



FAST FORWARD

TRAVEL CREATES OPPORTUNITIES AND LAUNCHES CAREERS



U.S. TRAVEL
ASSOCIATION

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Despite the size and positive impact of the U.S. travel industry, the act of traveling has yet to be seen as an essential part of our lives, businesses and economy. The **Travel Effect** campaign reverses that thinking and proves that the travel experience and the travel industry as a whole actually have a measurable and purposeful impact. The Travel Effect proves through research the economic, societal, business and personal benefits of travel, demonstrating the real truth behind the “hidden” impacts of travel.

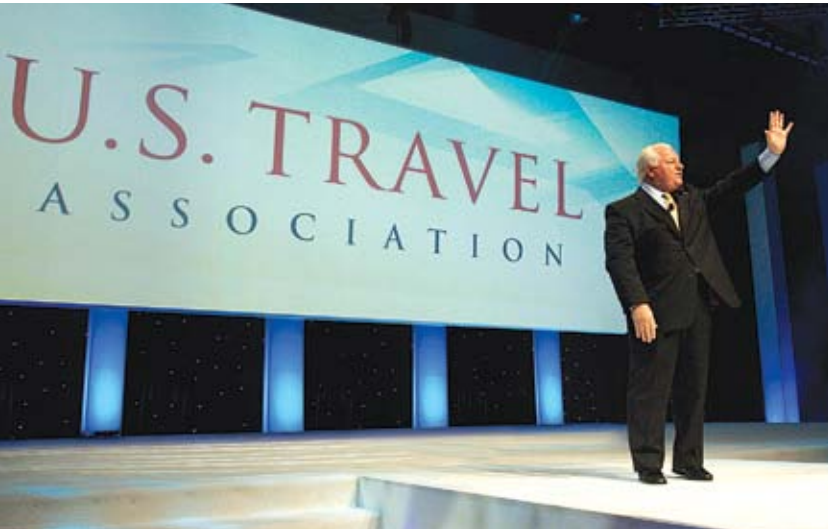
The U.S. Travel Association, the voice for the U.S. travel industry, will support its mission to increase travel to and within the United States through the Travel Effect campaign and leverage the collective strength of its industry partners to help grow travel’s voice, advance pro-travel policies and communicate travel’s widespread impact. Visit www.traveleffect.com.

The **U.S. Travel Association** is the national, non-profit organization representing all components of the travel industry that generates \$1.9 trillion in economic output and supports 14.4 million American jobs. U.S. Travel’s mission is to increase travel to and within the United States. Visit www.ustravel.org.

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Letter from Roger Dow

We are pleased to share with you this new report examining the benefits gained by Americans who have worked in the travel industry. Earlier this year, we released *Travel Means Jobs*, which is a report that details the broad economic footprint of travel on the U.S. economy. It explained how the travel industry supports 14.4 million American workers,¹ and how over the past few years, travel's job-creating power has outperformed the rest of the economy.²



Simply put, more travel means more jobs for our country. Recently, Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke said travel was a “bright spot” in an otherwise gloomy economy.³ Wall Street analysts have called our industry an “over-performer” compared to other industries.⁴ And President Obama issued an executive order to “boost America’s tourism industry so that we can keep growing our economy and creating more jobs.”⁵

But even as Washington, D.C. and Wall Street begin to embrace the fact that the travel industry can fuel job growth—a question persists: “Are travel jobs good jobs?”

This seminal report provides the answer: an unqualified “yes!”

Workers whose first job is in the travel industry progress further in their careers than individuals who get their start in other industries. Travel industry work experience helps Americans earn higher wages and attain more education. Travel jobs provide important, transferable skills that are indispensable to career success. Careers in travel deliver financial security with the majority of travel industry workers earning a middle-class income or higher.

This story is a familiar one for me. I began my career in the travel industry as a lifeguard at Marriott’s sixth hotel, learning the travel business from the bottom up. I spent 34 years at Marriott, eventually rising to senior vice president of global and field sales before leaving to lead the U.S. Travel Association.

I know firsthand how important travel jobs can be, from the skills they provide to the opportunities they create and the doors they open. This report helps tell this story in a new way, relying upon both data analysis and compelling stories from travel industry workers.

