

# 25 Years On

# US LEAP

## STILL FIGHTING for WORKER JUSTICE in the GLOBAL ECONOMY



**U.S. Labor Education in the Americas Project**  
*Proyecto de Solidaridad Laboral EUA/Las Américas*

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*Graphic Design: Anna Koob*

## Previous Board

Dozens of individuals have volunteered to serve on the board, providing leadership and indispensable service to USLEAP from its formation, during its growth, and through periodic financial and political challenges. We thank them all, listed in alpha order below:

Bama Athreya, International Labor  
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John August, SEIU, Local 1199P (1992-  
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Derek Baxter, International Labor Rights  
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Angela Berryman, American Friends  
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Robert Brand, Solutions for Progress  
(1990-1996)

Douglass Cassel, International Human  
Rights Law Institute, DePaul University  
(1992-2003)

Laura Carter, International Textile, Gar-  
ment, and Leather Workers Federation  
(1991-2011)

Gabriel Camacho, American Friends  
Service Committee (2008-2010)

Teresa Casertano, Solidarity Center  
(2006-2010)

Ed Clark, ACTWU (1990-1992)

Lance Compa, Founding Board Member  
(1990-95; 2005-7)

Thomas Cronin, AFSCME DC47 (1990-  
1993)

Stan DeBoe, OSST, Conference of Major  
Superiors of Men (2001-2006)

David Dyson, Lafayette Ave. Presbyte-  
rian Church (1992-1995)

Tess Ewing, Massachusetts Labor Com-  
mittee (1990-1992)

Martha Farmelo, fundraising consultant  
(1995-2011)

Paul Filson, ACTWU, SEIU Connecticut  
(1987-2008)

Mary Finger, UFCW (2001-2006)

Hank Frundt, author, activist, Ramapo  
College (1989 to 2010)

Stan Gacek, UFCW, AFL-CIO (1990-2011)

Paul Garver, SEIU (1990-1992)

Jeanne Graham, Bakery, Confectionery  
and Tobacco Workers Union (1993-1995)

Joy Ann Grune, IUF North American  
Representative (1992-1996)

Lisa Hugaard, Latin America Working  
Group (1995-2010)

Pharis Harvey, International Labor  
Rights Fund (1992-2001)

Jeff Hermanson, ILGWU, Solidarity Cen-  
ter (1995-2007)

Jennifer Hill, activist (1995-2007)

John Jordon, Laborers International  
Union (1997-1999)

Ted Keating, Conference of Major Supe-  
riors of Men (1995-2001)

Gabriela Lemus, Labor Council for Latin  
American Advancement (2007-2009)

Michael Ledoux, OFM, Conference of  
Major Superiors of Men (1992-1993)

Mike Lewis, Washington Representa-  
tive, ILWU (1990-1992)

Douglas Meyer, IUE (1997-2006)

T. Michael McNulty, Conference of Ma-  
jor Superiors of Men (2006-2007)

Susan Mika OSB, Benedictine Resource  
Ctr, Coalition for Justice in the Maquilado-  
ras (1993-99)

Beth Myers, STITCH (2006-2010)

Steven Nutter, ILGWU (1993-1995)

Marta Ojeda, Coalition for Justice in the  
Maquiladoras (1999-2003)

Ron Oswald, International Union of  
Foodworkers (2009-2010)

Ana Price, SEIU Pennsylvania (1990-  
1992)

Jim Ryder, ILWU, Local 6 (1992-1993)

John Ruthrauff, Founding Board Mem-  
ber, treasurer, delegation organizer  
(1990-2001)

Alan Spaulding, UFCW (1998-2011)

Margaret Swedish, Religious Task Force  
on Central America (1995-2007)

Kurt Stand, IUF North America (1997)

Joan Suarez, ACTWU (1992-1997)

Betty Sundry, Leadership Conference of  
Women Religious (1992-1993)

Dan Swinney, Midwest Center for Labor  
Research (1992-1994)

Natacha Thys, ILRF (2001-2003)

United Students Against Sweatshop  
Representatives: Emily Rigdon (2001-2),  
Molly McGrath (2002-3, 2005), Allie Rob-  
bins (2003-4), Camilo Romero (2006), Zack  
Knorr (2007-08), Rob Palmquist (2009-10),  
and Linda Gomaa (2011).

Baldemar Velasquez, Farm Labor Orga-  
nizing Committee (1992-1994)

Jeff Vogt, International Labor Rights  
Fund; Washington Office on Latin America;  
AFL-CIO (1997-2011)

Pamela Vossen, Health and Safety for  
the Americas (1992-2003)

\*\*organizational affiliation(s) listed at  
time of service on the board.



## The Arc of History: The Long View, from the Executive Director

USLEAP's 25th Anniversary is not only an occasion to reflect on its work (both successes and failures) but also an opportunity to look back and assess 25 years of solidarity in the North with the struggle of worker justice in Latin America, a part of the "long arc of history."

Twenty-five years ago, the anti-sweatshop movement did not exist in the U.S. Indeed, we still have in our files from the early 1990s letters from companies like JC Penney that categorically state that the conditions of workers in factories in Central America producing JC Penney clothing were not the company's concern or responsibility because JC Penney didn't own the factories. That argument is now settled, resting near the bottom of the trashbin of history, not only in the apparel sector but across the board, be it coffee or electronics. Of course, having accepted responsibility in principle is not the same as making changes that would improve wages and working conditions. Still, a May 2012 letter sent to the Guatemalan president signed by a half-dozen prominent apparel brands intervening on behalf of worker rights in a trade complaint represents a huge shift from where companies stood in 1990.

Likewise, worker rights conditions and labor protections in international trade were barely a blip on the political screen in 1987. Now they are at the center of every debate on new free trade agreements, with each generation of trade agreements adopting stronger labor protections. While inadequate, and a step back from the protections that characterized the U.S.'s unilateral trade programs, they are going in the right direction.

But these trends are moving too slowly given the assault on unions not only in Latin America but around the globe. In our 25 years of experience, we have witnessed thousands of brave and resilient workers in Latin America organize for justice against steep odds, confronting anti-union employers, an absence of protection from their governments, a globalization that accelerates the race to the bottom in one industry after another, and violence that is too often effective in crushing workers' hopes. In short, it is exceedingly difficult to organize independent unions in many countries in Latin America because of the vast forces arrayed against workers.

Yet, as this ad book demonstrates, the struggle does and must go on. Workers in Latin America have not stopped organizing and fighting for worker justice; the need for and value of solidarity remains as important as ever. Latin American workers would be the first to say that things would be far worse without solidarity from the North. A number of unions in Latin America have taken the time from their fight for justice—and survival—to express in this ad book their appreciation for international solidarity and the work of USLEAP.

We say thanks in return, for the fight for justice by workers in Latin America is also a fight for justice for workers in the North; their struggle is our struggle, and the struggle of our children and generations to come. In an increasingly intertwined global economy, it has never been more true that an injury to one is an injury to all.

Thanks to all who have made the work of USLEAP possible for the last 25 years: staff, board, donors, activists, partners in the North, and partners in the South.

For justice at home and abroad,

Stephen Coats  
Executive Director



# Twenty-Five Years Fighting for Worker Justice in Latin America



## USLEAP at 25

### 1987-1997: US/GLEP\*\*

The U.S. Labor Education in the Americas Project (USLEAP) was founded as the U.S./Guatemala Labor Education Project (US/GLEP) in 1987 by individuals and trade unionists concerned about violent oppression of Guatemalan workers. US/GLEP's roots trace back to one of the most famous early cases of international labor solidarity, the struggle of Coca-Cola workers to maintain their union in the face of ruthless repression in the mid-1980s.

The experience of the successful international Coca-Cola campaign to support these workers prompted extensive consultations with Guatemalan trade unions and the establishment of US/GLEP through the efforts of a number of individuals, including John Ruthrauff (US/GLEP's first chair), Michael Ratner of the Center for Constitutional Rights, Bill Patterson and Paul Filson of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU), Frank LaRue, the prominent Guatemalan labor and human rights lawyer, and Hank Frundt, author, academic and activist. Key to getting off the ground was the support of Dave Dyson, ACTWU's Union Label Director, who secured from ACTWU space at its headquarters in New York City and US/GLEP's first director, Peter Hogness. US/GLEP's early campaigns supporting workers at Lunafil, a Guatemalan thread factory, and at Playknits, an apparel contractor, won reinstatements, pensions and backpay in 1989.

