

THE CONNECTED VISITOR ECONOMY BULLETIN

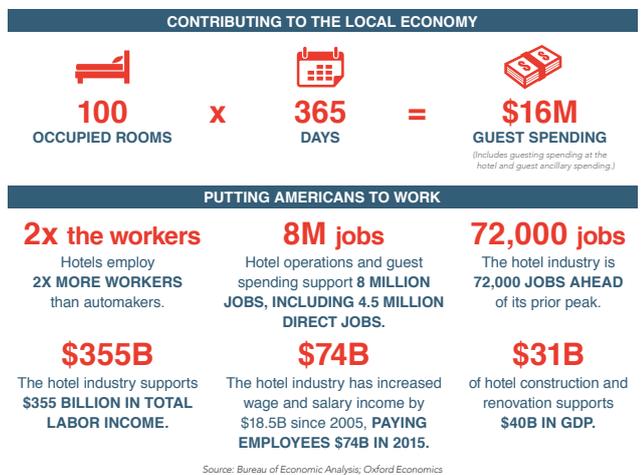
AHLEI
-Creating career pipelines for the U.S. hospitality industry through education and apprenticeships



January 2017

**Hotels and Lodging:
Powering America's Economy**

The hotel and lodging industry is integral to the American economy. Hotels and hotel guests support nearly 8 million jobs, including 4.5 million direct impact jobs. The industry drives the American economy, adding 188,000 new jobs since 2010. A typical hotel with 100 occupied rooms per night supports over 250 local jobs every year.



The hospitality industry in the United States has much to offer young professionals and those just starting to think about careers but they may not be aware of the scope of the industry or how to get started on a career trajectory with the potential for quick advancement and job satisfaction.

A study released by the [American Hotel & Lodging Association](#) (AHLA), the sole national association representing the U.S. hospitality industry, reports that the industry is responsible for 7.8 million jobs with 4.5 million jobs related directly to hotel operations and guest spending.

The hospitality industry in the United States has been identified as one of six priority sectors likely to drive domestic employment growth over the next 10 years with the potential for hotel projects in the sector to add between 2.1 million and 3.3 million jobs by 2021.

AHLA launched a major national awareness campaign in 2016 to showcase career advancement opportunities, community commitment and the economic importance of hotel and lodging businesses. The 'Dreams Happen Here' campaign highlights hospitality's many career success stories including inspiring accounts of

dishwashers and parking attendants who started at 17 and worked their way up to the role of General Manager by the time they were 30. An AHLA member survey revealed that more than 50 percent of all hotel General Managers, and 50 percent of C-suite executives, began their careers in hourly, entry-level positions.

Hospitality is one of the few fields where a degree is not a necessity to begin a career, although it is encouraged for advancement to upper-level positions. [The American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute](#) (AHLEI), the education and training arm of AHLA, provides programming that addresses both types of career entry with workforce training for line-level positions and a high school curriculum and college textbooks for those seeking a degree.

WHY PREPARE YOUR PARTICIPANTS FOR HOSPITALITY CAREERS?

Preparing a well-trained and job-ready workforce to help reduce local unemployment and curtail economic downfall is one of the primary tasks of many workforce and government agencies. These agencies would do well to look toward hospitality and tourism as a target area for their training activities.

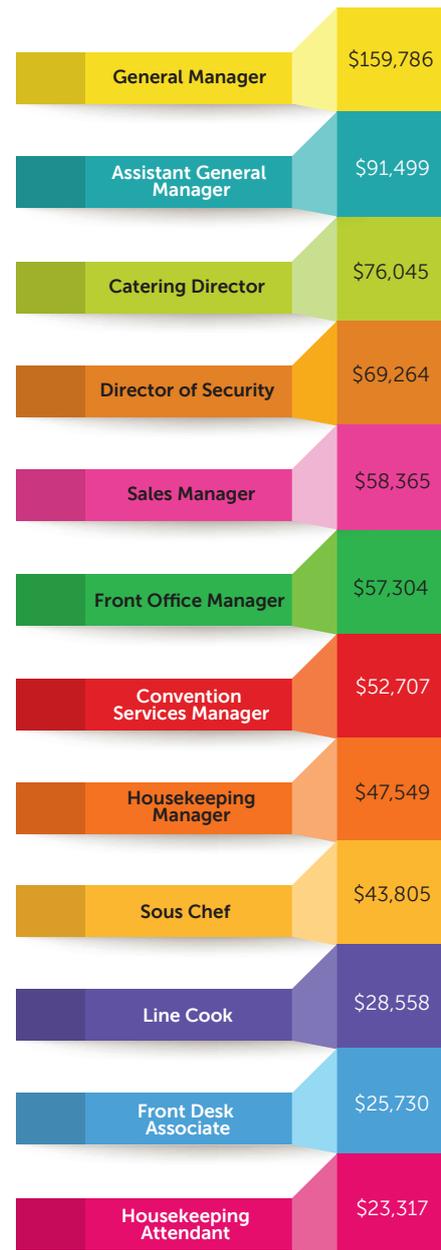
The hospitality and tourism industry leads the future as one of the largest growing work segments, offering career-minded individuals a rewarding, fast-paced environment with multiple career paths.