With this report, it is my hope—and U.S. Travel’s goal—that we can continue to work with elected officials to put policies in place to ensure that travel will continue to create jobs and provide opportunities for millions of American workers and their families.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roger".

Roger J. Dow
President and CEO
U.S. Travel Association

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As America's sixth-largest employer, the travel industry supports 14.4 million American jobs and directly employs more than 7.5 million Americans.⁶ Travel employs individuals working in transportation, hotels, restaurants, entertainment and many other sectors. The industry attracts different people for different reasons. For many young workers, a travel job means a first foothold on the career ladder. For part-time students, a travel job means the flexibility to pursue education and training while gaining the benefit of on-the-job experience. For workers at all stages of life, a travel job provides a path to upward mobility.

As travel continues to grow in size and significance as a U.S. employer, it's time to take a closer look at the opportunities travel jobs offer and the potential benefits of public policies to encourage further growth in the travel industry.

To provide insight into the benefits of a travel job and the career progression of workers who started off in the travel industry, the U.S. Travel Association analyzed longitudinal data collected by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Since 1979, BLS has tracked more than 5,000 American workers, interviewing them every year between 1979 and 1994 and every two years between 1994 and 2010.

For the first time, this report summarizes BLS labor force data on how travel jobs benefit workers and how careers in the industry progress over time compared to workers who began in other industries.

Key findings include:

- **Earning Higher Wages:** The average maximum salary for employees who start their career in the travel industry reaches \$81,900—significantly more than the other industries.⁷

- **Promoting Educational Opportunities:** One-third of the 5.6 million Americans who work part time to support themselves while they further their education work in the largest component of travel industry—leisure and hospitality.⁸
- **Building the Middle Class:** The travel industry is one of the top 10 largest employers of middle-class wage earners in the U.S. More than half of all travel industry employees (53 percent) earn a middle-class salary or higher.⁹
- **Leading to Rewarding Careers:** Employees who work in travel jobs build valuable skills that can translate into rewarding careers, both in travel and other industries. Two out of five workers who start their careers in the travel industry go on to earn more than \$100,000 per year.¹⁰

Travel Jobs BY THE NUMBERS *(all data 2011 unless otherwise indicated)*

14.4 million: total number of American jobs supported by travel

1 in 8: American jobs (private sector) supported by travel

4 million: travel industry workers who earn a middle-class income or higher—53% of the total travel workforce

19%: number of American workers who started their careers in the travel industry

48: number of states (includes D.C.) where travel is a top 10 employer (2010)

2 in 5: number of American workers whose first job was in travel and are now earning more than \$100,000/year

1/3: percentage of American workers who started in travel have a bachelor's degree

1.8 million: travel industry employees who are working part time so they can pursue higher education

TRAVEL: DRIVING CAREER GROWTH AND AMERICAN JOB CREATION

In recent years, the travel industry has quietly emerged as one of America's leading drivers of growth and job creation. In 2011, direct spending by travelers accounted for \$813 billion.¹¹ In turn, this spending directly supported 7.5 million travel jobs or seven percent of the country's total private-sector employment.¹² Travel now ranks sixth in total U.S. employment, ahead of major industries such as finance, construction, real estate and transportation.¹³

Every dollar spent on travel has a ripple effect benefiting other sectors of the economy. Counting the massive indirect effects of travel spending, the industry injects \$1.9 trillion into the U.S. economy and supports 14.4 million jobs.¹⁴ Travel is a top 10 employer in 47 states and D.C. and employs more than 100,000 workers in 25 states.¹⁵ And, unlike jobs in other industries, travel jobs can never be outsourced.

The travel industry also plays a unique role in helping Americans who have been disproportionately hurt by the Great Recession—younger workers and those without college degrees. At the same time, as this report documents, travel jobs provide millions of Americans with a gateway to a promising career and the opportunity to join America's middle class.¹⁶

Travel jobs provide millions of Americans with a gateway to a promising career and the opportunity to join America's middle class.



Erica Qualls

GENERAL MANAGER, MARRIOTT MARQUIS HOTEL
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

After the birth of her fourth child, Erica Qualls re-entered the workforce by taking the graveyard shift answering the telephone for \$7 per hour at the Santa Clara, California Marriott. She never realized that this post would be a stepping-stone to her current position as the general manager of the Atlanta Marriott Marquis, where she is responsible for running a \$100 million-a-year operation with 1,675 hotel rooms.

