

RVCC Massage: “A Career in a Year”

By Meaghan Breen
Eagle Times Health
Correspondent

CLAREMONT, NH--“I think a lot of massage therapists, including myself, pride themselves on the changes that they can help bring about in another person’s body, either managing their chronic pain or stress, [or] finding things they didn’t even know existed,” said River Valley Community College (RVCC) Massage Program Director Michael Jacovina, LMT. RVCC offers a massage certification program that combines medical and anatomical knowledge with practical hours and creativity.

It’s comprised of 37 credits and includes lectures, seminars and bookwork in addition to ample hands-on experience. Jacovina said they provide more practical hours than required for certification. The program may be completed in a part- or full-time capacity. The best part of the latter? You can develop a “career in a year” across three semesters, September to August. Part-time students finish in two years, although there is some “wiggle room,” Jacovina said, for those that need to extend.

The RVCC Massage Program trains students in kinesiology, pathology, business, professional communications, professional boundaries, myofascial release, Swedish and Thai massage and ayurvedic techniques, among others.

Income for massage therapists in NH is about \$50,000, close to the national average. “The pay is good; it

can be all over the place,” Jacovina said of how location and industry-specific positions influence monetary gains.

Massage therapy offers positions in chiropractic offices, spas, gyms, resorts, physical therapist offices, hospitals and nursing homes. Wanderlusters can even work on cruise ships, enjoying time off between contracts traveling. “There are so many ways to barter with it,” he said.

Sports massage is an excellent avenue for sports-enthusiasts. “You’re in the excitement of the locker room, before the game and after the game. It’s really cool stuff.”

For those who enjoy independence, private practice is possible. Jacovina says it’s fairly straightforward. Therapists have the ability to choose an annual target salary and schedule and allow that to dictate rates. “If you decide that you’re working for yourself, and you demand how much [you charge]... you can adjust,” he said, if needed.

“Having space is not a given for a lot of people, but aside from that... if you’ve got the license, you’ve got the insurance, you’ve got the table -- you’re ready to go,” he said. RVCC offers a scholarship program for low-income students. “We will donate tables to students who have financial hardship,” he said.

The program places a lot of emphasis on self-care. “It’s a physical job, that’s one of the things we stress with our students, that you do need to take care of yourself,” Ja-

covina said. He recommends doing light, dynamic stretches and wrist movements to prevent carpal tunnel and to always consider posture. Working with forearms is helpful and also allows therapists to move more tissue.

Self-care is also psychological. “If you don’t recognize that people exchange energies, then you are ignoring a big part of life and being able to protect yourself from the energy around you, from what people are bringing into the room...those things can take a toll on the psyche,” he said, adding that boundaries are important.

Jacovina addressed the rewarding

culture in massage therapy. “The comradery behind the scenes is a pretty special thing,” he said. “Everybody cares about each other. [It’s] making a difference in someone’s life while making a living. The one thing that I would like to say is that if you like getting massages, you will probably love being a massage therapist.”

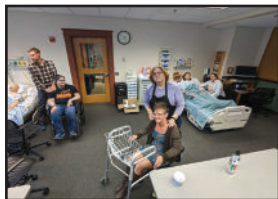
To learn more about the RVCC Massage Therapy Program, visit its website at www.rivervalley.edu/program/massage-therapy.



Jacovina



An RVCC massage therapy student practices



RVCC massage students practice massage techniques



Sports
Writer

STATE RUNNERS-UP BASEBALL 1972

STATE RUNNERS-UP BASEBALL 1979

STATE CHAMPIONS F.M. WILDCATS BASEBALL 1973 1974 1979 1981

STATE RUNNERS-UP BASEBALL 1988

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