#### Mission

USLEAP engages a broad range of organizations and individuals in the U.S. to promote full respect for the rights of workers in Latin America by supporting specific campaigns and initiatives and new rules for the global economy and international trade.

In 1990, US/GLEP moved to Chicago when Stephen Coats took over as director, following Barbara Briggs, now of the National Labor Committee [renamed the Institute for Global Labour and Human Rights], who had served as part-time director for a year. US/GLEP set up an office in Guatemala in 1991, staffed initially by Karen Brandow, followed by Bruce Fieldman, Rhett Doumitt (1992-1997), and, later, Bob Perillo (1997-2007). In the U.S., US/GLEP began to expand its base of support, using corporate campaigns targeting Starbucks and Phillips-Van Heusen to support workers in Guatemala while building a national presence.

During its first ten years, US/GLEP became the most effective North American support group for Guatemalan workers and pioneered strategies and tactics to support workers in Central America. It made Guatemala a test case for U.S. corporate responsibility for worker rights violations abroad, calling attention in particular to poor working conditions and violations in the coffee and maquila sectors. US/GLEP investigated complaints, sent delegations, and publicized violations, initiating some of the first anti-sweatshop campaigns in the U.S. and helping stimulate the emergence of codes of conduct in the apparel sector. Pilot projects in corporate monitoring in Guatemala led to the establishment of the Commission for the Verification of Codes of Conduct (COVERCO) which US/GLEP helped inaugurate in conjunction with Guatemala's Center for Human Rights Legal Action.

USLEAP became a key proponent for U.S. trade pressure on Guatemala, filing a worker rights petition with the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) in 1992 that resulted in the nation's trade benefits from the U.S. being put on probation. Because of USLEAP's persistent follow-up, this status lasted in one form or another un-

#### Key Principle

USLEAP operates on the premise that efforts in the global North to support economic justice for workers in the global South must be built on respectful partnerships with workers in the South, and focuses on the empowerment of workers in their own struggles for self-determination. Without such a focus and without such partnerships, support work in the North may unintentionally take forms that are not in the best interest of the workers themselves.



## Goals

(1) support worker justice in the global economy, specifically to support workers in Latin America who are fighting for a better life for their families and to overcome poverty;

(2) secure rules for the global economy and international trade that ensure respect for the human rights of workers;

(3) hold U.S. corporations accountable for the treatment of workers in factories and on plantations from which they buy; and

(4) support effective and respectful partnerships between workers in Latin American and worker justice advocates in the U.S.

til 2001. U.S. trade pressure resulted in Guatemalan labor code improvements, new labor courts, an improved labor inspection system, and increases in the minimum wage.

To pursue these strategies, US/GLEP prepared Spanish materials that aided Guatemalan unionists in learning about and applying both U.S. trade leverage and corporate codes of conduct.

To reinforce its findings, US/GLEP arranged for delegations of trade unionists and others to visit Guatemala, and for Guatemalan workers to visit the U.S. (One such exchange, in 1996, assisted organizing efforts of Guatemalan poultry

workers in North Carolina). US/GLEP also organized delegations of U.S. trade union women and helped inaugurate STITCH in 1998 as a separate support organization for trade union women in the apparel sector in Guatemala.

*\*\* The review above of the organization's first decade (1987-1997) is reprinted from USLEAP's 20th Anniversary booklet and was adapted from a longer article by Henry J. Frundt, one of the first board members. Hank remained an active board member, providing guidance, support, and wisdom to the organization for over two decades, until his death in 2010.*

## 1998-2012: USLEAP

After its first decade, the organization expanded its geographic and sectoral focus, responding to requests from banana unions to take a regional approach, the horrific levels of violence against Colombian trade unionists, and appeals to take up work in new sectors (e.g. flowers in Colombia).

While this expansion prompted a name change in 1998 to the U.S. Labor Education in the Americas Project, the organization's basic mission remained the same: (1) support workers organizing at specific factories or plantations producing for U.S. companies; (2) respond to violence against workers; and (3) advocate for new rules for global trade that protect the basic rights of workers.

Between 1998 and 2012, USLEAP undertook significant work in Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, and Peru, and limited work in the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Panama.

## What We Do

### Now, what is it that USLEAP does, exactly? USLEAP:

- lobbies government officials, here and in Latin America, including meeting with ambassadors and labor ministers, sending grassroots action alerts, holding press conferences, and organizing congressional letters;
- engages companies, from direct communication (meetings, phone calls, and emails) to public campaigns with leafleting, letter-writing, and media;
- educates supporters and activists, preparing briefing materials, sample letters, talking points, fact sheets, graphics and even, occasionally, some video;
- builds or supports ad hoc coalitions, as needed;
- serves as a go-to group in the U.S. for unions in Latin America who want support, including initiating letters, phone calls, alerts, and research; USLEAP also seeks to keep unions in Latin America informed of key policy debates in the North; and
- focuses and regularly shifts our limited resources on where we can make the most difference.

# I. WORKER ORGANIZING

One of the three pillars of USLEAP's work is to support workers in Latin America who are organizing in order to improve their wages and working conditions and gain dignity and a voice at work. USLEAP focuses on workers organizing on plantations and in factories that produce for U.S. companies or the U.S. market.

## Banana Worker Justice Initiatives Begin in 1998

In 1998, USLEAP was recruited by the Coordination for Latin American Banana Unions (COLSIBA) and the European Banana Action Network (EUROBAN) to provide support in the U.S. for banana unions in Latin America, becoming the third leg of an international alliance to stop a race to the bottom for banana workers in the region.

Banana unions are typically the strongest private sector unions in their countries, with relatively good wages and benefits, but they have been under threat from non-union production, especially in Ecuador and the south coast of Guatemala, as well as from major retailers who drive down prices paid to producers and exporters. These factors have claimed thousands of union jobs in the past 15 years.

The vitality and relative strength of the banana unions in Latin America and the importance of the U.S. to the Latin American banana industry--the U.S. is home to the three largest banana companies and consumes one-third of bananas exported from Latin America--combines to make banana support work perhaps the most important sector on the USLEAP agenda.



*Iris Munguía, head of the Coordination of Latin American Banana Workers Unions (COLSIBA), meets with Sofia Sandoval, member of the SITRABI executive committee, and Noe Ramirez, general secretary of SITRABI, during a strategy session in Ecuador with USLEAP and others in February 2012 to address a wave of murders of SITRABI members in Guatemala. credit: USLEAP*

USLEAP's banana support work is on-going, driven by the needs and requests of banana unions on the ground. These have included assisting Guatemala's SITRABI union to urge Del Monte to obey the law and pressing for an investigation of murders of SITRABI members (2012); regularly engaging in quiet, behind-the-scenes communications with Chiquita while also backing COLSIBA's threat of a new campaign (2011); pushing Bonita to reinstate fired workers (2011-12) in Ecuador; and leading U.S. solidarity work on a multi-year Dole campaign that paved the way for its first union contract in Ecuador (2011).

Partnering with COLSIBA, EUROBAN, the AFL-CIO's Solidarity Center, and the International Union of Foodworkers (IUF), in 1998 USLEAP initiated major work in the banana sector. It responded to specific attacks on worker rights, helped develop a strategic plan for regional work, and co-led international campaigns that targeted each of the top four major banana companies (Chiquita, Del Monte, Dole, and Bonita) over the course of the next decade and a half.

\* In 1999, hired goons physically assaulted leaders of the stalwart SITRABI union in Guatemala and threatened them with death when the union protested the firing of 900 Del Monte workers. An international campaign, led in the U.S. by USLEAP, helped bring Del Monte to the table where it signed an agreement with the IUF and SITRABI that retained 600 jobs. Earlier US/GLEP work on trade and worker rights helped prompt the United States Trade Representative (USTR) to threaten Guatemala's trade benefits if the government did not pursue the case. In March 2001, SITRABI leaders faced their attackers in an open trial and secured convictions for violence against trade unionists, a first for Guatemala, although the SITRABI leaders were still forced to go into exile to protect their lives. When violence struck SITRABI again a decade later, USLEAP was there, helping restore security protection for SITRABI's general secretary Noe Ramirez and enhanced security for other union leaders in 2012.

