

The Peggy Browning Fund

Educating Law Students on the Rights and Needs of Workers

Joseph Lurie, President

Mary Anne Moffa, Executive Director

Long-Term Impact of Fellowships Surges

PBF Alumni Network Grows in Influence

Fellowship experience boosts young lawyers to key positions in the labor movement

Danielle LeClair was a Peggy Browning Fellow in the summer of 2006, when she worked in the Legal Department of AFSCME in Washington, DC. Today she is a Federal Sector Representative at the Laborers' International Union of North American (LIUNA).

Speaking to an audience gathered in June to honor esteemed attorney George Murphy, Danielle enthusiastically described how she and so many of our other alumni are now working for the labor movement. They fight every day to protect and enhance workers' rights.

Being a Peggy Browning Fellow opened up phenomenal opportunities for Danielle and for many others. She inspired the audience with example

"I learned more in that summer than I probably did my entire first year in law school. It was a terrific way to spend a summer!"

- Leah Ford

after example of how our alumni are part of a large and growing movement. Her theme: "We're everywhere. We're not going away. We're committed and we're giving back to our communities."

Danielle is not the only one of our alumni who is now working in a key position in the labor movement.

Leah Ford considers herself lucky. When she was a first year law student, her labor law professor told her about the Peggy Browning Fund.

Today Leah is an Associate General Counsel at the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. She's also the newest member of the Peggy Browning Fund's Board of Directors.

At her urging, the Teamsters have been participating in our fellowship program for several years. In addition to her other duties, Leah recruits law students for the Teamsters Legal Department. She quickly learned that finding good law clerks is not easy.

"We were getting loads of applications from good law students, but they weren't really interested in the labor



Danielle LeClair

movement. They weren't interested in unions. They didn't know what we did.

"Since we joined the Fund, we now receive so many applications from incredible students from all over the country – students interested in labor law, who understand what we do, who know why they want to work with us.

"We've hired some really great people, all of whom have since gone on to get jobs in the labor movement somehow, whether in a union-side law firm, an international union, or the NLRB. It's been terrific!"

Students Build Winning Campaigns At Tenth Annual Conference

On a perfect October afternoon, many a student's idea of the perfect activity is attending a football game. Not these law students – they spent the afternoon exploring alternative legal



Conference attendees work on plan.

strategies for organizing workers.

Building on concepts they had discussed in earlier sessions, students at the National Law Students' Workers Rights Conference worked on innovative approaches to growing a stronger labor movement.

The event brought together 175 law students and mentors from schools throughout the nation and from all quarters of the labor movement. Some students were just beginning to learn about the issues, and some had been active union members for 20 years or more before going to law school.

All had one thing in common – the desire to use their talents to fight for social and economic justice.



Keynote Speaker Ed Ott (center), Executive Director of the New York City Central Labor Council, with PBF Board members Dennis Walsh (left) and Joe Lurie.

Peggy Browning Award Presented to George Murphy

Why Has The Peggy Browning Fund Been Such a Success?

Stalwart Union Lawyer Reflects, Inspires, Exhorts

I'm convinced that what we did eleven years ago, when a group of us led by Joe Lurie set up the Fund, was absolutely the right thing to do.

At that time, what we did was in memory of Peggy. We had to do something to relieve our own grief at losing such a wonderful, wonderful person.

So we got together and decided we'd have to do something in Peggy's name.

Now I've been involved in a lot of those in my lifetime. We all started with good reasons. Then after a couple of meetings and maybe one fundraiser it all falls off, nobody's interested, and it just dies. In this case, it didn't. And I got to thinking the other day, "Why didn't it?"

I've concluded that it's a number of reasons. **Joe was one of the reasons.** He was not going to let this go. He was going to make something out of this. And then it was all of **Peggy's friends** (I happened to be one), who are on the **Board of Directors** or the **Advisory**

Board. We decided we were going to raise money to fund this.

And thirdly, **it was the mission**, the idea that somebody came up with. I don't know who it was, maybe we all came up with it together – putting together a program where we could take young people who wanted to work in public service or who wanted to do something for their fellow man and woman, and helping them along the way. Maybe that was the reason.

