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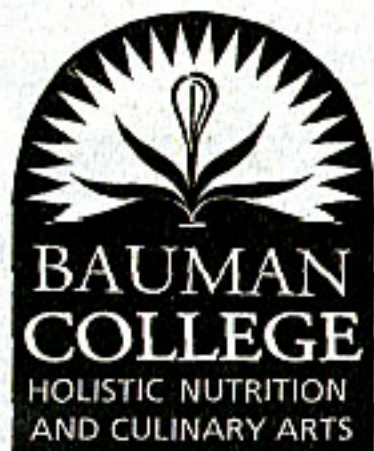
Lucrative chef jobs in the natural foods field are exploding as the need for good nutrition and a healthy lifestyle becomes more apparent in our fast-paced world.

Natural Chefs have a rewarding career providing nutritious gourmet meals for people wanting greater vitality, health and wellbeing.

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Find out if a culinary career as a Natural Chef is right for you.



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Shop Where You Sleep

Not long ago, Erin Kilmer Neel's life seemed torn from the pages of *Office Space*. The 36-year-old lived in Mountain View and commuted daily to her job at Oracle. "I wasn't walking anywhere," she recalled. "I was working for the Man." So Neel took a year off and headed to Thailand, where she volunteered to work on ecotourism villages. When she got back, she interned at Oakland's Community and Economic Development Agency, then attended grad school at MIT to study planning. Her thesis examined whether social marketing techniques can support local businesses.

Meanwhile, Neel got engaged, as did her best friend, Anne Campbell Washington. To their dismay, they found that their only choice for gift registries were big-box stores. Determined to support local businesses, Neel and Washington began work on OaklandUnwrapped.com in 2004. The goal was to make shopping

locally "easy and compelling," Neel says. After several years of toiling away late nights and on weekends, the e-commerce site officially launched earlier this month. Some items for purchase: a plush baby blanket for \$45 or an oil painting for \$325.

Supporting local businesses has become an increasingly popular model for economic development, from banking to farming to manufacturing. "If you're making your purchases at a local business, those purchasers are more likely to reinvest in the local economy," explains Mary Rick, program manager of San Francisco's Business Alliance for Local Living Economies, or BALLE, one of two national organizations that focus on supporting local businesses. Last year, Neel joined the Oakland Merchant Leadership Forum, which became the alliance's official Oakland affiliate. The organization's annual conference brings together bigwigs in the sustainable business movement, as well as business owners and leaders, to discuss the latest tactics in local ownership and sustainability. This year's event features luminaries like Paul Hawken, Van Jones, and Winona LaDuke. Neel will moderate a panel on Oakland's Green Industrial Revolution, discussing the changing manufacturing sector and how local businesses can take advantage of green trends. Speakers include Councilwoman Nancy Nadel, Jose Corona from Inner City Advisors, and Ian Kim from the Ella Baker Center.

The **2007 BALLE Conference** takes place at the UC Berkeley campus Thursday through Saturday. Registration at the door costs \$445, and daily passes are available. Info: LivingEconomies.org

— KATHLEEN RICHARDS

TWO, FOUR, SIX, APE

Did Darwin open a can of worms or what? The unquenchable battle between evolution and intelligent design flared in a Pennsylvania courtroom for more than two months in 2005, as detailed in **Gordy Slack's** book *The Battle Over the Meaning of Everything: Evolution, Intelligent Design, and a School Board in Dover, PA*. Oakland science writer Slack puts himself and his family — whose members follow different faiths — into the narrative. Chew the fat with him about survival of the fittest at **Diesel** (5433 College Ave., Oakland). 7:30 p.m.

— ANNELI RUFUS