



November 3, 2025

Jessica Enders, Ed.D.
Interim Dean, Applied Sciences & Business
College of the Desert Community College
43500 Monterey Avenue
Palm Desert, CA 92260

Dear Dean Enders,

Subject: Summary of Key Findings for Proposed Bachelor's Degree in Casino and Resort Management

The Inland Empire/Desert Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research has completed a labor market analysis in support of the College of the Desert Community College's application to offer a bachelor's degree in casino and resort management studies. This letter summarizes the key findings from our report and is organized to address the primary questions of workforce need, wage potential, and employer preferences for candidates with a baccalaureate degree.

Evidence of Regional Workforce Demand for Baccalaureate Degree Holders

Based on our analysis for the 2023-2024 academic year, there is a notable supply-demand gap for workers with baccalaureate degrees in casino and resort management services within the region. Projections for job openings over the next ten years suggest that the demand for qualified professionals in this field (201 annual job openings) will be higher than the anticipated supply of graduates (41 annual awards) from existing and proposed programs. Specifically, the data projects a supply gap of 160 baccalaureate-level workers in the Inland Empire/Desert region. These findings indicate that introducing a new program may help decrease the undersupply of baccalaureate-prepared professionals relative to regional employer demand.

Evidence that Employers Are Willing to Pay Baccalaureate Degree Holders a Regional Living Wage

Our wage analysis indicates that workers with a baccalaureate degree in casino and resort management are likely to earn wages that meet or exceed the regional living wage. Specifically, entry-level positions in this field offer salaries at the 25th percentile ranging from \$26.38 - \$49.58, with three of the four occupations estimated to have entry level wages greater than the regional living wage benchmark of \$34.35 per hour for a single adult with one child. This analysis confirms that graduates of the proposed program can anticipate earning wages that are at or above the local living standard.

Evidence that Employers Are Willing to Pay Baccalaureate Degree Holders More Than Those with an Associate Degree or No Postsecondary Degree

The analysis reveals a clear wage difference for individuals holding a baccalaureate degree compared to those with an associate degree or high school diploma. On average, job postings and salary data show that employers offer 3% higher entry level wages to candidates with a bachelor's degree than those with an associate degree and 29% higher than those with a high school diploma. Specifically, the 25th percentile salary for baccalaureate degree holders is \$37.71 compared to \$36.80 for associate degree holders or \$29.32 for those with a high school diploma. This provides evidence that employers will consistently pay higher wages to bachelor's degree holders across their career progression, which is significantly higher at the higher wage percentiles.

Evidence that Employers Prefer Candidates with the Proposed Baccalaureate Degree

The annual job openings and job posting data demonstrates that employers in this occupational group typically require new workers to hold a bachelor's degree level of education. Two of the four occupations typically require a bachelor's degree for entry-level employment, with the remaining two occupations requiring a high school diploma or equivalent award. The two occupations typically requiring a bachelor's degree account for the vast majority of annual job openings (97%). In the past year, a sizeable number of job postings across the state either required (31.9%) or preferred (41.9%) workers with a bachelor's degree. When taken together, the annual job openings related to occupations which typically require a bachelor's degree (+1,800) and number of job postings requiring or preferring a bachelor's degree (+30%) demonstrate that employers in this occupational group often require new workers to hold a bachelor's degree level of education.

In summary, our analysis indicates that a new program may assist in reducing the current supply gap with workers holding baccalaureate degrees in casino and resort management, and there is evidence of a wage premium for baccalaureate degree holders compared to those with an associate degree or high school diploma. Additionally, it appears that employers are likely to offer competitive wages that meet the regional living wage and employers in the occupations targeted by the proposed program appear to typically prefer a baccalaureate degree for new workers in the field.

Please find the full labor market report attached for a detailed review of the data and analysis. Should you have any questions or need further clarification, feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

Shannon Moran

Shannon Moran

COE Director

Inland Empire/Desert Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research

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