

# UNSAFE

## With U.S. Security Associates

What you need to know about safety at America's fourth-largest security firm.

October 2011 ■ Issue 3

### Welcome

to the third issue of Unsafe with U.S. Security Associates. Published by the Service Employees International Union, this newsletter will inform security directors, property managers, office building tenants and others about the business practices of U.S. Security Associates.

Upcoming issues will explore:

- More on Lisa Garner's story of alleged sexual harassment.

### Look for us at IFMA.

The International Facility Management Association's (IFMA) World Workplace 2011 conference will be held Oct. 26–28 at the Phoenix Convention Center in Arizona. *Stand for Security* will be there, ready to inform all facilities management professionals about the track record of U.S. Security Associates.



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## U.S. Security Associates' Second "Perfect Storm" of Sexual Harassment: Lisa Garner's Story

The U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Alabama rendered a final verdict Oct. 26, 2010, against U.S. Security Associates (USSA) and its manager Christopher Hargrove for sexual harassment, retaliation, wanton supervision, intentional infliction of emotional distress, assault and battery, and invasion of privacy.

The \$2.3 million verdict brought justice to Alabama security officer Jamie Marks, who, the judge wrote, suffered from an ordeal that "spanned at least 11 months during which USSA, through the actions of its unsupervised state director Hargrove, subjected her to more than 30 occurrences of unwanted touching, repeated sexually charged statements, and requests for various sexual performances from her."

As the judge explained, "USSA's cavalier attitude toward sexual harassment in the workplace coupled with Hargrove's demonstrated proclivity for sexual harassment of vulnerable women under his supervision provided the perfect storm for the most egregious case of sexual harassment, retaliation and tortious conduct that has been tried in this court."

Meanwhile in Philadelphia, USSA employee Lisa Garner was going through a perfect storm of her own.

Lisa had worked protecting the Philadelphia Nursing Home for 10 years. Nursing home administrators thought highly enough of Lisa that in 2007, she became site supervisor, entrusted with training new security personnel. One trainee was Willard "Todd" Messer.

After completing his training, Messer allegedly began to harass Lisa. The harassment included repeated requests for dates, confessions of his attraction to Asian women, and offers to buy Lisa gifts. Messer's alleged behavior could also be lewd. He often read material advertising strip clubs and talked about how his friend once bought him a "lap dance." In plain sight, he left his business cards for his side job, which entailed "promotions and scouting" for *Hot Bod Girls Magazine*.  
(To be continued next issue.)



Headquarters of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) in Washington, D.C. In late July, Lisa Garner filed a complaint of sexual harassment and retaliation against USSA with the EEOC and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission.

Stand for Security  
Service Employees International Union, CTW, CLC  
1800 Massachusetts Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20036

