarkable day of remembering the past and rededicating ourselves to current labor struggles in communities across the country. This is the day we commemorate the centennial of the horrific Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire in New York City.

Here's how you can get involved:

- [Organize a day of remembrance and dedication in your own community!](#) [Click here for a list of creative "Not One More Fire" activities for you to adapt.](#) Email [organize@sweatfree.org](mailto:organize@sweatfree.org) to let us know what you're planning
- [Take part in events March 23-25 in New York City organized by ILRF](#) to celebrate the organizing sparked by the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire, recognize recent achievements, and to get active in current campaigns.
- ILRF and SweatFree Communities are part of the [Remember the Triangle Fire Coalition](#) which has an excellent website that provides a calendar of Triangle-related activities in New York City and around the nation.
- Stay tuned for an announcement next week that ILRF will make in regards to a special event we will be hosting in Washington, DC in early April.

[Back to top](#)

## Thank You for Your Support in 2010!

Our end of the year appeal in 2010 was a great success with **\$19,184** raised so far! We signed up **12 new sustainers** who are giving on a quarterly or monthly basis. These sustainers account for almost **25%** of our total raised and their continuous donations will help us plan more strategically and save on administrative costs. Thanks everyone for your support!

Thank you to the sponsors who made possible the National SweatFree Summit: Catholic Relief Services, Change to Win, Equal Exchange, Ethix Merch, Justice Clothing, Maggie's Organics, Marigold Fair Trade, Milwaukee Clean Clothes Campaign, New York Metropolitan Area Joint Board, Workers United / SEIU, NYSUT: A Union of Professionals, Presbyterian Hunger Program, Traditions Fair Trade, Unionwear, United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries, Workers United Puerto Rico, and The Working World.

Our gratitude for the foundations that provided grants to sustain our work: Debley Fund, Eleanor Humes Haney Fund, Equal Exchange, General Service Foundation, Humanity United, Moriah Fund, Neighbors in Need, Norman Foundation, Open Society Institute, Presbyterian Hunger Program, United Methodist General Board of Church and Ministries, and Woodbury Fund. Other support comes from labor unions such as the American Federation of Teachers.

**Still have not gotten around to making a contribution?** [Donate here](#) or send a check to ILRF, 1634 I St. NW, Suite 1001, Washington, DC 20006.

[Back to top](#)

Order your *Dark Side of Chocolate* DVD

Before you pick up chocolate kisses and other treats for your loved one this Valentine's Day, check out ILRF's suggestions for how to [take action to stop forced, trafficked and child labor in the cocoa industry](#). From now until



Valentine's Day, **we are asking concerned consumers to send Valentines to Hershey CEO David J. West calling on Hershey to use Fair Trade Certified cocoa**. This is a great activity for gatherings of friends and family or community, faith, union and school groups! Full details and instructions are [online here](#).

You can also [order a copy of the new documentary about trafficked child labor in the cocoa industry, \*The Dark Side of Chocolate\*](#), for only \$6 and host a screening in your community. ILRF and our campaign allies are especially encouraging supporters to host screenings as part of a national week of action leading up to Valentine's Day from February 4-14, 2011 – [click here for details](#). Together we can show Hershey that we do not want our Valentine's Day gifts to come at the expense of worker rights globally!

[Back to top](#)

### **Victory in Seattle!**

Just in time for our National SweatFree Summit 2010, the City of Seattle joined the [Sweatfree Purchasing Consortium](#). Leading up to this victory, SweatFree WA worked for over two years to educate and call for the City to use its purchasing power to promote workers' rights wherever the city does business. Advocacy by the Washington Fair Trade Coalition, the Martin Luther King County Labor Council, the Seattle Women's Commission, and others led to the Seattle City Council unanimously approving a Statement of Legislative Intent to develop a sweatfree policy for Seattle. This effort was championed by Councilmembers Nick Licata and Tom Rasmussen and advanced by the strong leadership and vision of Nancy Locke, Purchasing Director for the City of Seattle. Next SweatFree WA is bringing the campaign to the state level!

In addition to Seattle, University City (Missouri), Berkeley (California), and Olympia (Washington) all joined the Sweatfree Purchasing Consortium recently, bringing its membership to fourteen. The Consortium is busy developing a supply chain database and setting up its internal organizational structure—not headline news, but good work.

Can you help us meet our goal of doubling the membership by the end of 2011? Contact Liana at [liana@sweatfree.org](mailto:liana@sweatfree.org) or 413-586-0974 to discuss organizing in your community.

[Back to top](#)

### **Solidarity with Workers in Bangladesh**

Garment workers and organizers are facing incredibly hard times in Bangladesh. Wages are abominably low. Health and safety standards are abysmally poor. On December 14th, a [preventable fire ravaged a factory supplying to JC Penney and others](#).

The Bangladesh Center for Worker Solidarity has a history of struggling to make improvements in the industry, but now its leaders



are facing falsified criminal charges and the organization is not permitted to operate. SweatFree Communities' new report, [Enemies of the Nation or Human Rights Defenders? Fighting Poverty Wages in Bangladesh](#) chronicles the negative actions of Bangladeshi government agencies, police, and security forces in cooperation with at least two major Bangladeshi garment factory groups that produce for several large international brands and retailers.

Take action:

- \* [Send a letter in support of the Bangladeshi labor leaders who face fabricated criminal charges.](#)
- \* [Sign up to take action at your local JC Penney store.](#)

[Back to top](#)

### Presente Collection Available for Exhibit

[Janet Essley's collection of 20 garment worker paintings](#) is available for exhibit in your community in 2011. Consider displaying the paintings at a local gallery, university, high school, union hall, church, community center, or other venue to raise awareness about sweatshops. You'll just need to provide the postage to get the paintings to your city. To learn more, contact [organize@sweatfree.org](mailto:organize@sweatfree.org).

[Back to top](#)

### We're Hiring: Development and Communications Manager

Want to work for a passionate and committed nonprofit like ILRF? ILRF has a current opening for a [Development and Communications Manager](#) as well as a variety of internships. You can [stay up to date with the latest openings](#) by checking the ILRF website.

[Back to top](#)

