

http://marketplace.publicradio.org/display/web/2007/12/06/hightech_innovation_in_short_supply

NPR Marketplace

Thursday, December 6, 2007

High-tech innovation in short supply

TEXT OF STORY

Scott Jagow: For the most part, the immigration debate has focused on low-skilled, illegal immigrants. But a study out today looks at a different group: skilled labor in the high-tech fields. From our America's Desk at WLRN, Dan Grech reports.

Dan Grech: There's a shortage of mathematicians and computer scientists in the United States.

In the past, U.S. companies filled the gap with skilled foreigners. But companies say visa quotas for high-skilled workers are too low to meet demand, and Congress hasn't raised the cap. A new study concludes companies are getting around this by outsourcing operations.

Stuart Anderson directs the **National Foundation for American Policy**, author of the study:

Stuart Anderson: The current restrictions on highly-educated immigrants is leading more jobs and innovation to be moved outside the United States, when you have many highly-motivated people that would be happy to come here, study, and then work and create jobs and innovation inside the United States.

The study also finds the tech-worker shortage has led to big raises in recent years. Computer scientists now earn on average \$96,000 a year.

I'm Dan Grech for Marketplace.