Counselors: Job seminar

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registered nurses in California in 1985, and that by 1995, there will be a demand for 207,230. That, said the analysts, represents over 67,000 new jobs in the nursing profession.

"And," Boggs said, "the community college is an excellent vehicle for people who want to come back to school to start a new career."

Atma concurred. A state survey, he said, reveals 30 percent of those students enrolling at a community college do so because vocational training is available.

"When you talk to your students," Atma said, "make sure they understand that the job market can be one thing now, and then can quickly change.

"Job titles are changing quickly, too, and can mean different things in different locations."

For example, Atma said, a secretary in Imperial County might be required to have only basic secretarial skills, but would need to know how to use a computer to get a job in San Diego County. Likewise, a computer technician in Imperial County, might have to be a computer engineer in this county.

Atma also told counselors that many occupations require continuing education, which community colleges can provide.

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Demand seen in nursing, food services, sales

Analysts tell job counselors careers in law and computers will be competitive

By John Berhman
Staff Writer

SAN MARCOS — A career in computers is definitely in. Ditto for attorneys and paralegals.

But, according to a pair of labor analysts, those careers are going to be very competitive in the upcoming decade. So, they suggest that job hunters consider alternatives: sales, food services or nursing.

"And good clerical workers can find work anywhere," said Susan Laurel, a labor market analyst for the state Department of Human Resources.

The findings emerged during a seminar held this week at Palomar College. It was attended by about 70 career and guidance counselors, most of them from community colleges countywide, and featured a preview of the job market for the upcoming decade.

Laurel and Nick Atma, a labor market specialist for the California community college system, told the gathering the legal profession is in for major growth in 1990s.

There were an estimated 6,800 paralegals in 1985, but the analysts said there will be a need for over 15,000 by 1995. There were 42,220 lawyers in the state four years ago, and by 1995, the experts believe there will be a need for 71,470.

The outlook in computers is promising, too. In 1985, there were 50,280 computer programmers in California. By 1995, however, the state will need 86,940, according to Laurel and Atma.

And, there will be corresponding demand for workers to repair computer equipment. Such workers, in 1985, numbered 13,180. By 1995, an estimated 22,670 will be needed.

However, in terms of total numbers, most of the new jobs in the coming decade will be in sales and service — waiters and waitresses, cashiers and secretaries — according to Laurel and Atma.

In 1985, for example, there were 409,700 jobs in retail sales statewide. By 1995, the analysts believe the market will support 523,470 such jobs. The corresponding figures for waiters and waitresses: 184,130 and 262,100.

Findings that major growth will be in service-related occupations prompted one counselor to express concern students will be directed away from academics and toward what he described as some "pretty mundane jobs."

"I don't like to use that term, but yes, that's true," Laurel responded. "A majority of the jobs are very mundane."

Another counselor questioned the advisability of directing job seekers toward retail sales "where most of the jobs are part-time, the money isn't much, and there are no benefits." The counselor also pointed out that the reports by Laurel and Atma did not include salary ranges.

However, John Disi, director of Palomar's Career Center, told the gathering that there are "car salesmen and (department store) sales employees who make $60,000 a year."

George Boggs, president of the college here, said not all of the jobs in the new decade will be mundane. Many meet community needs, he said.

For an example, Boggs cited the nursing program at Palomar, where the recent graduating class was ranked as the best in the nation. The program, he said, provides most of the nurses for Palomar and Tri-City medical centers.

Palomar College also offers a training program for paramedics Boggs added.

It was noted there were 140,171