

Be part of the solution



Want to help fix the world? There's a class for that. By **Jana Martin**
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Most people—except perhaps the folks that spend their time at those none-too-refined tea parties—accept the fact that there's a mounting balance of big world problems requiring urgent attention. The health-care crisis, diminishing global resources and the steady devastation by wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are keeping many of us up at night. And it seems like we've been hit with more than the usual spate of environmental cataclysms lately. If you're getting sick of standing at the sidelines shaking your head, you might want to consider gaining some of the skills necessary to help tackle these serious issues.

Heal an ailing system

The Bureau of Labor Statistics places health care among its 20 fastest growing professions. Yet today health care is linked to the words *crisis* and *reform* far more than to words like *success* or *effective*. Fixing this strained system also means tackling a spate of new issues. One field that's recently come to the fore in the national mind-set is disaster management and emergency training. According to Donna Nickitas, professor of nursing at Hunter College's Bellevue School of Nursing, the initial responses to the crisis of 9/11 have led to some fundamental changes in the way we handle emergencies. "After 2001, people said, 'We need to get something in place to teach people how to respond and deal with disaster, natural or man-made,'" says Nickitas. "It had to be something that could be on a national scale, so everyone knows the same vocabulary, the same lexicon, and can be thrown together in any situation and be able to work as a unit." The Core Disaster Life Support Course 3.0, a one-day intensive offered by the continuing education branch of Hunter College (212-650-3850, hunter.cuny.edu/ce), is just that: It breaks the word *disaster* into a functional, standard, active

lexicon, from D for disaster to R for recovery. Meant for anyone in the health-care field, the class is open to those outside the profession as well. "The whole point is helping anyone deal with any hazard—and being able to work together," Nickitas says.

For those seeking specific, hands-on emergency training, LaGuardia Community College's Adult & Continuing Education offers an EMT/paramedic program (718-482-7200, www.lagcc.cuny.edu). The four-month course covers all the basics. Completing it can be the first step toward an A.A.S. degree or certificate in paramedics.

Another growing field in health care centers on the needs of the aging: As the baby boomer population matures, care simply can't keep apace. One in five Americans will be over the age of 65 by 2030, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, creating a tremendous strain on the supply of geriatric care experts. With an eye toward easing it, Hunter College's Continuing Education division has developed several certificate programs: Aging, Aging & Mental Health, and Geriatric Care Management (212-650-3850, hunter.cuny.edu). Held in conjunction with the Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging & Longevity, their curricula cover everything from family and home care to assisting elderly who are developmentally disabled.

Reflecting another shift in the nation's population, immigrants may not have access to health care, let alone a means to communicate their needs. A 2003 study by the New York Immigration Coalition found that 25 percent of immigrant patients receiving health care did not understand their diagnosis or treatment, greatly compromising a successful outcome. To help, Hostos Community College and CUNY developed the Health Care Interpreter Program, training interpreters to bridge the language gap in hospitals, clinics and medical offices. "Too often, untrained family members have to act as translators," says Fern Chan, program coordinator of Continuing Education & Professional Studies at Hostos. "And there are a whole range of points a skilled interpreter knows how to cover." The certificate program trains interpreters in Spanish, Polish, Chinese, Creole and more, with classes in CUNY schools

way we gather, allocate and use our natural resources, from global population growth and climate change to complex international relationships. And the Development and Finance of Carbon Markets (Oct 30) focuses on a particular new, dynamic global market and how to channel capital to viable projects addressing climate change. Both cover hot topics, and are sure to fill up quickly.

One piece of good news: The concrete jungle is becoming greener by the day. "This city is actually one of the most energy-efficient places to live in the whole country," says David Greenstein, director of continuing education at Cooper Union, "and it's a great place to learn and practice green design." Cooper Union's Green Building Design Certificate program (212-353-4195, cooper.edu) tackles everything from construction and retrofitting to alternative energy technologies. Sharpen skills, add new ones, or learn the theories and practices toward getting your LEED licensing. And there's no need for lengthy field trips: Cooper Union's own new building, designed to be LEED platinum, is often used as a case study.

Relevant to constructive types of a different sort, the Fashion Institute of Technology's Sustainable Design Entrepreneur (212-217-3334, fitnyc.edu) is a noncredit certificate program created to give design professionals a green leg up. Whether you are starting an enterprise or refining one, the course imparts the knowledge, tools and access to resources necessary to build a viable, sustainable business. Follow the program's four core courses with those in your specialty: fashion, interior design or graphics/packaging.

