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Have you received a pink slip? Think green!

Many Americans today are finding themselves in a position they never thought they would be in, unemployed. Recent reports by the Employment Development Department (EDD) state that one out of every eight people are without a job. People are scrambling to find not only work, but also a career with a future that will allow them to earn a sustainable living in years to come. Green-collar employment opportunities may be the answer they have been looking for. Green-collar jobs protect our health and the health of the planet and they are in demand.

New environmental initiatives on renewable energy, energy efficiency and greenhouse gases will generate a tremendous amount of new jobs. The American Solar Energy Society reported by 2030 the number of direct and indirect jobs related to renewable energy and energy efficiency is expected to reach 40 million. Green collar workers include professionals such as conservation movement workers, environmental consultants, environmental or biological systems engineers, green building architects, solar and wind energy engineers, nuclear engineers, environmental lawyers, ecology educators just to name a few.

Green-collar workers also include vocational or trade-level workers such as electricians who install solar panels, plumbers who install solar water heaters, construction workers who build energy-efficient green buildings and wind powered farms, construction workers who weatherize buildings to make them more energy efficient, or other workers involved in clean, renewable, sustainable future energy development.

The biggest challenge to filling green jobs will be the lack of skilled workers. With the rapid growth expected, supply and demand for green-collar jobs will be unbalanced for a while. However, as the demand for green jobs grows, colleges and universities are instituting specialized degree or certificated programs to supply the future Green-collar workforce. In fact, the Yuba College Community District, North Central Counties Consortium Workforce Investment Board, Sutter County One Stop and Yuba County One Stop have partnered together to create the Yuba-Sutter Green Corps Certificate of Training. The purpose is to engage individuals ages 18-24 years old in green job training and employment. Students will participate in community service projects, environmental stewardship, education and work experience or internships. The goal is for students to further their education in a "green pathway" or compliment current skill sets upon completion of the Certificate of Training. The program will begin in February of 2010, but a mandatory orientation will be held on December 17, 2009. For more information, Yuba County residents can call 530.749.4850 and Sutter County Residents can call 530.822.5120 ext. 3043.

If you would like to explore your career options or employment opportunities, check out the following websites:

<http://jobs.treehugger.com/>

<http://www.ecojobs.com/>

<http://www.ecojobs.com/>

<http://www.ecoemploy.com/>

<http://www.greencareersguide.com/>