

Green Jobs Aren't Just About Hugging Trees

February 26, 2010 12:00 PM

Tammy C. Barney newwave@tulane.edu

"A lot of the jobs haven't even been invented yet," said Demetria Christo, who owns a sustainable landscaping company. "Pick something that people are screaming for. It's all there."



Sustainable landscaper Demetria Christo, left, talks about her green business along with panelists Anne Churchill, middle, an organic chef, and Elizabeth Galante, right, Global Green's New Orleans Resource Center director. (Photo by Tammy C. Barney)

Christo talked about the benefits of developing a niche in the environmental sector on Wednesday (Feb. 24) during a panel discussion on "Women in Green Jobs," sponsored by Newcomb Student Programs.

The panel was part of the [Career Luncheon series](#).

Other panelists sharing their experiences were Molly Reid, a freelance journalist; Elizabeth Galante, director of Global Green's New Orleans Resource Center; Anne Churchill, owner and chef of Karma Kitchen; and Jennifer Ruley, an urban planning specialist/engineer. Click [here](#) and view videos of the speakers talking about green job opportunities.

To develop green careers, students should major in environmental law, engineering or science, the women said. "Those are the most powerful fields that you can go into," Galante said. "Don't let some guy discourage you from getting in it."

Christo agreed. "We as women have to think about what skills will be needed to move the green sector forward. We have to retake ownership of these different skill sets."

Students can start now by volunteering or through internships. "Find organizations that are working on things that you like," said Ruley, who specializes in urban bicycle, pedestrian and sustainability projects in the City of New Orleans. "I came to this profession because I'm an avid cyclist."

Working for the environment is not about hugging trees anymore, the women added. It's about

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making a difference while making a living.

"Once you identify an unexplored niche, you can become the expert in that niche," Christo said. "You have to realize that you have the power. There are enough dreamers and planners. We need implementers. Seize the day, ladies!"

The next Career Luncheon is on the topic "Women in Social Entrepreneurship" on April 15 at noon at the [Newcomb College Institute](#).

Tammy C. Barney is the external affairs officer for the Newcomb College Institute.