



Equal
Rights
Advocates

Since 1974, Fighting for Women's Equality

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Are Women's Rights Under Attack? Equal Rights Advocates to Tackle Issue at Free October 6 Event

SAN FRANCISCO, October 4, 2011 – Are women's rights under attack? That's the issue Equal Rights Advocates will tackle Thursday, October 6 in San Francisco.

"We defend women's rights in good times and bad, and lately it seems there have been increasing attacks on equity in the workplace and in schools," says ERA Executive Director Arcelia Hurtado.

Hurtado, managing attorney Noreen Farrell and other attorneys at the nonprofit legal organization will provide updates on ERA's Title IX litigation and advocacy efforts, and discuss what's next for Betty Dukes and the courageous women plaintiffs against Wal-Mart.

ERA also will honor this year's Women In Sports Equity (WISE) Fund grantees. The WISE Fund originates from the successful settlement of a case (known as Brust) brought on behalf of female student athletes at UC Davis who sought equal athletic opportunities on campus. In conjunction with the Women's Foundation of California, ERA will award more than \$50,000 in WISE Fund grants to support the development of women athletes in 19 club sports at UC Davis. Recipients will receive funding to help them pay for a variety of expenses including travel for competition, equipment, uniforms and coaching.

The October 6 event will be held from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm at 180 Howard Street, Suite 300. There is no charge to attend.

ERA will have much to celebrate at the event, including tremendous gains in its three advocacy campaigns to achieve educational equity for female students and athletes, secure economic empowerment and dignity for marginalized women workers, and ensure employment fairness for working families.

On the education equity front, ERA is taking on schools to assist students facing gender-based bullying. ERA is ensuring equality for girls in sports, recently scoring a Title IX victory against UC Davis in a case challenging its refusal to provide female students with equal athletic opportunities.

On behalf of women workers who are marginalized by race, poverty, immigration status or a sex-segregated workplace, ERA demands a workplace that is free of sexual violence and harassment. ERA is involved in litigation on behalf of two clients who are Spanish-speaking immigrants. "ERA is also on the forefront of speaking out for women who work in male-dominated industries, such as construction and firefighting," Hurtado notes.

ERA's working families campaign team is working to ensure the passage of State Senate Bill 299, which would ensure continued health care coverage of workers taking pregnancy disability leave. The bill, which is co-sponsored by ERA and the California Commission on the Status of Women and authored by State Senator Noreen Evans, has been approved by the California Legislature and is awaiting signature by Governor Jerry Brown.

ERA provides a toll-free multi-lingual Advice and Counseling Hotline (1800-839-4372) to answer questions about gender discrimination in schools and in the workplace. Hundreds of callers a year receive advice and information on their legal rights. For details, please see http://equalrights.org/personal/need_advice.asp

About ERA

Equal Rights Advocates (ERA), founded in 1974, is a national civil rights organization dedicated to protecting and expanding economic and educational access and opportunities for women and girls. Through its campaign approach—incorporating public education, legislative advocacy, and litigation—ERA seeks to assist women and girls throughout a life-long continuum: ensuring equality in their educational experience, combating sex discrimination in the workforce, and advocating for workplaces hospitable to working families. For more information, see equalrights.org.

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