

Labor Market Analysis for:
1219.00 Optical Technology (Dispensing)
Inland Empire/Desert Center of Excellence, March 2025
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Summary

Program LMI Endorsement	All LMI Criteria Met	Some LMI Criteria Met (Proceed with Caution)	LMI Criteria NOT Met
	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Program LMI Endorsement Criteria		
Supply Gap	Yes ✓	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Comments:</i> There is <i>projected</i> to be 93 annual job openings throughout the Inland Empire/Desert region, which is more than the 3 annual average awards conferred by educational institutions over the last 3 years . Supply data includes both community college awards (0) and non-community college awards (3).	
Living Wage	Yes ✓	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Comments:</i> This occupation is estimated to have entry-level hourly wages (\$20.58) above the IE/D living wage of 20.42. ¹	
Education	Yes ✓	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Comments:</i> The typical entry-level education for this occupation is a high school diploma, however more than 33% of all workers in the field (50%) have completed some college or an associate degree as their highest level of education. See Exhibit 9 for more details.	

The Inland Empire/ Desert (IE/D) Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research (IE/D COE) reviewed the following occupations to prepare this report:

- Below Middle-Skill (typically require training/education at or below a HS diploma)
 - Opticians, Dispensing (29-2081)

Summary of findings

Demand

- The number of jobs related to the assessed occupation is projected to increase 7% through 2028, with 93 annual job openings (new and replacement jobs).
- Hourly entry-level wages for this occupation are above living wage at the 25th percentile hourly wage, estimated to be \$20.58 in IE/D.
- There were 249 online job postings from 72 employers over the past 12 months with the highest postings for opticians and licensed opticians.
- Most job postings for target occupations require a high school diploma or equivalent (78%), followed by a bachelor's degree (18%), an associate degree (3%), and above a bachelor's degree (0%).

Supply

- On average, there were 3 annual awards conferred by educational institutions over the last 3 years in related fields: 0 from community colleges and 3 from other institutions (e.g., 4-year universities, private schools).
- California community college students that exited these programs in the 2022-23 academic year earned a median annual wage of \$41,964 (\$20.18 per hour).

¹ The [UW self-sufficiency standard](#) is currently used by the CO and other COEs, the self-sufficiency standard was last updated by UW in 2024. To provide an alternative perspective, the COE will provide an alternative living wage calculation from MIT in the analysis below as an additional reference point. MIT estimates, the living wage for an adult with no kids living in 2024 is \$26.30 in Riverside County and \$25.17 in San Bernadino County.

Introduction

California Community College Optical Technology (TOP 1219.00) programs prepare students for employment in the theory of vision and lenses and techniques for the application of those principles to assisting in vision care (Taxonomy of Programs, 2023). The knowledge, skills, and abilities trained by Optical Technology programs lead to employment in occupations related to optometry.

Job Demand

In 2023, there were 939 jobs in occupations related to optometry in the IE/D region. Regional employment for this occupation group is projected to increase by 7% through 2028 with 93 job openings projected annually. Exhibit 1 displays the job count, five-year projected job growth, and job openings in the region.

Exhibit 1. Five-year projections for occupations related to optometry, IE/D Region, 2023-2028

Occupation	SOC	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2023 - 2028 % Change	5-Yr Openings (New + Replacement Jobs)	Annual Openings (New + Replacement Jobs)
Opticians, Dispensing	29-2081	939	1,003	7%	465	93

SOURCE: LIGHTCAST 2025.1

Job Postings

The following analysis for occupations related to optometry using online job posting data.

Important note: The data produced in this section were generated by leveraging online job posting data sourced from Lightcast, which is the labor market analytics software tool COEs use to produce these briefs. The job posting data is collected from scraping online job boards such as LinkedIn, Indeed, Glassdoor and many others. The process Lightcast uses to assemble this data does have some limitations due to methods that recruitment professionals sometimes use (e.g., posting one job to fill multiple positions). For example, the number of jobs posted is not necessarily the same as the number of job vacancies.² While not perfect, Lightcast leverages machine learning and other AI technologies to enrich, deduplicate and aggregate this information to make it a meaningful dataset.

Exhibit 2 displays the number of job ads posted for occupations related to optometry over the last 12 months and the median posting duration. Over the previous 12 months, there were 249 unique job postings for occupations related to optometry in the region from 72 employers.

