Get Connected: Sweatshops and Purchasing Power

Sweatshops

A sweatshop is a place of employment that has any one or more of the following working conditions:

- Workers don’t have the right to freedom of association
- Excessively long working hours
- Child labour
- Unsafe working conditions exist
- Physical and mental abuse
- Workers who organize to improve conditions are fired - or worse
- Pregnant employees are fired
- Pay is docked if the product is not produced fast enough or is found to have flaws
- Wages are below a living wage

Purchasing Power

As individuals, consumers have a considerable impact on company practices and policies. There are many ways in which a person can get actively involved in promoting fair trade and ethical conduct by employers. These include:

- Raising awareness about sweatshops with co-workers, family, and friends
- Volunteering to assist the University with its training initiatives
- Encouraging purchasers on campus to abide by the U of G Code of Ethical Conduct [1]
- Promoting and purchasing fair trade products

Through the U of G Code of Ethical Conduct for Suppliers and Subcontractors [1], the campus community is moving toward purchasing from employers who treat their employees in an ethical manner.


Links:
[1] https://www.uoguelph.ca/diversity-human-rights/hreo/node/258/