\* In 2001, after three years of grassroots pressure led in the U.S. by USLEAP and in Europe by EUROBAN, Chiquita signed a worker rights agreement with COLSIBA unions and the IUF, the first of its kind in the agricultural sector, which the IUF termed “historic.” Although implementation difficulties remain, the COLSIBA/IUF/Chiquita Framework Agreement marks the most advanced level of worker rights engagement between unions and any banana transnational company. In 2011 and 2012, the banana unions achieved new gains with Chiquita, including signing the first contracts in Nicaragua (a 20-year goal) and an end to rolling short-term contracts in Costa Rica.

\* In 2002, attention turned to the non-union banana sector in Ecuador when workers successfully organized unions on the Los Alamos plantations owned by the country’s wealthiest man and frequent presidential candidate, Alvaro Noboa [see vignette on page 11], owner of the Bonita label. Noboa’s response was to summon thugs to terrorize the workers with armed attacks, resulting in the hospitalization of union members. Although an extensive campaign, led in the U.S. by USLEAP, did not succeed in a union victory, *The New York Times* suggested that Noboa lost Ecuador’s 2002 presidential election partly because of his response. Unfortunately that did not stop Bonita from continuing its decades-long repression of worker rights, busting a new union drive at the same plantations in 2011-12.



Religious shareholders in 1998 protest outside of a Chiquita shareholders meeting, helping initiate an international campaign headed in the U.S. by then-USGLEP that led to a path-breaking worker rights agreement between the unions and Chiquita in 2001. Credit: J. Heath

\* In 2006, COLSIBA, EUROBAN, the IUF, and USLEAP launched a new campaign against Dole, issuing a campaign document, *Dole, Behind the Smokescreen*, in multiple languages, organizing sign-on letters, and, in the U.S., targeting Dole’s flower operations as well as bananas. In 2011, Dole signed its first banana union contract in Ecuador, an important (if limited) breakthrough in the world’s largest banana exporter, with 500 workers gaining better wages and working conditions.

\* USLEAP, with a contract from the AFL-CIO’s Solidarity Center, prepared an in-depth, bilingual study of the banana industry in Latin America entitled *Strategic Analysis of the Central American Banana Industry* that was used by COLSIBA to deepen its strategic planning in the late 1990s. A grant from the MacArthur Foundation supported national and regional strategic planning workshops that focused on the “race to the bottom” in the banana industry. In 2012, USLEAP secured limited financing to initiate an effort with COLSIBA to update a strategic plan for U.S. support work for the 2012-2015 period.

USLEAP has continued to be the primary U.S. NGO engaged with Latin American banana unions and European partners. It serves as the only U.S. NGO on the Steering Committee of the World Banana Forum, founded in 2009 as a permanent space of assembly for participants representing the global banana supply-chain to promote open dialogue on challenges facing the banana industry; a work in progress that remains supported by the banana unions.

## Apparel Sweatshops: Some Critical Victories but Difficult Terrain

Building on its work in its first decade to support workers in the maquiladora sector and end sweatshops, USLEAP served from 1998 to 2004 as the U.S. NGO partner for a major organizing initiative in Central America, led by the International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers Federation (ITGLWF). While the ITGLWF and Solidarity Center undertook organizing support on the ground, USLEAP provided research and campaign support in the North, helping nourish the growth of the





anti-sweatshop movement led by solidarity groups, U.S. unions, religious groups, and students.

Over the next decade, efforts to hold apparel firms like Gap, Talbots, Phillips-Van Heusen, Liz Claiborne and J.C. Penny responsible for rights violations of their suppliers brought concrete results on worker reinstatements, backpay, and a string of important victories in securing collective bargaining agreements in Guatemala (Van Heusen, Choi Shin), Honduras (Kimi, Corazon, Yoo Yang), El Salvador (Just Garments/Tainan), Mexico (KukDong), the Dominican Republic (BJ & B), and Nicaragua (Chentex).

Despite the impressive growth of the anti-sweatshop movement, led by the United Students Against Sweatshops (USAS), the National Labor Committee, the Maquila Solidarity Network (MSN), the Worker Rights Consortium (WRC), SweatFree Communities, the International Labor Rights Forum, USLEAP, U.S. unions, and local groups across the country, the terrain proved hard-going. Given the global nature of an industry with low overhead, employers can move to a new country or region or neighborhood virtually overnight. The end of the Multi-Fibre Agreement in 2005 further increased downward competition in the apparel sector, making it even more difficult to win new advances or even sustain past victories, with one major exception. By 2010, most of the unionized factories in Central America had been shut down.

*One of USLEAP's first major campaigns targeted Phillips-Van Heusen in support of workers who eventually won in 1997 what was then the only collective bargaining agreement in Guatemala's maquiladora sector. Here, protestors gather outside a PVH store in the Bay Area as part of a national day of actions in May 1992.*

It became clear that the collegiate apparel sector provides the best hope for sustainable organizing victories in the apparel sector and the one-two punch of USAS and the WRC, aided by MSN and the Solidarity Center, continues to achieve important victories. USLEAP accordingly reduced its work

in the apparel sector, remaining on call when needed. After being heavily engaged in the maquila sector for two decades, USLEAP has turned its focus to areas where it has more to contribute.

## Flowers Workers Ask for Support in 2005; Union Victory in 2008

In 2005, a group of mainly women workers organizing a union at a Dole flower plantation in Colombia petitioned USLEAP for assistance. For the next three years, the Dole flower worker campaign became a major part of the USLEAP program. Working with the International Labor Rights Forum, USLEAP led a campaign against Dole Fresh Flowers, conducting and publishing research, staffing worker tours, organizing letters from members of Congress, and engaging in strategic planning sessions with Colombian unions to support 100,000 flower workers in Colombia, which supplies 60% of the U.S. flower market.

### *The best day, on the offense with Guatemalan workers*

On Labor Day 1996, USLEAP sprung a national campaign on Phillips-Van Heusen, leafleting dozens of its outlet stores across the U.S. the same day a clandestine organizing campaign at a PVH factory in Guatemala went public. It marked the first time that a cross-border anti-sweatshop campaign supporting workers in Central America was able to strike first and go on the offense. It took a year, with an intervention from Human Rights Watch, but the workers and the campaign eventually won significant benefits and a collective bargaining agreement, at the time the only one in Guatemala's maquiladora sector.

In 2008, Dole workers won the only two independent union contracts in Colombia's flower sector, marking a major achievement. But the victories were lost two years later when the plantations, no longer owned by Dole, were shut down, along with others, during the global economic downturn.

Nevertheless, the spotlight USLEAP and ILRF were able to shine on the situation of flower workers in Colombia drew the interest of key members of Congress, leading the U.S. to include the flower industry as one of the key sectors to be addressed by a multi-year Labor Action Plan, agreed to by Presidents Obama and President Santos in April 2011. The increased attention will provide an opportunity for leverage in the coming years.



## Mexico: Our Nearest Latin American Neighbor

In addition to anti-sweatshop work in the apparel sector in Mexico, USLEAP has also provided support for Mexican autoworkers and electrical workers. Working closely with the Mexican NGO Center for Labor Support (CAT), and with unions in Canada, the U.S., Mexico and globally, USLEAP led U.S. NGO-support work in a multi-year campaign on behalf of Johnson Controls workers in Puebla. In 2011, the workers threw out a protection contract union and won an independent union contract, the only one in the company's 20-odd plants in Mexico. The victory was short-lived, however, when the company abruptly shuttered the factory in March 2012; two months later, the CAT was forced to close its office after recurring violence and death threats were levied against its staff, reflecting the failure of the Mexican government to end impunity for those responsible.

