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## February 2008

### Newsletter #18

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#### Save the date: SweatFree Summit

Join activists from across the country this summer for a weekend of training, strategy, and action. Coinciding with the National Governors Association Centennial Meeting, we are gathering in Philadelphia July 11-13 to call on our governors to join the State and Local Government Sweatfree Consortium.

The Sweatfree Summit will kick off with a Worker Rights Board hearing, march, and rally featuring testimonies by sweatshop workers who sew uniforms purchased with our tax dollars.

The rest of the weekend will feature trainings - suitable for new and seasoned sweatfree campaign activists - as well as strategy sessions for our joint Sweatfree Consortium campaign.

We hope that you can join us! Our goal is to make this summit affordable to all who are interested; we will be offering travel scholarships to low-income participants. **Mark your calendars now: July 11-13 in Philadelphia.**

#### Wal-Mart Sweatshop Workers Speaking Tour

Have you heard what Wal-Mart factory workers have to say about their working conditions?

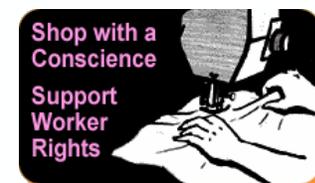
Now is your chance.

International Labor Rights Forum and SweatFree Communities are sponsoring a speaking tour in Michigan and Ohio, April 3-12. We have invited a Bangladeshi garment worker who sews school uniforms for Wal-Mart and a farmworker from Costa Rica who picks pineapples for Del Monte.

Email [trina.tocco@ilrf.org](mailto:trina.tocco@ilrf.org) by February 22 to inquire about hosting the tour.

#### Welcoming New Midwest Regional Organizer

We are excited to welcome on board our new Midwest Regional Organizer, Vicki Kaplan. Vicki joins us with a wealth of organizing experience from campaigns with Food & Water Watch, Citizens Trade Campaign PAC, and United Students Against Sweatshops.



Midwesterners, we invite you to get in touch with Vicki to introduce yourself. She would be delighted to come to your community for a meeting or to give a workshop:

[vicki@sweatfree.org](mailto:vicki@sweatfree.org).

### Host a Campaign Retreat, Training, or Strategy Session

Last month, our national organizer, Liana Foxvog, facilitated a day-long campaign retreat in Oregon and co-led a two-hour workshop in Seattle. Later this month she'll lead strategy workshops in Austin and San Antonio.

Will your community be next? A strategy session can help launch your campaign or bring it to the next level. To arrange one in your community, contact Liana to discuss the possibilities: [liana@sweatfree.org](mailto:liana@sweatfree.org) / 413-586-0974.

### Local Campaign Updates

**Hawaii:** A state senate committee has recommended passage of a strong sweatfree bill. Many hurdles remain. If you live in Hawaii or know people in Hawaii who can express their support, please let us know. To follow the bill's progress, [go here](#) and enter SB2409.

**Maryland:** The first committee hearing on the [Sweatfree Maryland](#) bill received enthusiastic support. If you live in Maryland, [this is a great time to send a letter of support >>](#)

**Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania:** During a [time of harassment of labor activists in Bangladesh](#), fans call on Pittsburgh Pirates to investigate working conditions in Bangladesh garment factories [>>](#)

**San Francisco, California:** In case you've been following the recent amendments to the sweatfree policy in San Francisco, we wanted to let you know that they are now online. Our website has the details [>>](#)

**Travis County, Texas:** Last month the county commissioners voted to enact purchasing policies to guide the county in buying only those products that are manufactured in environmentally and socially responsible ways. The Travis County Sweatfree Coalition is currently working to make sure that adequate rules are created and to encourage the county to join the Sweatfree Consortium [>>](#)

*More campaign updates [>>](#)*

### Have a Socially Responsible Valentine's Day

While you're celebrating the love in your life and perhaps enjoying fair trade chocolate, please take a minute for three actions this Valentine's Day:

- 1) Let Colombian businessmen know that U.S. consumers want justice for cut flower workers. [Send a letter now >>](#)
- 2) Ask Nestl  to take responsibility for ending child slavery on their farms and use Fair Trade cocoa. [Send a letter now >>](#)
- 3) Want to give something special this Valentine's Day? Give to SweatFree Communities. Won't you consider making a recurring donation of \$10 a month? [Become a monthly contributor now >>](#)

Thank you for taking these three actions.

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