

The Peggy Browning Fund

Educating Law Students on the Rights and Needs of Workers

Joseph Lurie, President

Mary Anne Moffa, Executive Director

My Summer in the Struggle One Peggy Browning Fellow's Experience

The War Room at UNITE HERE Local 2 in San Francisco is covered in butcher paper of airport maps that look like ancient pyramid schemes. The room was filled with fearless, dedicated warriors for justice. We were saying goodbye to the Hyatt housekeepers who were returning to work following a six-week leave of absence.

The five ladies are immigrant workers from the Philippines, China and Latin America. They do the impossible everyday, like cleaning up to 20 rooms and lifting 100-pound mattresses. Hyatt insists they do this without the proper tools, like fitted sheets and mops.

Their bodies suffer from the wear and tear of this grueling labor. But Local 2 is fighting back! They are helping these workers get up off their knees and become worker leaders who are speaking out and publicizing the fight for fair working conditions at the Hyatt nationwide. One of my proudest



Sonya Z. Mehta

moments during my fellowship was connecting them to community organizations to help them win support for the Hyatt boycott and tell everyone the real story.

Throughout the summer, we were in negotiations with the San Francisco Hyatt. The contract with the workers' union expired on August 14, 2009. Hyatt nationwide is engaging in many anti-worker measures. They fired 100 room cleaners, who had worked at the Boston Hyatt for 30 years, and replaced them with those from their 'Guest Worker Program'. They turned on the heat blowers, normally used in the winter, against their Chicago



Photo by: David Bacon

Over 700 hotel workers in San Francisco picketed and boycotted the Palace Hotel before joining thousands of workers in a march in solidarity with workers in Wisconsin and around the country.

hotel workers walking the picket line in 100+ degree temperatures.

Negotiations were like a snapshot of class relations. On one side were the Hyatt's lawyers, dressed in expensive suits and shoes, working hard to convince us that they had no power. On the other side were 30 hotel workers from the union negotiating committee. Our side of the table felt potent with the strength of numbers and conviction.

I accompanied the hotel cleaners to the state capital, Sacramento, to lobby for mops and fitted sheets. These women were eloquent and forceful. It

was a privilege to walk the halls of power with these brave fighters and advocate to the Assembly. In addition, I walked several picket lines. The biggest action was 1,000 people in the street protesting the Hyatt on Union Square. 100 were arrested and I assisted in collecting citations at the police station.

Working at Local 2 was an incredible experience. It is a strong coalition of rank and file, young people, religious leaders, and policy advocates. This summer, they added a law student to their community!

– Sonya Z. Mehta, PBF 2011

“Every morning I walked under the big sign at Local 2 that says ‘Unite Here for Justice’. This fellowship embodied that rallying cry. I am now better equipped for the fight for social and economic equality, and in solidarity with the family of sisters and brothers leading the way.”

– Sonya Z. Mehta, PBF 2011



Margaret A. (Peggy) Browning

A Beacon for Workers' Rights

Our namesake was, by all accounts, an exceptional person whose life and qualities left their mark upon the legal community and on the national scene. Born in Tennessee and educated at Swarthmore and the University of Pennsylvania Law School, Peggy was a creative and dynamic attorney.

While her name could have graced the masthead of any mega law firm, she chose to devote her energies to workers' rights. In her defense of workers' interests, she never lost a case in the Third Circuit Court of Appeals. Peggy was tirelessly focused on issues such as union representation, fair and equal pay and decent working conditions.

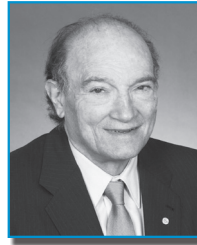
Her achievements strongly justified President Clinton's nomination of her as the first union-side lawyer in history to be appointed to the National Labor Relations Board.