The hospitality industry is one of dynamic growth potential, with more than 200 industry careers available in a number of different disciplines.

- **50% of hotel general managers began their careers at the entry level. (2014 AH&LA Lodging Survey)**
- Lodging serves as a top ten industry in 48 out of 50 states, providing employment, investment, and opportunity. One of every 17 Americans, either directly or indirectly, work in hospitality-related jobs.
- **Over the next eight years, it is estimated that the hospitality industry will add 3.3 million jobs.**
- The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) calls tourism a key driver of socio-economic progress through export revenues, the creation of jobs and enterprises, and infrastructure development. It is responsible for 1 in 11 jobs globally and 6% of the world's exports.

"A well-trained workforce is required to meet the needs of the travel and tourism industry. A skilled hospitality workforce is essential to a robust travel and tourism industry."

President Barack Obama



Information based on 2016 Full-Service Property data provided by WageWatch, Inc. | 1 888 330 9243

Please note that the salaries reflected for the lodging industry are the median average rate and each position has the potential to earn a higher salary.

Explore your career choices

Housekeeping

If you take pride in making everything "just so" and want to play a key role in providing a hotel's main product—a spotless guestroom—housekeeping may be for you. You'll also help guests feel comfortable and safe in their rooms.

Human Resources

As the name indicates, being good with "humans" is critical. You'll recruit, select, and train the best job applicants, administer benefits programs, and handle other personnel matters. Hospitality labor shortages and the need to hire good people have put this department in the spotlight.

Front Office

Are you a "people-person"? Do you like computers? Are you good on the phone? You could use those skills to check in guests, accept payments on accounts, exchange messages, and impress guests with the hotel's ability to provide great service. If you like the idea of being at the heart of a hotel's action, the front office is for you.

Guest Service

Do you like making good first impressions? Being on the go? Making people feel welcome? You were made for this department! You could do anything from driving the hotel's van to handling luggage or amazing guests by getting them tickets to a sold-out show.

Food & Beverage

Are you creative? Do you pay attention to even the smallest details? In the kitchen or the dining room, those abilities could be your key to a career in food and beverage preparation or service. Friendliness, cleanliness, and pride in your work are also essential.

Property Management

You're in charge! As general manager, you directly or indirectly supervise every hotel employee and make sure the hotel is performing the way its owners want it to. You'll work with every department to make sure the entire hotel runs like clockwork and guests feel welcome.

Marketing & Sales

Being a good listener and communicator is crucial for marketing and sales. You'll find out what services guests want, suggest ways your hotel can provide those services, and let the world know how great those services are. Your hotel's business growth can depend on you.

Accounting & Financial Management

If people call you "organized" and comment on your ability with numbers, you might be a natural for this area. You'll guide management decisions, make important financial recommendations, and keep track of the dollars.

Security

Detail-oriented. A problem-solver. Cool in a crisis. If those words describe you, there could be a career in security waiting for you. You'll balance guest relations with safety and security concerns, and have key input in your hotel's emergency procedures.

A lodging property is like a mini-community with opportunities for everyone. Your interests, skills, and personality traits will help you choose which department suits you.

