



Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc.
The original outplacement company



CONTACTS

James K. Pedderson, Director of Public Relations
Office: 312-422-5078
Mobile: 847-567-1463
Skype: james.pedderson
jamespedderson@challengergray.com

Colleen Madden, Media Relations Manager
Office: 312-422-5074
colleenmadden@challengergray.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MORE AMERICANS TO VACATION THIS SUMMER, MUCH TO THE BENEFIT OF SUMMER JOB SEEKERS

CHICAGO, May 25, 2016 -- Memorial Day weekend will kick off what is expected to be one of the busiest summer travel seasons in recent history, thanks to low gas prices and cheaper air fares. The increased number of Americans vacationing should result in increased hiring in areas and industries where tourists will congregate, according to a new outlook from the employment authorities at global outplacement and executive coaching consultancy Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc.

“Several surveys and reports point to a busy summer travel season. This is great news for economies that rely on tourism dollars, as well as for the job seekers hoping to find seasonal employment in these areas,” said John A. Challenger, chief executive officer of Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc.

“Hotels, restaurants, amusement parks, and other tourist attractions started hiring early in 2016. Employment in these industries is already up from last year’s levels, with peaking employment gains usually occurring in May, June and July. Those who have yet to find jobs with these types of employers should definitely keep trying, as most experience higher-than-average turnover,” he added.

Despite being in the age of planning and arranging vacations on the internet, nearly 204,000 Americans were employed in travel arrangement and reservation services, as of April. That is up 2 percent from about 200,000 in April 2015, according to the latest data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Employment in museums, historical sites, as well as amusement, gambling and recreation establishments was up by 3.1 percent from a year ago. These employers have added nearly

130,000 workers in March and April alone. Their payrolls are likely to grow by at least another 330,000 in May and June, if recent history is any indication.

Meanwhile, employment in food service and drinking places has increased by 366,000 over the past two months to a total workforce of 11.3 million. Last year, these establishments added 307,000 new workers in May in June.

“With low gas prices and wages finally creeping up, Americans should have more to spend this summer. Furthermore, there is mounting evidence that people are opting to spend their money on experiences, as opposed to accumulating more stuff. Domestic destinations should benefit the most, as recent events have perhaps raised safety and security concerns when it comes to traveling abroad,” said Challenger.

One recent report indeed shows that domestic travel is already up 17 percent in 2016. According to internal booking data from American Express Travel 195 million Americans are planning a summer vacation this year.

The AmEx Travel report shows that millennials, in particular, appear to have the travel bug, with almost 90 percent of them planning to take a summer vacation this year. And, much like other age groups, a vast majority of them plan to travel within the U.S.

“Employers in tourist destinations might be tempted to skimp on hiring, in order to keep a greater share of the profits. However, this could prove to be a disastrous mistake. As mentioned, more Americans are seeking experiences. If the experience falls short of expectations, due to understaffing or a poorly trained staff, they are more than willing to share their negative reviews on Yelp, Facebook, and other social media platforms,” said Challenger.

“Simply look at how unprepared the TSA was in handling the increased number of travelers. Security lines at major airports are taking two hours to get through and people are missing flights. Granted, the TSA is not a typical employer. Its budget and hiring authority comes from Congress, which is about as dysfunctional as the TSA. However, it should still serve as a lesson for employers considering short-staffing their establishments.

“The understaffed TSA will most certainly have broader economic consequences, particularly for the airlines. The slowdowns could prompt more Americans to take to the roads instead of relying on air travel. Now, imagine the same frustrations coming from waiting a long line to check in to a hotel or suffering a long wait at a restaurant that has empty tables but simply does not have enough staff to serve all of the customers. Employers definitely should not follow the lead of the TSA, but instead make sure hiring is ample enough to accommodate this year’s increased travel crowd,” advised Challenger.