Having relied on mentors throughout her career, Erica is passionate about mentoring associates at Marriott and many other young women in the Atlanta community. She encourages them to look at each job as a building block in a successful career. As she has often said to countless young associates at Marriott: “If you are willing to grow, there is no other industry that grows people from hourly associate into management, into senior leadership faster than the hospitality industry.”

Like most people, Erica’s career has not followed a straight line. After a few months on the graveyard shift, Erica was promoted to night audit, where she was responsible for running the books and getting the hotel ready to operate the next day. Since that time, she has had stints working in the front office, housekeeping, accounting and human resources.

“I was able to get some technical expertise early on as it related to the front office and finance,” Erica says. “I also went into operations as a housekeeping manager and learned there how to set strategies centered on leading large teams and developing the skills to build strong relationships and foster great teamwork. I was getting all these skills, and I was getting them very quickly.”

Despite the demands of her job, Erica’s position in the travel industry provides the flexibility she needs to be an active member in her community and to support her family.



A GATEWAY TO OPPORTUNITY

For millions of Americans, a first job provides critical skills that lead to a successful and rewarding career. First-time workers learn lessons that last a lifetime – the importance of professionalism, time management, customer service, teamwork, the need to set goals and achieve them. For nearly one in five Americans (19%), that first job began in the travel industry.¹⁷

Over the past thirty years, travel has achieved an impressive record of helping workers attain their educational goals. Among workers who began their careers in the travel industry, one-third earned at least a bachelor's degree, compared to just 28 percent in health care, 19 percent in construction, and 18 percent in manufacturing.¹⁸

In addition to giving workers the opportunity to learn skills on the job, the travel industry also offers employees the flexibility they need to gain additional knowledge, skills and training. Of the 5.6 million Americans working part time while pursuing higher education, nearly one-third,

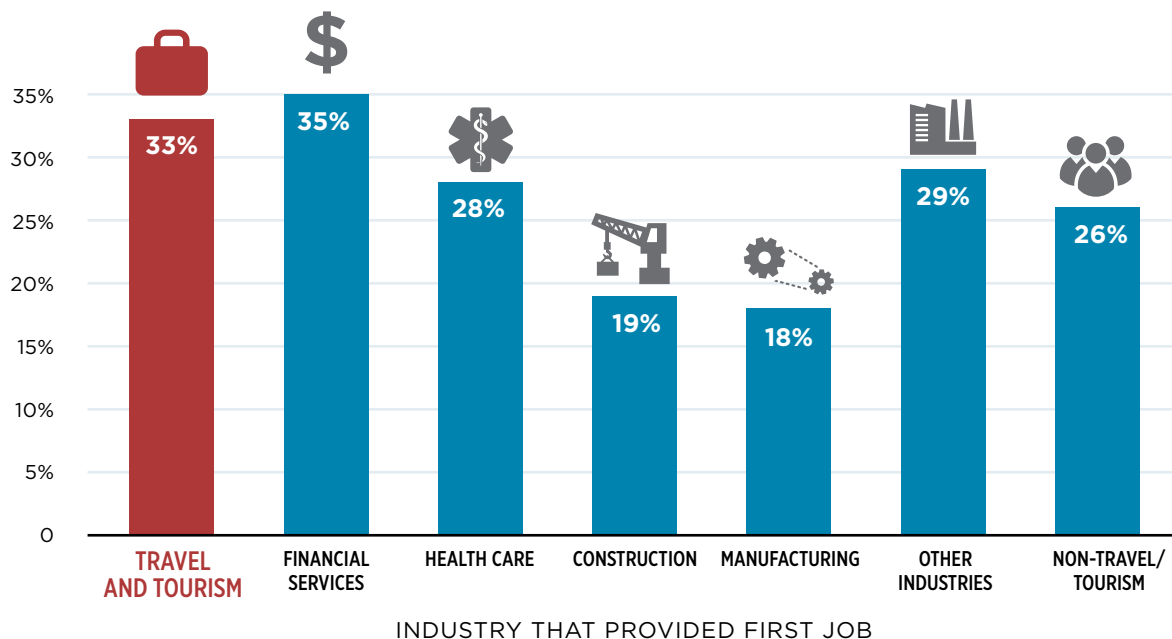
or 1.8 million workers, choose to work in the travel industry.¹⁹

Travel jobs grant workers the flexibility to pursue higher education. By doing so, the travel industry helps our country drive long-term economic growth. Greater education and skills are in growing demand in today's labor market. American workers are far more likely today to have a bachelor's degree than at any point in the last 40 years – a trend that will surely continue in the decades to come.²⁰

The record is clear, the travel industry puts Americans on a path to further their education and success.