## Coffee: The Starbucks Campaigns/Victories

In 1998, Starbucks officials addressed the USLEAP board of directors about its plans to improve conditions for coffee workers. The meeting came after a 1997 campaign that pushed the company to begin implementing promises made as the result of US/GLEP's initial 1995 campaign that secured the company's commitment to adopt a code of conduct and take responsibility for the conditions of workers in the coffee supply chain, with Guatemala as a pilot project.

The Starbucks code of conduct evolved into C.A.F.E. (Coffee and Farmer Equity Practices), a sourcing program that holds some promise, and for several years USLEAP remained engaged in pushing Starbucks to take the next step. However, the general absence of worker organizing in the coffee sector has made it difficult to test Starbucks code with respect to the ability of workers to organize and gain power on the ground, pushing USLEAP's Starbucks work to the back-burner.

## Codes, Certification, and Fair Trade

USLEAP was a key part of the anti-sweatshop movement in the 1990s that pushed U.S. companies to take responsibility for the treatment of workers in their supply chains abroad, leading to a proliferation of codes of conduct—first in the apparel sector and then other sectors—that helped prompt the emergence of global “corporate social responsibility” (CSR). CSR is now big business, with an annual conference, its own magazine, and dedicated corporate officers, but its impact on workers on the ground remains limited.

Accompanying the growth of CSR and the codes was the emergence of third party auditors, verifiers, and certification schemes and labels, most of which, like Rainforest Alliance, remain problematic in the view of workers and their unions, a position USLEAP voices in the U.S. In an effort to ensure that the verification of codes be undertaken by credible and independent NGOs on the ground with local expertise and a commitment to worker rights, in the mid-1990s the organization helped facilitate the formation of COVERCO, the Commission for the Verification of Codes of Conduct in Guatemala.

In a separate certification category is Fair Trade, which has been grappling for over a decade with how or even whether it can effectively certify large-scale producers, e.g. plantations that can employ hundreds of workers. USLEAP has been deeply engaged with this debate, advocating in the U.S. on behalf of workers in Latin America, especially banana unions who have a decade of mixed experience with Fair Trade certification. In 2005, USLEAP helped facilitate an initial agreement between banana unions (COLSIBA) and TransFair USA, but progress in resolving worker rights concerns remained slow.

A split in the Fair Trade movement in 2011-12, with FairTrade USA leaving the global body Fairtrade Labeling Organizations (FLO), provided an opportunity that USLEAP has, with others, sought to exploit to promote a “race to the top” between FLO and FairTrade USA, a competition that remained up in the air as of mid-2012.



*Activists protest outside a Starbucks store in 1995 in DuPont Circle in Washington, DC, part of a campaign initiated by USGLEP that secured the first code of conduct in the U.S. coffee industry for the treatment of coffee workers in Latin America. Credit: NISGUA*

## II. TRADE: NEW RULES to EFFECTIVELY PROTECT WORKERS

Enforceable, effective worker rights protections in global trade law are fundamental for achieving sustainable advances for worker rights in Latin America. Such protections are also critical for U.S. workers, who in a global economy will face a never-ending race to the bottom in the absence of workers abroad being able to organize to improve wages and working conditions. Consequently, USLEAP opposed the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) and for five years provided significant support to opponents of the Colombia Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

Since the late 1980s, unilateral U.S. trade programs like the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) have incorporated some protections for worker rights. These are gradually being replaced by trade agreements like CAFTA, with labor protections that have so far proven to be less effective than what existed before.

USLEAP was a pioneer in the use of the labor provisions of U.S. trade programs, filing worker rights petitions on Guatemala under the GSP program starting in 1991 and later on Ecuador under an Andean trade program. The GSP worker rights petitions and accompanying advocacy work were instrumental in securing a number of advances in Guatemala, including an increase in the minimum wage, new labor courts, increased sanctions, and legal recognition of maquila unions. USLEAP continued to file GSP worker rights petitions on Guatemala until GSP was replaced with CAFTA in 2006.

With free trade agreements replacing trade programs, Latin America has become a key testing ground for labor provisions in U.S. trade agreements. There has been a modest but potentially important progression in the labor provisions of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), CAFTA, which also includes the Dominican Republic, and the newest set of agreements with Peru, Panama and Colombia.\*\*



Outside of Obama re-election headquarters in Chicago, USLEAP joined a protest in June 2011 organized by Witness for Peace, 8th Day Center for Justice, and the Chicago Religious Leadership Network to oppose the Administration's push for the Colombia Free Trade Agreement. Credit: CRLN

### *Threatening Attention in 1992; A Reverse in 2012*

Following a 1992 press conference in Guatemala City organized by then-USGLEP to highlight a worker rights petition against Guatemala recently filed with the U.S. government, staff met with a representative of a well-known U.S. apparel company who at the time was also head of the Guatemala maquila association. After declaring that he didn't really care what the International Labor Organization had to say about Guatemala but that he did care about the possible economic consequences of the petition, the maquila industry representative encouraged the staff to leave the country sooner rather than later. Resting on his desk was a revolver. Upon leaving, Bruce Fieldman, USGLEP's staffer in Guatemala, turned and asked, "Have we just been threatened?" Later, Executive Director Stephen Coats was publicly declared by the head of the business sector an enemy of the state.

Two decades later, the most conservative arm of the Guatemalan business sector publicly urged its government in a May 2012 letter to address violence against unionists in order to avoid potential trade sanctions. The letter stemmed from a visit by USLEAP a few weeks earlier during which staff met again with business representatives, but this time with a different response.

USLEAP has therefore turned its attention to helping test and expose the effectiveness of the new labor provisions in trade agreements. The results to date are not encouraging, with a Guatemala labor complaint achieving little in the four years after it was filed in 2008.

USLEAP's extensive experience on trade and worker rights in Latin America, especially Guatemala, has put it in a credible position to highlight CAFTA's short-comings, including its failure to address violence against trade unionists. The coming years will be key in testing the labor protections of these agreements, but also challenging as resources for the trade-worker rights agenda have diminished overall, leaving USLEAP and ILRF as the primary U.S. NGOs dedicating significant time to advocate on the issue.

*\*\*NAFTA's labor protections are contained in a "side agreement" and require adherence only to domestic law; CAFTA's labor protections are incorporated into the text of the agreement but still require adherence only to domestic labor law. A third generation of labor protections incorporated into the four most recent agreements (Colombia, Panama, South Korea, and Peru) require compliance with international standards.*

### III. VIOLENCE AGAINST TRADE UNIONISTS

Twenty-five years after USGLEP was founded in the aftermath of an international campaign to respond to violence against the Coca-Cola union in **Guatemala**, Latin America continues to lead the world in the assassination of trade unionists. Colombia, despite a drop in murders over the past decade, consistently ranks first in the world in the number of unionists killed, and Guatemala, in recent years, second.

Violence against workers in Guatemala has always been a part of the organization's agenda but a surge in violence against Guatemalan trade unionists that has claimed 50 lives since 2006 has recently renewed USLEAP's focus. A central issue raised in a 2008 CAFTA labor complaint was violence against union leaders, but the US government has determined that the murder of a trade unionist is not a violation of worker rights subject to CAFTA's labor chapter. USLEAP has been at the forefront in challenging this notion, and in 2012 began an initiative with the ILRF to ensure that addressing violence becomes part of the process of resolving CAFTA labor complaints, starting with the precedent-setting case of Guatemala. USLEAP's efforts helped generate a path-breaking, jaw-dropping letter in May 2012 from the ultraconservative Guatemalan agribusiness sector urging its government to address violence in order to help respond to the complaint.

In 2001, USLEAP was asked by a leading Colombian NGO to take up the issue of violence against workers in **Colombia**. Over the next decade, USLEAP became the leading U.S. NGO authority on violence against Colombian trade unionists and impunity, organizing delegations to Colombia and worker tours to the U.S., putting out a monthly Violence Against Colombian Trade Unionists Bulletin, and producing a Colombia action kit and PowerPoint presentation for use by U.S. unions.

