

CTE: DEVELOPING THE HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM WORKFORCE

Career and technical education (CTE) supports America's hospitality and tourism needs by

preparing learners to enter this critical workforce, which employs more than **16 million**¹ people across businesses like hotels, restaurants, attractions, and transportation and travel services.

CTE programs in the hospitality and tourism field develop students' technical, academic and employability skills through work-based and hands-on learning, ensuring they are prepared to enter a **high-wage, in-demand** career in areas such as travel and tourism, hotels and lodging, and restaurants.

This infographic describes a small sample of the career opportunities available in the hospitality and tourism workforce.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM



- Travel and tourism employs approximately **8 million**² professionals, including travel agents, event planners and tourism directors.
- Meetings and convention professionals can earn a starting salary of about **\$52,000**³, with directors earning over **\$95,000** annually.
- Jobs for meeting, convention and event planners are growing **faster than average**, with more than **15,000**⁴ openings projected each year through 2032.
- Apprenticeships, industry credentials and postsecondary certificates and degrees can help individuals achieve **career success** in this sub-sector.

HOTELS AND LODGING



- There are about **1.8 million**⁵ people employed by hotels in the United States, with hotel jobs projected to grow by **12%**⁶ through 2027, much faster than average.
- As the hotel industry recovers from the pandemic, wages are at their **highest ever** and are projected to keep rising.
- Jobs for hotel and other lodging managers pay a median annual wage of **\$65,000**⁷, up to more than **\$127,000**.
- Industry certifications, apprenticeships and postsecondary credentials can help individuals **enter and advance** within the hotels and lodging sub-sector.

RESTAURANTS



- Restaurants are avenues for career advancement: **8 in 10**⁸ owners began their careers in entry-level positions.
- Managers responsible for restaurant operations make an annual median wage of **\$63,000**⁹, up to more than **\$100,000** for top earners.
- Executive chefs and sous chefs earn a median wage of about **\$58,000**¹⁰ per year, with the top 10% making over **\$93,000**.
- Postsecondary degrees and certificates, licenses and other certifications can help individuals build a **fulfilling career** in this field.

MORE JOBS IN THE HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM WORKFORCE

In addition to the careers already profiled, CTE prepares youth and adults for these further occupations in the hospitality and tourism workforce:

- amusement park personnel
- tour operator
- brewmaster
- casino supervisor
- pastry chef
- wine steward
- catering manager
- visitors bureau director
- bartender
- reservations manager

At the St. Johns County School District Academy of Tourism and Hospitality in Florida, students participate in project-based and hands-on learning, engage with guest speakers, go on field trips and complete internships with local employers. Additionally, learners can earn industry certifications in ServSafe, entrepreneurship and small business, and social media strategy.

HOW CTE PREPARES THE HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM WORKFORCE

CTE programs of study and career pathways prepare secondary, postsecondary and adult learners for the hospitality and tourism workforce in many ways:

- **Courses** in culinary arts, restaurant management and operations, ecotourism, institutional maintenance and more spanning secondary and postsecondary education.
- Opportunities to earn **postsecondary certificates and degrees** in travel and tourism management, hotel and restaurant management, meeting and event planning and more.
- Opportunities to earn **industry credentials** from the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation, ServSafe, the American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute, the American Culinary Federation, the Events Industry Council and the Travel Institute, among many others.
- **Work-based learning** experiences like job shadowing, internships and apprenticeships.
- Competitive events, service learning and leadership development through **career and technical student organizations** such as Family, Career and Community Leaders of America, DECA and Future Business Leaders of America.
- **Activities** that build technical, academic and employability skills such as teamwork, communication and problem solving.

Learn More

This Sector Sheet highlights just a few occupations within the hospitality and tourism workforce. To learn more, please visit the U.S. Department of Labor at www.CareerOneStop.org/ExploreCareers and MyNextMove.org.

Citations

¹CareerOneStop. (N.d.). *Hospitality and tourism career cluster*. Retrieved from <https://www.careeronestop.org/ExploreCareers/Learn/CareerClusters/hospitality-and-tourism-career-cluster.aspx>

²U.S. Travel Association. (2023, April). *The state of the travel industry*. https://www.ustravel.org/sites/default/files/2023-04/answersheet_2023_final.pdf

³American Society of Association Executives. (N.d.). *Job summaries and salaries: Meetings/expos/tradeshows*. Retrieved from <https://www.asaecenter.org/association-careerhq/association-careerhq-job-seekers/job-summaries-and-salaries/job-summaries-meetings>

⁴U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2024, April). *Occupational outlook handbook: Meeting, convention, and event planners*. Retrieved from <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/business-and-financial/meeting-convention-and-event-planners.htm#tab-6>

⁵American Hotel & Lodging Association Foundation and Lightcast. (2023, March). *Hotel industry entry points and pathways*. Retrieved from https://www.ahlafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/AHLAF_Lightcast_Career-Pathways.pdf

⁶Ibid.

⁷U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2024, April). *Occupational outlook handbook: Lodging managers*. Retrieved from <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/management/lodging-managers.htm#tab-5>

⁸National Restaurant Association. (N.d.). *National statistics*. Retrieved from <https://restaurant.org/research-and-media/research/industry-statistics/national-statistics/>

⁹U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2024, April). *Occupational outlook handbook: Food service managers*. Retrieved from <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/management/food-service-managers.htm#tab-5>

¹⁰U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2024, April). *Occupational outlook handbook: Chefs and head cooks*. Retrieved from <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/food-preparation-and-serving/chefs-and-head-cooks.htm#tab-5>