

so YOU want
to soothe
with your
hands?

3 ways to start stroking

STUDY IT The Swedish Institute College of Health Sciences offers degree-granting programs in massage therapy and acupuncture, a certification program in exercise science and personal training, as well as professional continuing education classes. Call (212) 924-5900 or visit swedish-institute.org. The massage therapy program at The Bryman School in Arizona offers an associate of science degree in less than 19 months. Visit brymanschool.edu. And check out naturalhealers.com for a list of massage schools by state.

STAY INFORMED The American Massage Therapy Association (amtamassage.org) represents more than 52,000 therapists in 27 countries. The Web site lists industry Q&A's and information on careers in the field. Lunkins learned about the Olympics from *Massage Today*, an industry trade publication (massagetoday.com). *The Complete Book of Massage* (Random House, Inc.) by Clare Maxwell-Hudson is a fully illustrated comprehensive guide to massage techniques.

KNOW THE DEAL Reputable therapists are either licensed or certified by the state in which they plan to work. Check the laws in your area to see what is required for certification. For industry jobs, log on to bestspajobs.com. *DaySpa* magazine (dayspamag.com) provides up-to-date info on trends, products, equipment, services, and management and marketing tools. —S.M.M.

Thinking about owning a business? You already do. You own you and your career, says Nicole Williams in *Earn What You're Worth: A Wildly Sophisticated Approach to Investing in Your Career—and Yourself* (Penguin Group). Her book shows you how to evaluate your worth and earn more money and respect.



I Love This Job!

LICENSED MASSAGE THERAPIST

Andrea Lunkins

SALARY RANGE: \$25,000–\$100,000+

Growing up playing sports, I often enjoyed getting massages to soothe my aching muscles. But I never gave a thought to a career as a professional massage therapist until I took a spa vacation. I'd graduated from the State University of New York at Albany and was working as a paralegal for a major sports company. But after the spa experience, I attended the Swedish Institute of New York at night—working full-time by day—studying anatomy, biology and kinesiology before earning a state license. A year later I launched Therapy Yes (therapyyes.com), a full-service company in New York that offers a menu of massage services.

"I found my niche after I attended a basketball clinic at St. John's University. I met the head coach of the men's basketball team, convinced him of the benefits of sports massage to decrease the athletes' injuries, and offered my services on a volunteer basis. Eventually I was hired as an independent contractor. This led to exposure on ESPN and MSG, and to such clients as WNBA players Kym Hampton and Teresa Weather- spoon and NBA players Kenyon Martin, John Wallace and Ron Artest.

"The successes have been sweet, but it's been a fight because women therapists aren't taken seriously in men's sports. I've had to convince coaching staffs that I have the physical strength to do the job, persuade them of the benefits of sports massage to complement conditioning regimes, and remain professional at all times to avoid the groupie label. I work festivals, travel to people's homes and offices, and jump on airplanes to attend to corporate clients. In 2003 I went to Thailand and became certified in Thai Massage. And I was selected from more than 500 applicants to work on athletes of the Athens 2004 Olympics. The art of massage is as old as time, but there's still a lack of qualified female therapists. Massage isn't just about pampering. It's about improving life and healing people."—S.M.M. □