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College grads find challenging job market



The unemployment rate for recent college graduates ages 22 to 27 stood at 5.7% in the fourth quarter of 2025, up from 5.3% in the previous quarter. MARIO TAMA/GETTY IMAGES FILE

Rebound doesn't change U.S. economic 'narrative'

Rachel Barber
USA TODAY

In 2025, new college graduates wanted remote, high-paying jobs that aligned with their values. In 2026, they just want a job.

With 89% worrying artificial intelligence could replace entry-level roles – up from 64% last year – 67% of graduates now say they would accept a lower-paying position if it offered more job security, Monster's 2026 State of the Graduate Report found.

"They do not want to be 'the last one

in, first one out' of their new job," Monster career expert Vicki Salemi said, adding that young people are noticing waves of corporate layoffs. "They really want to feel like they're going to be in a job for the long term."

An April 2 Challenger, Gray & Christmas report may have confirmed some of their fears. It found employers announced 60,620 layoffs in March – up 25% from February – with AI adoption the primary reason behind the cuts.

Overall, the U.S. economy added 178,000 jobs in March, the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimated April 3 – a

figure well above forecasters' expectations. This news comes after the revised jobs report for February showed a loss of 133,000 jobs. The return to work in March of about 31,000 striking Kaiser Permanente health care workers accounts for some of the rebound.

The unemployment rate ticked down to 4.3% in March from 4.4% in February.

Andrew Stettner, senior director of economic security at the National Employment Law Project, said the report is a positive bounce back from February, but that it doesn't change the labor

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Dunnellon Police Chief Ron Bray retires

Austin L. Miller
Ocala Star-Banner
USA TODAY NETWORK

Dunnellon Police Chief Ron Bray has decided to call time on his career.

In an email sent to the city clerk dated March 16, Bray wrote: "I would like this email to serve as the formal submission of my resignation as the City of Dunnellon Police Chief. It has been a true joy and pleasure serving the citizens in the City of Dunnellon and Marion County.



Bray

"I have had the pleasure of working with excellent staff and a superb council. I will comply with the cities policy requiring 30-day notice, this is making my last day on April 15, 2026. I remain committed to a smooth transition, and available should it require additional time to achieve a smooth and complete transition of my duties should council request. Again, thank you for the honor of serving the City of Dunnellon," Bray wrote.

As to why he's leaving, Bray told a Star-Banner reporter: "I'm just ready to retire."

Clerk's email

A memorandum sent by the clerk to the city council on March 23 about Bray's resignation states: "Chief Bray has submitted his resignation effective April 15, 2026, which satisfies the required notice period for department heads. He has requested to be placed on paid administrative leave for the remainder of his employment, allowing the Marion County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) to take the necessary steps to assume interim leadership without delay."

The email further says: "Although

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1 rescued after U.S. jet downed over Iran

Thao Nguyen
and Cybele Mayes-Osterman
USA TODAY

One crew member of a U.S. F-15E fighter jet that went down over Iran on April 3 has been rescued, according to a U.S. official.

President Donald Trump has been briefed on the jet, White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said in a statement without providing details.

CBS News first reported the crew member's rescue.

The status of the other crew member from the two-seater fighter jet was unclear. News outlets including The Wall Street Journal and The New York Times reported that a search and rescue operation was ongoing.

The regional governor promised a commendation for anyone who captured or killed the pilot, according to the semi-official Iranian news agency ISNA. Irani-

an news agencies said U.S. helicopters were flying low on apparent search missions and carried videos of residents shooting at them.

President Donald Trump vowed in an April 1 address to hit Iran "extremely hard" over the next two to three weeks.

As of April 2, 13 U.S. service members had died in the war and more than 300 had been wounded.

Trump proposed increasing defense spending to \$1.5 trillion – a 44% increase – in his 2027 budget, which was released on April 3.

"President Trump promised to reinvest in America's national security infrastructure, to make sure our Nation is safe in a dangerous world," wrote Russell Vought, the director of the Office and Budget Management, in a letter submitting the budget to Congress. "The 2027 Budget upholds this promise and would

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People stand outside a damaged residential building April 3 in Karaj, Iran.

AJID SAEEDI/GETTY IMAGES

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