The Peggy Browning Award is presented annually to social justice champions who have distinguished themselves with passion and dedication to the rights and needs of workers and their families.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Peggy Browning Fund educates and inspires the next generation of advocates for workplace justice. Through fellowships, workers' rights conferences, networking and other programs, the PBF provides unique opportunities for law students to work for economic and social justice.

Summer Fellow Reports Reinforce Our Mission



Thousands Served – Need Predicted! *Joseph Lurie, President*

Greetings to our Fellows, Alumni, Mentors, Supporters and Friends.

Fall at the Peggy Browning Fund means all-hands-on-deck as we finalize the Summer Fellowship Program and prepare for our National Law Students Workers' Rights Conference. This is the time of year I especially enjoy because I have the opportunity to read what each Fellow has written about their summer experience and what each Mentor has reported about their supervision.

As a requirement of accepting a fellowship, each student agrees to submit a detailed 'feedback report' describing their assigned tasks and work experience. Each mentor similarly agrees to submit a student and program evaluation. This process culminates in an oral presentation at the Luncheon and Wrap-Up Session preceding our National Conference.

Through their reports and presentations, we are able to evaluate the success of our programs. I also make calls to various fellows over the summer to see how they were progressing. Our Fellows were enthusiastic,

dedicated and were directly involved in meaningful assignments. Our mentor organizations reported their Fellows were bright, passionate and were greatly needed to assist in protecting the rights of thousands of workers around the country.

In such an important year for the labor movement, I'm proud to be able to share with you that the 2011 class of Peggy Browning Fellows was a resounding success! You can read excerpts of some of our Fellows' experiences in this issue of our newsletter.

In a few weeks, we will begin preparations for the Class of 2012. We already know the demand for more of our Fellows has increased. Along with the joy of knowing the program is working well, comes the pressure to raise more funds. **Please consider making a gift using the enclosed envelope in the center. Another fellowship added means another fighter for workers' rights!**

My thanks to you for your continued support.

In solidarity,



Alumni Connections

PBF Alumni Meet to Increase Opportunities to Stay Connected

This summer, the Alumni Connections Committee formed and held its first meeting in Washington, DC. On the agenda were discussions on increasing outreach to former Peggy Browning Fellows and a plan for several programs to take place in the coming months to connect alumni with each other, PBF's leadership and management, current Fellows and prospective employers.

Michael L Artz, *PBF 2000* and chair of the committee announced

that in the coming months the committee is planning networking events, a revamped Facebook page, a mentor program, and a Fellow/Alumni Network area on the new website. The goal is to start with a networking opportunity in Washington, DC after the national conference. Joining Michael on the committee are **Andrea DiBitetto, PBF '06**, **Danielle LeClair, PBF '06** and **Jessica Drangel Ochs**, PBF Advisory Board member.

Students Return to Annual Conference

With Gratitude and Solidarity

"I'm not sure how you can top last year, but I'm confident you'll think of something." So wrote Georganna Ekpo, a third-year law student from Washington University School of Law in St. Louis, when she emailed her registration for our 13th annual National Law Students Workers' Rights Conference.

Georganna is just one of a number of students who are returning to our conference on October 14 and 15. She's looking forward to the chance to reunite with other students with whom she collaborated during the summer as they advocated for worker rights.

Many of this year's students have been active in worker rights causes in their local communities. They are especially looking forward to the conference's opening session on Friday evening, a panel discussion on *The Battle for Collective Bargaining: Wisconsin & Beyond*. This panel discussion will be moderated by Pat Szymanski, General Counsel of Change to Win. Panelists will include A.J. Stokes, Director of We Are Ohio, Jessica Robinson, Associate

General Counsel of AFSCME and Peter Barca, Rep. 64th District, Wisconsin State Legislature. Their perspectives, from the front lines of these battles, are sure to generate active discussion.

The conference aims to educate law students about workers' rights, galvanize their interest in labor law, help them see that public interest labor law is a vital and viable career, and motivate them to work for social and economic justice.

