

Subject: Re: Michigan State WRC Affiliation
Date: Thursday, February 25, 2021 at 2:31:09 PM Eastern Standard Time
From: Samantha Stevens <sstevens@msu.edu>
To: USAS Steering Committee <usascoordinating@gmail.com>, PresidentStanley@msu.edu <PresidentStanley@msu.edu>
Attachments: image001.png, image002.png

National Student Steering Committee
United Students Against Sweatshops,

Thank you for reaching out to Michigan State University regarding our WRC affiliation. Michigan State University plans to remain affiliated with both the Workers Rights Consortium and Fair Labor Association through the length of the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

We appreciate the efforts of the WRC, FLA and USAS on behalf of their university partners over the years and especially now as we all navigate this crisis. It is more important than ever to remain committed to workers' rights throughout our supply chains across the globe.

Should you have any additional questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

Samantha Stevens

Director of Licensing
Michigan State University
MSU Union
49 Abbot Road, Rm. 210
East Lansing, MI 48824
[\(517\) 355-3434](tel:5173553434)
sstevens@msu.edu

SPARTANS WILL.



From: USAS Steering Committee <usascoordinating@gmail.com>
Date: Wednesday, February 24, 2021 at 2:16 PM
To: <PresidentStanley@msu.edu>, <sstevens@msu.edu>
Subject: Michigan State WRC Affiliation
Resent-From: <sstevens@msu.edu>
Resent-Date: Wed, 24 Feb 2021 14:16:41 -0500 (EST)

February 24th, 2021

Dear Samuel L. Stanley and Samantha Stevens,

I am writing to you on behalf of a coalition of students and faculty eager to ensure that universities with high-revenue licensing programs remain sweatshop-free campuses that protect the rights of workers producing our

university apparel through and beyond the Covid 19 pandemic. Michigan State University took a crucial step in this regard when it affiliated with the Worker Rights Consortium. We strongly urge that you maintain and build upon this commitment to the protection of worker rights in production of university apparel, now and in the future.

United Students Against Sweatshops members across the country are heartened that so many universities continue to participate in the Worker Rights Consortium through this turbulent time. We are writing now because Michigan State University has not made it clear to students that the university has committed to continue its affiliation. Therefore, we ask that you commit to continue participating in the WRC's vital work to enforce university labor codes and protect the rights of workers who make university apparel. This is more important than ever during the global pandemic.

As you know, the WRC is the *only* fully independent factory monitoring organization working in the collegiate apparel supply chain. The WRC plays a unique role in the field of apparel factory monitoring by ensuring the transparency of collegiate supply chains and providing robust and in-depth reporting on the conditions faced by workers while producing collegiate apparel.

Through its work on behalf of universities, the WRC has uncovered and corrected labor rights violations around the world, recovering for workers tens of millions of dollars stolen through theft of wages and severance benefits, protecting pregnant and LGBTQ+ workers from discrimination, and playing a leading role in the elimination of deadly safety hazards in factories in Bangladesh and other countries. Over 150 universities around the country are affiliated with the WRC, paying 1% of their yearly licensing revenues to maintain this important organization.

Importantly, the university's affiliation and active participation in the work of the WRC will also ensure that the university does not become complicit in the worker rights abuses that have been exacerbated by the pandemic and the economic crisis that has occurred as a result. Demonstrating Michigan State University values through affiliation with the WRC is all the more important at this time considering the dire conditions faced by garment workers as a result of Covid 19, both for those still on the job and those who have been suspended or fired as a result of this crisis.

As can be seen on its website, since the start of the Covid 19 pandemic, the WRC has focused its factory monitoring work on addressing this unprecedented challenge to the lives and livelihoods of garment workers around the globe. The WRC's "brand tracker" has been a key resource for licensing departments, journalists, and consumers to learn which apparel brands have acted responsibly by committing to pay for the apparel they had ordered (and that suppliers had begun or even completed manufacturing).

Over the past six months, the WRC's work in this area has helped factories recover billions of dollars in orders that brands had improperly cancelled, – and enabled thousands of these factories to pay workers wages that they are legally owed and desperately need. Without these wages, many workers' families would become homeless, be unable to afford to send their children to school, and, in some cases, starve

The WRC has also produced important guidance for licensees to navigate this crisis without violating their contractual commitment to maintain our university's sourcing code of conduct, as well as health and safety protocols to help prevent the spread of Covid 19 at factories that have restarted production.

The devastating impact of the Covid 19 pandemic on the global garment industry has made the WRC's independent monitoring more vital than ever to ensure compliance with university labor codes, safe and fair processes for reopening factories and rehiring workers, and industry reforms to prevent future crises from having such a devastating impact on garment workers and their families.

With this in mind, we are asking for your confirmation that Michigan State University will remain affiliated with the WRC through the length of this crisis and beyond. We wish to communicate that this is a matter of key concern for students and faculty. We ask that you reaffirm your commitment, in writing, to renewing

affiliation with the WRC and to maintaining it throughout the pandemic to ensure that the WRC's vital work on behalf of garment workers and the university can continue.

We appreciate your consideration of this important matter and look forward to your response no later than one week from receipt of this letter.

Sincerely,

National Student Steering Committee
United Students Against Sweatshops

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