

The Peggy Browning Fund Newsletter

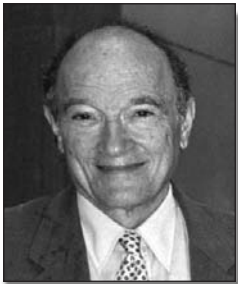
Educating Law Students on the Rights and Needs of Workers

December 2007

Joseph Lurie, President

Mary Anne Moffa, Executive Director

President's Message



Joe Lurie
PBF President

This year we celebrated our tenth anniversary. In ten years we have grown from a possibility into an institution, playing a vital role in educating law students on the rights and needs of workers, encouraging the next generation of activist public interest labor and employment lawyers, and honoring labor leaders and union-side labor lawyers who have made life-long contributions advancing the economic and social rights of all of us.

We are a success! There are so many who have contributed to our achievements who deserve our thanks. I would like to begin by thanking all of you who dug into your pockets to support us. Your support not only has helped us serve our mission but also has helped us access many more opportunities for law students to work for economic and social justice.

Because of supporters like you, many Peggy Browning Fellows are now working as lawyers for the National Labor Relations Board, labor unions, union-side law firms, and worker centers. Because of supporters like you, we have reached over a thousand law students through our National Law Students Worker's Rights Conferences.

When I conceived of the establishment of the Fund, I discussed the idea with the AFL-CIO. The support of the AFL-CIO and many of its member unions encouraged us to move forward. We thank the AFL-CIO.

From the outset, the unions that now form Change to Win have been ardent supporters. They continue to support us. We thank Change to Win.

Special thanks are due to our Board of Directors and our Advisory Board. A remarkable group of people, too many to name here, but visit our website to see who they are. Great people, great ideas and great support.

Throughout our history, volunteers have been integral to our success in so many ways – by offering advice and feedback, by raising funds, by mentoring our students, by helping us organize and run events, by facilitating workshops at our annual conferences, by reaching out on our behalf. We thank our many outstanding volunteers.

Perhaps most important, we thank the law students who have served as Peggy Browning Fellows. Eager to work, they have provided mentor organizations with resourceful young talent. Through their advocacy, Peggy Browning Fellows have worked to change the lives of working men and women. Talented and dedicated young people who could work at large firms earning four or five times what we pay, they are dedicated instead to sacrifice by working for economic and social justice.

We look forward to the next ten years of growth and service. We continually receive requests from prospective mentor organizations eager to become part of our program. Several hundred law students apply for our fellowships and conference opportunities each year.

As our Board of Directors meets during the coming months to plan for the future, we will have to make some hard choices about where to direct resources. We are completely debt free and we intend to stay that way, yet we have huge commitments to meet.

We are proud of what we have accomplished. If you believe our cause is justified, if you believe in what we are doing, then please continue supporting us. Don't wait until later, when you'll be busy with your other important commitments. You can make your tax-deductible contribution now online at www.peggybrowningfund.com/donations.html or you can mail your check using the enclosed envelope. Either way, I promise your support will make a difference.

Upcoming Events – Mark Your Calendars

Watch our website for details.

January 15, 2008 – Application Deadline for 2008 Peggy Browning Fund Fellowship Program.

January 30, 2008 – PBF will honor **Ida Torres**, President of Local 3 United Storeworkers RWDSU/UFCW, and labor lawyer **Seymour M. Waldman, Esq.**, of Vladeck, Waldman, Elias & Engelhard, P.C., in New York, NY.

March 19, 2008 – PBF will honor **James P. Hoffa**, General President, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, in Philadelphia, PA.

Ninth Annual National Law Students Workers' Rights Conference

by Dennis P. Walsh, Member, NLRB and Secretary, PBF

Law students from around the country gathered with practitioners, government officials, and academic experts to discuss, debate, and ponder cutting-edge issues facing American workers at the National Law Students Workers' Rights Conference on October 19-20, 2007 at the National Labor College.

