

**PANEL SESSION 37 - Graduating Students and New Engineers – Wants and Needs –
Are Companies Even Listening?**

Co-Chairs: Robert Berry, *Foxfire Scientific (UK)*;
Leonel E. Lagos, *Florida International University Applied Research Ctr*
Reporter: Leonel E. Lagos, *Florida International University Applied Research Ctr*

Panelists Included:

- Kenney Krieger, *Texas State Technical College*
- Desi Crouther, *US DOE*
- Nadia Lima, *DOE Fellow, Florida International University*

Some 25 to 35 people were present to hear this session that bring together graduating students and new engineers with industry and government representatives. Following introductions by the Co-Chairs **Leonel Lagos and Robert Berry** opened the proceedings. Remarks were made by Leonel Lagos pointing out the importance of connecting young graduates and industry and government representatives. The purpose of the panel is to identify wants and needs from young engineers and graduates in terms of employment following their college career. Also, industry and government expressed their expectations of recent graduates and young engineers.

Kenney Krieger's presentation focused on the Texas State Technical College's efforts of training a 21st century workforce for the nuclear industry. He described the various programs at Texas State Technical College such as certificates programs and Associate in Arts (AA) that are geared toward the nuclear industry. He commented on the potential construction of as many as eight new nuclear commercial reactors in Texas. He also pointed out that Comanche Peak Nuclear plant is already building a new reactor. He emphasized a "Welding" course developed to train and qualifies welders for the construction of new nuclear reactors. Mr. Krieger added that the program at Texas State Technical College had the support of utilities companies in Texas. Also, he mentioned that Texas State Technical College offers an Associate in Arts (AA) in Nuclear Technology.

Desi Crouther represented the US DOE and described the various program that DOE's Office of Environmental Management has in place to recruit and retain young graduates. Mr. Crouther announced that President Obama has just signed an executive order on December 30, 2010 and described new vehicles to hire young graduates and engineers. Mainly, he described three new programs under the new executive order that include the Resent Graduate Program, the Presidential Management Program, and the Federal Internship Program. Mr. Crouther shared statistics from DOE-EM showing the number of DOE-EM employees facing retirement in a very near future. Mr. Crouther also described programs already in place to train and recruit new engineers. Mainly, he cited the DOE Fellows program at Florida International University as an example of a successful program being sponsored and funded by DOE-EM.

Nadia Lima gave an inspiring talk on her experience from a college student point of view. She presented the expectations of young engineers and graduate students regarding future employers and the workplace. Nadia is a DOE Fellow at Florida International University and she described her working experience at Florida International University's Applied Research Center and her

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internship experience at Savannah River National Laboratory during the summer of 2010. Nadia also gave the perspective of a young engineer and college students and her generation's expectation of a workplace. She also explained how her generation uses technology to accomplish everyday tasks and work. She commented that her generation wants to be challenged and that her generation appreciate mentors and learning from an older generation.

Public Comment and/or Questions

Comment – Mr. Leif Erickson commended the DOE Fellow's program. He had the opportunity to visit FIU and had the opportunity to interact with the DOE Fellows.

Comment – Several students and young engineers described their expectations of employers and the workplace.

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