# Peggy Browning Fund

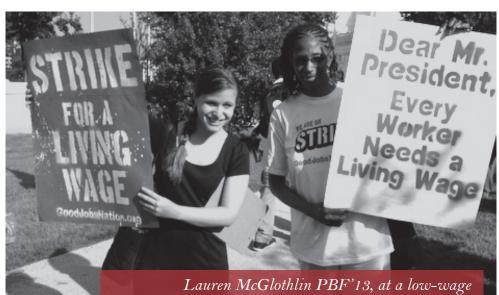
Educating Law Students on the Rights and Needs of Workers

# Summer Fellows Involved In Today's Workers' Issues In the Trenches and Learning First-Hand

his summer, a number of Peggy **L** Browning Fellows were highly visible in actions impacting workers' rights issues from low wages to immigration. A series of one-day strikes by fast-food workers protesting low wages in several cities around the country grabbed the headlines. Similarly, groups of pro-immigrants' rights advocates marched in Los Angeles to protest undocumented deportation, and Peggy Browning Fellows were there. The following is one fellow's story:

As part of my Summer Fellowship at Service Employees International Union (SEIU) in Washington, DC, I was involved in a huge low-wage organizing strike. More than 100 workers employed in various fast food restaurants and retail stores at Union Station went on strike to protest the incredibly low wages they receive from their employers. A press conference was held outside of Union Station, where workers spoke about how they and their families cannot survive on \$8.25 an hour - Washington, DC's current minimum wage.

I was especially struck by one of the speakers who explained that he was forced to drop out of college because his minimum wage job did not pay enough to make it possible for him to afford tuition or secure financial loans. Throughout



organizing strike at Union Station in Washington, DC.

the day, I walked and talked with the workers listening to their stories and chanting powerful messages such as "We can't survive off \$8.25!"

It was inspiring to observe the workers as they took control of their situations to try and improve the quality of life for themselves and their families. The goal is to engage politicians, workers, employers and unions in a dialogue to change the law, provide fairer treatment in the workplace and respect the basic rights and dignity of workers.

Although participating in this strike was only one part of my Summer Fellowship experience, I'm excited to follow the outcome and whether unions will continue to embrace creative ways of organizing non-traditional workers. This part of my summer was an extremely rewarding experience, and I'm grateful to have participated in this opportunity!

> Lauren McGlothlin, PBF'13 **Boston College Law School**

"In addition to actions in support of individual workers, members and organizers of Make the Road New York could show up in sufficient numbers to rallies and press conferences to win the ear of NYC Council members and legislators in Albany. It was that level of power that enabled passage of New York's first Paid Sick Day and Wage Theft Prevention laws." - Greg Baltz, PBF '13



# 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.

# A Message From PBF's Board Chair



As we evaluate the success of this year's National Law Students Workers' Rights Conference, our focus will be on the students who are the beneficiaries of

our programs. And well it should be, since nearly 150 of them gathered at the Maritime Institute last month to network with leaders in the workers' rights field and to discuss issues that are crucial to helping working families obtain the rights and benefits that they deserve. Because of the opportunities for networking and education that the Conference provides, many of these students will go on to public interest law careers serving the cause of economic and social justice.

But the students are not the only beneficiaries of the services PBF provides. Recently, a subcommittee of

the American Bar Association's Labor and Employment Section nominated the Peggy Browning Fund for its prestigious Frances Perkins Award, which recognizes organizations that are on the forefront of providing legal services to underserved populations in the area of employment and labor law. The nomination alone is recognition from the legal community that Peggy Browning Fellows, as well as our Alumni who go on to public interest careers, fill an important gap in the provision of legal services to workers who otherwise would not have access to them. I would like to thank PBF's Board Members for their leadership in providing these services, and as a supporter of the Peggy Browning Fund, you should be proud to be helping in this important endeavor.

Pinin & Walk

# **Berger-Marks Foundation Grant**

#### Funding for New Fellowship

This summer, we added a new mentor organization with funding from The Berger-Marks Foundation to support a female Peggy Browning Fellow working for workers' rights for women. SEIU United Long Term Care Workers representing (ULTCW), 180,000 workers in Los Angeles who are homecare and nursing home workers, fit the bill. The union supports the organizing efforts of its members in fighting for better wages, working conditions, and dignity and respect on the job.

Cameron Bell, a first-year student at Loyola Law School, was the Peggy Browning Fellow who was granted this opportunity. Working with the union's General Counsel, Laurel Webb, her assignments included research and writing, meeting and collaborating with ULTCW staff on union organizing and community-based campaigns, and attending internal and external meetings, conferences and hearings.

