

Kirsten DiChiappari '93

Director | EVOLUTION Bodywork & Nutrition, RI



Alumni Career Snapshot

Major: American Studies

Briefly describe your position, organization and industry.

I am the Director of EVOLUTION Bodywork & Nutrition, a comprehensive wellness center located in Bristol, RI. We create unique programs for individuals and companies.

Please specify your job responsibilities, including a typical day on the job.

There are no typical days on my job - everything flows to me. I am responsible for staffing the business, working on our marketing plans and goals, connecting with our advertisers and partners, meeting with our corporate clients, conducting health screenings and analysis, networking, networking, networking.

How did you break into your career field? What, if any, obstacles did you face?

After a decade or so in Human Resources, I decided that I no longer wanted to work in a corporate environment. It's very hard to find a company that truly cares for its employees in words AND actions. After the birth of my second child, I briefly became the Executive Director of Shape Up Rhode Island, the statewide anti-obesity campaign. Through that job, I was introduced to a small company in my hometown that was trying to create wellness programs for individuals and businesses. I came on board for a short time gig to help out and ended up staying and becoming the Director.

Indicate any previous experiences and how that led to your current position.

My HR experience gave me insight into the challenges that businesses face when considering programs for employees. It is critical to provide owners and decision makers with the real information - statistics, numbers, return on investment - so they will realize the value in providing resources to keep their employees healthy. I knew that every company faces unique challenges and obstacles and that my advantage would be to have been on the other side of the table as a decision maker.

What does it take to succeed in your field? Please specify any important trends.

Patience, persistence, passion. While it might only take a few weeks or months for a client to experience positive results, it really takes several years to see the successful (and profitable) end game. There are billions of dollars spent on all aspects of wellness but it is so widely distributed that it can be very disconcerting and disappointing in the beginning.

Networking is critical - the need to constantly add new people to your circle so that in addition to impacting current clients, you increase your reach and base.



Get more career information and advice from PC alumni by participating in Career Services events throughout the year!

Kirsten DiChiappari '93

Director | EVOLUTION Bodywork & Nutrition, RI

How can students prepare themselves while still in college?

Work experience is important - any job, every job counts. Learn to conduct yourself in a professional environment, meet deadlines, be accountable to coworkers and bosses, etc. My favorite interview candidates are ones that are able to provide examples of work that they have done - even when it is undergraduate team project work. Demonstrate your skills in words and if you can create a portfolio *of examples, do it*. You want to stand out in a crowd of candidates and show why you are the best person - the right person - for the job.

How important is a graduate degree or other training? Specify preferred degrees, programs or certificates.

Graduate work is important in certain fields. Continuing education and lifelong learning are, in my opinion, the most important things a person can do.

What entry career areas would provide the best experience for students aspiring to your field? What strategies or resources would you recommend for landing an entry-level position or internship?

The wellness industry has many different pieces to it - from the extremely educated and experienced to the most shady and unauthentic. If you have a passion for something, whether it be Pilates, Yoga, Nutrition, Massage Therapy, Health Education, Counseling, etc. you should follow that path to its end BUT not at the expense of gaining general business experience and acumen. Most wellness businesses are well intentioned but ill prepared and fail shortly after opening. Be prepared to spend several years cultivating your craft and your credibility before you can expect to be successful. It is an industry that is just gaining acceptance and you want to distinguish yourself as the one to know - the place to go.

What resources or websites would you suggest for students interested in your field?

Welcoa (Wellness Councils of America) has a wealth of information and resources for people interested in wellness in the workplace. Go to www.welcoa.org. Also, Trust for America's Health provides state by state facts on the key facts and indicators in health. Someone who is interested in health policy or promotion would gain some insight here. Go to www.healthyamericans.org. In addition, however, students should take advantage of their own available resources - seek out screenings and health fairs, find out the preventative benefits allowed by healthcare plans - truly experience the challenges that most Americans are facing in order to determine what your own role should be - teacher, advocate, administrator, researcher, provider, etc.

Alumni Career Snapshot



PROVIDENCE
COLLEGE

Get more career information and advice from PC alumni by participating in Career Services events throughout the year!

Kirsten DiChiappari '93

Director | EVOLUTION Bodywork & Nutrition, RI

How did your Providence College education and experience help to prepare you for success?

My liberal arts education helped me land my first job in a law firm. From there, I was able to gain experience and insight - enough to know that I no longer wanted to go to law school! The broad education that PC provided me gave me the confidence to carry myself in every job I had (and I have had MANY) until I found the one that fit me best.

Additional Comments or Suggestions for Providence College Students:

Paul Zane Pilzer is the author of The Wellness Revolution. From his webpage (<http://thewellnessrevolution.paulzanepilzer.com/index.php>): In 2002, The Wellness Revolution was the "shot heard round the world" for the wellness industry. It defined wellness as an industry—linking tens of thousands of disparate service and product suppliers with a single cause. It showed scientists, fitness providers, businesspeople, food manufacturers, doctors, and others focused on disease prevention and anti-aging that they were part of a worldwide revolution—rather than merely lone iconoclasts inside their chosen professions or industries.

Five years ago, in The Wellness Revolution, economist Paul Zane Pilzer outlined an emerging \$200 billion industry he called "wellness." Today, as fully explained in The New Wellness Revolution, that industry has grown to \$500 billion, and it's just getting started, offering even greater entrepreneurial opportunities.

Alumni Career Snapshot



PROVIDENCE
COLLEGE

Get more career information and advice from PC alumni by
participating in Career Services events throughout the year!