Building bridges between education and industry

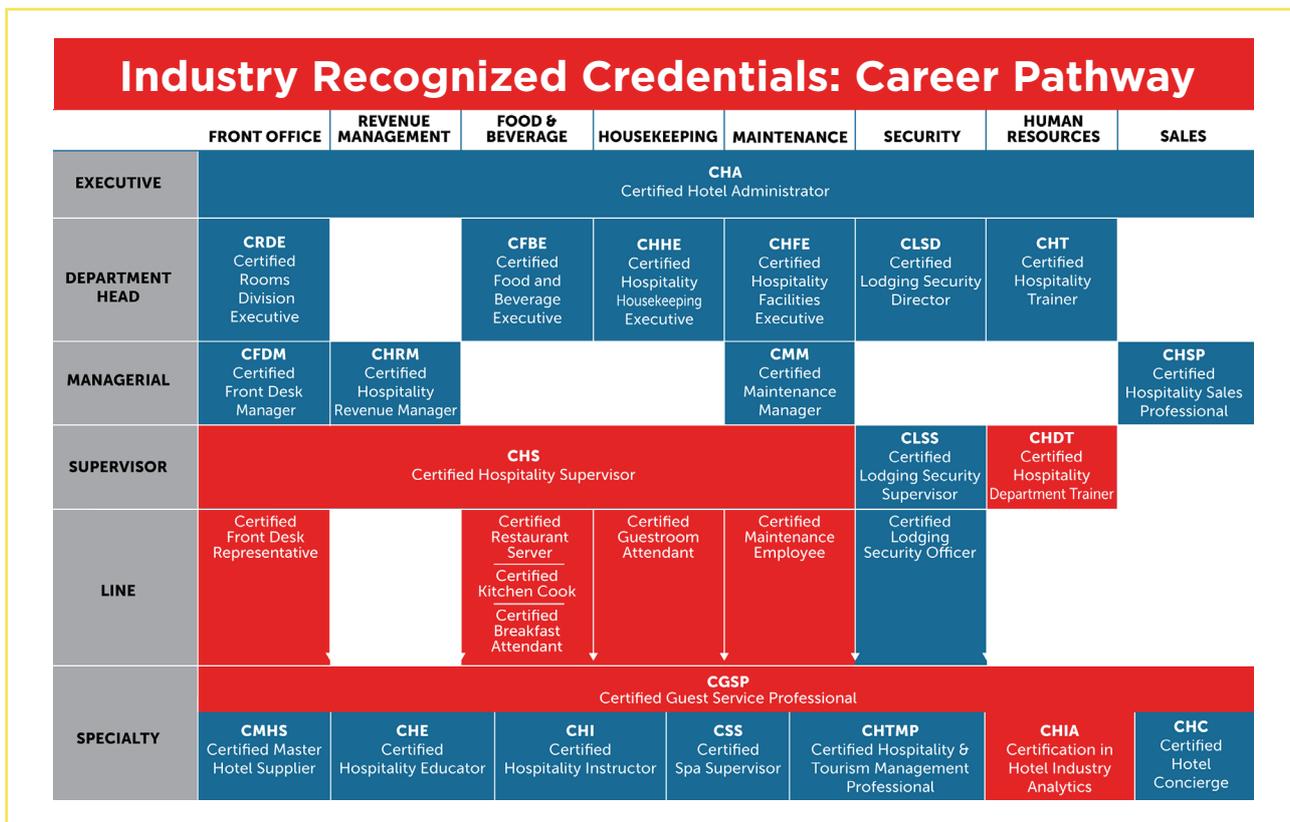
Working with these diverse audiences AHLEI can play a key role in helping individuals, educators and employers to make connections that will forge a solid career pipeline for the industry. AHLEI serves as a conduit between schools, workforce agencies and employers through its high school programme, workforce training and certifications, and relationships with key industry players. For example, the chief learning officers of major brands such as Marriott, Hilton, IHG, Wyndham, and Best Western serve on AHLEI's Education and Certification Advisory Council. This makes AHLEI a unique bridge between those who prepare workers and those who want to hire them.

In California, AHLEI has worked for the past two years with the state's community college system and the [California Hotel & Lodging Association](#) to create a broad-spectrum hospitality training programme to prepare students to fill more than 200,000 new jobs in the hospitality and tourism sector.

To remedy the shortage of skilled workers, the [Retail, Hospitality and Tourism Learn and Earn \(RHT\) grant](#) was created and launched in three regions as part of a grant programme through the State Chancellor's Office of the California Community College System. These regional sectors, under the leadership of deputy sector navigators, are using the AHLEI's [Guest Service Gold®](#) training programme and [Certified Guest Service Professional \(CSGP®\)](#) designation to provide a solid foundation in hospitality principles for a number of different audiences including high school students, educators and incumbent workers.

"California's tourism and hospitality industry is booming. New hotels are popping up everywhere and with that comes a need for more hospitality employees," said Susan Ragatz, CGSP, education director for the California Hotel & Lodging Association.

