

HOSPITALITY & TOURISM

UA GRADUATES



The University of Alaska has identified 8 programs whose graduates are important to hospitality and tourism in Alaska. Detailed below are their employment and wage outcomes, plus other information that can be used to assess UA programs and their usefulness to one of the state's key industries.

Graduates from Key UA Programs

Working in Alaska within One Year of Graduating

(Rate | Actual)

CULINARY ARTS

79.9% | 231

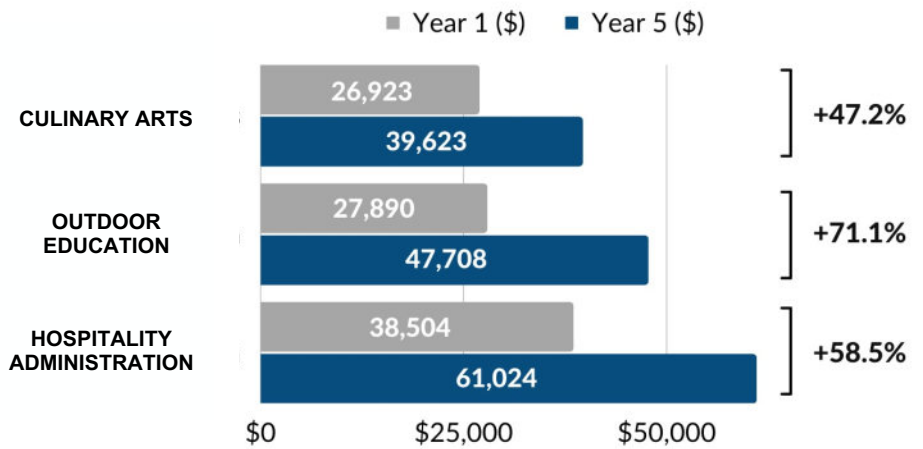
OUTDOOR EDUCATION

72.6% | 53

HOSPITALITY ADMINISTRATION

72.7% | 56

Wage Growth

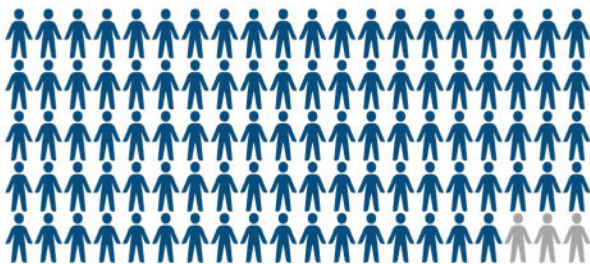


Note: Data reflects the actual employment and wage data of all graduates, and is not limited to those employed in hospitality and tourism.

UA Programs Boost Alaska's Hire Rate

96.5%

Of Working Graduates are Alaska Residents

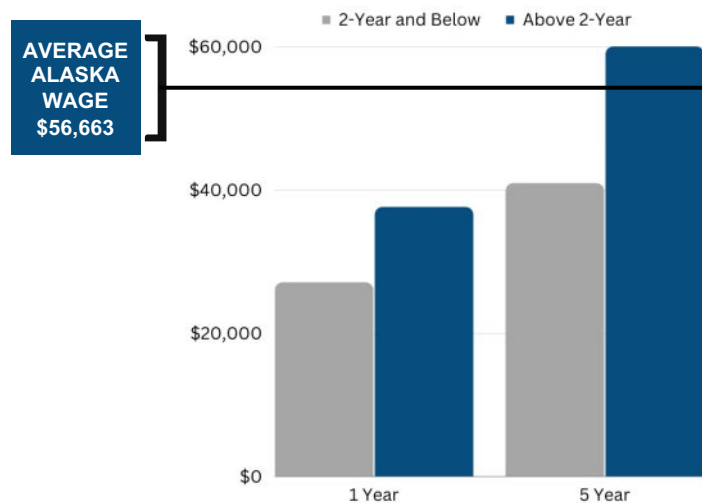


For comparison, residency is...

