

WM Symposia WM2010 Conference Panel Report

PANEL SESSION 36: Graduating Students Needs and Wants vs. Corporate Needs and Wants

Co-Chairs: Robert Berry, *Foxfire Scientific (UK)*

Leonel Lagos, *Florida International University (USA)*

Panel Reporter: Robert Berry, *Foxfire Scientific*

Panelist included:

1. Collin Donohue – *Colorado School of Mines;*
2. Corhyn Parr – *Nuclear Enterprise UK;*
3. Leydi Velez – *DOE Follow, Florida International University;*
4. Desi Crouther – *Director of Human Capital US DOE EM.*

After a brief introduction of all the panel members, **Desi Crouther** outlined the current efforts of the DOE EM division to coordinate the Training Programs for engineering students and the needs of the DOE. He spoke of programs like that at FIU and other programs associated with the National Laboratories and contractors, which last for 2 years and in which newly hired engineers at the DOE travel from facility to facility learning about the DOE EM programs at each facility.

Crouther stressed the need for such programs to generate student/graduating engineers interested in the DOE EM program but also to get the message out that the DOE EM is flexible and is willing to work with young engineers on their career pathway.

Leydi Velez spoke of her experiences in the DOE EM program, she did a survey of student wants and needs and expectations from a company. She detailed how important good lines of communication and information were to the modern young engineer and that the company's structure sometimes seemed to slow down the ability to complete an assigned task or job. She and others found that interactions with the panel audience reminded everyone how the DOE or any company for that matter, runs within a set of controls and systems and that by its very nature, slows things down. Velez also spoke of how important it was to find a job that truly interested and challenged her. She was hoping to build a successful career with DOE EM where she thought she had many chances to further grow as an engineer.

Corhyn Parr spoke about her work experiences in the UK and her interactions as both a site employee and as a contractor. She noted that the size of the Nuclear Industry in the UK seems to make it easier to be seen as an individual; not just as another young engineer. She spoke of mentors and how they had pushed her to leave the company she was working for and to move on to a bigger and larger challenge elsewhere. She seemed to believe that it was easier to move about in the UK nuclear industry while maintaining a good presence with past and future employers. She did point out that these were the same issues in the US with individual wants and needs versus corporate wants and needs and she believes that was sort of a universal truth. If handled correctly, a young engineer could build a successful career while meeting the wants and needs of all concerned.

Collin Donohue spoke of the wants and needs of graduating student and young engineers and what they hoped for and expect from a potential long term employer. He spoke of the

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importance of being challenged and how he thought this generation of engineers wanted to be pushed and work hard. He stressed the need to have a total and definite separation of work and life outside of work. He thought that companies needed to realize that in this current work environment, while workers are willing to put out a good effort, that effort should not be wasted by mismanagement and lack of communication. This generation of engineer will get bored and frustrated much easier than past ones.