Travel Allows Flexibility for Workers to Attain Higher Education

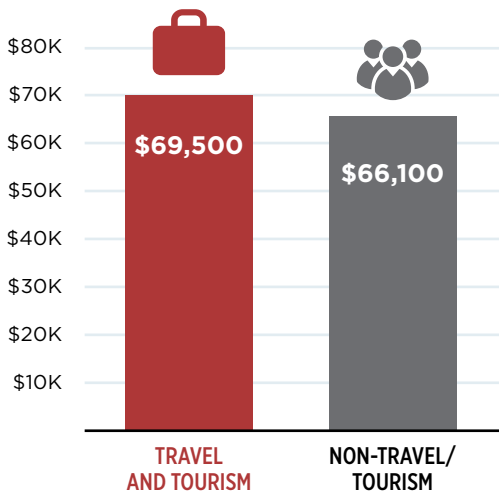
PERCENTAGE OF WORKERS WITH AT LEAST BACHELOR'S DEGREE



SOURCE: Oxford Economics based on BLS data

Travel Offers Competitive Salaries

MAXIMUM SALARY ACHIEVED FOR WORKERS WITH A HIGH SCHOOL DEGREE OR LESS



SOURCE: Oxford Economics based on BLS data

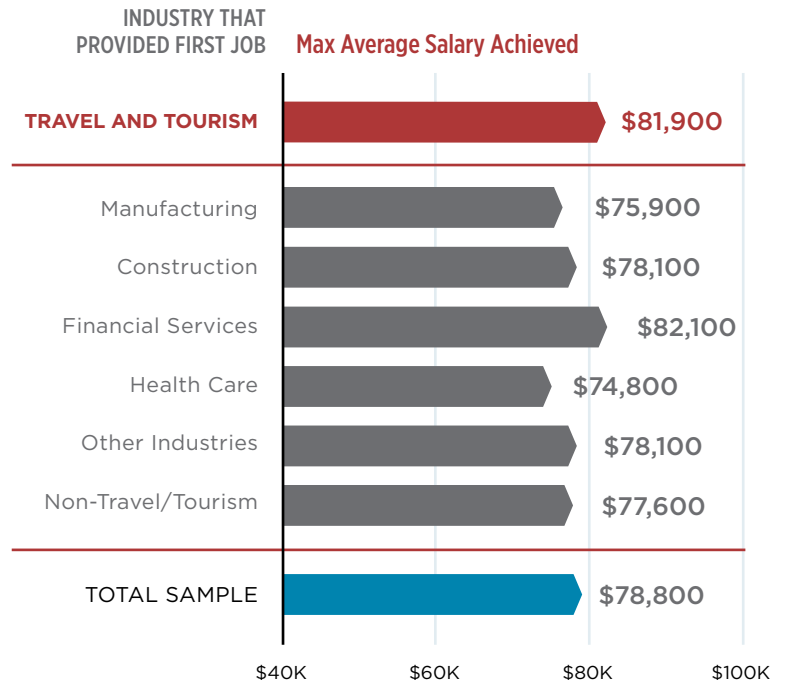
America's economy also needs to generate enough jobs for those who face the most difficult challenges finding full-time employment – particularly young adults and workers without higher education. As of October 2012, these two groups accounted for 85 percent of the 12.3 million unemployed Americans.²¹ In many cases, the travel industry provides these workers with their best hope for employment.²²

- Opportunities for Young Adults:** Workers under 25 years old account for nearly one-quarter of all travel industry employees as opposed to just 13 percent in other sectors of the economy.²³
- Opportunities for Workers with a High School Degree or Less:** Americans with no more than a high school education make up the vast majority of the U.S. workforce – roughly 70 percent of all workers.²⁴ Employees with no college degree who begin their careers in the travel industry enjoy abundant opportunities to earn a solid income. On average, they reach a pay level of \$69,500.²⁵

Regardless of educational attainment, data from BLS reports that people who start their careers in the travel industry end up earning more on average than employees who began their careers in nearly all other industries – slightly behind only financial services.