Exhibit 2. Job ads and posting duration, IE/D Region, Mar 2024 – Feb 2025

Job Title	Job Ads	Median Posting Duration
Opticians, Dispensing	249	27 days

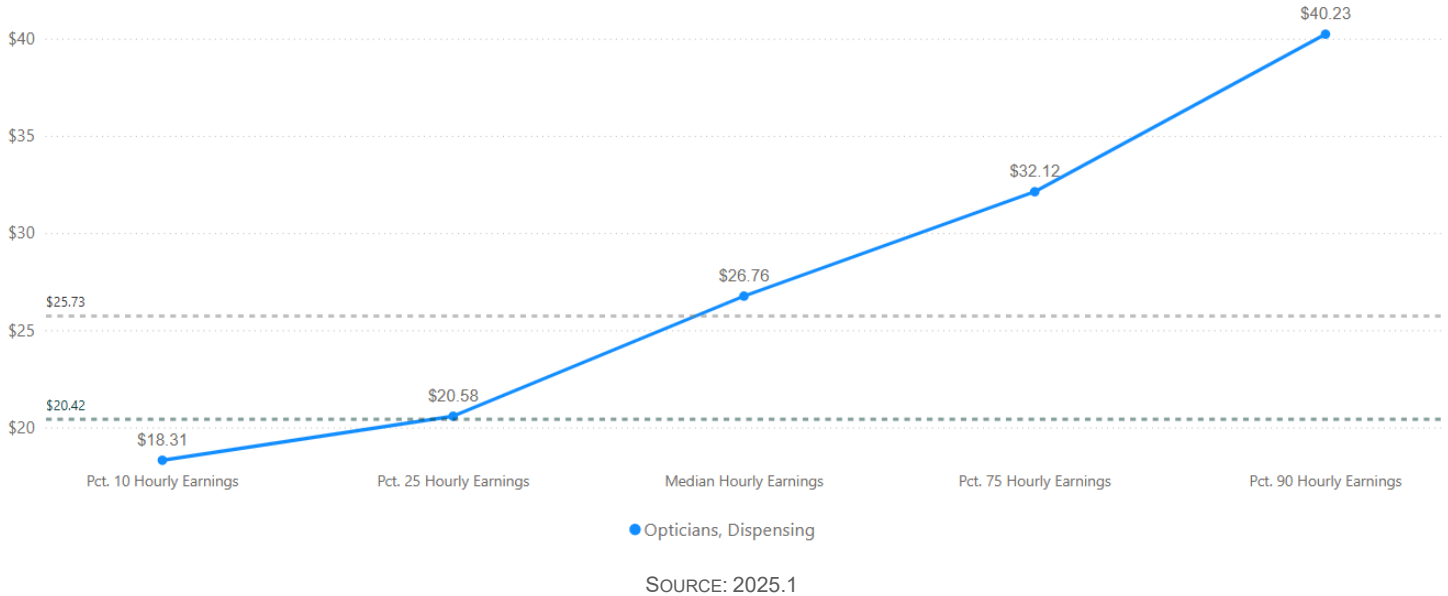
SOURCE: LIGHTCAST 2025.1

² "Job Posting Analytics (JPA) Methodology." Lightcast Knowledge Base, <https://kb.lightcast.io/en/articles/6957446-job-posting-analytics-jpa-methodology>

Earnings

Exhibit 3 displays the hourly earnings for occupations related to optometry compared to both the UW Self-Sufficiency Standard for the IE/D of \$20.42³ and the MIT IE/D living wage of \$25.73.⁴

Exhibit 3. Projected hourly earnings by percentile, IE/D Region, 2023



All projected entry-level earnings (that is, the earnings of the lowest paid 25% of employees in the IE/D) were above the UW Self-Sufficiency Standard for the IE/D (see Exhibit 3). However, the occupation was below the MIT living wage for an adult with no children (\$25.73) in projected entry-level earnings (see Exhibit 3).