Of her experience, Cameron reports, "I was drawn to this fellowship because of my background in women's studies and women's issues. I worked on a variety of issues from aspects of the union's internal legal operations to proposed ballot initiatives for the 2014 election. The best part of my summer was a series of mediations/ arbitrations conducted to restore workers' employment as I was able to handle substantial parts of these cases by myself."

Our thanks go to The Berger-Marks Foundation for making this opportunity a reality!

# 15th Annual Conference a Huge Success Challenging Job Market Doesn't Deter These Students

#### They're Determined to Work for the Labor Movement



Conference Keynote Speaker, Craig Becker, General Counsel, AFL-CIO and former NLRB Member, discussing the challenges facing unions today.

At a time of ever-increasing challenges to the labor movement, nearly 150 talented law students eager to become advocates for worker rights attended our 15th annual National Law Students Workers' Rights Conference on Oct. 25 & 26 at the Maritime Institute near Baltimore, MD.

One sign of student optimism: more registered for the workshop on the Future of Worker Mobilization than for any other session. They travelled from across the country to join with other like-minded students, to educate themselves about some of the most pertinent issues facing workers, and to meet the prominent labor attorneys who volunteered to lead sessions during the conference.

To open the conference, Peggy

# Work for Workplace Justice

#### **Broadening Our Reach**

Last year, the Peggy Browning Fund (PBF) launched a pilot regional workshop in Pittsburgh to share information with law students from schools in the region on PBF's Summer Fellowship Program and tips for how to get a job promoting workplace justice. The pilot was very well received. With Browning Fellows Isela Ramos, Bryce Mesa and Rebecca Eisenbrey led a lively discussion of the award-winning film *Trash Dance*, which explored the dignity and grace in the work of the unseen men and women who pick up our trash. Students discussed how these themes inform their work as lawyers.

Keynote speaker Craig Becker, AFL-CIO General Counsel and former NLRB Member, discussed challenges facing unions and offered insights into various current issues in the news, such as the Affordable Care Act and labor cases on the Supreme Court docket. During a plenary session on Saturday afternoon, panelists Leon Dayan,



The Conference Plenary Session comprised panelists Peggy Shorey, AFL-CIO's Director of State and Government Relations; Leon Dayan, Bredhoff & Kaiser, PLLC; Jessica Robinson, Associate General Counsel, AFSCME and moderator, Matthew Ginsburg, Associate General Counsel, AFL-CIO

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Jessica Robinson, and Peggy Shorey summarized attacks on collective bargaining rights in the states. Other sessions covered topics including basic labor law, protecting and organizing immigrant workers, the rewards of labor law practice, public sector labor law, sports and labor law, and globalization and labor rights – all pertinent, timely topics of great interest to the attendees.

that endorsement, it was decided to plan three more workshops.

Under the leadership of Richard Brean, General Counsel of the United Steelworkers and PBF Board member, the first workshop, entitled **Work for Workplace Justice**, was held at the University of Michigan on Sept. 28. The second, in Austin, at the University of Texas School of Law (UT), was held on October 21.

Regional Workshops in Boston and Los Angeles are planned for November and December. For information on panelists, sponsors and donors, go to www.peggybrowningfund.org.

# 2013 Summer



Tania Fonseca, PBF'13, (center) at a pro-immigrant rights rally in Los Angeles.

#### *Tania Fonseca* National Day Laborer Organizing

Network, Los Angeles, CA Armed with banners, posters and our voices, I joined a number of pro-immigrant rights groups on a march in the posh neighborhood of Brentwood, Los Angeles, where President Obama was to speak. It wasn't long before the intersection at that location was shut down. This was my first time participating in an event of this kind. It was a beautiful experience to march alongside people from all walks of life with one common purpose: to create awareness of the millions of deportations of undocumented mothers, fathers and children occurring under the current administration in Washington, DC.

I witnessed fellow undocumented marchers in acts of civil disobedience who eventually were arrested by the LAPD. It was inspiring to see their commitment surpassed their fear of arrest and the repercussions to follow. It was humbling to put a face, personality and character to people I would otherwise overlook in the news about immigration reform. My Summer Fellowship experience was truly life changing, and has motivated me to continue in this line of work.



