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Healthcare, "Green" Jobs Most Popular at Miramonte Career Night

By Jean Follmer



Mechanical Engineer Lyn Gomes addresses the students while Environmental Engineer Rebecca Overacre, Civil Engineer Al Saadeh and Moderator Frank Darling look on Photo Jean Follmer

More than 300 students attended the Orinda Rotary Club's annual Miramonte Career Night at Miramonte High School last week to listen to panelists from 10 industries including Architecture & Design, Business & Entrepreneur, Technology & Computers, Engineering, Law, Media/Communications, Performing Arts and Science, Government & Politics, and Medical/Health Care.

The Government & Politics panel included Orinda Mayor Sue Severson, Orinda City Clerk Michele Olsen, and Orinda Police Detective Nate McCormack. The Medical/Health Care panel included a chiropractor, a veterinarian and nursing professor.

Two of the most popular careers for students were "green" jobs and those involving healthcare.

Environmental engineer Rebecca Overacre sat on the engineering panel along with a civil and a mechanical engineer. She said she chose her career because "I'm good at math and science and I wanted to protect the environment."

Overacre went the "environmental science route" in her undergraduate studies. Once she got into the field, she realized the environmental engineers were actually doing what she wanted to do, so she returned to school and received her graduate degree in Environmental Engineering and now works entirely on

municipal water and sewer.

The attendance in the Medical/Health Care session was so high that attendees recommended a larger room for that industry next year.

Business & Entrepreneur moderator & Rotarian Henry Gannet was envious, and joked, "(Our Panel) hasn't been doing well lately because I'm a realtor and (Jeannie Rhodes) is a financial planner."

Located in 10 separate classrooms, each panel member made a 5-minute presentation and then opened up for questions.

In the Business & Entrepreneur session, students asked the panelists what their inspiration is for getting up in the morning and if any of them went to graduate school. One student pointedly asked "What do you dislike most about your job?"

The Business & Entrepreneur panelists said regardless of the economic situation, you need to be a good listener. "It's my job to listen well enough to do a plan for (my clients)," Rhodes said.

"You need to be a good listener - not to what you want to hear but to what they're trying to say," Joe Shamash added.

Many of the students got extra credit for attending Career Night.

"Teachers who teach classes in fields that are represented generally give extra credit," said Miramonte College and Career Coordinator Eloise Schneider. "We try to make a connection between what (panelists) do and what we teach."

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