

# 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**<sup>1</sup> 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**<sup>2</sup> professionals, including travel agents, event planners and tourism directors.
- Meetings and convention professionals can earn a starting salary of about **\$52,000**<sup>3</sup>, with directors earning over **\$95,000** annually.
- Jobs for meeting, convention and event planners are growing **faster than average**, with more than **15,000**<sup>4</sup> 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**<sup>5</sup> people employed by hotels in the United States, with hotel jobs projected to grow by **12%**<sup>6</sup> 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**<sup>7</sup>, 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**<sup>8</sup> owners began their careers in entry-level positions.
- Managers responsible for restaurant operations make an annual median wage of **\$63,000**<sup>9</sup>, up to more than **\$100,000** for top earners.
- Executive chefs and sous chefs earn a median wage of about **\$58,000**<sup>10</sup> 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](http://www.CareerOneStop.org/ExploreCareers) and [MyNextMove.org](http://MyNextMove.org).

### Citations

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

<sup>2</sup>U.S. Travel Association. (2023, April). *The state of the travel industry*. [https://www.ustravel.org/sites/default/files/2023-04/answersheet\\_2023\\_final.pdf](https://www.ustravel.org/sites/default/files/2023-04/answersheet_2023_final.pdf)

<sup>3</sup>American 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>

<sup>4</sup>U.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>

<sup>5</sup>American 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](https://www.ahlafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/AHLAF_Lightcast_Career-Pathways.pdf)

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>U.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>

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

<sup>9</sup>U.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>

<sup>10</sup>U.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>