

Health Career Observer



The Official Newsletter of the WNY R-AHEC

November, 2024

Radiologic Technologist

Radiologic technologists, also known as radiographers, perform x-rays and other diagnostic imaging examinations on patients. Radiologic technologists are trained in the use of different types of medical diagnostic equipment. They may choose to specialize, such as in x-ray, mammography, computed tomography (CT) imaging, cardiovascular-interventional radiography, or sonography. Radiologic technologists are responsible for accurately positioning patients and ensuring that a quality diagnostic image is produced. They work closely with radiologists, the physicians who interpret medical images to either diagnose or rule out disease or injury.

Average Annual Pay: \$76,020



"Being able to be a small fragment in someone's life and their road to recovery is an honor and gratitude I will happily never trade in."
-Grace Collins, Radiologic Technologist

How Do I Become a Radiologic Technologist?

**PROJECTED JOB
MARKET GROWTH:
6% BY 2033**

Radiologic technologists typically need an associate's degree. There also are postsecondary education programs that lead to graduate certificates or bachelor's degrees in healthcare and related fields and science technologies. Coursework includes anatomy, pathology, patient care, radiation physics and protection, and image evaluation. Most states require radiologic technologists to be licensed or certified. To become licensed, technologists usually must graduate from an accredited program and either pass a certification exam from the state or obtain certification from a credentialing organization. Technologists may be certified in multiple specialties. Certifications for radiologic technologists are available from the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists.

What Does a Radiologic Technologist Do?



Adjust and maintain imaging equipment.



Follow physician orders on what areas of the body to image.



Prepare patients for procedures, including taking a medical history and shielding exposed areas that do not need to be imaged.



Position the patient and the equipment in order to get the correct image.



Operate the computerized equipment to take the images.



Work with physicians to evaluate the images and to determine whether additional images needed.



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A Professional Account

Grace Collins, Radiologic Technologist at Strong Memorial Hospital
gives insight on a career in Radiologic Technology.

What is the most rewarding part of your job?

"When asked what part of my job is most rewarding, it poses a perplexing answer. Not because it is hard to produce the answer, but because it is difficult to narrow down just one. Being a radiologic technologist possesses so many benefits and rewards. You are not only working with so many amazing people, but also are interacting with them. From my coworkers that are welcoming and brilliant, to my patients that are kind and inspiring, I am constantly reminded of the good that my job entails. Not only do I get to help people and be part of their care and that process to better them, but I also get to collaborate so closely with amazing individuals that do so. With the influx of patients we deal with daily, it can almost seem adventitious that we are a significant piece in someone's care. Being able to be a small fragment in someone's life and their road to recovery is an honor and gratitude I will happily never trade in. It is an extremely rewarding experience to know that I am a part of someone's care and that I have the ability to help them and their families."

What is the most challenging?

"Just like any job or any part of life for that matter, there are always challenges that we endure. One of the most challenging aspects of my job is the ability to problem solve quickly. Being able to quickly solve problems is a really crucial tool to have as a radiologic technologist. We are working in settings where patients are significantly injured and ill to the point where they cannot move. It is our job to not only help them but to make their lives easier for the time we are with them. With that being said, it is a lot of on-the-spot thinking, moving things around to obtain the images we need while providing comfort to the patient and/or their families. It is essentially looking in a different lens; adjusting your thinking in an unusual way that leads you to the same answer. While this might sound like second nature to us, this is something that is developed over time and continuously practiced. Being able to remain calm and thoroughly think through a problem is a challenging yet pragmatic aspect of our job. As exigent as it may seem, it is equally inspiring and something I will continue to appreciate about my job despite the challenge it poses."

What do you wish you knew back in school that you know now?

"Something that I wish I knew while I was in school that I now know is the makeup of the medical field and how expansive imaging is. I know we have all seen medical shows that highlight medicine and healthcare and make it look straightforward and simple. And after, we assume we are medical professionals since we watched all nine seasons. I can willingly admit I was one of those people that thought that. With what I know now, it is extremely baffling as to what I thought before. Working in the healthcare field, specifically a trauma hospital, has opened my eyes to innumerable things. Not only are there multiple branches of healthcare, but there are numerous professions within each branch. I was unaware of the specificity of different specialties, the importance, the different workflows, and the makeup within each branch. This is a similar concept for imaging as well. There are multiple modalities within imaging that make up the whole. There is Computed Tomography (CT), Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), Mammography, Interventional Radiology, X-ray, Sonography, Radiation Therapy, Positron Emission Tomography (PET), and a multitude of other modalities and different components within each modality. Until I stepped into the medical field, and I was actively involved within, I was blind to all of the various aspects of healthcare. This is a job where I will continue to learn and understand all aspects of it constantly."