"Not only have we seen an increase in the awareness of hospitality as a career path but California Community Colleges has also made great strides in aligning themselves with high schools, four-year colleges and industry partners to ensure they are offering programmes that benefit students and businesses."



In India, where approximately 40 academic institutions offer AHLEI hospitality management courses and academic certifications, [Best Western India](#) has forged a partnership with AHLEI to help meet its staffing needs as the hotel company expands in that country. M. Douglas Peter, Director Training & HR for Best Western India, stated that students who have completed AHLEI’s academic programmes, in particular those holding an AHLEI certificate of specialisation or hospitality management diploma, will be given preference during campus recruitment by Best Western India for both internships and full-time job vacancies.

In Tianjin the Nankai University, an AHLEI [Global Academic Partner](#) institution, is partnering with Marriott International to offer students a unique hospitality education experience that combines an extended internship with campus and online learning. The ‘Marriott Apprentice Program’ (MAP) began in 2014 with the goal of enrolling 150 students. Those students are expected to undergo a five-year comprehensive hotel education programme that comprises 18 months of learning on campus, 38 months of combined online learning and internship at Marriott hotels in two phases and a final evaluation featuring progressive performance appraisals of the internships.



Students who successfully complete the Marriott MAP will receive graduation certificates from Nankai University and internationally-recognised certificates from AHLEI. They will also receive supervisory job offers from Marriott International. Outstanding MAP graduates will be connected seamlessly to the ‘Global Voyage Program’, Marriott’s proprietary future leader incubator that targets elite university graduates worldwide.

“We are honoured and excited to work with Nankai University and American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute on the MAP. This collaboration will not only benefit the long-term development of Marriott International in China but will also help to take the country’s hospitality education to the next level,” said Regan Taikitsadaporn, Chief Human Resources Officer - Asia Pacific at Marriott International Asia.

Another Marriott success story with AHLEI connection



Evelyn Richardson, assistant director of finance and accounting at the 1,500-room Gaylord Texan Resort, is a young hospitality professional who came through Marriott's U.S. Voyage Global Leadership Program after getting her introduction to hospitality from an AHLEI programme. Just 25 years old, Richardson didn't even know what hospitality was when her mother enrolled her in Washington, D.C.'s Hospitality High School. The school combined mathematics, science and English classes with hospitality-focused career classes that opened Richardson's eyes to a whole new world. The high school uses AHLEI's Hospitality and Tourism Management Program (HTMP) high school curriculum and Evelyn Richardson was a member of the school's team that competed in AHLEI's international high school hospitality competition.

After completing high school, Richardson enrolled at Tuskegee University in Alabama where she completed a double major in hospitality and finance and became one of the first members of her family to earn a degree.

After graduating in 2014 she was accepted into the Marriott Voyage Program where she worked as a management trainee in the housekeeping, front office and finance departments at the Atlanta Marriott Marquis. When the assistant director of finance position at the Gaylord Texan opened up, Richardson was well prepared for the opportunity.

"I could never have imagined doing this when I was in high school," said Richardson. "I've gotten to travel and work in exciting places and experience things I never dreamed of. The hospitality industry is amazing," she explained.

Expanding the apprenticeship model in hospitality

In November 2016 AHLA, in collaboration with the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation (NRAEF) and Jobs for the Future (JFF), was awarded a US\$1.8 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to create and implement a national Hospitality Sector Registered Apprenticeship (HSRA) initiative for the hotel, lodging and restaurant industries. AHLEI will use its connections and resources to create the lodging apprenticeship programme, including gaining employer commitments for apprenticeships with a deliverable of 450 apprentices enrolled by September 2017. AHLEI will also provide assistance with onboarding employees into new apprenticeship programmes as well as working with currently registered programmes such as Hilton Worldwide which has committed to enrolling 380 apprentices over a five-year period.

Benefits of Apprenticeship to Employers

- Highly skilled employees
- Reduced turnover costs
 - 91% of apprentices that complete an apprenticeship are still employed nine months later
- Lower investment in recruitment
- Higher productivity
 - For every dollar spent on apprenticeship, employers receive an average \$1.47 return in increased productivity
- Stable and reliable pipeline of qualified workers
- Opportunity for apprentices to earn an industry certification from AHLA, as well as college credit for future degree attainment
- State-based tax credits
 - Ex: Employers hiring an apprentice given a credit in the amount of \$2,000 or 10% of the wages earned
- Potential federal funding to help offset costs
 - Ex: WIOA reimburses up to 50% of wage rates paid to participants for 6 months

"As a business of people serving people the hotel industry thrives because our people are at the core of the industry. We proudly invest in the women and men who are the backbone of the hospitality industry and ensure they have the training, skills and resources necessary to earn promotions and climb the ladder from entry level to management, upper management, senior executives and on to the C-suite," said Katherine Lugar, president and CEO of AHLA. "Our industry already supports eight million jobs and this apprenticeship programme truly embodies the character of hospitality. It will provide important opportunities for the next generation of hospitality leaders to begin lifelong careers in such a dynamic industry."