Javier Castro Chicago Newspaper Guild One week after

One week after I arrived at the Guild this

summer, the *Chicago Sun Times*, with whom the Guild was negotiating a new collective bargaining agreement, completely fired their photography staff. It was the first time that a major newspaper had ever done anything of that nature. The Guild went into crisis mode. A collective of over 600 years of experience was gone – award winners, pioneers in the field, stalwarts of the news community were terminated with such little respect. Having some organizing experience, I was tasked with creating a picket.

Organizing it was at times overwhelming. Hoping to attract members of the media, I was shocked at the response. National and local

As a result of my fellowship experience, I realized that the type of impact I hope to have on the labor movement cannot be accomplished as a litigator. I believe I will be most fulfilled working on the regulatory side. Jessica Ornsby, Mehri & Skalet, PLLC, Washington, DC media members from *ABC*, *CBS*, the Chicago Tribune and Huffington Post were all there with over 100 picketers from our own members and the community. Although this experience was far and away the most memorable, I had a great experience as a Peggy Browning Fellow learning a tremendous amount about labor and the inner workings of a union.



Bryan Lopez New Orleans Workers' Center for Racial Justice

The New Orleans Workers' Center for Racial Justice

(NOWCRJ) was founded in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina to organize and provide support for the working class communities of New Orleans and Louisiana. From my first day, I knew this would be a summer to never forget. Immediately, I was thrust into a battle between routinely discriminated and falsely imprisoned day laborers and the Orleans Parish Sheriff's Office. The day laborers were guest workers in rural Louisiana trying to get back wages, safer working conditions and better working conditions from a corporate supplier of produce and low-income African-American workers and community members attempting to improve housing policies and their access to a living wage and better jobs.

**Every assignment I was given reflected the exact reason I decided to attend law school.** From writing a subpoena, to calculating back wages, to observing civil rights violations during an ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) hold, I had the opportunity to learn from an innovative and holistic organization. I've returned to law school fired up from my experiences this summer.

# **Fellow Highlights**

My Peggy Browning Fellowship gave me a realistic glance at my future as a union-side labor attorney and reinforced my passion for social and economic justice.

Alex Leenson, UNITE HERE Local 2, San Francisco, CA



(R to L) Ian Seruelo and McLean Johnson, with their Summer Fellowship Mentor Lela Klein, at the DuraMax plant in Dayton, OH

#### *Ian Seruelo* IUE-CWA, Dayton, Ohio

the Industrial Division of At the Communication Workers of America, I did a lot of research and writing on a variety of issues confronting the union's different locals. From secondary boycotts to reasonable accommodation of religious practices, from management rights clauses to mandatory subjects of bargaining, from NASA's safety and security procedures to employer's unilateral installation of hidden cameras, from inclusion of a common law wife as beneficiary to an insurance benefit to employer's

prohibition of union meetings on company property, I was involved in it all.

What I enjoyed most was participating in several advocacy discussions immigration on reform, the UFCW-led OUR campaign Walmart training and playing a part in the union's efforts in coalition building. These undertakings involved people from the community, coming from different sectors and different fields, united in advocacy for reforms. This experience is one I know I'll someday look back upon as one of the highlights of my education in law.

I was most surprised by the number of different legal areas I worked in this summer - labor and employment, contract, administrative and corporate law. My summer with the CWA will certainly help me market myself as a skilled and experienced attorney.

Christopher Lewis, CWA, Washington, DC

#### Charlette Matts-Brown and Andrew Gold United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1776, Plymouth Meeting, PA

In July, the Pennsylvania NAACP led a rally in opposition to the state's voter ID law that would disenfranchise hundreds of thousands of eligible voters across The law, barred from the state. enforcement in the 2012 presidential election and the May 2013 primary, is being challenged again in court. Members from our local were part of a broad coalition of labor, civil rights and environmental groups opposing the law as a blatant attack. Despite the ban on enforcement in last year's elections, the PA AFL-CIO estimated that thousands stayed home from the polls due to confusion about the law.

During the rally, we were inspired by the speakers and after being handed posters by a member of SEIU Local 668 that read "I AM A WOMAN" and "I AM A MAN" inspired by the "I AM A MAN" signs held by sanitation workers during the 1968 AFSCME Memphis Sanitation Workers' Strike. We were glad to join in the battle to protect what is perhaps the cornerstone right in any democracy.