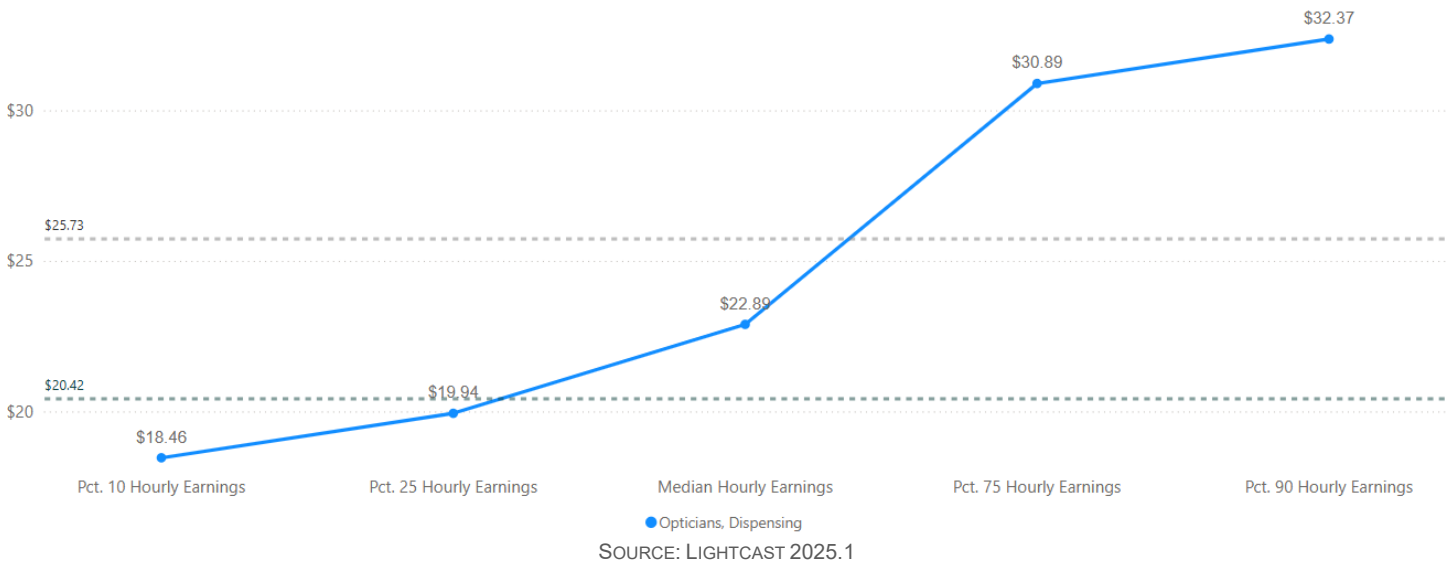
³ The [UW self-sufficiency standard](#) is currently used by the CO and other COEs, the self-sufficiency standard was last updated by UW in 2024. To provide an alternative perspective, the COE will provide an alternative living wage calculation from MIT in the analysis below as an additional reference point. MIT estimates, the living wage for an adult with no kids living in 2024 is \$26.30 in Riverside County and \$25.17 in San Bernadino County.

⁴ *ibid.*

Advertised Salary from Online Job Ads

Exhibit 4 displays the regional online advertised salaries for the occupations related to optometry over the last 12 months. The salary information of online job ad data suggests employers advertise entry level hourly wages of \$19.94 (estimated to be equal to an annual salary of \$41,475.)

Exhibit 4. Hourly earnings of job postings by percentile, IE/D Region, Mar 2024 – Feb 2025



Online Job Advertisements: top job titles, skills, education & work experience.

Exhibit 5 displays the job titles most frequently used in job postings for the occupations related to optometry over the last 12 months. Assessing the top advertised job titles may provide insight into the types of positions sought by employers.

Exhibit 5. Job titles most frequently used in job ads, IE/D Region, Mar 2024 – Feb 2025

Job Title	Unique Postings
Opticians	104
Licensed Opticians	65
Optical Dispensers	11
Opticians/Optometric Assistants	11
Eyewear Specialists	8
Dispensing Opticians	4
Eyecare Advisors	4
Opticians/Receptionists	4
Front Desk Managers	3
Optical Assistants	3

SOURCE: LIGHTCAST 2025.1

Exhibit 6 displays the employers posting the most job ads for this occupational group during the last 12 months. Showing employer names can provide insight into where students may find employment after completing a program and may inform job development and other employer engagement targets for faculty and staff involved in related programs. EssilorLuxottica and Walmart had the highest unique job posts for this occupational group in the last 12 months. Posting intensity is the ratio of total job posts to unique job posts which are deduplicated. A higher posting intensity can represent the level of effort and activity the organization is putting into hiring for that position. The following report comes directly from Lightcast’s Job Posting Analytics dashboard.

Exhibit 6. Employers posting the most job ads, IE/D Region, Mar 2024 – Feb 2025

Company	Total/Unique (Mar 2024 - Feb 2025)	Posting Intensity	Median Posting Duration
EssilorLuxottica	147 / 48	3 : 1	27 days
Walmart	60 / 25	2 : 1	29 days
Kaiser Permanente	24 / 12	2 : 1	16 days
Sam's Club	31 / 8	4 : 1	28 days
Acuity Eye Group	10 / 7	1 : 1	11 days
Lenscrafters	25 / 4	6 : 1	35 days
Total Vision	7 / 4	2 : 1	35 days
Coherent	7 / 3	2 : 1	n/a
Target	11 / 3	4 : 1	35 days
Eye Care Associates	8 / 3	3 : 1	13 days

