

CALLS AND DEMANDS

- ⇒ Justice for Avelino Tajonera, Ellroy Corporal, and all other Filipino migrant workers who have died or were injured or exploited working for Grand Isle Shipyard.
- ⇒ The Filipino GIS workers' stolen wages and tax refunds must immediately be returned to them.
- ⇒ All former GIS guestworkers still in the US should be granted humanitarian (U or T) visas immediately.
- ⇒ Government agencies must immediately investigate the conditions of the 167 currently employed GIS guestworkers. They must shut down Grand Isle Shipyard, Inc., DNR Offshore Crewing Services, Black Elk Energy, and their operators for illegal, inhumane, and negligent business practices.
- ⇒ We must end workplace racism and discrimination and develop stronger worker protections for all workers, including guestworkers.
- ⇒ The Philippine government must end the Labor Export Program, and they along with the U.S. government, and recruiters and companies in the Philippines and the U.S. must "Stop Trafficking Our People" (see STOP Project of Phil-Forum).
- ⇒ We must bring an end to this and other examples of Modern-Day Slavery of migrant workers!
- ⇒ The Philippines and other labor sending countries must end forced migration by creating jobs at home, instead of encouraging the outmigration of our people who have no choice but to leave their families, communities, and home country!
- ⇒ Philippine Ambassador Cuisia was made aware of the exploitation of Filipino GIS workers since 2010. He did nothing to stop the abuse and exploitation of these workers. The campaign demands the resignation of Ambassador Cuisia.

KEY DATES

- ⇒ **February 22-25:** Fact Finding Mission and Solidarity Mission in New Orleans, LA. Mobilizations supporting former & current GIS workers.
- ⇒ **March:** Delegation to Washington D.C. legislators and Mobilization at Philippine Embassy
- ⇒ **May 1:** May 1st International Workers Day Actions in New York and other cities
- ⇒ **October 3-4:** Events to coincide with U.N. High Level Dialogue on Migration:

National Stop Trafficking Conference organized by National Alliance for Filipino Concerns (NAFCON)

Guestworker Summit organized by International Migrants Alliance - USA (IMA-USA)

Visit <http://j4gisfilipinoworkers.wordpress.com/> frequently for up to date information on planned actions



NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR
FILIPINO CONCERNS



NATIONAL
GUESTWORKER
ALLIANCE

CONVENING ORGANIZATIONS

Philippine Forum (NY) | Fellowship for Filipino Migrants (Chicago) | Filipino Community Center (SF)



JUSTICE

for GRAND ISLE SHIPYARD

FILIPINO WORKERS!



HUMAN
TRAFFICKING!
SLAVERY
OF FILIPINO WORKERS!



FOR MORE INFORMATION, TO JOIN OR TO ENDORSE THE CAMPAIGN FOR "JUSTICE FOR GIS FILIPINO WORKERS":

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SUMMARY OF THE GRAND ISLE SHIPYARD CAMPAIGN

Conditions of Workers

Highly skilled Filipino workers were trafficked by Grand Isle Shipyards (GIS) from the Philippines with promises of visas, pay above \$16/hour, and quality jobs as welders, scaffolders, and pipe-fitters. These promises were not kept for the Grand Isle Shipyard (GIS) workers in Louisiana. The reality of the situation for the Filipino migrant workers amounted to modern-day slavery along the Gulf Coast in the American South.

GIS profited handsomely by violating the basic rights of these Filipino migrant workers. The workers were paid just about \$5/hour for working 10-14 hours/day, 6-7 days/week, sometimes up to 4 months straight with no overtime pay. Workers also experienced ridiculous deductions for housing ranging from \$1000 to \$3000 per month for a bunk bed and the company stealing their tax refunds.

Migrant workers were housed in cramped quarters (10x10 ft. rooms with 4 -6 workers per room) , not allowed the freedom to leave the GIS compound, and were even restricted from practicing their religious faith. Workers were subjected to a 10pm curfew, bunkhouse lockdowns, constant surveillance from the 23 cameras in the bunkhouse and restriction of their movement and



The Black Elk Energy Platform Explosion on Nov. 16, 2012
Photo credit: public domain

communication with the outside world, even while they were not working. If they did not follow these rules, they were threatened by GIS management with termination and deportation back to the Philippines.

Black Elk Energy Explosion

GIS put the Filipinos to work on an oil production platform owned by Black Elk Energy - a company that had racked up 315 documented "incidents of safety non-compliance" offshore since 2010 according to federal regulators . On November 16, 2012 three Filipino workers died when the Black Elk Energy platform exploded and three others were seriously injured. The incident brought increased attention to the practice of American companies hiring foreign guestworkers for potentially hazardous and unsafe jobs and the abuses and exploitation that often comes from such arrangements.

Fighting back: Join the Campaign!

After suffering discriminatory treatment (compared to their U.S. citizen co-workers) and other forms of abuse and exploitation, more than 100 Filipino GIS workers have joined a class action lawsuit against their recruiters and employers. Despite bribery and threats of deportation and harm to their families in the Philippines, the workers, surviving relatives and community supporters are demanding justice from these companies.

They are also demanding accountability from the Philippine and U.S. government agencies responsible for neglecting, if not facilitating, this situation of guestworker exploitation, trafficking and abuse. Local, national and international communities of Filipinos, guestworkers, churches, and everyday people are joining this campaign. JOIN US in our common struggle for truth and justice!



Justice for Avelino Tajonera, a victim of the Black Elk Energy platform Explosion!

CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVES

- ⇒ **To support the GIS Filipino workers** in accessing moral and social support, immediate relief and protection from retaliation, humanitarian visas and work permits, and victory in the class action lawsuit against GIS, DNR, and other defendants. To hold accountable the companies and individuals responsible for the exploitation of the GIS Filipino migrant guestworkers.
- ⇒ **To support the grassroots organization** and leadership of migrant workers and other trafficked victims to directly address this particular case and prevent future exploitation and abuse of Filipino migrants and all guestworkers in the United States.
- ⇒ **To expose and oppose** the slave-like conditions of the GIS workers and expose the culpability of the Philippine and US governments in these guestworker programs as a form of legal human trafficking.
- ⇒ **To activate** Filipino and non-Filipino organizations in the New Orleans area in order to build alliances inside Louisiana, across the United States, and around the world. And to build a broad network of support for this campaign and connect it with the struggle nationally and internationally against exploitative guestworker programs and for migrant rights.
- ⇒ **To engage** and be catalysts in policy changes, including but not limited to, strengthening anti-trafficking laws and labor laws in the Philippines and host countries, and the elimination of exploitative guestworker programs as part of U.S. immigration reform.

**JUSTICE FOR GRAND ISLE SHIPYARD FILIPINO WORKERS
AND THE VICTIMS OF
THE BLACK ELK ENERGY EXPLOSION!**