



25 people who do what they love

By Rachel Farrell, Special to CareerBuilder

When I set out to find people who love their jobs so much that they can't believe they get paid to do it, the response was overwhelming. Which is awesome, because we love it when you love your job!

So let's get to it. Without further ado, here are 25 people who can't believe they get paid to do these awesome jobs:

"I'm co-owner and photographer at Bark Pet Photography, a Los Angeles-based pet photography business. I get paid to play with animals." -- Kim Rodgers

"I am a travel writer and photographer who focuses on adventure. When I'm not zigzagging around the planet -- swimming with sea lions in the Galapagos Islands or roaming the remote jungles of India -- I'm writing about my adventures, the environment, fitness, health and wellness, extraordinary people and social injustice issues." -- Sarah Sekula, freelance writer

"I'm a reality casting director. It's my job to find fascinating individuals, who have amazing life stories and get to tell their stories to millions of viewers worldwide. From raging seniors ("Sunset Daze") to single millionaires ("The Millionaire Matchmaker"), my job never gets old. I don't just create icons ... I create the shows that distract people from their day-to-day lives and also create a common social thread." -- Vinnie Potestivo, VPE, Inc.

"I work with cover songs! We have a service called Limelight that lets artists and bands secure the rights to release any cover song for CD, download, ringtone or streaming. I develop ways to share this service with bands, choirs, a cappella and other musical groups worldwide. Very cool to be helping musicians in 79 countries simplify what can be a complicated process. Also very cool to be helping songwriters get paid!"-- Michael Kauffman, SVP of sales and marketing at RightsFlow

"I'm a food writer and recipe developer, which means I get paid to create delicious things to eat! I write cookbooks, but also work for magazines (I created the recipes for 'Bon Appetit' magazine's December Christmas Dinner Spectacular) and for corporate clients. Ever wonder who makes up the recipes that appear on the back of food packages? For some products, that's me!" -- Jill Silverman Hough

"I get to come up with and create new candy ideas for my company, <http://www.niftycandy.com/>. Some of my ideas include candy necklaces and giant gummy letters. I work with my dad, David Klein, who is also a candy inventor. He invented Jelly Belly's and Sour Licorice." -- Roxy Klein, Can You Imagine That! Inc.

"I am a boudoir photographer. I have women come to me for beautiful, tasteful images for their honey. What is most interesting (and gratifying) to me is when they leave, they realize that it is more for them than for the one they came in to give a gift to." -- Jill Thibodeau

"I own a lifestyle photographer business. I basically focus on families and children. When I'm not photographing families, I meet mommies out at parks or at their house and basically play with the kids while I take their photos. A happy child in their own element makes for great images. My job is to make them laugh and play, while I capture them carefree and enjoying life." -- Gwendolyn Allen

"I have a part-time job I love called 'author escort' or 'literary escort.' I get paid to drive authors around the Seattle area when they come here on book and media tours. It's a fantastic job that puts me in regular contact with top journalists, scholars and writers. The people I have escorted include a Nobel Peace Prize winner, a famous wrestler, Stephanie Meyers, a bomb detonation expert, Anthony Bourdain, Dr. Cornell West, etc." -- Diane Duthweiler, Book It Northwest

"I'm a freelance audio engineer. I'm paid to travel around the world and mix audio for live concerts -- and being paid to see live music and travel the world is a heck of a benefit. I get to see lots of the world and work with very interesting people and organizations. From major-label bands to mixing shows for troops overseas, I've had lots of great experience." -- Joe Shambro

"I work for a small company called Ludus Tours, a tour outfitter that focuses on global events like the Olympics, World Cup, Running of the Bulls and Oktoberfest. While I am in the office my job role is to focus on non-traditional marketing and seek PR and press opportunities. My job has sent me to Oktoberfest in Munich, Germany twice and to Running of the Bulls in Spain. My job while I was there was to learn the city and the festival and make sure clients had a good time. Making sure the clients enjoyed themselves included drinking beer and/or wine (depending on the festival) and showing them two of the best cities in Europe!" --Victoria Whyte

"Infertile women seek my expertise to become a seemingly impossible fertile mother-to-be. In a moment I transform a desperate, empty soul into a thriving vessel of life. To help create life is the most fulfilling career. When my swollen-bellied mamas waddle through my door, I know I have changed not just one life for the better, but an entire family." -- Kristen Burris