Shelly Weir, AHLEI's vice president for domestic sales, works extensively with workforce agencies who prepare clients for hospitality careers and she is excited to expand such training to the management level with AHLEI's industry partners.

"We are encouraged to see industries come together in recognition of the pathways and potential they have to offer people of all ages, colours and nationalities," she stated. "We are proud to partner on this important workforce and economic development initiative. Our industry is booming with six consecutive years of job growth. Ours is an industry where dreams happen and opportunities exist for all. The hospitality/retail/service sector provides a good start on a career path for these individuals. The apprenticeship model can offer them a successful path to long-term employment. This is an exciting opportunity for us to cultivate the next generation of hoteliers," said Shelly Weir.

The apprenticeship model, which has been successful in Europe and Asia, offers opportunities for apprentices to earn industry certifications, training and college credits while offering employers possibilities for tax credits or funding assistance as they develop a stable and reliable pipeline of employees.

AHLEI is also involved with other workforce initiatives to guide young people into hospitality careers. Weir explained that a major focus of programmes such as the 100,000 Opportunities Initiative target the demographic known as 'opportunity youth' - individuals aged 16-24 years who are out of school and not on a traditional pathway. According to the Rockefeller Foundation, this demographic is at high risk, with an unemployment rate more than eight percent higher than the overall unemployment numbers. Those who do not find jobs with potential for long-range career growth by their mid-20s will find it difficult to achieve a secure financial future. Hospitality can provide that entryway and a clear path to advancement.



More support for young hospitality professionals

AHLA also supports young hospitality professionals through its student chapters, the Under 30 Gateway membership category and the academic and professional development scholarships offered by the [American Hotel & Lodging Educational Foundation](#) (AHLEF).



Twenty four U.S. college hospitality programmes have established AHLA student chapters. One of these is at the Hospitality School at [Johnson & Wales University-North Miami](#) (Florida). It provides its members with opportunities to go through AHLEI's industry-based trainings and certifications to gain a competitive edge when they apply for internships and jobs. The chapter offers [Guest Service Gold®](#) training, giving students the opportunity to take the [Certified Guest Service Professional \(CGSP®\)](#) exam, and also the [Certification in Hotel Industry Analytics \(CHIA\)](#).

"When I highlight my certification in interviews, employers have looked positively at that credential," said senior Ashley Amador Rankine. She added that other members of the chapter have reported that their CGSP® designation has helped them land interviews. One student who had a job as a front desk representative was given the opportunity to train other front desk agents because he held the certification.

"We try to offer students many opportunities to do things that interest them so that we can help them achieve their goals," said senior Adonis Peña. "We show them the benefits of joining AHLA, how it can help them now and once they get into the industry."

Once in the industry, these young people can join AHLA's Under 30 Gateway which offers targeted webinars, networking and social events at AHLA conferences and meetings as well as discounts on AHLEI professional development resources. The Under 30 Gateway currently has 800 members.

To further support current and future hospitality leaders, AHLA is conducting the Opening Doors to Opportunity campaign. The goal of the campaign is US\$8 million to be used to provide college scholarships in hospitality management, professional development grants for continuing education and professional certifications, and hospitality research to advance the industry. There has never been a better time to start a career in the U.S. hospitality industry. AHLA and AHLEI are committed to ensuring that those who seek out hospitality are equipped for long-term success in their careers.



About American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute (AHLEI)

Established in 1953, the American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute (AHLEI), the non-profit training and education arm of the American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA), is committed to investing in the professional development of the hospitality industry. AHLEI provides hospitality education and training solutions to those preparing for hospitality careers and those already working in the industry. Leading hotel brands, management companies, hospitality schools, tourism bureaus, governmental bodies, and associations around the world turn to AHLEI for hospitality education and training resources and professional certification.

About the Author

Elizabeth Johnson, CGSP, is the senior public relations and marketing manager for AHLEI. In her 20 years with the organization, she has helped to promote AHLEI's mission to hotels, schools, and international partners, and other stakeholders.

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