

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. Below are responses from these businesses, 8 in Ohio.

SUMMER WORK TRAVEL PARTICIPANTS*

	2019	2020	2021	Decrease from 2019
United States	108,303	4,952	39,647	63% ↓
Ohio	3,332	225	1,114	67% ↓

*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

In Ohio, 5 businesses reported a total loss of \$1,010,000, averaging

\$202,000

per business

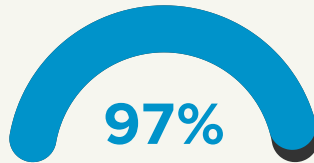
- PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IMPACT -

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.

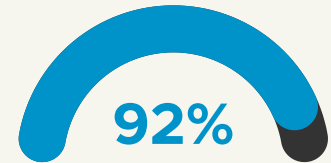
Host employers across America agree or strongly agree that Summer Work Travel and Camp Counselor participants:



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

“International staff bring a wonderful positive component to the workplace and make it a very interesting environment for all of us. Our American staff keep in touch and even travel during the winter months to the countries where our international staff call home.”

- Restaurant in Put-in-Bay, OH

“Being over 50% short on staff in our kitchen/prep areas, our seasonal operation took a hard hit with customer service.”

- Restaurant in Senecaville, OH

“We had to close one day per week throughout the season in each of our departments. This was something that we have never done in any of our businesses prior to this 2021 season. All due to staffing shortages.”

- Restaurant in Put-in-Bay, OH

“Without having enough staff our service scores were severely impacted. This caused many guest complaints and adjustments to guest accounts. As a result, the hotel lost revenue and potential revenue due to a loss of repeat business.”

- Hotel in Sandusky, OH

“The J-1 Visa BridgeUSA program has brought international staff to our workplace who are interacting with our American staff. Friendships are formed, understanding of different cultures is enhanced and overall we have found that our international staff have a positive impact on our workplace and our community.”

- Restaurant in Put-in-Bay, OH

“We operated at 50% of the staff we typically have.”

- Restaurant in Lakeside Marblehead, OH