CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS
Providing pathways to success for employees. Ensuring continued success for the industry.

The American Dream, made real.

AHLA&AHLEF
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Our career development programs are all about empowering sustainable growth. Youth receive the skills training, financial support and AHLA certifications to progress from entry-level worker to management apprentice to college graduate to lifelong hospitality professional. The industry receives the assurance of a strong future.
This national AHLEF program recruits young people for entry-level positions, and it nurtures and develops them with training, tools and support that will lead to permanent careers in hospitality.

We focus on Opportunity Youth, who are ages 16-24 and out of school and unemployed, but who have the desire and resilience to succeed in the workplace.

We will engage with 1,000 Opportunity Youth over two years. Each will receive the AHLA Certified Guest Service Professional designation, the highest acknowledgment of guest service for employees in the hospitality industry.

AHLEF and AHLA have committed $500,000 in grants to community-based organizations to kick-start pilot programs in four high-demand cities: Los Angeles, Chicago, Washington, D.C. and Baltimore.

To distribute our grants and execute the pilots, AHLA has partnered with Grads of Life, the leading national nonprofit specializing in helping employers build talent pipelines for Opportunity Youth.

This is not a short-term intervention, but a long-term solution. For young adults, it provides pathways to opportunity and success that will lead to lifelong employment. For AHLA members, it will increase access to quality talent for in-demand positions and improve staff retention year after year.
To help address the need to build a strong bench strength of managers and supervisors for the lodging industry, AHLA created an apprenticeship program for the position of Lodging Manager.

The AHLA management apprenticeship program was designed with the goal of aligning certification with the fundamentals of apprenticeship and was constructed using more than 100 competencies found in leading AHLA certifications. The result is an industry-created, competency-based, apprenticeship program that offers a direct path to upper management and credential attainment. Apprentices in the program can earn while they learn, but also acquire industry certifications and credit toward a college degree. AHLEF is supporting apprentices’ academic pursuits by earmarking professional development scholarship funding to help pay for these credentials.

AHLA currently has over (25) employers participating in the program – from major hotel brands, to large and small management companies and independent properties. Apprentices are actively working in more than 35 states across the country.

AHLA’s program was officially approved and registered with the US Department of Labor in June 2017.
AHLEF has launched a groundbreaking program to offer hotel industry employees at more than 1,500 hotel properties nationwide a chance to earn a college degree at no cost and no debt to them. AHLEF has partnered with Pearson Education, the world’s largest education company, to help orchestrate this work.

AHLEF and Pearson are working with a consortium of two- and four-year accredited colleges and universities that will provide continuing education and access to a cost-free degree. Participants are enrolling all over the country through online classwork offered in the model.

Participating colleges can choose to offer credit hours for prior work, industry certifications, employer training programs, and the AHLA apprenticeship program, which may be worth as many as 12 college credit hours.

The pilot for the cost-free college program includes employees from 10 companies representing the breadth of the industry, including management companies, independent properties, and hotel brands ranging from Red Roof Inn to Wyndham.

AHLEF has created this exciting opportunity for the hospitality industry’s workforce through a combination of federal Pell Grant funding, employer tuition reimbursement programs, and scholarships.
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