

# Site | Chicago

This year 2009 has started with the world in uncharted economic turmoil, stemming from crisis in the mortgage industry to today touching almost every type of business within the United States. The unemployment rate increased to 7.2% in December 2008 ... the highest level in approximately 16 years.

Nearly 2.4 million jobs are attributed to the hospitality industry. Roger Dow, President and CEO of the U.S. Travel Association, notes that "the Department of Labor reports a loss of nearly 200,000 travel related jobs in 2008 and U.S. Commerce Department data predicts a loss of an additional 247,000 travel related jobs in 2009."

There has never been a more vital time for hospitality professionals:

- to stay connected, engaged, motivated, and feel a sense of community
- to continue to build relationships and trust through networking
- to stay abreast of evolving business practices and industry regulations

It is particularly critical for those in career transition to remain abreast of current issues in order to be effective moving forward ... *embracing a new approach for the future and unleashing their human potential!*

That's why Site Chicago has launched a "Colleagues in Career Transition Initiative" where the professionals that decide to join the chapter can offset part of the cost of membership: 50% for colleagues that have been a member in the past and 25% for those who would join for the first time and students.

To run this initiative the Chapter will assign an initial budget of \$2,500 US from its funds.

"This is the time to show our colleagues we are in this together, and we will make through it if we stay connected" said Teresa Matamoros, CMP, Chapter President.