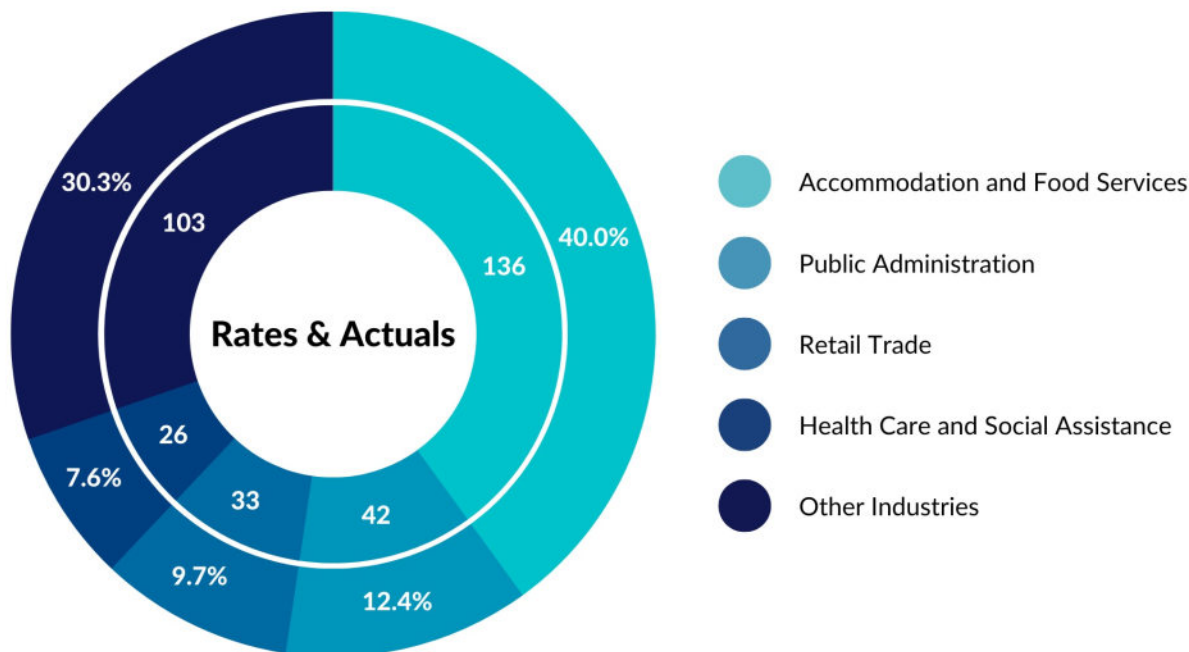
79.8% for all Alaska Workers

72.8% for all Hospitality & Tourism workers

Program Graduates' Average Wage



Industries Where First-Year Graduates Work

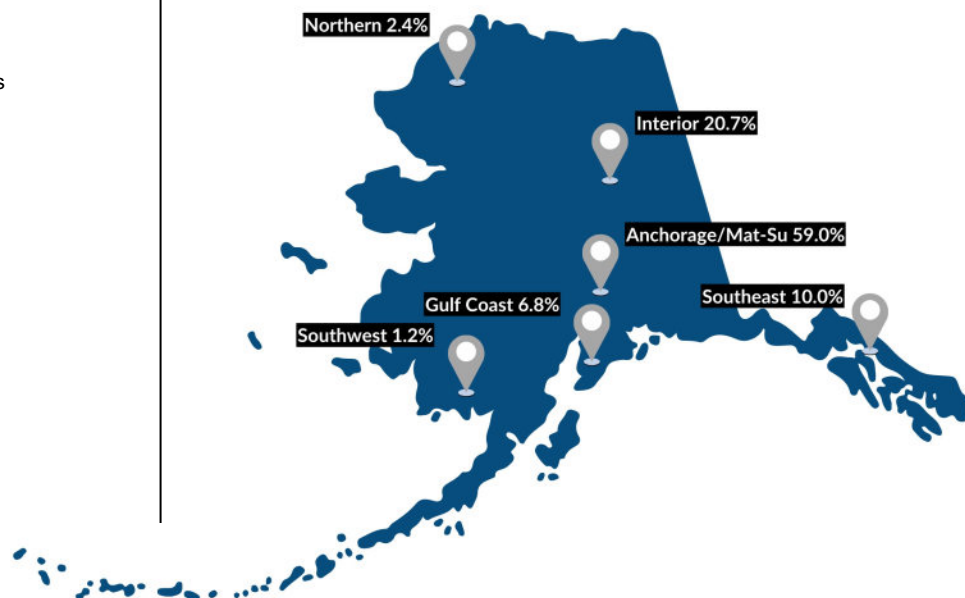


Over the last three years, the hospitality and tourism industry hired...



Note: These occupations may or may not require postsecondary education and include all hires, not just UA grads, to identify greatest demand.

Regions where UA hospitality and tourism program graduates work





Programs and the Industry Connection

Education pays — people working jobs in Alaska that require a high school degree earn an average of \$44,679 annually, which jumps to \$63,883 for jobs that require associate degrees, \$86,140 for those that require bachelor degrees, and \$102,511 for jobs in Alaska that require graduate or professional degrees.

Alaska's spectacular natural scenery, abundant and varied wildlife, and rich culture have long attracted visitors from around the country and world. Alaska expects as many as 1.6 million visitors just on cruise ships in 2023 and at least a million more independent visitors to the state. Those visitors create thousands of Alaska jobs, and University of Alaska programs that help train those workers include those with a focus on the culinary arts, hospitality administration, and outdoor education.

The number of job openings in Alaska has jumped by 40 percent from 2019 to 2022, and spending from the 2021 Infrastructure Act—nearly \$3 billion has already been announced so far for Alaska—will make filling high-wage jobs, most of which require postsecondary training or education, even more difficult. The state's ten consecutive years of negative net migration (more people moving out of the state than moving in) creates an additional challenge for Alaska employers looking to fill open positions. These challenges, however, create unprecedented opportunities for Alaska workers, especially those with sought-after education and training credentials.