A comprehensive study of BLS data that tracked more than 5,000 workers over a 30-year period found that the average maximum salary for employees who started in the travel industry rose to \$81,900 – significantly higher than workers whose first jobs were in manufacturing, construction and health care.²⁶

A Better Start: Workers Who Begin in Travel Ultimately Achieve Higher Wages in their Careers







SOURCE: Oxford Economics based on BLS data

A PATH TO THE AMERICAN MIDDLE CLASS

For millions of Americans, a career in the travel industry is not just a first job; it creates a path toward the American Dream of a stable, prosperous middle-class life for employees and their families.²⁷

The Travel Industry is a Top 10 Employer of Middle-Class Workers

RANK	INDUSTRY	NUMBER OF WORKERS EARNING MIDDLE-CLASS WAGES
1	 Educational Services	11,455,770
2	 Manufacturing	9,894,810
3	 Retail Trade*	9,511,474
4	 Health Care and Social Assistance	8,435,140
5	 Construction	5,142,040
6	 Wholesale Trade	4,883,070
7	 Administrative Support, Waste Management, Remediation Services*	4,681,202
8	 Transportation and Warehousing*	3,773,045
9	 TRAVEL	3,701,227
10	 Other Services (except Public Administration)	3,003,920
11	 Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	2,847,070
12	 Finance and Insurance	2,650,520
13	 Information	1,742,710
14	 Real Estate and Rental and Leasing*	1,645,123
15	 Management of Companies and Enterprises	862,690
16	 Accommodation and Food Services*	662,404
17	 Mining, Quarrying and Oil and Gas Extraction	555,800
18	 Utilities	402,490
19	 Arts, Entertainment and Recreation*	367,132
20	 Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	87,420

*Employment attributed to travel excluded

SOURCE: U.S. Travel Association based on BLS data, 2011

A few key data points confirm the role travel plays in building America's middle class:

- The travel industry is one of the top 10 largest employers of middle-class wage earners in the U.S. – more than finance and insurance, real estate and other industries.²⁸
- Half of all travel industry employees – a total of more than 3.7 million workers – earn middle-class wages. That's more than double the number in the information sector.²⁹
- In addition to the more than 3.7 million middle-class earners, the travel industry employs approximately one-quarter of a million workers who are making more than a middle-class wage. That brings the total number of people bringing home a middle-class wage or higher to four million – 53 percent of all travel industry employees.³⁰

The bottom line: The travel industry helps its employees climb the ladder of opportunity, secure a strong and rising level of income, and boost their families into the great American middle-class.

Tina Diehl

ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT OF DAILY RENTAL, ENTERPRISE RENT-A-CAR COMPANY
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

Fresh out of college, Tina Diehl wanted a career that would grow with her over the years. She found it in the travel industry. “I was interested in finding a great company with the prospects for a long-term payoff,” Tina says, “...a place that I could make an investment in and that would make an investment in me.”

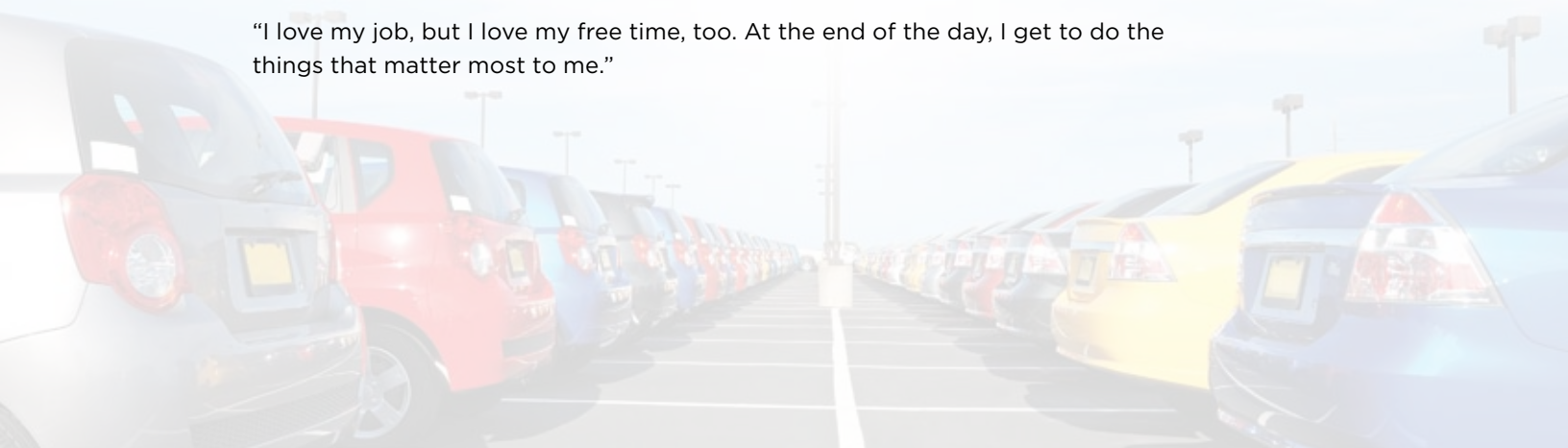
Tina accepted an offer from Enterprise, enrolled in Enterprise’s Management Trainee program and started to learn the business. Within two years, she was running her very own branch.

