

Supplemental Q&A

Q. She mentioned taking classes...does she have some top recommendations on what skills to build or what types of classes?

A. The skills all depend on what part of the field you want to go into. A good place to start is to find a professional association representing where you might want to work and check with them – they often have courses and training programs. A good all-purpose type of skills or training, though, is any class/certificate/training in sustainability, since it applies across all aspects of our industry.

Q. If breaking into green careers, what is the fastest growing and/or most stable sector to get into (e.g. energy, agriculture, utilities, etc.)?

A. This changes all the time. Best advice is to start to follow blogs and newsletters from agencies, news media, nonprofits and professional associations that you can find (search on the key parts of the industry that interest you, for example, natural resources or cleantech) and also look online for trends reports. There are many sources out there such as the Leaders in Energy blog, Bloomberg, US Energy News, International Energy Agency, United Nations SDG office, GreenBiz, to name a few.

Q. Question for the panelists -- You mentioned following money & trends, but what if we are trying to work in a sector where we are working to get more money and policy flowing in that direction (ex. carbon farming/regenerative agriculture), but there is not a lot of funding yet?

A. This is where local nonprofits are key, unless there are big stakeholders who have a vested interest in that change happening. I would recommend getting involved in a group at a local level or perhaps a local or state government agency working in this area.

Q. What about technical sales and more client facing via IT companies? Seems like more openings for engineers, fewer for sales / client facing.

A. Yes, there are many opportunities out there for sales/client facing work. IT companies always have a need for this – I would probably focus on Energy Efficiency consulting firms, as they are looking at selling the benefits of Big Data, or perhaps Smart City tech firms.

Q. Will you be providing sources for types of certifications that are available?

There are many available from universities and professional associations. Here is one that offers free and low cost sessions, <https://www.edx.org/>, and a second list of free options via NYSERDA, <https://www.nyserdera.ny.gov/All-Programs/Programs/Clean-Energy-Workforce-Development/Directory-of-Free-Online-Resources>

Q. What about the opposite end...wanting to enter with minimal tech skill, more interpersonal experience?

I would recommend considering a green job that's in customer service or sales, as generally they won't require as much technical expertise (but they will train you).

Q. I currently work with manufacturing using recycled materials. It seems to be stalling with Green Sword. Do you feel green energy is growing?

Thank you for making me aware of the term “Green Sword” in regard to China’s recent policy to reduce the volume and contamination levels of recyclable materials it imports for reprocessing. This policy has definitely changed the landscape here in the US. For example, I live in Arlington, VA and the County is no longer taking glass because of a glut in the secondary glass recycling market, in part, I understand due to this new China policy. I am an advocate of the circular economy and I am hoping that there will be a silver lining in the China policy so that the US will move toward the smarter design and use of materials to reduce the volumes of waste that we are currently producing.

“Green” energy has been growing and I think that it will continue to do so in order to tackle our important issues with greenhouse gases. I also think that energy efficiency will need to be a part of that solution. At my organization, Leaders in Energy, we also conducted a program last year that examined the greening of fossil energy as we feel that this also needs to be part of the solution. You can see the recap article from that program titled “Rewriting the Equation of Fossil Fuel Emissions” [here](#).

Q. What are some good professional organizations to join?

It depends on what part of the field you’d like to pursue. My best recommendation would be to search using keywords for where you might want to work (e.g., Green Buildings, Sustainable Transportation, environmental policy, etc.) and include “professional association” or “association” also as keywords.

Q. I’d also love to know the names of some of those groups and women’s groups to network!

There are many great organizations who are working in our field, including women’s groups! My best recommendation would be to search using keywords for where you might want to work (e.g., Green Buildings, Sustainable Transportation, environmental policy, etc.) and include “professional association” or “association” also as keywords. You could also do a second search adding “Women” –a few to consider are the Council on Women in Energy Engineering, the Women’s Energy Network, WRISE, and there are many others. The Association of Energy Engineers focuses on energy and sustainability and admits members with all disciplines (not just engineering) and has chapters in many states. They also have a women’s division called the Council on Women in Energy and Environmental Leadership.

Q. Do you know any Canadian Green Job organizations I should look into?

Yes, there are many! <https://www.goodwork.ca/environmental-groups> has a good list of organizations to consider.

Q. Are they only within the United States, as I come from Kenya but I am interested in a green career after undertaking a Masters Course in the States. Thank you.

There are many organizations around the world working on sustainability. The Kenyan Organization for Environmental Education has several Kenyan organizations working in our field, [https://koee.org/](https://koe.org/). Kenya also has numerous foreign aid organizations that may also provide additional job opportunities.