



Examining big issues

Undergraduates advancing Worker Institute research

Faculty and graduate students are not the only ones conducting meaningful world-of-work research at ILR.

The Worker Institute at Cornell is currently starting its second year of the Undergraduate Research Fellows program. Through the program, undergraduates have the chance to build research skills and make substantive contributions to ongoing research projects while working closely with faculty on the Ithaca campus and Worker Institute associates in New York City and Rochester.

Kate Griffith, who oversees this program, says that it “integrates many facets of ILR by connecting students’ educational experience with the research and extension missions of the school.”

This fall, 25 undergraduate research fellows and several Master of Industrial and Labor Relations students (MILRs) are engaging in projects focused on major worker-related issues facing New York state and the world.

Research projects include analyzing the first and second contract bargaining gains of unions, and examining the impact of immigration status on workers’ willingness to come forward when they experience wage violations or safety risks in the workplace.

Students conduct interviews, contribute to survey efforts, engage in law and policy research, code collective bargaining agreements, create original datasets and put together comprehensive literature reviews.

“I have gained a wealth of legal and policy research experience on a current issue [enforcement of wage protections for ‘tipped workers’] that is central to local and national economic equality strides,” said Undergraduate Research Fellow Deanna Hall ’15. “I have also increased my exposure to ILR faculty and staff, allowing me to create valuable relationships within the school.”

The Worker Institute Fall 2015 research teams

How do Unions' Administrative Policies Impact Organizational Outcomes?

Faculty and research professionals: Rachel Aleks, assistant professor of labor relations

Undergraduate and MILR students: Krassimira Hernandez '16; Damian O'Sullivan '17

Young Workers & The Labor Movement

Faculty and research professionals: Joe Alvarez, instructor; Sally Alvarez, director of Labor Programs; Maite Tapia Ph.D. '13; Lowell Turner, professor of International and Comparative Labor and director of The Worker Institute

Undergraduate and MILR students: Lisa Leibfried '16; Breanna Ross '17; Paul Ahrens MILR '17

Our Complements to the Nurses: The Impact of Bargaining Structures on Bargaining Outcomes for Hospital Workers in New York State

Faculty and research professionals: Adam Litwin, associate professor of labor relations

Undergraduate and MILR students: Tommy Slabowski '16

Unions and Inequality: An Analysis of First and Second Collective Bargaining Gains

Faculty and research professionals: Kate Bronfenbrenner, director of labor education research

Undergraduate and MILR students: Chris Alter '16; Mellissa Chang '17; Adam Davis '18; Maha Ghandour '17; Ben Hollander '16; Alex Klein '18; Michael Mintz '17; Zane Mokhiber '16; Jack Nobel '17

"Men at Work" (and Family): Caregiving Responsibilities Among the Working Class

Faculty and research professionals: Ileen DeVault, professor of labor history; Beth Livingston, assistant professor of human resource studies; KC Wagner, director of workplace issues; Sharon Sassler, professor of policy analysis and management

Undergraduate and MILR students: Julia Krupski '17; Juan Guevara MILR '17

Who Funds Worker Centers?

Faculty and research professionals: Kate Griffith, associate professor of labor and employment law

Undergraduate and MILR students: Jonathan Kim '17; Zane Mokhiber '16

Immigrant Workers Website: A Resource Portal for Organizing Immigrant Workers

Faculty and research professionals: Lowell Turner, professor of international and comparative labor and director of The Worker Institute; Prerna Sampat, manager of communications and website at The Worker Institute; Shannon Gleeson, associate professor of labor relations; Maria Figueroa, director of labor and industry research

Undergraduate and MILR students: Kelly McClure '16; Zakiya Williams Wells '17

Race, Gender, Class & Organizing

Faculty and research professionals: Kate Bronfenbrenner, director of labor education research

Undergraduate and MILR students: Michael Iadevaia '16

Labor Leading on Climate

Faculty and research professionals: Lara Skinner, associate director of The Worker Institute; Alex Colvin, professor of conflict resolution

Undergraduate and MILR students: Alex Chakrin '17

How Does Immigration Status Affect Legal Mobilization and Labor Outcomes?

Faculty and research professionals: Shannon Gleeson, associate professor of labor relations; Kate Griffith, associate professor of labor and employment law

Undergraduate and MILR students: Alexa Salazar '16; Juan Guevara MILR '17

Labor Roundtable

Faculty and research professionals: Rachel Aleks, assistant professor of labor relations; Kate Bronfenbrenner, director of labor education research

Undergraduate and MILR students: Allison Consodine '17; Michael Ferrer '16

A Multi-industry Study of Hours and Scheduling Issues for Low-Wage Workers

Faculty and research professionals: Maria Figueroa, director of labor and industry research; Shannon Gleeson, associate professor of labor relations; Kate Griffith, associate professor of labor and employment law

Undergraduate and MILR students: Gideon Teitel '17

Navigating the Bureaucracy, Searching for Justice: The Promise and Failure of Workplace Protections in the United States

Faculty and research professionals: Shannon Gleeson, associate professor of labor relations

Undergraduate and MILR students: Albaro Tutasig '17