Attempts to precisely match the supply of graduates with the demand for certain workers by industry would be misguided, but the data shown here are appropriate for general conclusions about the benefits of certain UA programs. More importantly, this information can help facilitate conversations with key industries about how programs could be expanded, changed, or developed to provide them with more and better-trained workers.

Since 2011, 439 people have graduated from programs relevant to the state's hospitality and tourism industry, producing the following outcomes:

Degree Type*	Graduates	% Employed in Alaska within 1 Year	Average First-Year Wage (\$)	Average Fifth-Year Wage (\$)	Average Tenth-Year Wage (\$)
Certificate	127	68.5%	\$25,085	\$40,287	\$44,859
Associate	229	83.4%	\$27,965	\$41,203	\$52,017
Bachelor and Above	83	74.7%	\$37,590	\$59,965	\$44,631

*Certificates (1-2 yrs); Associate Degrees (2 yrs); Bachelor Degrees and Above (4-4+ yrs).



Questions and Answers

Where do the employment numbers come from?

The University of Alaska and the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Research and Analysis Section work together each year to identify where university graduates are working in the state and what their wages are.

The detailed employment and wage information comes from quarterly reports that nearly all Alaska employers are required to file under state unemployment insurance law. Those records do not include federal workers or the self-employed, so university program graduates in those categories are not shown here.

Wages numbers have been annualized and have been inflation adjusted to 2022 wages to make them comparable across the ten-year window of this report. Annualizing wages is a method used to calculate what the wages would be if all workers worked all four quarters in the year.

How were programs & target occupations selected?

