

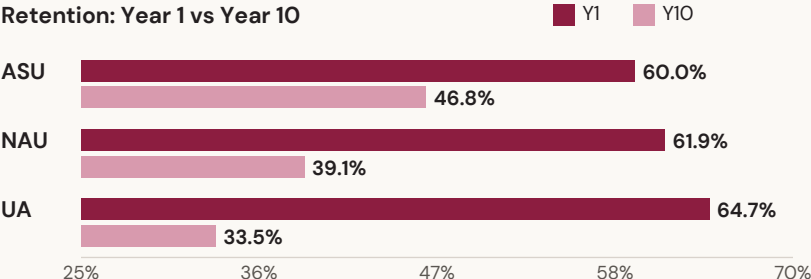
KEY FINDING

Food & Hospitality shows the steepest retention decline in the panel — by year ten, fewer than half of AZ public university graduates remain in state, and UA loses 31 percentage points of retention over ten years.

Graduate Retention by Institution

Institution	Y1	Y5	Y10	Decline
ASU	60.0%	50.4%	46.8%	-13.2 pp
NAU	61.9%	49.0%	39.1%	-22.8 pp
UA	64.7%	41.1%	33.5%	-31.2 pp

Retention: Year 1 vs Year 10



Arizona Context

- Tourism/hospitality = \$24.2B AZ GDP, 347,500 jobs (11% of state workforce)
- Restaurant industry is AZ's 3rd-largest private employer: 324,900 jobs across 12,500 locations
- OEO projects +42,442 Accommodation & Food Service jobs by 2034 (1.3%/yr growth)
- Despite sector's size, by Y10 fewer than half of AZ grads in F&H remain in state

Source: Common Sense Institute, 2023; National Restaurant Association, 2025; Arizona OEO, 2025

Where Graduates Work — One Year After Graduation

REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION

Food & Hospitality graduates show a markedly more mobile pattern than Education or Health Care. About 18% are employed in the Pacific region one year after graduation — one of the highest Pacific-region shares of any industry in the panel. The remaining share is anchored in the Mountain region but at lower rates than the panel average.

WHERE DEPARTING HOSPITALITY TALENT GOES

Outflow follows the geography of industry career ladders: the Pacific region is the dominant destination, with secondary flows to the South Atlantic. This could inform future regional workforce coordination.

What This Means for Employers

Food and Hospitality rewards geographic mobility — careers in hotels, restaurant groups, and resort operations often require moving between markets. Arizona's public universities produce a steady supply of entry-level hospitality talent, but the state lacks the structured career pathways that convert early employment into lifelong Arizona careers. UA's 31 percentage-point decline — the largest in the panel — highlights the urgency of building stronger in-state career ladders for graduates who choose Arizona for their first role.

Alignment with Workforce Demand

HIGH GROWTH

+42,442 jobs by 2034
OEO 2024–2034

YEAR 1: MODERATE

60–65% retention
Below Health Care, Education

YEAR 10: CRITICAL

33–47% retention
Largest decline in panel

Engagement Opportunities for Hospitality Industry Partners

- 1 Build Career Ladders**

Partner on management trainee programs and multi-year career pathways to convert entry roles into Arizona-based careers
- 2 Invest in Internships**

Create structured internship-to-hire pipelines that anchor students to Arizona employers before graduation
- 3 Support Alumni Networks**

Develop industry-specific alumni networks to retain mid-career professionals through connections, not just compensation

ABOUT PSEO DATA & LIMITATIONS

PSEO (U.S. Census Bureau Postsecondary Employment Outcomes) captures only graduates with covered employment under state unemployment insurance — excluding self-employed individuals, independent contractors, federal workers, and those working outside the U.S. Industries are reported at the 2-digit NAICS level, small cells are suppressed to protect privacy, and 10-year retention is only observable for the 2004, 2007, and 2010 cohorts.

Learn more about the PSEO data ecosystem: census.gov/programs-surveys/ces/data/public-use-data/pseo.html