A new topic this year will be organizing excluded workers. Since substantial segments of the workforce are excluded from coverage under traditional labor laws, there are many legal and practical challenges in advocating for this group.

Georganna signed her message, "With Gratitude and In Solidarity," a sentiment we expect will be shared by other students as they leave this year's conference.

**- Mary Anne Moffa
PBF Executive Director**

YOU can make it possible for more students to become workers' rights advocates!

Simply make a gift using the attached envelope or contact Rhonda Gelman Kelley, CFRE, Director of Development, at 267-273-7994



This summer, Peggy Browning Fellows and Alumni attended a Congressional briefing session on Capitol Hill facilitated by (L to R) Melissa Kiedrowicz, PBF '08 from Rep. Linda Sanchez's office, Michele Varnhagen from the House Education and Workforce Committee, and Danielle LeClair, PBF '06, Federal Sector Representative for LiUNA.

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Conference Sponsors - Listing complete as of 10/7/2011

2011 Peggy Browning Fellows

A Summer of Eye-Opening Experiences

Sarah Arendt, Communications Workers of America, Washington, DC

The most interesting project I worked on this summer involved the use of social media as a communication tool during the CWA strike against Verizon. Many of our members created Facebook pages in support of their striking brothers and sisters. My role was to research any potential liability that workers and the union could incur as a result of Facebook posts. The use of social media in a labor dispute context poses new challenges for this new undeveloped area of the law.

“In my role passing leaflets outside of a Verizon Wireless store in DC, I was tickled to be able to say, ‘I have a constitutional right to be here!’ Standing in solidarity with CWA members was an exhilarating experience.”

- Sarah Arendt
CWA, Washington, DC

Meredith Garry, CLEAN Carwash Campaign, Los Angeles, CA



Meredith Garry

The CLEAN Carwash Campaign has many unique organizing strategies that impressed me. One was when I accompanied ex-carwash worker brigadistas to ‘flash’ organize while dropping off drinking water - workers have no access to drinking water during their shift. The organizers would talk with the workers to access working conditions and pass along information to help them strategize ways to address their concerns.

By meeting a community of like-minded attorneys and law students as a Peggy Browning Fellow, I realize there are many different and exciting ways to contribute to the struggle for workers’ rights.



Photo by: CLEAN Carwash Campaign

A rally for the CLEAN Carwash Campaign at Bonus Car Wash in Los Angeles.

“What I gained from my Peggy Browning Fellowship is a greater appreciation for workers’ rights. I was a member of the team and learned more about the nuances of labor law in two weeks at the Federal Labor Relations Authority than in a semester of labor law.”

- Ellen Berndtson
Federal Labor Relations Authority, Washington, DC

Andrew Kesler, Community Legal Services Employment Unit, Philadelphia, PA

I had a phenomenal summer at Community Legal Services. I experienced a full spectrum of employment-related work and received useful feedback and tremendous support from experienced and well-respected attorneys. I worked directly with clients, analyzed legislation and wrote a variety of legal documents. I felt very fortunate to have every attorney I worked with find the time to discuss my work, highlight my strengths and emphasize areas where I can improve. All of this will benefit me as I move forward in my legal career.



Andrew Kesler

Colleen Normile, The Workplace Project, Hempstead, NY

My goal for my summer fellowship was to learn about the power of organizing in the fight for workers’ rights. While I didn’t see as much organizing as I would have liked, the experience was eye-opening in unexpected ways. It was the transformation process people underwent as they learned that they had rights under the law and those rights could be vindicated. One worker, whose

“Although I enjoyed working in the AFSCME Office of the General Counsel in Washington, DC, I learned that I feel my place is fighting for workers’ rights at the front lines, at the local and state level, rather than advocating for broad policy changes at the national level.”