"I run an outdoor movie and events company. We show movies outside on the inflatable movie screens that we designed." -- Chris Malloy, owner and executive producer, Community Events, LLC

"I run an adventure travel company for women. As part of that, I guide trips to absolutely amazing places such as Italy, Bhutan, Nepal and Kilimanjaro. I definitely can't believe I get to make a living doing it!"-- Marian Marbury, Adventures in Good Company

"I love every aspect and every minute of being a personal chef. In fact, there are many times in the middle of a cooking day, or a client's dinner party, or while teaching a cooking class that I actually think to myself, 'I'm getting paid to do something I love!' How many hard-working people out there can say that? I love the freedom, the responsibility and the daily challenges that this line of work offers me." -- Ellen McCreight Grant, Everyday Personal Chef Service

"I'm a standup comedian. I love every single second of what I do. I think it's so important in life to do what you love. So many people spend eight hours of the day (an extremely huge chunk when you multiply it by five days a week every month of every year) staring at the clock dying to get home." -- Jim Dailakis, actor, writer, comedian, voiceover artist

"I'm a professional magician. Entertaining people with magic is one of the most satisfying experiences I can imagine, and every performance brings me something new and exciting. It's enormously gratifying to experience the whole range of responses I regularly get from my audiences, from wonder, amazement and disbelief to laughter and outright glee at times. I like to think that a big part of my job is spreading joy. How cool is that?" -- Mitch Williams, Magic Productions

"For the past four years, I have been a professional organizer. I primarily work with residential and small business clients to help them overcome the overwhelm that comes from being disorganized. I absolutely love working with my clients and witnessing the changes they are capable of while we work together and after we complete our work together. Working with people to help them move forward with their goals can't be beat." -- Andrea Sharb, Certified Professional Organizer® and Certified Organizer Coach®

"Every day I get to consult with people and their animals. I connect telepathically with the animal and figure out what is going on for the pet, behaviorally, emotionally or physically. Every day is very different. A couple of days a week I'm on the phone connecting with people and their animals over the phone via pictures of their animal(s). Other days I'm in people's homes or in barn aisles talking to horses." -- Joan Ranquet, animal communicator, author, speaker and founder of communication with all Life University

"I'm a celebrity makeup artist. I've had the pleasure of traveling to cities like Buenos Aires, Melbourne and Marseilles, to name a few, with Rachael Ray. I couldn't believe that they actually paid me to rub baby oil on Chad Ochocinco's awesome body for a GQ photo shoot. I've had President Bill Clinton ask me if I thought his hair looked alright. I honestly get paid to do what I would be happy to do for free." -- Kim White

"I work as a chef primarily, but on the side I act as a farm-to-consumer liaison in Sheboygan and Manitowoc Counties, Wisconsin. That entails traveling through the county, meeting and talking to farmers, sampling produce and checking out herds and then linking them up with families and businesses that could use the item(s) they produce." -- Christine Campbell

"I've been a birth doula for more than 14 years and have helped bring 419 babies into the world. When my phone rings, often at 3:00 a.m., I wake up smiling, knowing that I will be going to work soon to do the greatest job ever!" --Tracy Hartley

"I get to bring inventions to life! Inventors send me prototypes of their new ideas, I have them evaluated for safety issues, and I then take the prototypes and send them out to China factories for quotes. We then select a factory, I address all safety issues with the factory, we go into production and I legally import the products into the USA (or wherever the client wishes) -- thus bringing my clients' ideas to life." -- Edie Tolchin, "The Sourcing Lady," owner EGT Global Trading

"As a professional rum drinker, I visit distilleries, taste great rum and consult with some of the best people in the industry." -- Edward Hamilton, founder, Ministry of Rum

"I'm a mystery shopper. I get paid to visit restaurants, theme parks, hotels, casinos, grocery stores, upscale retail stores and more by visiting the venues and reporting back on service and timings. I make my own hours and work for as many or few companies as I choose." -- Pam "PamInCA," president, Myster Shopper's Coalition

"Every day I get up and my day involves chocolate from start to finish, whether it's production, teaching classes, hosting corporate and charity events or traveling around the world. Sometime I have to pinch myself to make sure it's real. I truly love what I do, and I can hardly believe it's real. I'm in the process of starting a little internet-TV show ... the fun never ends!" -- Julie Petch, author "The Chocolate Therapist: A User's Guide to the Extraordinary Health Benefits of Chocolate."