At first, Tina struggled with her new role as a manager, but Enterprise was there to support her. “Leadership was something I brought to the table. But they taught me the technical aspects,” says Tina. “The first lesson was time management and how to prioritize. Then, through one-on-one coaching with my supervisor, management seminars, and internal training, I learned the business skills I needed to succeed.”

Tina moved up from branch manager to area manager and on to even more senior positions with the company. Today, Tina is an assistant vice president of daily rental for Enterprise. She is also the proud mother of three children, all of whom arrived during her time with Enterprise.

Tina credits her job’s flexibility and compensation for providing her family with support and financial security. In the travel industry, Tina found not only a fulfilling career, but also the ability to balance her family and other interests with her work.

“I love my job, but I love my free time, too. At the end of the day, I get to do the things that matter most to me.”



THE LAUNCHING POINT FOR A REWARDING CAREER

The American workforce is incredibly mobile. From 1979 to 2010, the average worker held 11 different jobs.³¹ A closer look at the data shows that the travel industry has provided employment opportunities for a significant portion of the U.S. workforce over the past three decades. For example, nearly one in five survey participants (19%) got their first job in the travel industry, and an astonishing 50 percent held at least one travel-related job in their career.³²

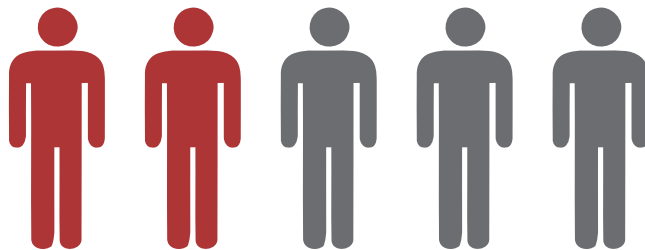
The data also illustrates that opportunities offered by travel-related jobs often served as the launching point for a rewarding career. Compared to other industries, workers who started in travel advanced up the career ladder with far greater success.

- Two out of five workers who first took a job in the travel industry are earning more than \$100,000 per year.³³
- Nearly 40 percent of workers who began their careers in travel earn at least \$100,000—double the rate in the health care industry.³⁴
- While workers who start their careers elsewhere can only expect wage increases of just slightly more than \$42,000 during

the course of their careers, workers who start in the travel industry can expect wage increases of nearly \$59,000.³⁵

- Minorities and women who start their career in travel-related industries also see a greater increase in their wages over the course of their careers compared to those in other industries.³⁶