Summer Fellows Andrew Gold and Charlette Matts-Brown with Eduardo Moreno of UFCW

# Washington, DC Awards Reception



Washington, DC awardees Nancy Schiffer, retired, AFL-CIO and Jim Boland, President, of the Bricklayers Union

It was a beautiful evening on June 24 as guests from across the country arrived to pay homage to James Boland, President of the Bricklayers & Allied Craftworkers (BAC), and Nancy Schiffer, retired Associate General Counsel of the AFL-CIO, for their achievements on behalf of workers and their families. The evening began with a buffet reception followed by the awards presentation when Elizabeth Bunn, Director of Organizing for the AFL-CIO, shared stories of working

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with Nancy and her dedication to Peggy Browning Fellows and AFL-CIO Union Summer participants. Henry Kramer, BAC's Secretary Treasurer, then spoke of Mr. Boland's extraordinary leadership.

Art Traynor III, *PBF '06*, shared his Summer Fellowship experience and his relationship with Ms. Schiffer as a law student who participated in both PBF's and AFL-CIO's Union Summer programs. "I think these opportunities led directly to the wonderful career I now enjoy. I can't imagine I'm unique in that regard. I know a lot of other Peggy Browning alumni who have had similar experiences. So I consider myself tremendously lucky, and I'm happy to have the opportunity to now mentor Peggy Browning Fellows as they come through our office at the United Mine Workers." PBF congratulates Nancy on her appointment as a member of the NLRB.

# Leadership Circle

Supports All Programs

The Leadership Circle affords donors the opportunity to make one annual leadership-level gift per year that would support all PBF's programs. Members are recognized at all annual receptions, at the National Conference, in our newsletters and on our website. To join the Leadership Circle, contact Rhonda Gelman Kelley, CFRE, Director of Development and Marketing at 267-273-7994 or rkelley@peggybrowningfund.org.

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# Chicago Awards Reception

#### Success in the Midwest

On November 7th, the Peggy Browning Fund headed to the Windy City to host its biennial awards reception at Teamster City Auditorium. The region's labor community arrived to celebrate three leaders of the Chicago labor movement – Karen G.J. Lewis, President of the Chicago Teachers Union; James M. Sweeney, President & Business Manager of IUOE Local 150 and J. Peter Dowd, Esq. of Dowd, Bloch and Bennett.

Although there was a chill in the air, the warmth in the room exemplified the degree of respect and love those in attendance had for the awardees. Each were presented with the Peggy Browning Award for social justice

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: Chris Williamson, *PBF '09*



When asked how he became interested in workers' rights, 2009 Peggy B r o w n i n g Fellow Chris Williams o n told us, "Having spent my entire

pre-adult life in rural, economically disadvantaged southern West Virginia, I have always been committed to helping working class people and solving problems concerning poverty and other socioeconomic issues."

The lessons he learned will serve him well in his current job as Labor Counsel to Chairman Tom Harkin (D-IA) on the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. Chris' portfolio on the committee primarily consists of labor law and workplace safety issues. This new position, which Chris began in July 2013, is the latest in a series of accomplishments. As a Peggy Browning Fellow, Chris worked at the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) Contempt, Litigation, and Compliance Branch in Washington, DC, helping draft documents that were later filed in a case in federal district court. He began his legal career as an attorney-advisor at the Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission working for Judge Jacqueline Bulluck. In 2012, he continued to work in Washington, DC as a Legislative Assistant for Senator Joe Manchin III (D-WV).

Marv Gittler, Esq., Asher, Gittler & D'Alba

champions who have distinguished

themselves with passion and dedication

to the rights and needs of workers and

McLean Johnson, PBF'13, spoke of

her Summer Fellowship experience

at the Industrial Division of the

Communication Workers of America in

Dayton, OH. This year's reception was

the most successful of all the previous

years' events in Chicago raising more

funds for PBF's Summer Fellowship

their families.

Program!

Chris continues to value his Fellowship experience and this year attended the DC Fellowship Orientation, sharing his experiences with more than 30 Fellows. He also served as a panelist for a Congressional Staff Briefing session held for DCarea Fellows this past summer. Chris shared. "I know that I would not have had the success that I have had thus far in my career without my experience as a Peggy Browning Fund Fellow."

## Chicago Award Reception Sponsors

(L to R) Craig Rosenbaum, Esq., Chicago Newspaper Guild; Dale Pierson, Esq.,

President, Chicago Teachers Union; Dennis Walsh, Esq., PBF Board Chair and

Sweeney, President & Business Manager, IUOE Local 150; Karen Lewis, awardee,

IUOE Local 150; Peter Dowd, Esq., awardee, Dowd, Bloch and Bennett; Jim

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To register for these receptions, visit www. peggybrowningfund.org/events For more information, call 267-273-7994.