



HOSPITALITY IN NEW ORLEANS

Cultivating successful career pathways to transform the lives of opportunity youth

The hospitality industry has great potential to serve opportunity youth through the development of career pathways—sequenced delivery of education and training opportunities, accompanied by support services—to prepare people for success in the workforce. This promise is particularly strong in New Orleans, where the hospitality industry offers a solid beginning point for young people at the start of their careers.

BETTER OUTCOMES THROUGH YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Adolescence is a time of heightened potential and risk. With significant brain development occurring well into a person's 20s, strong evidence exists that a first job experience can influence the trajectory of a teen's future.

Youth employment has been shown to affect an individual's overall economic well-being, including potential for increased earnings, support of transitions to postsecondary education, decreased justice system involvement, and the fostering of psychological health and positive relationships.

INDUSTRY QUICK FACTS

Hospitality is **the largest employer in the U.S.** and is growing quickly. The potential economic impact is expected to reach \$2.5 trillion by 2025.

Hospitality **employees are in high demand**, and employers are eager to retain their people and promote from within. Hospitality offers **more on-the-job training** and **rapid advancement** for entry-level positions than any other industry in the U.S.

Hospitality provides **multiple points of entry** for employees at varying education levels. The hotel industry, in particular, allows individuals to pursue a range of customer-facing and back-office roles, technical positions, culinary work, and trades with transferrable skills.

WHO ARE NEW ORLEANS OPPORTUNITY YOUTH?



- **16 to 24** years old
- Not in **school** or connected to the **workforce**
- Nearly **half** live in a household below the poverty line
- **Twice** as likely for women to **have a child**
- **More than twice** the rate of **disabilities** than other youth in New Orleans
- **7,000** opportunity youth in Orleans parish—**15%** of all area youth
- **64%** have a high school credential

“ For so long this population of young people has suffered the rippled effects of youth disconnection, disconnected from educational and gainful employment opportunities. In spite of their disadvantages, social inequities, and adversities these young people still aspire to do great things and obtain success. Their resiliency and life experiences enables them to learn, grow and contribute to society for beyond imagination, if only potential was met with chance and opportunity.”

Ryan Dalton

HOSPITALITY IS ON THE RISE IN NEW ORLEANS

- Hospitality employs **57,000+** people and is the dominant sector in the region
- **5,400+** new hotel rooms projected to open by 2019
- **30,000+** new jobs coming in the next 10 years
- 25% of new jobs will be **middle** or **high skilled**



HOSPITALITY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Responding to the high number of opportunity youth in Orleans parish, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation Hospitality Workforce Development Program seeks to improve the life trajectory of young people through a focus not only on career placement, but also career advancement. With nearly 15 percent of youth in New Orleans facing significant economic instability and disconnection, young people struggle to find and retain employment with potential beyond entry-level positions. The challenges they face are systemic and substantial—and so are the solutions.

By partnering with local organizations as well as national programs that support the New Orleans community, the Foundation is working to elevate the perception of the hospitality industry and propel systemic change to support stronger career pathways for opportunity youth.

Together with our partners, we share a vision for the future of New Orleans—one in which all young people have the opportunity to thrive in economically sustaining, fulfilling careers.

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New Orleans has always held a special place in the Foundation’s heart and history. We are excited to help the city build a future where all youth have access to economic opportunity.

Elizabeth Cheung
Senior Program Officer,
Conrad N. Hilton Foundation

OUR APPROACH

Investing in Quality Pathways

- **Build well-defined career pathways** that match training, education, and supportive services needs to what youth need
- **Establish wrap-around supports** that enable youth to thrive as they pursue career advancement
- **Increase the capacity** of education and workforce development programs to better serve opportunity youth

Elevating the Industry

- **Transform the perceptions** of key stakeholders—employers, public systems, youth, and the community at large
- **Develop feedback mechanisms** between the hospitality industry and workforce providers
- **Document and disseminate** best practices for workforce development with opportunity youth

Changing Existing Systems

- **Encourage alignment and efficiency** in public and private systems, including engaging employers to help identify and meet the industry’s true needs
- **Create a community of champions** who are active partners in supporting opportunity youth
- **Coordinate workforce delivery mechanisms and funding sources** to help investments in the sector make greater impact

SOURCES

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State of the Sector: Hospitality and Tourism, 2017, Greater New Orleans Inc.
Zeroing in on Place and Race: Youth Disconnection in America’s Cities, 2015, Measure of America.

