

# MASSAGE magazine

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## NHI Celebrates 30th Anniversary, Continues to Shape Massage Therapy Education

### *Thirty Years of Helping People Have Work They Love*

Emeryville, CA – Over two thousand years ago, Confucius wisely stated: “Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life.” For the past 30 years, the National Holistic Institute (NHI) has graduated thousands of massage therapists for whom those words have real meaning.

NHI's founder, Carol Carpenter, created California's first comprehensive, professional program of massage therapy in 1979 in Oakland. Despite humble beginnings in a small house, the school had a well integrated program from the start and grew steadily to become the first accredited massage school in California and the first in the state to offer federal financial aid through the U.S. Department of Education.

NHI moved to its current location in Emeryville in 1989, the same year that the Loma Prieta earthquake struck the San Francisco Bay Area. NHI responded by creating the Massage Emergency Response Team (MERT), sending students and graduates into the community to provide free massages to those suffering from acute stress. Since then, the MERT team has offered massage therapy services to firefighters, and police officers, and is used nationally by the American Massage

Therapy Association to organize volunteer massage on rescue and recovery workers at disaster sites.

In 2003, Mason Myers and Tim Veitzer purchased NHI and accelerated the school's growth by opening new campuses in San Jose, Petaluma, Encino and San Francisco. With a widely established network of relationships in the field of massage therapy, NHI assumed an influential voice in the creation of the first statewide standard for the certification of massage practitioners and therapists. NHI students and faculty sent hundreds of letters to Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger in support of SB 731, which was signed into law in 2008 and creates uniform education requirements for California's massage professionals.

The new statewide standards are well-timed, considering the rapid growth of the massage industry. According to the Labor Department, employment for massage therapists nationwide is expected to increase faster than the average for all occupations, about 20% from 2006 to 2016. As a result, NHI has experienced a 30% increase in student enrollments over the previous year.

A contributing factor to NHI's growth is a placement rate of over 87%, with NHI graduates going to work for organizations ranging from Google to the US Olympic Training Center, and finding work they love with spas, resorts, sports clubs, chi-

ropractic and medical offices. Employers are pleased with NHI's emphasis on customer service and its solid training in Western and Eastern modalities, including acupressure, deep tissue, Swedish, Thai massage, Shiatsu, sports massage and myofascial therapies.

Looking ahead, NHI continues to shape massage therapy education with the creation of an accelerated program that lets students complete the required 720-hours in just seven months instead of the traditional year, and an advanced 360 hour continuing education program. To accommodate future growth, NHI is building a new campus and headquarters in Emeryville, scheduled to open in October 2009, and plans to open additional locations in Southern California.

NHI is also taking an active role in introducing massage therapy and massage therapy education to the larger community, via sports massage teams at high-profile events such as the Los Angeles and San Francisco marathons, and in student clinics that make it affordable and accessible to get a high-quality, professional massage.

Thirty years after its creation, in the midst of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, NHI continues to thrive—thanks to unwavering commitment to Confucius' principle of helping people have work they love.