#### An unsettling day in Bogota, Colombia

On a beautiful Sunday morning in Bogota in February 2009, USLEAP staff were strolling towards Mount Monserrate with human rights lawyer Yessika Hoyos a day after she had returned from testifying in Washington, DC about violence and impunity in Colombia. The stroll was interrupted when she received a cell phone call from her family, telling her that Colombian President Alvaro Uribe was at that very moment denouncing her on national TV, in terms that seriously increased her risk factor. (Ominously, the President seemed to know exactly what she had had to drink in Washington the evening after testifying.) USLEAP quickly secured intervention from a U.S. senator to express "concern" about Uribe's verbal assault. Yessika went on about her mission to try to identify those who murdered her father in 2001; later in the year, she was awarded the AFL-CIO's Lane Kirkland-George Meany Human Rights Award.

#### *Encounters with the rich and anti-union powerful, in Ecuador*

After armed men shot, attacked, and evicted workers engaged in a work stoppage in 2002 on banana plantations owned by the richest man in Ecuador, USLEAP staff met with him in his Guayaquil office overlooking the Guayas river. Alvaro Noboa, not a man of great height, was perfectly at ease admitting he had called in thugs to violently evict his workers, offering no apology and declaring that all unions in Ecuador were communist. Despite USLEAP interventions with his largest U.S. buyer (Costco) and his friend Bobby Kennedy Jr, the filing of a worker rights petition with the U.S. government, securing extensive media coverage (e.g. *The New York Times*, Univision), and support from members of Congress (e.g. Rep. George Miller, whose staffer on a USLEAP delegation to Ecuador was identified in the Ecuadorian press as a U.S. senator!), Mr. Noboa refused to recognize the union; in 2012, the company remains "union-free."

After the U.S. and Colombia initialed a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in 2006, USLEAP also researched and wrote three annual, ground-breaking impunity reports documenting failures by the Colombian courts in handling cases of violence against trade unionists. In addition to USLEAP fact sheets and briefing papers, the annual reports were used extensively by advocates and members of Congress during the debate on the Colombia FTA. According to Congressional allies, USLEAP's work made a major contribution to ensuring that violence against trade unionists was a focal point of the Colombia FTA debate, helping bottle up the FTA for an unprecedented five years until its dismaying passage in October 2011.

Violence against trade unionists and other human rights advocates in **Honduras** following the



2009 coup prompted USLEAP to organize U.S. trade union sign-on letters opposing the coup, supporting Honduran trade unions, and opposing U.S. military aid to Honduras until the Honduran government addressed human rights violations. Signing the most recent, March 2012 letter were the AFL-CIO, American Federation of Teachers, Communications Workers of America, International Association of Machinists, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA), United Auto Workers, United Food and Commercial Workers Union, United Steelworkers, and UNITE HERE.

USLEAP has also responded to specific needs of **individual workers**, e.g. playing a significant role in securing the resumption of protection in 2012 for union leader Noe Ramirez of the SITRA-BI banana union in Guatemala; helping lead U.S. grassroots work in support of Blanca Velasquez, Executive Director of the Mexican worker rights organization CAT after repeated death threats in 2011 and 2012, and helping arrange safety and support for Guatemalan bank union leader Reynaldo Gonzalez and his family in 1996 and Guatemalan unionist Jose Armando Palacios and his family in 2006-08.

### Baptism by fire, in Washington, DC

After finishing her first and USLEAP's second impunity report on Colombia in 2009, Colombia-based field representative Suzanna Collerd went with other USLEAP staff to review the report at a meeting at the office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR). Normally, USLEAP staff meet with just a couple USTR officials but Suzanna was faced with a small army of more than a half-dozen staff who circled the table to face her and her defense of the report. Suzanna greatly impressed her fellow USLEAP staffers with her presence, command, and effectiveness despite the imbalance of forces.

### Key Publications

*Justice for All: The Struggle for Worker Rights in Colombia*, a 2006 report produced for the Solidarity Center by Bob Perillo.

*Justice for All: The Struggle for Worker Rights in Guatemala*, a 2008 report produced for the Solidarity Center by Bob Perillo.

*Gendered Injustice: The Struggle of Women Flower Workers in Colombia*, a 2009 booklet produced by Carol Hansen, Suzanna Collerd, and Lupita Aguila with a grant from the Berger-Marks Foundation.

*Colombia: Falling Further Behind in the Fight Against the Impunity of Anti-Union Violence*, USLEAP's 2009 Annual Impunity Report, by David Feller Pegg, funded by the 21st Century ILGWU Heritage Fund.

*Systematic Violence Requires Strategic Justice: Ongoing Impunity in Assassinations of Trade Unionists in Colombia*, USLEAP's 2008 Annual Impunity Report, by Suzanna Collerd, funded by the 21st Century ILGWU Heritage Fund.

*Why are Unionists Murdered in Colombia? An analysis of 2007 rulings by the Specialized Labor Courts in Colombia*, USLEAP's 2007 Annual Impunity Report, by Charity Ryerson.

*Survey of Maquila Worker Organizing Efforts in Central America and International Labor Solidarity: 1990-2005*, by Stephen Coats and Bob Perillo, funded by the 21st Century ILGWU Heritage Fund.

And an award-winning website!



**News Coverage:** USLEAP's work has been covered in *The Atlanta Journal Constitution*, *Chicago Tribune*, *National Journal*, *New York Times*, *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, *Seattle Times*, *Washington Post*, ABC, NBC, Univision, National Public Radio, and other media, including newspapers, radio, and TV in Latin America, especially Guatemala and Ecuador

**Memberships:** Chicago Fair Trade, Colombia: Human Rights Defenders Under Threat, European Banana Action Network, Latin America Studies Association, Latin America Working Group, World Banana Forum Steering Committee.

## Latin American Unions We Have Supported

Over the years, USLEAP has worked with a range of trade unions and worker rights NGOs in Latin America too numerous to list but they have included in Colombia: the Cactus Corporacion, CUT, CTC, Escuela Nacional Sindical, House of Flower Workers, Sintrainagro, Sintrasplendor, Untraflores, and Untrafragancia; in Costa Rica: ANEP, COSIBA-CR, Sitagah, and Sitrap; in Ecuador: FENACLE and CEOSL; in El Salvador: STIT, CEAL, and SUTTEL; in Guatemala: CALDH, CGTG, COVERCO, CUSG, FESEBS, FESTRAS, SITRABI, Sitracimi, Sitrachoi, UGT, and UNSITRAGUA; in Honduras: COSIBAH, Sitraterco, Sitraserco, SitraKimih, STEYY, and Sitracor; in Mexico: CAT, CFO, FAT, FTVO, Mineworkers, and SME; in Nicaragua: ATC, CST-JBE, FETRABACH, FNT, FSTTZE, and FTVPC; and in Peru, SITAG.

## Northern Unions with Whom We've Worked

Over the years, USLEAP has worked with many U.S. and international unions, through campaigns, representation on the board, advocacy, and delegations. Unions that have participated in or provided support for USLEAP's work include ACTWU, American Federation of Teachers; AFSCME; the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Union; Canadian Auto Workers; Communications Workers of America; Farm Labor Organizing Committee; GMB (UK); HERE; International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; International Brotherhood of Teamsters; ILGWU; International Longshore and Warehouse Union; International Union of Electrical Workers; National Education Association; Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union; Service Employees International Union; United Auto Workers; United Electrical Workers; United Farm Workers; United Food and Commercial Workers Union; United Mineworkers, United Steelworkers; UNITE, UNITE HERE, and Workers United.

USLEAP has also worked extensively with the AFL-CIO and the Americas Region of the Solidarity Center, including contract work from 1998 to 2010.

At the international level, USLEAP has worked closely with global union federations, the primary international arm of the global labor movement, especially with the International Union of Foodworkers (IUF), the International Textile, Garment, and Leatherworkers Federation (ITGLWF), and the International Metalworkers Federation (IMF, now known, with the ITGLWF, as IndustriALL) and their regional offices.



