

Career Shopping? Check Out This Hot Option

by (ARA)

With the national unemployment rate hovering around 5 percent, many Americans are seeking new career opportunities. Career experts point to several fields where employment and compensation opportunities are set to boom. It's no surprise that financial services, information technology, and medical careers make everyone's list - from FastCompany.com to CareerBuilder. There's a new entry, however, to lists of fastest-growing professions in 2006 - landscape architect. For increasingly environmentally conscious job seekers, the profession can be the perfect marriage of "green" lifestyle and financial green. A 2005 ASLA award-winning project by Thomas Balsley Associates. Photo courtesy of Michael Koontz and ASLA. "There is significant growth in demand for landscape architecture services across the board," said Nancy C. Somerville, executive vice president and CEO of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA). "The traditional market sectors - residential, parks and recreation, planning, commercial - have remained extremely strong. In addition, landscape architects are looked to as leaders in security design, stormwater management, environmental mitigation and green roofs. The profession is gaining visibility, and increased salaries are an indication of that." U.S. News & World Report cites landscape architect as one of the top careers for 2006. And the profession is featured in the book "Cool Careers for Dummies." With urban development and redevelopment occurring throughout the country, demand is growing for professionals who can plan the location and arrangement of buildings, walkways, roads, water features, site furnishings, flowers, trees and plantings. Landscape architects make sure a site functions as intended, is aesthetically pleasing, and minimally affects the natural environment. The field is wide open, with just 30,000 (in business terms, a mere handful) landscape architects currently practicing in the United States, according to ASLA. Practitioners are most often self-employed (more than 70 percent) and make an average of \$80,000 per year, with experienced professionals and firm principals earning much more. Four or five years of college study are usually required to acquire a bachelor's degree in landscape architecture. Master's programs are also available. Most states require landscape architects to pass a national licensing exam. "It's a very good time to be a landscape architect," said Dennis Carmichael, FASLA, president of ASLA and a partner with EDAW, the largest landscape architecture firm in the world. "Not only is the profession growing rapidly in terms of impact and prosperity, but what we do touches people's lives every day in hundreds of different ways by improving our communities, protecting our environment, and increasing property values through creative, sustainable design." To learn more about a career in landscape architecture, visit www.asla.org or call (202) 898-2444. Courtesy of ARA Content

Career Shopping? Check Out This Hot Option by (ARA)