

## AHLA Foundation Career Pathways

### Introduction

The AHLA Foundation provides support to future hospitality professionals through many scholarship opportunities, having budgeted more than 1.3 million in 2018. With 3 different programs, AHLAF looks to provide the necessary skills to hospitality students so they can further advance in their career.

The AHLA Foundation Career Pathways research uses Emsi's profile database, consisting of roughly 136 million online profiles, to provide insights on the career pathways hospitality students follow as they advance in their career. The profiles used for this analysis represent 0.21% of the industry.

**31,217**

**Analyzed Profiles**

The analysis of educational attainment found 26,898 degrees belonging to Bachelor's and 4,319 belonging to Associates. The demographic analysis found that most workers in the industry are white, female, and between the ages of 35 and 44.

**53%**

**Remain in Industry**

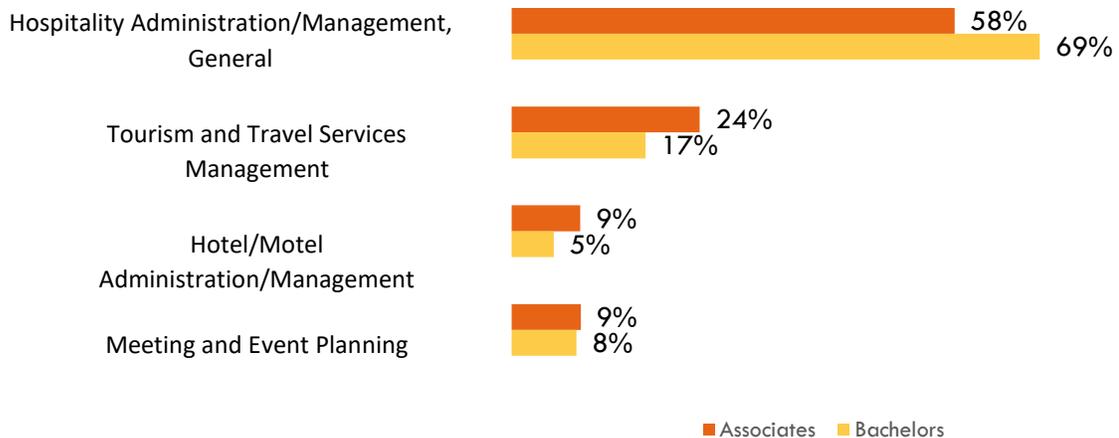
The remainder of individuals go to work in other industries, with retail and administrative services being the most common areas, followed by Tourism and Travel Services Management.

## Graduates by Program Type

Profile data obtained by Emsi shows that around 54% of Bachelor’s and 49% of Associates obtain their first job in the Hospitality Industry. As their careers progress, the share of Hospitality graduates that remain in the industry decreases to 28%. On the other hand, areas that tend to receive fewer recent graduates see a growth over time, as they exit Hospitality and migrate to

other industries. Finance & Insurance and Manufacturing are examples of areas that see a 3% increase in the number of graduates. Other Industries, composed by jobs such as Mechanics, Hairdressers, and Maids see the biggest change out of most industries, with a 14% increase in the presence of graduates over time.

**Figure 1:** Percent of Graduates by Program Type



Source: Emsi

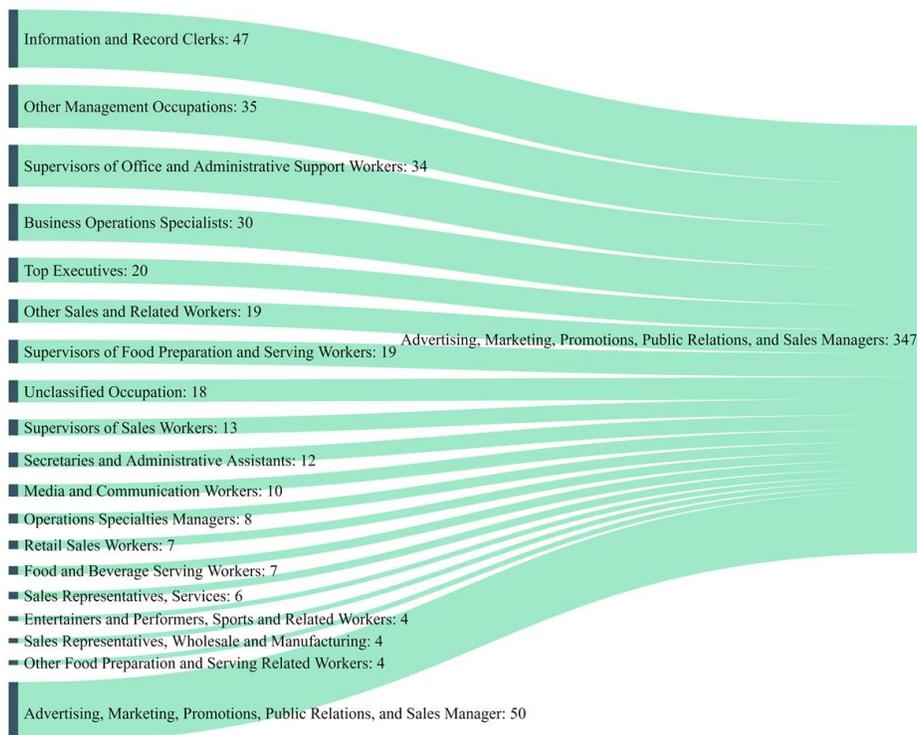
## Career Diversity over Time

Although the majority of profiles obtained belong to Bachelor’s, it is possible to observe there is less diversity in the programs pursued by that group when compared to Associates, where 42% of graduates belong to other programs other than Hospitality Administration/Management, General. Tourism and Travel Services Management is the area in which Associates have a significantly higher representation than their Bachelor counterparts.

In the top 6 industries, data reveals that graduates with Associates degrees are more likely to remain in the same industry in comparison to their Bachelor counterparts. However, expanding tenure in the Hospitality industry pays off, leading to high-paying managerial positions given the experience and industry-specific education received. On average, Associates tend to stay 1 more year in Hospitality after graduation than Bachelor’s across all areas.

## Career Pathways

**Figure 2: Career Pathways to Advertising, Marketing, Promotions, Public Relations, and Sales Manager**



An example of a possible career pathway for Associates was to eventually go to an Advertising/Marketing Management position within their current jobs. As can be seen above in Figure 2, there is great diversity in the type of entry jobs of these graduates, ranging from food service to information and record clerks.

### Cost vs. Benefit

Data shows the cost of obtaining an Associates degree is substantially smaller than that of obtaining a Bachelor’s degree. Although the wage gap is present in both the first job and the current job depending on the degree, the dividends from investing in their education are impressive regardless of the degree level obtained.

**Figure 3:** Cost and wages earned by degree level



Source: Emsi

## Conclusion

Ultimately, Associates graduates tend to remain longer in Hospitality than their Bachelor's counterparts, which is essential for their success in the industry, as the combination of education and experience often result in management positions within the industry.

Both degrees guarantee similar success levels in the long-term. Thus, for someone looking to advance in their career, an Associates degree may represent a good investment, given their low entry point and the prospective of a well-paid hospitality career.

**53%**

Wage Increase in Both  
Degrees