- Michael Haynes
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, Washington, DC

wages we helped recover, gave one of the most inspiring speeches to the other workers. Though we had done part of the legwork in writing to his employer and setting up a face-to-face negotiation, this worker had ultimately confronted his employer about his low wages and long hours and had prevailed. What struck me most was that even though we didn't need to resort to public action, the workers seemed to gain the tools they needed to resolve the problem themselves.

Devon Oser, IUE-CWA, Dayton, OH

The project that I most enjoyed and benefited from was the first one I was assigned. In less than a week, I helped interview a client for the first time, wrote my first official document to be eventually filed in court, and helped write a document that was filed with the NLRB! Although the task seemed daunting, with the help of my supervising attorney, I was able to complete the work on time and hand him a finished product I now refer to as my writing sample when applying for jobs.



Pat Szymanski, PBF Board member, introduces Fellows to honoree Michael Bearse and his wife, Elli Guisti. (L to R) Raul Garcia, Evan Shanley, Michael, Pat, Elli and Heather Murray.

“As a child, I remember watching ‘School House Rocks – How To Make A Bill’ where a piece of paper sang about how a bill becomes law. This summer gave me a glimpse at how comprehensive that process can be.”



- Jennifer Saint-Preux
NELP, New York

Evan Shanley, LiUNA, Washington, DC

One of the benefits of working for LiUNA was my exposure to the internal structure and operation of an international union. Working at the union's headquarters, the cases were usually final appeals, potentially difficult issues in the early stages of litigation, and suits filed directly against

the international union. Advocating on behalf of workers and unions is more than just a fight for democracy in the workplace. The importance of organized labor to our country and the world extends much further. I will always be grateful for the opportunity to witness and contribute to the cause.

Jesse Stewart, National Labor Relations Board, Region 5

I most enjoyed investigating the Facebook discharge for protective concerted activity case assigned to me, where it was an emerging area of law requiring mandatory submission to the NLRB's General Counsel, Division of Advice. It also involved the issue of whether or not the Region had jurisdiction. I was very lucky to receive a lot of excellent guidance and support from my supervisors, as well as the other attorneys in the Region. I would highly recommend this experience to anyone interested in working for the NLRB or in a career in labor law.

Facts About the Peggy Browning Fund

- 58** Summer Fellowships in 2011 from a pool of 460 applicants
- 124** Participating Law Schools
- 17** Union Mentor Organizations
- 13** Worker Center Mentor Orgs
- 6** Government Agency Mentor Orgs
- 9** Union-Side Law Firm Mentors
- 375** Alumni (Not including 2011 Fellows)
- 101** Alumni Working in Workers' Rights Labor Law
- 20** Alumni Working in Public Interest Law



Photo by: Micah Wissinger

Greg Ainsley leading the march of 400 around the CEO's neighborhood in New York after the workers lost their healthcare benefits.

Washington, DC Reception A Stellar Success!

Good Feeling Throughout was Palpable

As guests arrived to acknowledge the accomplishments and dedication of those being recognized the evening of June 2, 2011, there was no doubt of the love and admiration they shared for Joslyn N. Williams, President of the Metropolitan Washington Council, AFL-CIO; Michael S. Bearse, Esq., General Counsel of the Laborers' International Union of North America and Richard I. Bloch, Esq., arbitrator and mediator. During their acceptance speeches, each honoree spoke passionately about the threat to working families in today's political climate.



(L to R) Michael Bearse, PBF Board Chair Dennis Walsh, Richard Bloch, Joe Lurie, Pat Szymanski and Joslyn Williams.

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IUE-CWA

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Michael Bearse noted that, "With each passing year, the American dream that was a reality for our grandparents, parents and us is disappearing – the expectation that our children and their children will have better opportunities than the generation before them."

Arbitrator and mediator, Richard Bloch stated that productivity is at the heart of the American economy. "At the heart of productivity is people in the labor relations process who understand that the battles between management and labor are between and among folks who know this is not divorce court or common litigation; it is a process that recognizes the reality and necessity of continuing the relationship."