The conference kicked off with a wrap-up session for this year's Peggy Browning Summer Fellows and their Mentors. Most of the 40 Fellows from 2007, along with representatives from some of their mentor organizations, spent Friday afternoon discussing their fellowship experiences with several Members of the Peggy Browning Fund's Board of Directors. This included a stimulating dialogue about how this new generation of advocates can contribute to the labor movement and the movement for social and economic justice and workplace democracy.

A highlight of this year's conference was a networking reception and dinner on Friday night for all the conference participants, over 140 law students, followed by a showing of the documentary *Morristown: in the air and sun*. The film, set in Morristown, Tennessee, interior Mexico, and Ciudad Juarez, explores issues of factory flight from the U.S. to Mexico, and looks at the economic forces that cause worker immigration from Mexico to the U.S. It examines these issues from the viewpoint of the workers who have lost their factory jobs in Tennessee and the workers who have crossed the border from Mexico and traveled to Tennessee to work in the agricultural fields and the poultry plants. It also features union organizing campaigns on both sides of the border and ends with a stunning union victory at a poultry processing plant in Morristown.

The filmmaker, Anne Lewis, and former University of Tennessee law professor Fran Ansley, who also contributed to the making of the film, led a post-screening discussion about the issues raised by the documentary. The students provided a variety of insights on the issues of immigration, racism, globalization, and the difficulties of organizing workers in today's political climate.

Saturday's program began with opening remarks by Peggy Browning Fund President Joe Lurie, who quoted from President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's 1944 State of the Union message, which has become known as the "Second Bill of Rights," an inspirational talk in which FDR set forth a list of rights including:

- "The right to a useful and remunerative job in the industries or shops or farms or mines of the nation;
- The right to earn enough to provide adequate food and clothing and recreation;...
- The right to adequate medical care and the opportunity to achieve and enjoy good health; (and)
- The right to adequate protection from the economic fears of old age, sickness, accident, and unemployment."

All the students had the opportunity to participate in the workshops of their choosing. These workshops were interactive discussions and brainstorming sessions led by prominent practitioners, academics, and government officials such as Marley S. Weiss, Professor of Law at the University of Maryland; Nancy Schiffer, Associate General Counsel, AFL-CIO; David Prouty, General Counsel, UNITE HERE; Yanira Merino, Immigration Coordinator, Laborers International Union of North America; Dennis P. Walsh, Member, National Labor Relations Board (NLRB); Sarah Fox, former Member of the NLRB; and Jeff Fannell, Assistant General Counsel, Major League Baseball Players Association, among many others.

The workshops on *Protecting the Workplace Rights of Immigrant Workers* and *Labor Rights in the Global Economy* were particularly popular and provided the students with the opportunity both to learn about and to debate topics which are at the forefront of the workers' rights agenda.

A workshop on *Changing Capital Markets, the Growing Power of Financial Elites and the Impact on Workers* was organized by Damon A. Silvers, Associate General Counsel, AFL-CIO, an authority on the use of capital and corporate



All Photos by MAM unless otherwise noted.

strategies for the benefit of workers. A variety of practitioners, including lawyers practicing in the government, in union-side law firms, in-house at unions, and in a class-action law firm specializing in securities litigation on behalf of workers and their benefit funds, gave the students their varied and unique perspectives on the practice of public interest labor law at a workshop on *The Rewards of Labor Law Practice*.

Lawyers and organizers who are at the forefront of innovative organizing techniques led spirited and informative discussions about the challenges of organizing in the current legal and political environment in the workshop *The Changing Role of Lawyers in Union Organizing*. A current and a former Member of the National Labor Relations Board gave an overview of traditional labor law to the uninitiated in a workshop entitled *Introduction to Basic Labor Law*.

