

WORKING TOGETHER: APPRENTICESHIP & HOSPITALITY

This document summarizes a February 2020 call for State Apprenticeship Expansion grantees. The call featured speakers from the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation and BEST Hospitality Training, who discussed resources and promising practices in Registered Apprenticeship in the hospitality sector.

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

Lori Sylvia is the Apprenticeship Director for BEST Hospitality Training. She handles all apprenticeship requirements for BEST's Introduction to Hospitality Housekeeping pre-apprenticeship program, including strengthening employer partnerships, acting as a liaison with partners such as the Massachusetts Department of Labor and Bunker Hill Community College, and developing relevant curricula for job seekers. This pre-apprenticeship program articulates to a Registered Apprenticeship Program in hospitality housekeeping. For more information, contact Lori Sylvia at lsylvia@hoteltrainingcenter.org.

John Shortt is the Director of Program Development at the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation (NRAEF). He is responsible for the development and implementation of apprenticeship programs with the Hospitality Sector Registered Apprenticeship Program—a partnership between NRAEF and the American Hotel and Lodging Foundation. NRAEF is an Industry Intermediary contracted with the U.S. Department of Labor. For more information, contact John Shortt at jshortt@nraef.org.

WHY APPRENTICESHIP WORKS IN HOSPITALITY

Over the past decade, there has been a dramatic increase in the hiring requirements and expectations of individuals working in housekeeping in mid- and high-end hotels. They are expected to interact more with guests, answer questions, and help to create memorable guest experiences. Employers are seeing the benefits of professionalizing not only housekeeping but also other occupations in the hospitality sector, and apprenticeship is an ideal workforce development tool to provide a career pathway within those occupations.

A LOOK AT APPRENTICESHIP IN HOSPITALITY TODAY

According to the Society for Human Resource Management's Preparing for an Aging Workforce: Retail and Hospitality Industry Toolkit, the hospitality industry employed roughly 13.2 million workers in the United States as of 2016 with average hourly earnings of \$13.96. While the wages in this sector are comparatively low, and its occupations are often viewed as low-skilled, that view is changing. The National Skills Coalition released a report in 2017 titled *Foundational Skills in the Service Sector: Understanding and Addressing the Impact of Limited Math, Reading, and Technology Proficiency on Workers and Employers*, which states that increased investment by retail and hospitality employers in their workforce will benefit these businesses through increased productivity and lower employer costs. The report specifically encourages policymakers to support the expansion of apprenticeships and other

work-based learning opportunities, as well as encouraging businesses to partner with organizations such as BEST and NRAEF to provide employee training.

BEST Hospitality Training works in Boston with over 30 hotel partners, of which 22 have taken part in its housekeeping apprenticeship programs. Right now, BEST trains about 75 individuals annually with its hotel partners. NRAEF has embedded over 400 competencies into its national program standards for its restaurant manager program that align with the competencies needed to attain the necessary credentials for the occupation. Developing national program standards was important for NRAEF because many of its employer partners, such as Chili's and Hilton, operate in all 50 states.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

Use intermediary sponsors to make it easier for employers to engage in apprenticeship. Some businesses do not have the capacity to undertake the registration and reporting processes themselves. As industry intermediaries and program sponsors, both BEST and NRAEF have developed internal systems so that they, not their partner employers, take on the task of filing paperwork with the registration agency.

Partner with employers from the beginning, and listen to their needs. BEST is often asked why it has concentrated on its housekeeping apprenticeship program, and the answer is that the program is what their hotel partners needed. Having demonstrated value through the housekeeping program, BEST has strengthened its partnerships with hotels, who are now sharing with BEST that they need cooks. In response, BEST is working on developing the first culinary apprenticeship program in Boston.

Borrow from promising practices, and take advantage of innovations. While apprenticeship has been traditionally used for the building trades, BEST was able to modify standards for its commercial cleaner apprenticeship program for its housekeeping standards. Although BEST's housekeeping program is time-based, NRAEF has found competency-based programs that allow for more flexibility for their partners. Both options have value. Another option is to take a hybrid approach that merges the two program types, which is valuable as apprenticeship continues to expand into new industries.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Apprenticeship.gov's [Hospitality page](#) links to a toolkit, competency models, apprenticeship standards in high-demand occupations, and more.
- The [Apprenticeship in Hospitality](#) page on Workforce GPS offers program examples, outreach materials, and other resources to help expand apprenticeship in hospitality.
- Learn more about the apprenticeship programs sponsored by the [National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation](#).
- Find out more about [BEST Hospitality Training's](#) pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs.