



Working with Students

AT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES across the country there are student activists who share our commitment to global fairness and rights for working people. From the streets of Seattle to their campuses and their communities, students have been front and center in recent years advocating such progressive causes as an end to sweatshop labor and opposition to unfair trade agreements. An event focusing on issues of international trade and the ILO declaration on rights at work is a great opportunity to build and strengthen your ties to student activist organizations.

Find students. If you don't already work with local students, finding them will take a little investigation. Talk to your members and community allies to see whether they have worked with student organizations in the past. There are also several national organizations that you can call:

- **AFL-CIO.** Andre Banks, Student Project Coordinator; 202-508-6989; www.aflcio.org.
- **United States Student Association and Jobs with Justice.** Laura McSpedon and Treston Faulkner; 202-347-8772 and 202-434-1106; www.usstudents.org and www.jwj.org.
- **United Students Against Sweatshops.** Eric Brakken and Carrie Brunk; 202-NOSWEAT.
- **Student Alliance to Reform Corporations.** Eric Romann; 510-272-9109; www.corpreform.org.

If all else fails, head over to campus or check the Web. Most colleges have a list of student organizations—check that list for organizations that are concerned with sweatshops, trade, labor, peace, the environment, civil rights and social justice.

Set up a meeting and plan the event together. The best way to build a lasting relationship with student activists is to plan an event together—not simply invite them to an event where everything already is planned. The type of event students will be interested in will depend on their current campaigns. Some ideas are:

- A May 1 action to coincide with other events for the ILO poster launch. Anti-sweatshop organizations, for example, could use the poster as part of their campaign to ensure that university apparel manufacturers respect workers' rights.
- A student/labor/community forum on the impact of such trade agreements as the Free Trade Area of the Americas.
- A rally in support of graduate student employees who are trying to form a union.
- A coordinated effort between students and union members on campus to post the ILO poster in different university workplaces.

After you have discussed different possibilities for the event, make a commitment and then follow up.