Keep an eye on science

Biomedicine and biotechnology are also among the 20 fastest-growing fields listed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. With advances in science seeming to occur with rapid-fire regularity—genetic modification, stem cell research, cloning—who is going to decide what we do and how we use all these new discoveries and innovations? "There are tremendous implications in every field, from medicine to research, law to politics, scientists to health-care providers and policy makers,"

says Robert Klitzman, director of the new M.S. program in bioethics at Columbia University (212-854-9666, ce.columbia.edu). "Scientific advances have mushroomed in the past few decades. But we still don't know how to deal with these advances as a society."

The multidisciplinary program equips professionals and policy makers with the knowledge and skills to make critical bioethical decisions. "A whole range of students take this," Klitzman says. "Just as there's huge growth in a field like biotech, there's an enormous need for skilled, smart people who know how to apply regulations and ethics. And many people, whether in law or medicine or business, take the courses to give them a better sense of their own direction and career." Students not enrolled in the program can take up to two courses.

Global outreach

Earthquakes. Hunger. Poverty. Microfinancing loans for a village's business-minded women. Humanitarian aid. In the past 20 years, globally focused nonprofits have taken on ever more responsibility all over the world. They're not just raising funds, though; they're also creating programs. NYU-SCPS's newly launched Certificate in Global Philanthropy (212-998-7200, scps.nyu.edu) trains students to assess and confront the challenges facing both fund-raisers and programmers, incorporating current debates about humanitarian assistance, governance, ethics and other issues. What are the consequences of long-term aid? What are the consequences of certain kinds of programming? And what are the logistics?

"Certainly, the effects of economic crises, poverty, war and global warming are felt far beyond national borders," says Vera Jelinek, divisional dean of NYU-SCPS's Center for Global Affairs. "The public sector has to learn how to respond to these issues on a global scale." The program has two branches: Students can focus on fund-raising or programming, combining courses from the philanthropy and global affairs departments. Among the subjects covered are fundability, microfinancing, food policy and corporate funding.

Five courses for a new era

Urban farming

What if, instead of going to Gristedes or Whole Foods, we all went out to harvest the back quarter acre? The New School's Food Studies program offers **Urban Agriculture**, 15 Thursday-night sessions beginning September 2, all about growing and producing food within a metropolis—from urban agriculture's role in a city's economy and food system to its environmental implications. The course includes NYC-based case studies, guest lectures and field trips. 212-229-5600, newschool.edu

Social media

Twitter for Peace: The 92nd Street Y and Mashable, the social networking news blog, are holding the **Mashable Social Good Summit: How Social Media Can Change the World**. The daylong symposium (Sept 20), held during United Nations Week and in partnership with the United Nations Foundation, promises to be inspiring.

It features Ted Turner as the keynote speaker and will emphasize how new media can help address the problems facing our world. 212-415-5500, 92y.org

App development

Money and business have gone mobile with smartphone technology, creating a whole new world of entrepreneurial opportunities: mobile-environment applications for customers, suppliers, salespeople and representatives, among others. Current Web-based applications—once dependent on desktop or laptop use—can now be morphed into a mobile format. Learn all about it over the course of ten Tuesday nights from October 5 in NYU-SCPS's **iPhone and iPad Apps for Business and Enterprises** class. You'll cover topics like data availability, information security and design considerations, and will learn how to integrate your own shiny new app into a fully operational application on the Web. 212-998-7200, scps.nyu.edu

Design solutions

Do better by design: In this ultra-visual world, graphic designers have the power to influence what people buy, what they read, where they shop and

nearly everything else. The School of Visual Arts offers **Citizen Designer**, a 12-session course in how design can effect social and political change. Students will produce designs for their own causes, so come prepared with ideas and goals. Typography knowledge and Adobe Creative experience is helpful, but not required. 212-592-2251, schoolofvisualarts.edu/ce

Aesthetics

Give good face, get good job: Skin-care specialists are among the 20 fastest growing occupations, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the field is the only one of them for which a postsecondary vocational award—a certificate—is all the education required. Do it the green way with the **Aveda Institute of New York's Esthetics Program**. Aveda started out as the wholesome indie rock version of the beauty business, but it's grown into a green mainstay, with 6,500 salons in 20 countries. The 600-hour

part-time or full-time course prepares you for a career as a licensed aesthetician, with an emphasis on ethics, organics and sustainability. New hires in the Aveda network are up 37 percent, according to a company spokesperson. 212-807-1492, avedainstituteny.com