The Conference wrapped up on Saturday with closing remarks from two members of its organizing committee, Dennis P. Walsh, Secretary of the Fund, and Professor Marley S. Weiss, Professor of Law at the University of Maryland and a

Member of the Fund's Advisory Board.

For the past nine years, the Conference has provided law students from all over the country with a unique opportunity to gain insight into the issues of economic and social justice for workers, while networking with their colleagues and with prominent practitioners and academics in the field. In the process, many are inspired to take up a career advocating for workers' rights, while others take the knowledge and understanding of the rights and needs of workers they have gained into other careers. For one weekend in October, the George Meany Campus of the National Labor College is turned into a hotbed of discussion and debate on how best to achieve workplace justice and democracy, in an inspirational gathering of the workplace advocates of the future.

The Ninth Annual National Law Students Workers' Rights Conference was truly an inspiration to all the law students, and also inspired the workshop facilitators, Peggy Browning Fund Board Members, and Conference organizers to continue building the Fund as an incubator of legal talent to serve the cause of social and economic justice for workers.

Alumni News

A draft version of the long-awaited Alumni Directory has been circulated and will be formally issued to all alumni in January 2008. Updates have been pouring in and will be posted on our website. We're sure you'll be impressed with the work our alumni have been doing. Meanwhile, we recently had a successful get-together for Washington, DC-area Peggy Browning alumni and hope to duplicate that elsewhere. Anyone interested in helping to organize these events, email jvaltos@osbornelaw.com or mmoffa@peggybrowningfund.org.

Visit www.peggybrowningfund.org/alumni.html for more information.



Joe Lurie with honoree John Sweeney, President of the AFL-CIO, in Philadelphia, March, 2007.

Terry O'Sullivan, General President of LIUNA, accepting the Peggy Browning Award in New York in January.



Mary K. O'Melveny, General Counsel of the CWA, shown here with Dennis P. Walsh, was honored in Washington, DC in June.

Photo by Shane Van Eitzen



Patrick W. Flynn (left), Secretary-Treasurer of Teamsters Local 710, and labor lawyer Charles Orlove (right), were honored in Chicago in November.



Photo by Shane Van Eitzen



Labor lawyer Tom Kennedy, whom we also honored in New York last January, is shown here with two of our Summer Fellows

The Peggy Browning Fund

1818 Market Street, Suite 2300
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Peggy Browning Fellows: Focused High-Achievers

by Elizabeth Schumacher, Former Assistant Director, PBF

This was the tenth year of our Fellowship Program and we were pleased to offer forty fellowships to an amazing group of law students. The 2007 Peggy Browning Fellows display high academic achievement and a passionate dedication to social and economic justice.

These students are mold breakers. They hold degrees in Labor and Industrial Relations, Latin American Studies, South Asian Studies, Linguistics, Philosophy, Labor Economics, Chemistry, Biology, Health Policy, Cultural Anthropology, Human Resources, History, and Psychology. Among them, they speak twelve languages: Spanish, Hebrew, Arabic, German, Turkish, Russian, Punjabi, Hindi, Portuguese, English, Thai, and French.

Their backgrounds include work at organizations dedicated to immigrant rights, women's rights, low-income legal services for families and employees, low-income housing, health care policy reform, biomedical ethics, developmentally

and physically disabled people, legal aid for people living with AIDS, and protection of the environment.

Some were former organizers for professional musicians, healthcare workers, mushroom farmers, migrant workers, hotel and service employees, teachers, reporters, farmworkers, and laundry workers. They have experiences working for or being a union member at SEIU, UNITE HERE, UAW, AFT, CWA, UHW, and SPFPA.

These students have worked on the floor, in the fields, in organizing drives, as union representatives, in legal and finance departments and for union-side labor law firms. They have studied the social, political, and economic barriers that labor faces and they are eager to help the movement. We welcome their optimism and enthusiasm in the fight to protect working families and hope that their experience as a Peggy Browning Fellow will provide a crucial stepping-stone towards a career in public interest labor law.

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.

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