



I wanted to take this opportunity to talk about the CSEG's participation in the CFES and one of CFES's initiatives in particular. The CFES is an umbrella organization of 15 geoscience and academic societies, which the CSEG belongs to. It provides the CSEG an opportunity to coordinate efforts, trade experiences and learn from other similar societies. In September 2008 the CFES released a survey called "Human Resources Needs in the Earth Sciences in Canada" which pointed out that the geosciences are experiencing similar demographic trends as identified in our own internal surveys (Note Susan Eaton will be writing an article focused on this survey for the March RECORDER). In the May 2008 RECORDER the CSEG published its own demographic survey showing that 75% of our membership is over the age of 40 and further, 44% of our membership is over the age of 50, presenting a demographic challenge to our society.

This trend was recognized a number of years ago with one of the consequences being that the CSEG put a major effort into Outreach to try and attract more young people to the profession of geophysics. Through the efforts of the volunteers associated with this committee, Outreach over the last 5 years has grown to be one of the most dynamic and successful committees in the CSEG. They have been sending volunteers into the public schools, attending career fairs and interacting with university student societies to raise the profile of geophysics as a possible career choice for a young person. Interest in our profession and society has grown.

However, about a year ago it was observed that new geoscience graduates were having a difficult time securing their first job and were leaving for other industries. This seems a shame given the potential for retirements in our profession and the effort we as a society have put in trying to attract younger people to geophysics. Various member organizations of the CFES recognized this trend and as a result the CFES set up a subcommittee to understand how serious the problem is

and what can be done. Carol Laws, Anne Halladay and myself represent the CSEG on this committee.

The committee is just ramping up. Currently we have been trying to ascertain how big a problem this actually is, and if it is a problem, what can we as the CSEG do to help address it. As the oil price has dropped and activity levels decreased, students are going to find it increasingly harder to find their first job.

Originally, we thought the issue might be one of training and that the CSEG/CFES might be able to help address this by providing training. Larger companies who have the internal infrastructure to provide training and mentoring hire the vast majority of students. Intermediate and smaller companies do not necessarily have this so the CSEG may be able to play a role here. One specific area it has been noted is that new graduates and immigrants often only have limited job search skills and that the CSEG could help by offering them training in this area. The problem looks deeper than this though. It is noted that any student who has some experience, has a huge advantage in obtaining that first job. This suggests if we could encourage more companies to offer summer jobs or part time employment this would help geophysics students land that first full time job in the industry. Another alternative would be to offer internships; this perhaps might be superior in that more meaningful projects could be accomplished in the longer time span.

All this will be hard with low oil prices. But we know that we do have a significant gray bulge in our membership and that a significant number of geophysicists will be retiring over the next number of years. It is in the self-interest of our industry to find ways to find ways to hire students who have heeded our call and obtained degrees in the geosciences. Our committee is just starting up so any feedback from the membership on how the CSEG might help would be appreciated. *R*

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Have you moved?

Do you know someone
who has moved?

Let us know



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