

CLASP

CENTER FOR LAW AND SOCIAL POLICY

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New CLASP Initiative Promotes Job Quality and National Prosperity

(Washington, DC) – A new initiative announced December 4 by the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) advocates for job quality policies that increase our nation’s prosperity and ensure that this prosperity is shared fairly. **OPPORTUNITY AT WORK: Creating Better Jobs for a Stronger Economy** will promote a national conversation about policy innovations and best practices to improve job quality for low-wage workers.

The focus on job quality is an important and necessary addition to CLASP’s existing work on skill upgrading and work supports. Taken together, these three areas of work represent a comprehensive approach to improving the economic prospects of low-income people.

“The growing gap between those who have benefited from globalization and technological development and those who have not is threatening our social fabric and our nation’s long-term competitiveness,” said Evelyn Ganzglass, CLASP’s Director of Workforce Development.

Over the coming year, **OPPORTUNITY AT WORK** will promote job quality policies and practices that link economic, employment, education and social policies in mutually reinforcing strategies.

Beginning in January 2007, CLASP will convene a series of national audio conferences, in which cutting-edge thinkers will discuss policy options for addressing—at local, state and national levels—these challenges facing low- and middle-income workers and their families. The audio conferences topics will include:

- **Job quality and the new Congress**
- **Getting the job quality picture right**
- **Creating middle-class jobs**
- **Making low-wage jobs family friendly**
- **Socially responsible staffing agencies**
- **Employers who advance workers**

In January 2007, CLASP will also launch “Promising Innovations to Improve Job Quality” to showcase new ways in which our workforce, education, economic development and human services systems are responding to the seismic shifts in the economy. CLASP will issue a call for nominations from around the country of promising

policies and practices on emerging ideas—along with others more firmly in place—to provide opportunity and economic security in the changing U.S. economy.

These promising practices will be highlighted in a publication to be released on Labor Day 2007. In addition, CLASP will publish “Jobs that Measure Up,” a series of issue briefs on work quality and public- and private-sector strategies being used, in the U.S. and internationally, to promote better jobs.

CLASP will use blog technology to support an interactive Web site that fosters information exchange and debate of the issues raised by the audio conferences and publications. The Web site will also offer links to related resources.

In collaboration with the Center for Policy Alternatives, the Women Legislators’ Lobby and People for the American Way Foundation’s Young Elected Officials Network, CLASP will also provide ‘101’ workshops on job quality issues. These workshops will be provided to new-generation leaders—at annual meetings or other venues—so that they can gain information and tools related to new workforce issues.

In addition to promoting job quality policies at the federal and state levels, CLASP, in partnership with colleague organizations, has initiated a local effort to improve employment conditions for low-wage building service workers in the nation’s capitol. The project, Building Benefits, seeks to enlist building tenants in Washington, D.C.—nonprofits and others—in encouraging building owners and contractors to improve employment conditions for janitorial and other employees who run the building’s infrastructure. Building Benefits will link with the ongoing efforts of CLASP and others to obtain paid sick days legislation for the city.

“There’s no single solution to the challenge of creating a fairer economy in which all workers share in the benefits of our prosperity,” said Ganzglass. “We’re trying to connect the dots and give voice to state and local innovations that are leading the way.”

The Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) is a national non-profit that works to improve the lives of low-income people. CLASP’s mission is to improve the economic security, educational and workforce prospects, and family stability of low-income parents, children, and youth and to secure equal justice for all.

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