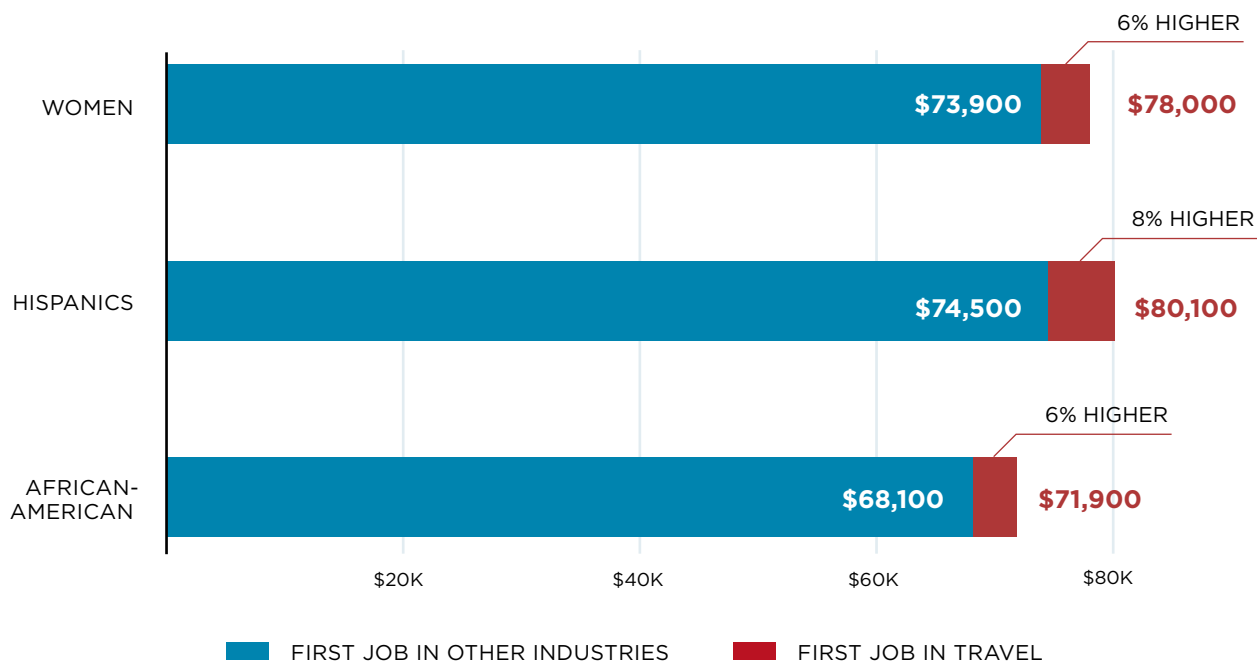
Why do so many who get their start in travel or spend time working in travel go on to enjoy rewarding careers? The travel industry equips American workers with a full range of professional skills and prepares them to succeed in any profession—whether within the travel industry or not.



Two out of five workers who first took a job in the travel industry are now earning more than \$100,000 per year.

Travel Leads to Higher Pay for Women and Minorities

AVERAGE MAXIMUM ANNUAL WAGE ACHIEVED



SOURCE: Oxford Economics based on BLS data

Travel industry employees have the opportunity to engage with an extremely diverse set of people on a daily basis – people from many different backgrounds, age groups, cultures and personalities. This diversity of interaction builds valuable interpersonal skills that position travel employees for success in many industries. In addition, the travel industry teaches employees how to respond to customer needs by working in an environment that is highly competitive and very dynamic – invaluable experience that helps at every step on the career ladder.

— JEANNE FAGAN

FINGER LAKES COMMUNITY COLLEGE



Angie Anderson

CHEF-OWNER, BLUE HOUSE BISTRO
HOLLAND, MICHIGAN



For Angie Anderson, the night when two chefs walked off the job wasn't a disaster — it was the opportunity of a lifetime. "I'll do it...I'll cook," Angie told the restaurant manager, taking her first step toward what would become a 20-year career as a chef and her dream of owning a restaurant.

Running a restaurant well requires strong dedication and the work ethic to conquer long hours at a blistering pace. According to Angie, her career in the restaurant business has equipped her with skills she simply could not find anywhere else.

"This business has taught me the importance of teamwork and close attention to detail. I think it rarely can be duplicated in other workplaces or professions." Her career has also provided her with exceptional customer service and interpersonal skills.

In 2005, Angie moved from hurricane-ravaged New Orleans to tourist destination Holland, Michigan, and opened her first restaurant, The Grass Cup Café.

What Chef Angie lacks in formal education, she has more than made up for in on-the-job training. She has been a chef, server, manager and just about every other job possible in the business. "Opening a restaurant was challenging, but making the leap from employee to entrepreneur and business owner was easier because of my training and the many mentors who not only showed me the right way to do things, but also told me the reasons why."