## Tribute to Gail Lopez-Henriquez

Many board members have played vital roles with the organization during its lifetime but at the end of 25 years, one who stands out is Gail Lopez-Henriquez, now serving her third term as board chair and the longest serving board member. Gail took over from John Ruthrauff as our second chair, extending a level of no-nonsense leadership that kept the organization professionally grounded. Gail has provided legal advice, led a trade-worker rights delegation to Guatemala in the 1990s, bailed out the organizationally financially on two separate occasions, and steered the organization through difficulties that might have sunk any other small non-profit. This 25th Anniversary ad book is therefore dedicated in part to her; thanks, Gail.

## NGOs with Whom We've Worked

None of what USLEAP has helped accomplish has been achieved by USLEAP acting alone. Most USLEAP campaign or support effort in the North has been based on collaborations with a broad range of NGOs (non-governmental organizations) that have included the American Friends Service Committee, Banana Link, Campaign for Labor Rights, Chicago Religious Leadership Network, Clean Clothes Campaign, Development Gap, Eighth Day Center for Justice (Chicago), EUROBAN (European Banana Action Network), Focus on Globalization, Global Exchange, Guatemala Human Rights Commission/USA, Human Rights Watch, International Labor Rights Forum, Interreligious Task Force on Central America (Cleveland), Latin America Working Group, Maquila Solidarity Network (Canada), Nicaragua Network, NISGUA, Peace Brigades International, Religious Task Force on Central America and Mexico, STITCH, Sweatshop Watch, United Students Against Sweatshops, U.S. Office on Colombia, Washington Office on Latin America, Witness for Peace, and the Worker Rights Consortium.

## The Staff: 25 Years of Excellence

USLEAP has been fortunate to have had many excellent staff over the years, providing commitment and skills while garnering low pay, little recognition, and minimal support. In chronological order, we recognize and thank: Guatemala-based staff Karen Brandow, Bruce Fieldman, Rhett Doumitt, Marion Traub-Warner, and Bob Perillo; Colombia-based staff Suzanna Collerd; and U.S.-based staff Peter Hogness, Mark Hallett, Robin Dillow, Erich Hahn, Hannah Frisch, Tasha Pierce, Dan Graff, Gloria Vicente, Joan Axthelm, Alison Paul, Juana Pascual, Maurisia Martinez, Charity Ryerson, Rachel Wallis, Carol Hansen (long-term intern), Lupita Aguila Arteaga, Anna Koob, Maria Demopoulos, and Rebecca Van Horn.

## Thanks!

USLEAP would like to express deep appreciation to all the individual donors, both large and small, who have provided the bulk of our support over the years. While we cannot list all individual donors for the past 25 years, we list here those individuals who have made at least one donation since January 1, 2010. (Individuals in italics have made significant financial contributions in the life of USLEAP).

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We also wish to thank the following foundations, religious groups and unions whose support has been critical to our ability to function for 25 years. All have provided at least one gift of \$1,000 or more, many have provided much more (major donors highlighted in bold).

AMJ Foundation

**Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union**

**Arca Foundation**

Berger-Marks Foundation

**Boehm Foundation**

Boston Foundation

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Mary Alphonse Bradley Fund

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**International Ladies Garment Workers Union**

International Longshore and Warehouse Union

**International Textile, Garment, and Leather Workers Federation**

International Union of Electrical Workers

**International Union of Foodworkers**

Labor Council for Latin American Advancement

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UNITE HERE Chicago and Midwest Regional Joint Board

UNITE HERE New York Metropolitan Area Joint Board



# Corporación Colectivo de Abogados

**José Alvear Restrepo**

Bogota, May 24, 2012

## HOMAGE FOR USLEAP ON ITS TWENTIFIFTH ANNIVERSARY

Colleagues:

Today we celebrate with you these 25 years of struggle for the rights of Latin American workers, especially those who are frequently exploited by North American multinational companies.

We recognize your accompaniment of Latin American peasants and workers who receive encouragement in the struggle to defend their rights.

We recognize your search for JUSTICE, your voice to denounce impunity and your efforts to dignify, rebuild and recover the dream of those who have been victims of our history, work that brings DIGNITY to everyone.

For this and much more we celebrate your 25 years of existence.

**COLECTIVO DE ABOGADOS JOSE ALVEAR RESTREPO**



The team representing the Centro de Apoyo al Trabajador A.C. would like to congratulate you

for the 25th anniversary that you are celebrating and share a few brief words to express our profound appreciation of USLEAP for the invaluable work that it does to benefit the human rights of many men and women who are clamoring for a just world. We offer special, double thanks to our colleague Stephen who has been at our side to denounce, work for and make known the demands of the workers of Mexico, starting with the Tarrant case and up through the outrageous closure of Johnson Controls. Thank you for your support because thanks to international support our voices can be heard.



*The Sindicato de Trabajadores Agrarios del Perú offers its greetings to the U.S. Labor Education in the Americas Project, USLEAP, as it celebrates 25 years of struggle and support for those of us that are working for a better life for ourselves and for our families and to overcome poverty in Latin America as we dream of a more global economy and an environment that allows workers the freedom to fight for improved salaries and working conditions.*

*Sitag-Perú recognizes USLEAP's 25 years, a difficult road of working on behalf of labor justice. In 1987 Guatemala was chosen for the creation of USLEAP with the name U.S./Guatemala Labor Education in the Americas Project. Since then USLEAP has expanded its work to other countries in Latin America, including Peru, and that is why, on this 25th anniversary, the Sindicato de Trabajadores Agrarios del Perú recognizes not only the noble work of the organization but also says Onward! Hasta la Victoria!*

-----  
JUAN A. HERRERA HUANCA  
GENERAL SECRETARY  
SITAG-PERU





## **COORDINADORA LATINOAMERICANA DE SINDICATOS BANANEROS Y AGROINDUSTRIA COLSIBA**

La Lima Cortes, Col. Sitraterco 100 mts. N.O. del parque central  
Tel : ( 504) 668 – 1736 Apdo. Postal S.P.S. No 4128  
e-mail : [colsiba@colsiba.org](mailto:colsiba@colsiba.org) [iris@cosibah.org](mailto:iris@cosibah.org) web [www.colsiba.org](http://www.colsiba.org)

The U.S. Labor Education in the Americas Project (USLEAP) is celebrating its XXV anniversary of ongoing solidarity with our organizations.

Our union recognizes the important and successful efforts of this organization to defend and gain respect for the social and employment conditions of workers in Latin America's diverse sectors.

We know that it has not been easy to keep going but the courage, will and commitment that your organization has demonstrated provides us with an example so that we may continue to take action, share information, educate, denounce, and promote solidarity so that thousands of workers in the agro industrial sector might have greater opportunity to improve their quality of life.

**For this we express our solidarity and congratulate you on your anniversary**

# **COLSIBA**

## **COORDINADORA DE SINDICATOS BANANEROS Y AGROINDUSTRIALES DE HONDURAS**



### **COSIBAH**

Miembro de la Coordinadora Latinoamericana de Sindicatos Bananeros  
La Lima Cortes, Col. Sitraterco 100 mts. N.O. del Parque Central  
Tel: (504) 2668 -1736 Apdo. Postal S.P.S. No. 4128  
[cosibah@cosibah.org](mailto:cosibah@cosibah.org) [www.cosibah.org](http://www.cosibah.org)

La Lima, Cortes 07/21/12

Colleagues of USLEAP:

The Coordinadora de Sindicatos Bananeros y Agroindustriales de Honduras, COSIBAH, recognizes our colleagues at USLEAP for their 25 years of unwavering struggle on behalf of thousands of workers in Latin America and around the world.

We speak on behalf of thousands of agricultural workers in Honduras who have felt the warmth of USLEAP's solidarity, which has been expressed by campaigns, letters and protests demanding companies improve their labor standards and respect union organizations.

We recognize the support offered to the people of Honduras during the coup d'état and the recent struggle to defend human rights in our country, especially for peasants.

International framework agreements, intervention in the dialogue with transnational companies, campaigns for the respect of labor rights and joint efforts in creating strategy characterize your organization and demonstrate your rejection of labor exploitation and support for the effort to improve the living conditions of thousands of agricultural workers in this country.

