

technical

# careers you can enjoy

without

so, the thought of another four years in school makes you weep? well, weep not. you can have a career without college. check what these folks have done.

a

college degree

### viewing the human body

When 18-year-old Michelle Lertay, a high school honor student, decided that she didn't want to go to college right after high school, she raised a lot of eyebrows. "I wanted to go immediately to work because I really wasn't gung ho about going to a four-year college straight from high school," Lertay says.

Throughout high school, she was told by her friends and family that going to a four-year college was the only way to be sure of getting a good job. But Lertay discovered a different route. She enrolled in a two-year radiologic technology program at the Washington Hospital Center in Washington, DC.

"This gave me the opportunity to have some patient contact, to have the work experience, the school experience and graduate with something comparable to an associate's degree," says Lertay, who is nearing the end of her second year of training.

After completing her program, Lertay could make an entry-level salary of at least \$27,500 per year. Health-related jobs account for 13 of the 20 fastest growing occupations requiring postsecondary training, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Radiologic, or X-ray, technicians account for the fifth fastest-growing occupation in the overall job market for people with less than a bachelor's degree.

The certified radiologic technologist (RT) studies radiography, the science of taking pictures inside the human body to diagnose illnesses. RTs are responsible for positioning patients, operating the X-ray machine and exposing the film. X-ray technicians work in a variety of settings such as hospitals, doctors offices, health-maintenance organizations and emergency-care facilities. In most hospital-run radiology programs, students such as Lertay divide their time between the classroom and working in hospital X-ray clinics. Lertay has been spending her final year of training working the evening shift in the Hospital Center's X-ray room and in the hospital's shock trauma unit.

In her program at the Hospital Center, Lertay pays \$300 per year for tuition and about \$750 for books. The \$250 per month she receives as a stipend helps to offset those expenses. She says the thing she likes best about working as an RT is that she gets a firsthand look at the development of a variety of medical conditions that affect the body. "You don't know everything that the doctors know, but you do have some insight."

Dr. Name	Reg. No.	Exp.	Phy.	Sup. Files
DR. BROWN	02-02-02	02-02-02	02-02-02	02-02-02
DR. SMITH	02-02-02	02-02-02	02-02-02	02-02-02
DR. JONES	02-02-02	02-02-02	02-02-02	02-02-02
DR. WILSON	02-02-02	02-02-02	02-02-02	02-02-02

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by chris murray and sibylla nash



kevin davis gets paid to record bumpin' music.

Lertay says her grandmother's death from cancer was one of her major motivations for wanting to become a radiologic technologist. "If the technology had been what it is today, then I think

maybe she'd have had some more years with me," she says, adding, "it makes you feel good to know that you've helped to prevent a condition like cancer, especially if the patient does everything he or she is supposed to do after that."

#### making stars sound better

Kevin Davis spends most of his time locked in a room with the likes of Aaron Hall, Chanté Moore, Heavy D, Brandy and others, listening to music. Well, not only listening. He is also working and getting paid, mind you. As an audio engineer, it's Davis' job to record everything, make sure it gets on tape—you know, the vocals, samples, bass, mix it down—and the end product is what you hear bumpin' in the boomers' systems.

During his senior year in high school, Davis took a six-week night course at the Los Angeles Recording Workshop. He learned the basics—about how a studio, the equipment and the

**court reporting training turned knox into a closed-captionist.**

technology works. A month later, he got a job. It's three years later, and the 21-year-old has a list of credits that read like a *Billboard* magazine Top-Twenty Chart.

"As a kid, I always knew I wanted to do something in music," Davis says. "My mom's a singer and my father's an arranger and producer, so I was always in the studio. When I was 15, I was a roadie. I went on tour with a band and learned about live engineering. I liked the engineering aspect, but not the touring," he says.

A typical day for Davis begins at noon and lasts until midnight. Most studio time is brought in 12-hour blocks. One time, on a remix of a song for Chanté Moore, Davis was in the studio for 36 hours straight! Sometimes, a session can be nonstop comedy. "Working with Jamie [Foxx] was like having a comedy club in the studio the whole night," recalls Davis. "You have to make sure this [audio engineering] is what you want to do, because of the long hours in the studio—you gotta love music."

To become an audio engineer, you need to have some training, whether it's through a four-year institution or a trade school. Some studios will start you off as a runner, where you would run errands. this allows you to be in the studio and to learn the equipment.

So you want to know what an engineer makes? The average salary can fall in the \$500 range for a 12-hour day. Of course, this pay scale will vary depending on the budget for the project and the work required of you.