Anything else you want to share?

"Ever since I started working within this profession my eyes have opened up to a lot of things not only in healthcare but in life as well. As disheartening as it may seem to collaborate so closely with injured and ill individuals, it is a privilege in my eyes. I am working to help providers, nurses and others figure out the best way possible to aid people and make them better. I am constantly learning and developing skills that not only make me a better radiologic technologist, but a better person as well. The knowledge I have only grows and expands and will continue to do so. I am incredibly grateful to have a profession that is so versatile and expansive that I get to consistently deepen my knowledge and work and interact with so many different people. Imaging is often an overlooked field within healthcare. People are often unaware of the importance and significance that imaging provides to and for healthcare. I can personally say that imaging is a great field to explore and there are many benefits within as well multiple pathways that can be taken to further your education."

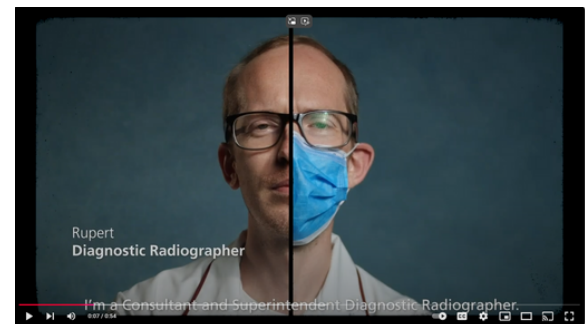


Click on the image for information on a career in
Radiologic Technology

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VJmu_TrRGY



Scan Me



Click on the image for a professional account
from a Radiographer

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4J7XyJWtrkk>



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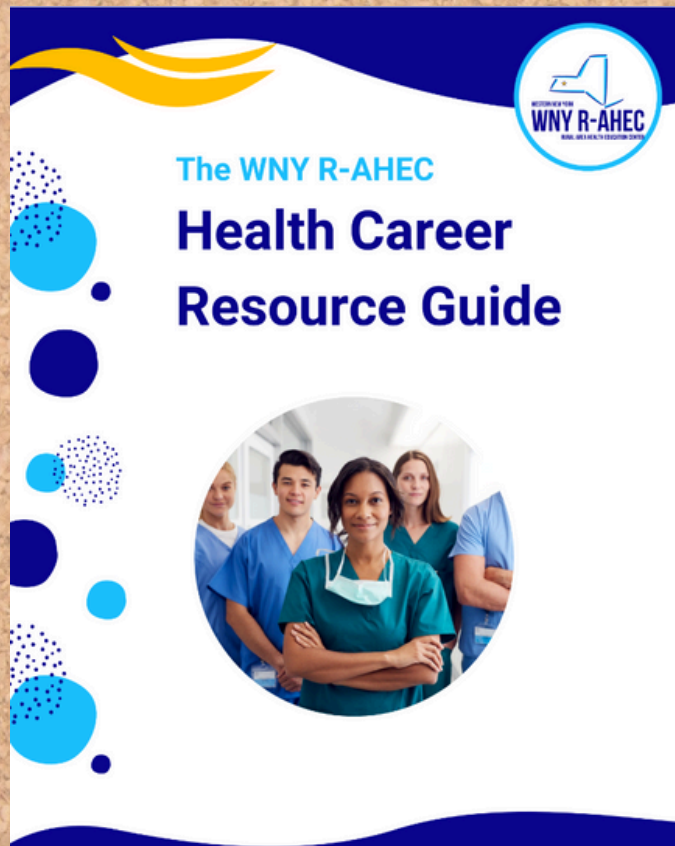
For more information visit the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/radiologic-technologists.htm>

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**Health Careers
Resource Guide
QR Code**

The Health Career Resource Guide features roughly 40 careers, health career information, and school and financial resources.