The main reason was people like you and the people you represent – the unions you work for, the companies you work for, even the people at the NLRB and in other government agencies, who donate their own money or help us get money by getting the various unions to contribute.

You are the people who kept this going ... And I thank you and I hope you will continue to do that. **Because more than ever we need people like Danielle LeClair and the other Peggy Browning Fellows.** **Because I have**



George Murphy accepted the Peggy Browning Award in June 2008. His remarks are excerpted here.

a feeling, in my gut, I have a feeling that times are changing, things are going to get better!

We're going to look to that day when we get some kind of labor law reform. We're going to look to the day when non-union companies are not going to be able to threaten and coerce their employees when they seek to organize into a union. That day is coming. And we need all the help we can get to take full advantage of that.

Started as a Memorial, Fund Sparks a Movement

Why I Chose to Establish The Peggy Browning Fund

Founder Asks, "How can we attract law students to the labor movement?"

Dozens of times each year, before audiences large and small, Joe Lurie recounts how the Peggy Browning Fund got its start. At first, he explains, "it was to be a memorial to my wife Peggy, the brilliant, extraordinary, courageous woman whom many of you knew.

"Peggy was a staunch union-side labor lawyer, a determined supporter of economic and social justice. Until she died, she worked as a Member of the National Labor Relations Board, fighting for workers' rights."

"When she passed away," Joe explains, "I thought it was important for her spirit and her mission to continue. Through the Peggy Browning Fund and supporters like you, it certainly has."

Joe's initial purpose was to keep

Peggy's memory alive, but over the years the Peggy Browning Fund has taken on a life of its own.

He elaborates: "We are the prime organization in the country that educates law students about the rights and needs of workers.

"Your leadership is beginning to affect the entire labor law profession in the U.S. in a very positive way."

**- Paul Whitehead,
General Counsel, USW**

"Our message to law students is simple: Worker rights are civil rights. The labor movement needs you. By working for economic and social justice, you can have a viable career in an honorable profession. You can make a lasting difference in the lives of working people."

Joe was deservedly proud this summer when the United Steelworkers sent a significant contribution to the Fund. USW General Counsel Paul Whitehead enclosed a note saying the gift is "in support of the many wonderful things being done by the Peggy Browning Fund. Your leadership is beginning to affect the entire labor law profession in a U.S. in a very positive way."

Summer Spent Working at Teamsters Helps Both Student & Union

Peggy Browning Fellow honed skills while contributing to the labor movement

I recall walking into my office on the first day of the job, looking out the giant picture window at the Teamsters headquarters and seeing the giant dome of the United States Capitol directly across the street. At this moment, I knew that I had made the absolute right decision in choosing to be a Peggy Browning Fellow this summer.

A Quick Start

My work began almost instantly. I was called upon to research a traditional labor law issue and draft a memo for my supervising attorney. When I handed in my memo later that week I felt great because I knew it was on point and my research would be used for something good.

Later, I had more difficult assignments, some that required weeks of research. At times I'd pore over documents for weeks, trying to catch a major employer in an act that would put him back on the hook for ripping off his employees. Other times I'd draft simple labor law briefs which brought my law school labor law classes into much sharper focus.

Some of my projects included researching and drafting briefs on traditional NLRA issues such as: ULP litigation, Board remedies, common situs disputes, picket line extension, and representation elections. Some of the work shifted toward employment law, something I was quite interested in learning. I researched and drafted briefs

on employment law issues including retiree benefits (ERISA), wage and hour disputes, and vacation benefits under various state statutes.

Every research and writing skill that I had ever learned was put to the test and improved over the course of my summer.

A Close-Knit Office

The office was close-knit, which surprised me because I always pictured working at an international union headquarters to be impersonal and overwhelming.

I was fortunate enough to work closely with my supervising attorneys, the other law clerk (who became one of my best friends of the summer) as well as the general counsel (who turned out to be a native Detroitter and a Tigers fan).

The work I did made me feel good about my employment when I went home at the end of the day. I worked closely with the attorneys on their projects and I knew exactly how the work I was doing was going to help the overall larger goal.

Making a Difference

I'm confident the work I did was actually beneficial to Teamster Locals, individual employees, and the International Union as a whole. I also got involved in some of the long term strategies of the Teamster Union.



