

From: Anne O'Rourke [mailto:Anne.O'Rourke@workersrights.org]
Sent: Thursday, April 26, 2007 2:20 PM
Subject: WRC El Salvador Trip

Dear Colleagues,

The WRC was asked to circulate the below message on behalf of the group that participated in the trip to El Salvador earlier this month. They encourage you to contact them (their names and e-mails are listed below) should you have any questions or wish to discuss this further.

Best,

Anne O'Rourke
Administrative Director
Worker Rights Consortium
202.387.4884

Dear Colleagues,

During April 12-14, the five of us traveled to El Salvador with the Worker Rights Consortium. The purpose of the trip was to learn about the labor rights situation in El Salvador from workers, factory managers, and organizations "on the ground" that work to promote fair working conditions.

During our three days in El Salvador, we visited two factories and met separately with three groups of workers, as well as worker representatives and labor rights NGOs. These meetings were highly informative as to the challenges to improving working conditions and achieving respect for worker rights. Among other activities, we visited a worker's home for an evening meal and had an in-depth discussion there with workers from two factories. Our meetings helped us to appreciate the tremendous effort that goes into gathering and analyzing information from various stakeholders as part of a labor rights investigation. While it was apparent from this eye-opening experience that there is still much work to be done to ensure that the rights of workers are respected, it is also clear that U.S. universities have made and can continue to make a meaningful contribution to this effort.

We would be happy to share our experiences from this trip with other WRC affiliate universities, and encourage you to contact us if you would like to hear more (see contact information below). We would also like to thank the WRC for making this opportunity available to us and for organizing an excellent set of meetings. We were impressed with the skills and knowledge of the WRC staff, both the U.S.-based staff who accompanied us and the organization's representative in El Salvador, and with the WRC's ability to facilitate discussions with many different stakeholders.

We understand that the WRC intends to organize such trips on a regular basis going forward, and would highly recommend this experience to those of you who might be interested in participating in the future.

Sincerely,

Philip Breeze, Kutztown University breeze@kutztown.edu (610) 683-4000
Dawn Crim, University of Wisconsin-Madison dbcrim@bascom.wisc.edu (608) 263-5510
Joe Ebaugh, University of Maryland jebaugh@umd.edu (301) 314-1203
William Wei, University of Colorado William.Wei@colorado.edu (303) 492-7655
Jim Wilkerson, Duke University jim.wilkerson@duke.edu (919) 684-2065