

BridgeUSA Program Survey

Absence of Crucial International Exchange Visitors Devastates Seasonal Businesses Across the United States

From September 13 to October 15, 2021, the Alliance for International Exchange surveyed 665 seasonal businesses and summer camps nationwide, of which 72% are small businesses.

CAMP COUNSELOR PARTICIPANTS*

2019	2020	2021	Decrease from 2019
25,681	219	5,856	77% ↓

*Data source the U.S. Department of State, J-1 Visa Exchange Visitor Program.

- ECONOMIC IMPACT -

60%

Of Businesses
Lost Revenue

20%

Of Seasonal
Positions Unfilled

3 in 5

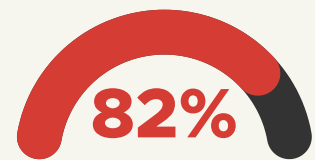
Shortened their
season/hours or closed
business locations



Did not meet peak
staffing needs without J-1
Visa Exchange Visitors



Reported staff burnout



Reported lower quality of
customer service or longer
customer wait times

Across the country, 31 summer camps reported a total loss of \$7,705,000, averaging

\$248,548

per business

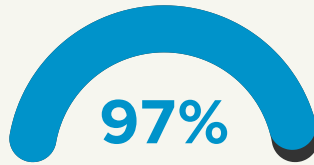
- PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IMPACT -

Lack of J-1 Visa Exchange Visitors hamstrings U.S. public diplomacy goals by taking away a key positive U.S. experience from tomorrow's international leaders, and preventing them from engaging with their American host communities.

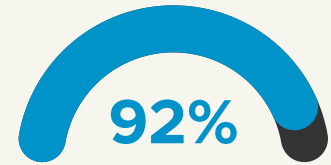
Host employers across America agree or strongly agree that Summer Work Travel and Camp Counselor participants:



Enable U.S. based staff to gain a better understanding of other cultures



Contribute to a positive culture in the workplace



Make the community more sensitive to other cultures

“Less staff = less campers = less income.”

- *Summer Camp in Charlottesville, VA*

“We provide services for individuals with disabilities. Summer camps provide a vacation for our campers in an accommodating and accepting environment. We are not able to provide these services without our international team members.”

- *Summer Camp in De Moines, IA*

“With staff from a wide variety of locations our campers get a broader view of the world, gaining a better understanding of the differences, but even more importantly the similarities we share with others. Without our international staff several recreational areas were not offered and we lost attendance due to not being able to offer some of our most popular activities.

- *Summer Camp in Lake Zurich, IL*

“What happened in 2021 cannot happen again; my business will not survive another season like 2021, and our current survival "success" was as much luck as it was blood, sweat, and tears.”

- *Summer Camp in Thompson, CT*

“Future lost revenue due to the lower level of customer service. I have families who will not return this year due to their kid's experience at camp and how it was impacted because I had fewer staff members than normal.”

- *Summer Camp in Jaffrey, NH*

“Due to the staffing shortage we were not able to open all of our camp cabins so we were not able to take as many campers as we would have any other years (lost sales) and parents were also not able to get the child care they needed to be able to fully go back to work.”

- *Summer Camp in Hancock, NY*