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2019 Seasonal Retail Hiring Update

RETAIL HIRING UP 2% OVER LAST SEASON, HIGHEST TOTAL SINCE 2012; TRANSPORTATION & WAREHOUSING DOWN 5%

CHICAGO, December 10, 2019 – Retailers added 156,100 jobs in October, an upward revision of 18,900 jobs, and 466,400 jobs in November, according to an analysis of non-seasonally adjusted data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) from global outplacement and executive and business coaching firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc.

October's total is 34.7% higher than last October, when 115,900 jobs were added. It is the highest October total since 2015, when 183,300 jobs were added.

Meanwhile, November's total is 5.7% lower than the same month last year. So far this season, retailers have added 622,500 jobs, 1.9% higher than the 610,700 added through this point last season. It is the highest October-November hiring total since 2012, when 624,100 jobs were added.

“Retailers predicted a strong season, and demand has not softened through November. Even with slow December hiring, we will see more jobs added than in 2018. In fact, retailers could potentially add over 700,000 Retail jobs this season, something we have not seen since 2015,” said Andrew Challenger, Vice President of Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc.

Jobs added in Transportation and Warehousing were revised down by 7,400 to 36,300. This sector added 119,400 jobs in November for a total of 155,700 so far this season. That is 5.1% lower than October-November last year, when 164,100 jobs were added.

“All sectors are having trouble finding talent this year, with the unemployment rate at 3.5% and more available job openings than people currently searching for work. Companies in Transportation and Warehousing, as well as Retail, simply cannot find the people needed for the holidays,” said Challenger.

In fact, the latest Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey from the BLS found over 7 million job openings. The BLS’s Employment Situation for November reported that unemployed persons who had looked for work in the last four weeks stood at 5.8 million in November, another 1.2 million were long-term unemployed, and an additional 1.2 million were marginally attached, meaning they were available and willing to work, but had not searched in the last four weeks.

“Now may be a good time for those who are long-term unemployed or who have not found something in the last year to pick up a seasonal position. Many of these positions turn into regular, permanent employment after the holiday season,” said Challenger.

For instance, UPS reports 35% of their seasonal workers become permanent. Target retained 40% of their seasonal workforce last season, while Macy’s reportedly kept 10%, according to CNBC.

So far this holiday season, Challenger has tracked 789,781 large-scale seasonal hiring announcements, 10.6% higher than the 714,000 tracked through last season, and the highest since the firm began tracking in 2012. Amazon, which last year announced 100,000 new jobs for the holiday season, doubled their seasonal hiring plans to 200,000 this year.

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JOBS ADDED IN RETAIL TRADE

October, November, December 2005-October 2019

	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL	% Change
2005	122,300	392,700	196,600	711,600	0.20%
2006	150,600	427,300	169,000	746,900	5.00%
2007	87,900	465,400	167,600	720,900	-3.50%
2008	38,600	213,600	72,700	324,900	-54.90%
2009	45,100	317,100	133,600	495,800	52.60%
2010	149,800	339,200	158,600	647,600	30.60%
2011	134,200	390,600	154,500	679,300	4.90%
2012	138,700	485,400	99,600	723,700	6.50%
2013	159,600	443,100	184,100	786,800	8.70%
2014	182,800	412,200	154,100	749,100	-4.80%
2015	183,300	399,300	125,700	708,800	-5.38%
2016	149,400	359,400	132,200	641,000	-9.57%
2017	146,400	462,700	59,300	668,400	4.27%
2018	115,900	494,800	14,900	625,600	-6.40%
2019	156,100	466,400		622,500	
Average*	130,713	404,613	130,179	656,860	

*Since 2005

JOBS ADDED IN TRANSPORTATION & WAREHOUSING

October, November, December 2011-2018

	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL	% Change
2011	11,200	25,900	62,200	99,300	-2.93%
2012	14,000	28,300	103,900	146,200	47.20%
2013	11,300	57,500	96,300	165,100	12.39%
2014	39,100	56,800	135,800	231,700	40.34%
2015	13,900	70,600	144,000	228,500	-1.38%
2016	28,000	85,500	152,800	266,300	16.54%
2017	41,400	88,600	135,200	265,200	-0.41%
2018	52,900	111,200	95,400	259,500	-2.15%
2019	36,300	119,400		155,700	
AVERAGE*	27,567	71,533	115,700	201,944	

*Since 2011

Source: Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc., with non-seasonally adjusted data provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Large-Scale Seasonal Hiring Announcements

Company	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Amazon	50,000	70,000	80,000	100,000	120,000	120,000	100,000	200,000
Target	88,000	70,000	70,000	70,000	77,500	100,000	120,000	133,000
UPS	55,000	55,000	95,000	95,000	95,000	95,000	100,000	95,000
Macy's	80,000	83,000	86,000	85,000	83,000	87,000	80,000	80,000
FedEx (Transportation)	20,000	20,000	50,000	55,000	50,000	50,000	55,000	55,000
JCPenney	40,000	35,000	35,000	30,000	40,000	40,000	39,000	37,000
Michaels						15,000	15,000	15,000
Kroger						14,000	10,000	
Kroger (GA & SC Stores)								1,000
Nordstrom				11,800	11,400	13,650		
Toys"R"Us	45,000	45,000	45,000	40,000		12,500		
Burlington Stores						12,000		
The Bon-Ton Stores					13,500	10,000		
1-800-FLOWERS.COM Inc.						8,000	8,000	8,000
McDonald's						3,179		
Williams-Sonoma						2,000		
Fanatics						2,000		
Plow & Hearth						400		
Opryland					300	400		
Kohl's	52,700	53,000	76,970	79,160	69,000		90,000	90,000
Walmart	50,000	55,000	60,000	60,000				
GameStop	17,000	17,000	25,000	28,000				
Sports Authority				3,500				
Best Buy	14,000							
Meijer	12,000	9,000	10,000					
Radial					20,000	23,000	20,000	12,581
Party City					35,000			25,000
Gap			63,000				65,000	30,000
Versant Supply Chain					2,000			
L Brands					4,000		4,000	
XPO Logistics						6,000	8,000	
Hickory Farms (Food)	5,225	6,000						
Altar'd State								1,200
Bass Pro Shops								7,000
Total	528,925	518,000	695,970	657,460	620,700	614,129	714,000	789,781

Source: Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc. ©