Acknowledgment of the value of the Peggy Browning Fellowship Program was also clear as each addressed the acute need for the next generation of labor lawyers. "**Now more than ever, the work of the Peggy Browning Fund is critical.**" stressed Jos Williams. "Workers and their unions need sharp, committed, knowledgeable individuals to wage war on the legal front. **The great work of the students supported by the Fund is indispensable to our success in saving collective bargaining and workers' power – because the long knives are out for us!**"

"On a personal note, having worked with a number of Peggy Browning Fellows, I can attest to and admire their dedication, diligence and commitment."

- Michael S. Bearse, Esq.
General Counsel, LIUNA

Fellowship Networking Opportunities Expanding

Important To Our Students' Futures!

An important part of the Peggy Browning Fellowship Program, our students rely on networking opportunities to help open doors to meeting union leaders, lawyers and other program supporters who could be helpful and influential in the students' ability to gain employment in the labor movement upon graduation from law school. During their fellowship year, and as alumni, Peggy Browning Fellows are welcome to attend one or all of our Award Receptions in Chicago, New York City, Philadelphia and Washington, DC.

This summer, our Fellows in the Washington, DC area were invited to attend a reception at the union-side law firm of Mehri & Skalet, PLLC. Cyrus Mehri, Esq., a Peggy Browning Fund Advisory Board member, hosted 23 Summer Fellows, fellowship supporters

and donors to an evening reception that was well-received and appreciated by all. Additional receptions are planned in other cities in the coming months and will repeat in DC next summer. Our thanks go out to Cyrus and his firm for their generosity!



(L to R) Norm Gleichman, PBF Advisory Board member, with Lewis Woods, PBF 2011, at the Washington, DC event.



Cyrus Mehri, Esq., PBF Advisory Board member and host of the reception, addresses the group of Summer Fellows and guests.

Leadership Circle

Supports All Programs

The Peggy Browning Fund Leadership Circle was instituted last year as a result of supporter requests to make one annual leadership-level gift that would support all PBF's programs. Leadership Circle donors are recognized at all annual events and the National Conference, on the PBF website and in our newsletter. To see a list of benefits for each leadership level, go to our website at www.peggybrowningfund.org and click to read more on the Leadership Circle section of the home page. To join the Leadership Circle, contact Rhonda Gelman Kelley, CFRE at 267-273-7994, Director of Development and Marketing or rkelley@peggybrowningfund.org.

The Peggy Browning Fund gratefully acknowledges the following annual Leadership Circle donors:

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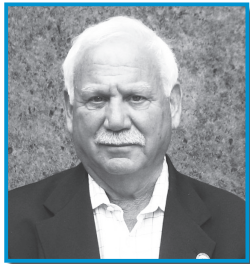
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Join Us As The Peggy Browning Award Is Presented To:



Henry Tamarin
President,
UNITE HERE Local 1



Barbara J. Hillman, Esq.
Cornfield and Feldman

Thursday, November 10, 2011

Teamster City Auditorium
300 S. Ashland Avenue • Chicago, IL

**6:00 pm Networking,
Cocktails & Buffet Dinner**

7:30 pm Awards Presentation

To Register call 267-273-7994. For more information visit www.peggybrowningfund.org/events

Upcoming Events – Mark Your Calendars

Watch our website for details.

- October 14 – 15** – National Law Students Workers' Rights Conference, at the National Labor College in Silver Spring, MD.
- November 10** – Chicago Peggy Browning Awards Reception, honoring: Henry Tamarin, President, Unite Here Local 1 and Barbara J. Hillman, Esq. of Cornfield and Feldman
- January, 2012** – New York Peggy Browning Awards Reception, honoring: Denis M. Hughes, President, New York State AFL-CIO, Vincent F. Pitta, Esq., Managing Partner, Pitta & Giblin LLC, Martin Scheinman, Esq., Arbitrator & Mediator