The University of Alaska analyzed labor market information to determine the largest and fastest-growing occupations in the hospitality and tourism industry, then linked programs based on occupations' titles and characteristics. While other UA programs also provide some preparation for hospitality and tourism jobs, this report excludes general administrative training programs that are useful for all sectors, such as accountants and human resource professionals.

How long does it take to earn a certificate, associate degree, or bachelor degree?

If a student is attending classes full-time, certificate programs take less than 2 years (often 1 year or less); associate degrees are generally 2 years; bachelor degrees are four years; and advanced degrees are more than 4 years.

Can this information be used for program evaluation?

It can inform those types of decisions, as well as decisions about which programs to expand, but there is far more to consider than which programs have the highest earnings or best employment outcomes. Other data such as short-term and long-term industry and occupational projections, enrollment numbers, and tuition and program costs are important, and so are less formal insights and information gathered from industry and other key stakeholders. When making key decisions about university programs, it is also important to consider the most recent developments in the economy that cannot yet be measured.

Do graduates work only in the hospitality and tourism industry?

No, they work in a variety of industries. Graduates being hired and paid well by employers in any industry indicate successful outcomes for both the program graduates and the Alaska economy.

Why are the first-year average wages so low for graduates from the hospitality and tourism programs?

In general, wages in these types of jobs pay lower than average for a few main reasons. First, they are less likely to require as much training or education as the jobs in most other industries. Second, they are much more likely to be part-time or have variable hours as opposed to a standard 40 hour work week.

One pattern to note is that graduates from the programs listed on page 5 tend to show substantial increases in their wages from their first year to their fifth year. Graduates from the largest program, UAA's culinary arts associate degree, also see another strong wage increase as they move into their tenth year.

It's unclear why graduates from the two other programs with data available ten years after graduation have lower average wages than at five years post-graduation. As with other programs, the number of graduates who have been in the workforce that long is much smaller than the number who have been working for one or five years, which can skew the results high or low depending on the particular wages of those relatively few people.

If little or no post-secondary experience is required to get jobs in the hospitality/tourism industry, why does the University of Alaska have training programs?

It's true that most jobs in hospitality/tourism don't require a person to have a specific type of training or education. That does not necessarily mean, however, that employers don't place a higher value on the people who do have postsecondary credentials demonstrating their interest and skill in that type of work. The University of Alaska works closely with employers to ensure that program curricula give graduates the kinds of skills and experience the employers value.

8 Programs Linked to Hospitality & Tourism

Target Occupations	University	Major	Degree	Graduates	% Employed in AK within a year	1st-year average wage	5th-year average wage
Baking and Pastry Arts/Baker/Pastry Chef (12-0501)	UAF	Baking and Pastry Arts	Certificate	92	72.8%	23,614	35,027
	UAF	Culinary Arts	Certificate	80	70.0%	23,820	37,787
	UAA	Culinary Arts	Associate of Applied Science	200	87.0%	26,833	40,975
Culinary Arts/Chef (12-0503)	UAF	Culinary Arts and Hospitality	Associate of Applied Science	42	71.4%	23,754	50,746
	UAA	Hospitality Restaurant Management	Bachelor of Arts	78	73.1%	38,465	61,024
Hospitality Administration & Management, General (52-0901)	UAA	Hospitality Restaurant Management	Bachelor of Arts	78	73.1%	38,465	61,024
Outdoor Education (31-0601)	UAA	Outdoor Leadership	Associate of Applied Science	14	71.4%	39,113	*
	UAS	Outdoor Skills & Leadership	Certificate	54	70.4%	24,209	48,355
	UAS	Outdoor & Adventure Studies	Bachelor of Liberal Arts	6	100.0%	27,537	*

*Data unavailable. Program has been offered for a limited period of time, or wages are suppressed when fewer than 5 graduates are employed in Alaska. Note: Graduate numbers are from 2011 through 2021.

This report is a collaboration among UA Workforce Development, UA Data Strategy and Institutional Research, and the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Research and Analysis Section. For more information, visit alaska.edu/research/wd/.