German Zepeda  
President



**CONFEDERACIÓN DE UNIDAD SINDICAL DE GUATEMALA CUSG**  
12 Calle "A" 0-37 Zona 1, Telefax: 22536811 – 22328154  
E-Mail: [cusg.guatemala@gmail.com](mailto:cusg.guatemala@gmail.com) [WWW.Cusg-guatemala.org](http://WWW.Cusg-guatemala.org)

Guatemala, June 16, 2012

The Confederación de Unidad Sindical de Guatemala, CUSG, congratulates USLEAP on its XXV anniversary. We recognize that these have been twenty five years of struggle and solidarity with workers who are constantly suffering violations of their human, labor and union rights.

Our confederation believes that it is important to recognize the work that this important organization has been doing in Guatemala since its inception, fighting for a better life for workers and their families and working to overcome poverty.

CUSG expresses its appreciation and recognition of USLEAP for the many ways that it offers solidarity, support and assistance for our union affiliates. One example of this is the case of the Sindicato de Trabajadores Bananeros de Izabal, SITRABI, whose union offices were raided by heavily armed men in October 1999 forcing five SITRABI leaders and their families into exile. On that occasion, USLEAP and other solidarity organizations coordinated support and accompaniment for our colleagues and their families and the organization continues to closely follow the current situation of SITRABI members, which is a complex situation given the constant labor rights violations, threats, persecution, intimidation and assassinations of union leaders and members.

For this and many other expressions of support, solidarity and accompaniment that USLEAP has offered to CUSG and its member organizations, a thousand times thank you to the colleagues that represent the diverse organizations that make up USLEAP and to the organizations and institutions that offer financial support.

## **CONGRATULATIONS**

**1987**

**25th ANNIVERSARY**

**2012**

# SOLIDARITY SOLIDARIDAD

**The working women and men of the  
AFL-CIO  
congratulate  
USLEAP  
on 25 years of bringing justice  
to workers in the global economy**

RICHARD L. TRUMKA  
President

ELIZABETH H. SHULER  
Secretary-Treasurer

ARLENE HOLT BAKER  
Executive Vice President

**Members and Officers of the  
International Association of Machinists  
and Aerospace Workers**

Congratulate and salute the

## **U.S. Labor Education in the Americas Project**

on your

### ***25th Anniversary***

Keep fighting for justice on the job, human rights and a decent standard  
of living for working men and women in the global economy.

INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

**R. Thomas Buffenbarger**

GENERAL SECRETARY-TREASURER

**Robert Roach, Jr.**

GENERAL VICE PRESIDENTS

**Dave Ritchie, Jr., Lynn D. Tucker, Jr., Robert Martinez, Jr.,  
Richard Michalski, Philip J. Gruber, Gary R. Allen,  
Sito Pantoja and Mark A. Blondin.**



# SERVICE EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION



Salutes the work of


# USLEAP

*For 25 years of fighting for worker  
justice in the global economy*

.....  
**[www.seiu.org](http://www.seiu.org)**

1800 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20036

**Service Employees International Union, CTW, CLC**

15746.m.6.14.12 



# Congratulations to US LEAP on 25 years!

The International Metalworkers' Federation has enjoyed an excellent collaboration with you in the past and expects to continue in the future, now as IndustriALL Global Union.



[www.industriall-union.org](http://www.industriall-union.org)



## Uniting Food, Farm and Hotel Workers Worldwide

In appreciation of USLEAP's 25 years of dedicated support  
for workers' rights in the Americas



### Building global solidarity

International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel  
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Associations

8, Rampe du Pont-Rouge, 1213 Petit Lancy, Switzerland  
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General Secretary: **Ron Oswald**  
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[www.iuf.org](http://www.iuf.org)

The Solidarity Center Is Proud  
to Support USLEAP's  
25th Anniversary



**Solidarity Center**  
promoting worker rights worldwide



[www.solidaritycenter.org](http://www.solidaritycenter.org)



Bruce J. Klipple  
President

Andrew Dinkelaker  
Secretary-Treasurer

Robert B. Kingsley  
Director of Organization

*Thank You USLEAP*

*For 25 Years of Effective  
Solidarity, Education and Advocacy with the  
Labor Rights Struggles of Latin America!*

*Adelante!*



**Chicago Religious Leadership Network  
on Latin America (CRLN)**  
4750 N. Sheridan Rd., Suite 429  
Chicago, IL 60640  
[www.crln.org](http://www.crln.org)



LET US JOIN TOGETHER IN FAITH AND HOPE

Support workers' rights globally!  
Take action at [LaborRights.org](http://LaborRights.org)



UFCW News Service



**LCLAA**<sup>®</sup>  
LABOR COUNCIL FOR LATIN AMERICAN ADVANCEMENT

Congratulates **USLEAP**  
on *25 years* of tirelessly  
fighting for workers' justice  
all around the world!

815 16th Street NW 3rd Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20006  
202-508-6919  
Wwww.lclaa.org

**Congratulations to USLEAP on  
twenty-five years of advocacy  
for improved labor policies and  
support for workers around the  
world who struggle to defend  
their rights!**



**WORKER RIGHTS CONSORTIUM**

*The Worker Rights Consortium is an independent labor  
rights monitoring organization that seeks to combat  
sweatshops and protect the rights of workers who make  
apparel and other products.*

*More information is available at [www.workersrights.org](http://www.workersrights.org).*



**Witness for Peace**

and our 20,000 members who support peace, justice, sustainable  
economies and workers' rights in the Americas would like to thank  
USLEAP for 25 years of crucial work standing up for economic  
justice, workers' rights and fair trade.

**THANK YOU!**

**Witness for Peace – 3628 12th Street NE, 1st Fl., Washington, DC 20017 – 202.547-6112**  
[www.witnessforpeace.org](http://www.witnessforpeace.org)

*UNITE HERE congratulates USLEAP  
on 25 years of working to improve workers' lives.  
We join with you in supporting the efforts of  
workers organizing in the Americas and globally.*



# UNITEHERE!

**John W. Wilhelm**

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**Sherri Chiesa**

Secretary-Treasurer

**Peter Ward**

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General Vice President for  
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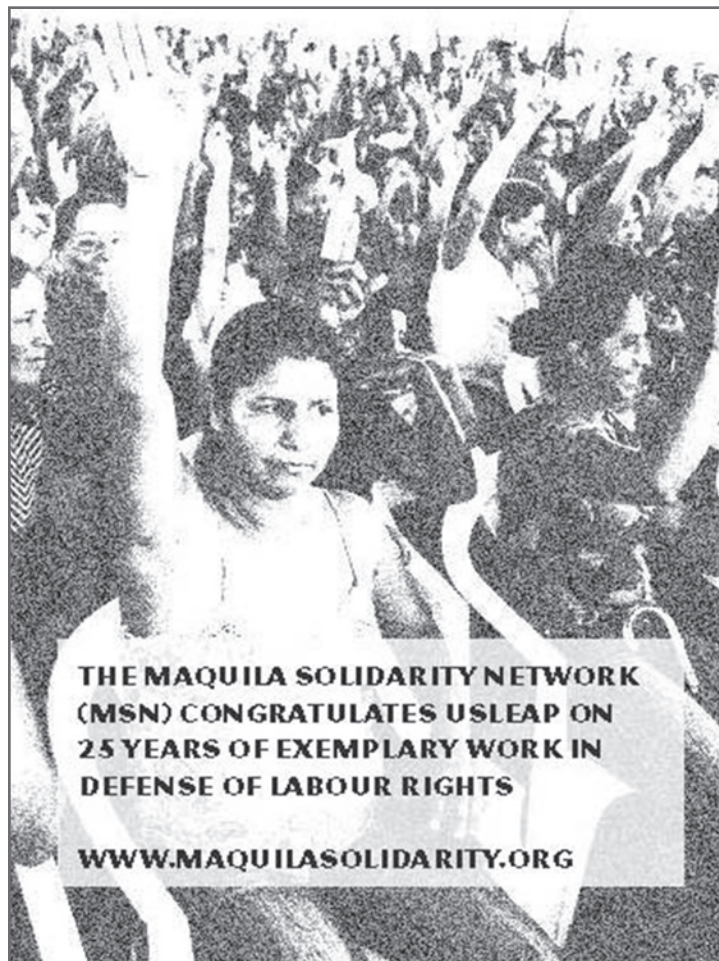


**Citizens  
Trade  
Campaign**

Congratulations on 25 years!