Her experience in the industry has led to a career that exceeded her wildest expectations. In 2010, she opened her second highly acclaimed restaurant, Blue House Bistro, where she is owner and executive chef. The dedication and commitment required to own and run a restaurant may leave less time for adventure but has provided Angie ample time to accumulate savings. "My career has definitely given me the ability to do what I want to in life."

Eduardo Garcia

MAYOR
COACHELLA, CALIFORNIA

In 2006, at age 29, Eduardo Garcia became the youngest mayor ever elected by Coachella, California voters. According to Eduardo, the talent and skills that help him campaign and govern were learned more than 15 years ago during his first job in the travel industry.

Mayor Garcia worked as a guest services agent at a Desert Springs, California resort from 1997 to 2001 as he paid his way through the local community college. He credits the resort's "amazingly supportive supervisors and managers who all emphasized the importance of completing my education" for helping him effectively balance work and school demands. "Their flexibility, respectfulness and support for my goals and objectives helped get me through."



In fact, this early support fueled his ambitions to attain higher education. After completing his bachelor's degree at the University of California Riverside, Eduardo has gone on to do post-graduate work at Harvard's Kennedy School and received his master's degree from the University of Southern California in Public Policy, Planning and Development in May 2012.

Mayor Garcia believes his time in the travel industry was critical to both his educational and career success, helping to spark personal and professional growth and to provide him with the skills necessary to thrive in public service.

Whenever he gets the chance, Mayor Garcia tells people that there was no better place to prepare for a career in public service than in travel. "The skills I learned working in the travel industry — teamwork, communications skills, understanding people's needs and situations, and working hard to solve problems — are the essence of the public service work I do now."

And these skills are at the heart of his success as a public servant. In December 2012, Eduardo was sworn in once more as the mayor of Coachella after winning his fourth consecutive term.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Behind these statistics are inspiring stories of Americans who know firsthand where a job in the travel industry can lead. There are stories of unemployed workers finding a job that secures their place in the middle class. There are stories of part-time students financing their education while learning transferable skills on the job. There are stories of families realizing the American Dream. Today, as the statistics prove beyond a doubt, that dream begins in the travel industry.

The message is clear: The travel industry is an essential contributor to a strong, upwardly mobile job market. To ensure that all Americans have the opportunities they need to succeed—whether it’s grabbing that first rung on the job ladder or building a rewarding career—we need to enact public policies that encourage a strong and growing travel industry.

By joining together with the travel industry, leaders in both the government and the private sector can help advance policies that will expand opportunities for millions of American workers:

- **Winning the Competition for International Travelers:** Global long-haul travel is projected to grow by 40 percent over the next decade.³⁷ By streamlining our visa process and adding more countries to the Visa Waiver Program, we can achieve the nation’s goal of attracting 100 million international visitors annually by 2021.
- **Investing in Brand USA, America’s First-Ever Nationally Coordinated Marketing Effort:** By continuing to invest in travel promotion—at the federal, state and local level—we can attain stronger economic growth and lower unemployment.
- **Improving the Air Travel Experience:** By strengthening security at U.S. airports while reducing the burdens on travelers, aviation security becomes more efficient and effective. Research proves that with common sense reforms, we could generate an additional \$85 billion in traveler spending that would support 900,000 American jobs.³⁸
- **Building World-Class Infrastructure to Support America’s World-Class Destinations:** According to the World Economic Forum, America’s roads are ranked just 20th and aviation infrastructure a lowly 30th in the world.³⁹ Our country’s destinations need high-performing infrastructure to attract visitors—and that requires new investment in our roads and runways.

The travel industry is an essential contributor to a strong, upwardly mobile job market.



Employers today are looking for a combination of skills that demonstrate flexibility, resourcefulness and the ability to provide customer service by listening and anticipating the needs of others. Working in the hospitality industry provides a means for young professionals to hone all of those skills.

Greater emphasis on “soft skills” like effective communication and the ability to work within a team are also cited as desirable employee traits. The multicultural environment of a hospitality operation and the nature of being “on stage” daily when serving guests and customers, allows employees to develop the critical skills necessary to be successful in a variety of career fields.

— LYDIA WESTBROOK

CONRAD N. HILTON COLLEGE OF HOTEL & RESTAURANT MANAGEMENT,
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON



Discover the impact of travel on the nation's economy and see more real-life employee profiles online at www.ustravel.org/jobs



ENDNOTES

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