Peggy Browning Fellows Chris Schneider (l) and Julie Polakoski (r) with Teamsters President Jim Hoffa. During their fellowships in the Teamsters Legal Department, the students participated in a conference in the Senate Office Building to promote the introduction of the Trade Reform, Accountability, Development and Employment (TRADE) Act.

I helped prepare long-term lobbying strategies for the Teamster lobbyists. I met the movers and shakers in the Teamster organization and the labor movement as a whole. I sat in on press conferences with US Senators calling for labor reform.

The entire experience has been amazing and wonderful in a number of ways. Today, I have an understanding of labor law and its relations to other laws in a much more intrinsic way.

I now have the confidence to apply for jobs in the labor field that might not have been available to me. I know that the cachet of the Peggy Browning Fellowship and the Teamster name will open doors for me that might not be available to most students trying to break into the labor law field.

Upcoming Events – Mark Your Calendars

Watch our website for details.

January 15, 2009 – **Application Deadline** for 2009 Peggy Browning Fund Fellowship Program.

January 28, 2009 – PBF will honor **Chris Shelton**, Vice President of CWA District 1, and labor lawyer **Gwynne A. Wilcox**, Esq. of Levy Ratner, P.C., in New York, NY.

March 19, 2009 – PBF will honor **Anna Burger**, Chairperson of Change to Win and International Secretary-Treasurer of SEIU, in Philadelphia, PA.

New Board Members Named

Added to the Board of Directors in 2008:

- Leah Ford, Esq., Associate General Counsel, International Brotherhood of Teamsters; former Peggy Browning Fellow.



Peggy Browning Fund Board Members Joe Lurie and Leah Ford

Recent additions to our Advisory Board:

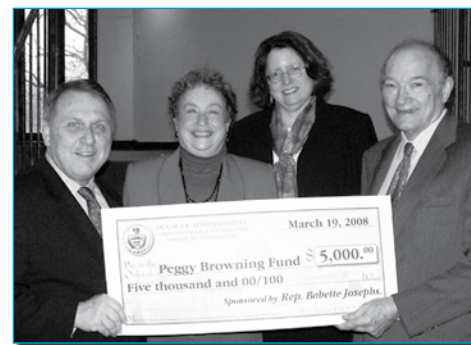
- Michael Artz, Esq., Associate General Counsel, AFSCME; former Peggy Browning Fellow.
- Danielle LeClair, Esq., Federal Sector Representative, LIUNA; former Peggy Browning Fellow.
- Jessica Drangel Ochs, Esq., Associate General Counsel, UNITE HERE
- Jason Valtos, Esq., Osborne Law Offices, P.C., former Peggy Browning Fellow.

The quality of the applicant pool is truly impressive – much better than the applicants we receive through other avenues.

**- Hillary Ronen, Esq.,
La Raza Centro Legal**

“Where will the new generation of Teamster leaders come from? Most importantly, where will the lawyers come from? That’s where the Peggy Browning Fund comes in.”

**- Teamster President Jim Hoffa,
honored by the Fund in
Philadelphia in March 2008.**



PA State Representative Babette Josephs presents a \$5,000 grant award from the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) to PBF President Joe Lurie. Also pictured: Teamsters President Jim Hoffa (left) and PBF Executive Director Mary Anne Moffa (second from right). The grant supported a fellowship at Community Legal Services in Philadelphia. With the help of State Representative Tony Payton, we also received a \$5,000 DCED grant to support a fellowship at Friends of Farmworkers.



Some of this year’s Peggy Browning Fellows, along with mentors Pat Szymanski (back row, 4th from left) and Craig Rosenbaum (front, right).

“Without the union movement there would be no middle class. Working people need a union. Working people want a union. I salute all of you who are advocates for working people!”

**- Ida Torres,
President of Local 3 United Storeworkers
Honored by the Fund in
New York in January 2008.**



Honorees Seymour Waldman, Esq. (left) and Ida Torres, President of Local 3 United Storeworkers RWDSU, with PBF Advisory Board Member Eugene Eisner, Esq.



Recent honoree George Murphy, Esq. and AFL-CIO President John Sweeney

The official registration and financial information of The Peggy Browning Fund may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

tel 215-665-6815 • www.peggybrowningfund.org • fax 215-564-2262