**Thank You,  
USLEAP**

[www.citizenstrade.org](http://www.citizenstrade.org) • (202) 494-8826



**THE MAQUILA SOLIDARITY NETWORK  
(MSN) CONGRATULATES USLEAP ON  
25 YEARS OF EXEMPLARY WORK IN  
DEFENSE OF LABOUR RIGHTS**

**WWW.MAQUILASOLIDARITY.ORG**



**Guatemala Human Rights  
Commission/USA**

Founded in 1982, the Guatemala Human Rights Commission/USA (GHRC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, humanitarian organization that monitors, documents, and reports on the human rights situation in Guatemala, advocates for survivors of human rights abuses in Guatemala, and works toward positive, systemic change.

Please visit [www.ghrc-usa.org](http://www.ghrc-usa.org) for more information.

3321 12th St., NE  
Washington, DC 20017  
202.529.6599 - [ghrc-usa@ghrc-usa.org](mailto:ghrc-usa@ghrc-usa.org)



**The  
Latin America  
Working Group**

Action at home for just policies abroad

***Congratulations to  
USLEAP!  
for 25 years of innovative  
programs in support of  
worker justice in Latin  
America!***

*For more information on how you can have an impact on U.S. policies toward Latin America or to receive LAWG email alerts on Colombia, Cuba, and U.S.-Mexico border policy, please visit our website at [www.lawg.org](http://www.lawg.org).*

Working towards fair and sustainable  
banana and pineapple trades

[www.bananalink.org.uk](http://www.bananalink.org.uk)



**Make Fruit Fair!**

Thank goodness for US/LEAP in the heart of  
North America. The banana world would have  
a big hole in it were it not for your sterling  
solidarity and advocacy work.

Here's to the next 25 years!

42-58 St George's Street, Norwich , NR3 1AB, Norfolk  
United Kingdom. + 44 1603 765670  
International Coordinator: Alistair Smith  
National Coordinator: Jacqui Mackay

## Congratulations on 25 years USLEAP!

GLOBAL EXCHANGE  
*building people-to-people ties*



Thank you USLEAP for twenty-five years of dedicated struggle in  
advocating for more just policies and for improving the lives of  
men and women workers everywhere.



# WOLA

Washington Office on Latin America

 [www.wola.org](http://www.wola.org)

 [/wola.org](https://www.facebook.com/wola.org)

 [/wola\\_org](https://twitter.com/wola_org)

## WOLA congratulates US LEAP on 25 years of advocacy on workers' rights

---

With the passing of the U.S.-Colombia  
Free Trade Agreement, your work to defend  
Colombian workers' rights will be  
more important than ever.

---

**We are grateful for your work  
and your partnership**

# Stand- ing Up for Trade Unionists Through- out Latin America



[www.usw.org](http://www.usw.org)

The European Banana and Agro  
Industrial Product Action Network



Euroban congratulates our key North American partner – US/LEAP – on a quarter of a century of invaluable work to secure rights and justice for the plantation workers of the Americas.

Keep up the brilliant work!

c/o Banana Link 42-58 St George's Street, Norwich , NR3 1AB  
Norfolk, United Kingdom. + 44 1603 765670



The *Project for Global Workers' Rights* at Penn State University congratulates USLEAP on its 25 years of struggle for worker justice in the global economy. We look forward to working together for many years to come.

U.S. Office on Colombia  
connecting civil society to policymakers



Advocacy and up-to-date analysis on human rights issues, impunity, and the search for a negotiated solution to the Colombian conflict.

1100 G Street, Suite 800 NW Washington, DC 20005  
Tel: 202-232-8090 www.usofficeoncolombia.org  
Fax: 202-232-7530 info@usofficeoncolombia.org



**NISGUA**  
Working for Justice in Guatemala

"Congratulations on your 25 years of solidarity work!"

<http://www.nisgua.org>

Join the IRTF  
**RAPID RESPONSE NETWORK**

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Killing,  
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[www.IRTFcleveland.org/action/rrn/letters](http://www.IRTFcleveland.org/action/rrn/letters)



InterReligious Task Force on Central America  
3606 Bridge Avenue Cleveland OH 44113  
[www.IRTFcleveland.org](http://www.IRTFcleveland.org)



The UAW congratulates the U.S. Labor Education in the Americas Project on their 25th Anniversary supporting Latin American union activists.



uaw.org  
facebook.com/uaw.union  
twitter.com/uaw

Illustration by Seth Tobocman





### Greetings on the XXV Anniversary of USLEAP

The Central Unitaria de Trabajadores de Colombia, CUT, sends greetings to USLEAP (US Labor Education in the Americas Project) on its XXV anniversary and recognizes the actions taken by this organization to denounce violations, made real through campaigns that are designed to put an end to impunity and the assassination of unionists and to oppose the United States' current trade and economic aid policies towards Colombia.

Currently Colombian unionism is undergoing one of its history's most severe crisis. More than 2,800 union leaders and affiliates have been assassinated since the organization was founded in 1986; 26 years of "unionicide" perpetuated by the power of Colombian government and businesses. This is why we underline the importance of USLEAP's work as an example of solidarity with our country.

**Domingo Tovar Arrieta  
President**

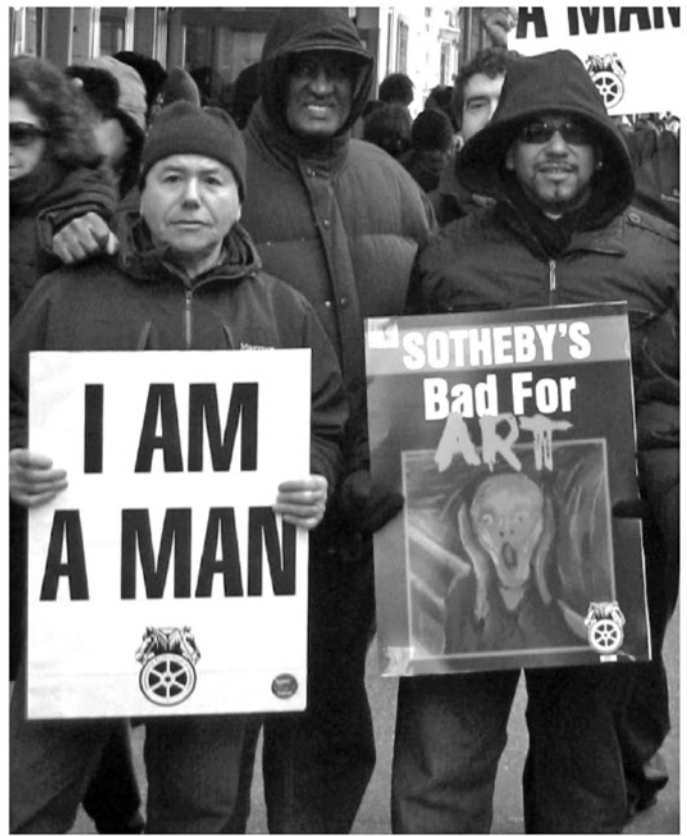
**Witney Chavez Sanchez  
General Secretary**

**Luis Alberto Vanegas Z.  
Director of the Department of  
Human Rights and Solidarity**



**TRABAJAMOS POR LA UNIDAD DEL SINDICALISMO COLOMBIANO**  
Calle 35 No. 7-25 P.9 PBX y FAX 3237550-3237950 Bogotá, D. C. -Colombia  
Email: [cut@cut.org.co](mailto:cut@cut.org.co) - [derechoshumanos@cut.org.co](mailto:derechoshumanos@cut.org.co)





## USLEAP and Teamsters Defending Worker Rights in the Americas



*Dedicated to all working women and men at home and abroad who organize for justice.*

U.S. Labor Education in the Americas Project (USLEAP)  
Proyecto de Solidaridad Laboral EUA/Las Americas  
P.O. Box 268290  
Chicago, IL 60626  
773.262.6502 (t) 773.728.8409 (f) [www.usleap.org](http://www.usleap.org)