#### helping the deaf hear

Sherry Knox is just 25 years old, but already she is well paid. Knox says once she finished high school, she had no desire to go on to college. Instead, she enrolled in a court reporting school in Northern Virginia, from which she graduated last **▶ page 58**



photography opening by welton b. doby III this page aldo mauro; welton b. doby III

Other Technical Careers

#### Other technical jobs that do not require a college degree include:

- **medical transcriptionists**—prepares medical records for physicians
- **rapid text entry specialists**—work in a business setting using the short-hand machine to put information into computers two to three times faster than traditional typewriters
- **scopist**—edits and transcribes documents recorded during court proceedings
- **camera operators**—work the cameras during the making of a movie
- **film and videotape editors**—spend long hours editing, splicing and cutting film or videotape for television shows, commercials, movies and music videos

#### where to go for more info:

**American Cinema Editors**  
4416 1/2 Finley Ave  
Los Angeles, CA 90027  
213-660-4425

**International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees and Moving Picture Machine Operators**  
1515 Broadway  
New York, NY 10036  
212-730-1770

**National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians**  
7101 Wisconsin Ave.  
Bethesda, MD 20814

**National Technical Association**  
P.O. Box 7045  
Washington, DC 20032  
202-829-6100

c.m. & s.n.

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March. "Some people go to college and don't have a job when they finish," says Knox. "I had a job when I finished court reporting school. I was able to translate my court reporter skills into a closed captionist job because the machines are similar or the same."

The average salary for a court reporter and a closed-captionist is somewhere between \$25,000 and \$50,000 per year, but freelancers can make as much as \$80,000 per year.

After her graduation from court reporting school, Knox got a job at Caption Reporters Inc., a Washington, DC, firm that contracts its reporters out to television stations and video production crews. As a closed captionist, Knox translates the audio portion of television programs for the deaf and hearing-impaired.

Knox says she had no idea what she wanted to do after graduation from high school until one of her teachers read an advertisement from the newspaper calling for a court reporter. Although she was enticed by the large salary and generous benefits mentioned in the ad, she had no idea what she was getting herself into until she completed her first week of court reporting school.

"You don't really know what this field entails because it's good money. But they don't really know that it is hard work," Knox says. Court reporters are responsible for recording conversations between people as they are speaking during trials, hearings, meetings, depositions and conferences. The hard part of being a court reporter that Knox describes comes when students have to learn how to use a shorthand reporting machine, which resembles a miniature typewriter with no letters printed on the keys.

"You have to learn the keyboard, just like you learn a typewriter's keyboard, by not looking at the keys as you type," Knox says. By the time students graduate, usually in 24 to 30 months, they must have mastered the shorthand machine along with the basic computer software and be able to type a minimum of 225 words per minute in shorthand. Court reporting students also must be proficient in legal and medical terminology, deposition procedures and in the English language. Of the 17 students enrolled in the course with her, Knox was the only one who graduated.

Knox says working as a closed-captionist in television calls for working a variety of shifts, from the morning television news talk shows to prime time. "You have to allow yourself at least two hours to prepare, because you have all the scripts," Knox says. For example, in closed-captioning sports events, she says, "you may have the names of all the guys on the teams, but it's still a live sporting event, where you don't know what the announcer is going to say."

Knox's skills are saleable because few court reporters have the ability to work as a closed-captionist. It is a new and growing field. ☐

**CHRIS MURRAY** is an Arlington, Virginia-based writer, while **SIBYLLA NASH**, a student, freelances from Los Angeles, California.

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After going to the manicurist for a few months, Anifalaje realized she could save herself a lot of money if she did her own nails at home. "I realized a lot of what the manicurist was doing I could do myself. I went to a local beauty supply store and bought the supplies and began practicing." Anifalaje took a few classes offered by the manufacturers of nail polish and after about a year, she learned how to manicure nails so well she began doing the nails of friends and family members.

While still in high school, in the summer of 1992, Anifalaje created her own company, Tokunbo's Creations, a full-service manicure business. Not only does she do natural as well as artificial nails, she also does nail decorating, complete with hand-painted designs featuring rhinestones and gold and silver striping. Her prices range from \$6.50 for regular manicures to \$25 for a full set of tips and wraps. While still in high school, she worked out of local beauty salons on commission. Some weeks she made as much as \$300.

In July 1993, Anifalaje took part in the New York City-based National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship Program, designed to teach inner-city teenagers the principles of business ownership. "At first they thought I was too advanced to take part since I already owned my own business," explains Anifalaje, now 18. "But I still learned a lot from the two-month program. I learned how to manage my money better and how to keep track of it. Bookkeeping and record keeping became major priorities."

In September 1993, Anifalaje entered Wesleyan University and took her business with her. She has become a walking billboard for Tokunbo's Creations. "Students see my nails and my toes and they ask who did them. When I say I did, they ask if I would do theirs."

A full-time student with a government major, Anifalaje does the nails of about four customers a week and can make up to \$100. Once she gets the hang of college life, she plans to advertise with flyers and signs and will probably double her client base. She either does the manicures in her room or in the rooms of her fellow college mates.

Once she pays for her supplies, the rest of her profits pay for her college costs, such as books and clothes. She also puts some money away for the future. Once she finishes college, she knows she will own her own business, though she's not sure what kind yet.

"Having my own business has given me a purpose in life," explains Anifalaje. "It gives me a sense of pride. I also realize that I can make money. I have become so much more independent."

And Anifalaje has this advice for other young people who want a piece of the entrepreneurial rock: "Sit down and think about something you really enjoy doing and go for it. Start small. Set goals and watch your venture grow. With your skills, you can also help your community by providing inspiration for others to do what you're doing. That's how we can build a stronger community." ☐

**LLOYD GITE** is a television reporter in Houston, Texas.