SOURCE: LIGHTCAST 2025.1

Exhibit 7 displays the top common, specialized and computer skills that were included in the job postings over the last 12 months. Today’s demand is an important indicator of which skills employers are looking for in the current market. Analyzing skills from a historical perspective as well as projecting the future needs of employers may provide insight into how the job posting skills demand compares to the market as a whole. Rapidly growing skills are those that are increasing in demand at a faster rate than the market as a whole.⁵

Exhibit 7. Top 10 in-demand skills from employer job ads, IE/D Region, Mar 2024 – Feb 2025

Common skills	Total Postings	Skill Growth Relative to Market
Customer Service	118	Stable
Sales	117	Stable
Multitasking	68	Growing
Management	67	Stable
Detail Oriented	64	Stable
Self-Motivation	56	Rapidly Growing
Calculators	50	Growing
Prioritization	49	Rapidly Growing
Time Management	43	Growing
Communication	39	Lagging

⁵ “What are Lightcast Skill Projects”, Lightcast Knowledge base, <https://kb.lightcast.io/en/articles/8496296-what-are-lightcast-skill-projections>

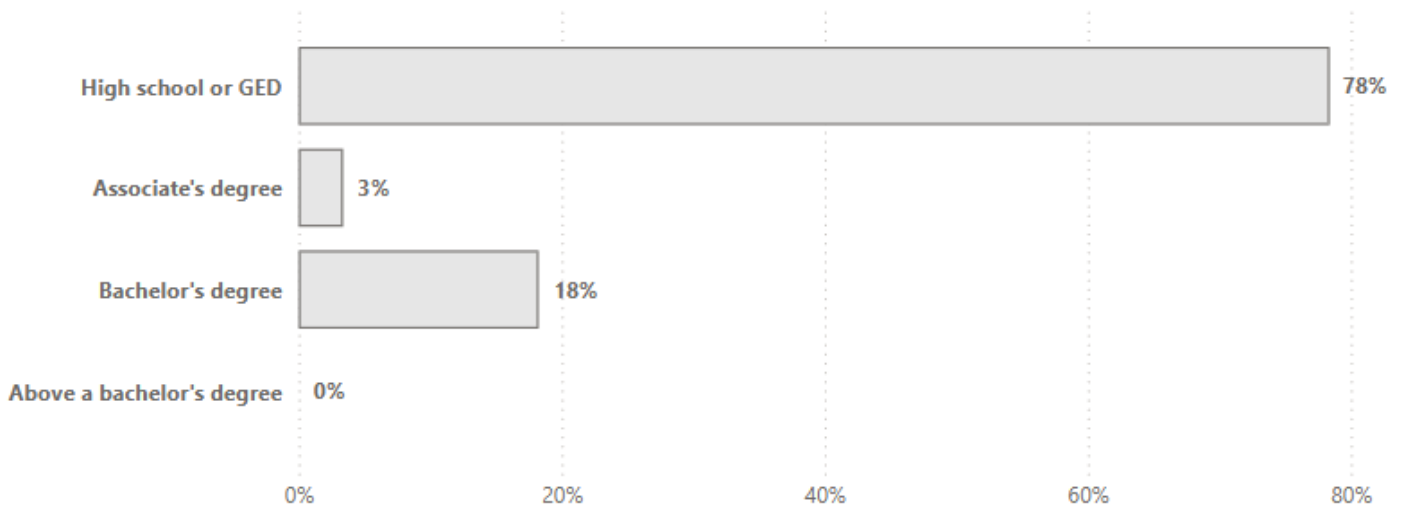
Specialized skills	Total Postings	Skill Growth Relative to Market
Medical Prescription	137	Growing
Merchandising	89	Growing
Patient Assistance	56	Growing
Inventory Management	53	Growing
Selling Techniques	53	Lagging
Product Knowledge	47	Growing
Contact Lenses	44	Growing
General Mathematics	41	Growing
Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	39	Growing
Billing	38	Rapidly Growing

Computer Skills	Total Postings	Skill Growth Relative to Market
Project Management Software	13	Stable
Operational Data Store	10	Stable
Inventory Management System	8	Growing
Payroll Systems	8	Growing
Spreadsheets	8	Rapidly Growing
Microsoft Office	4	Growing
Aperture	2	Growing
Microsoft Outlook	2	Rapidly Growing
Software Systems	2	Growing
Epic EMR	1	Growing

SOURCE: LIGHTCAST 2025.1

Exhibit 8 includes the minimum educational requirements from job postings for this occupational group with a high school diploma or equivalent (78%) significantly greater than bachelor’s degree (18%) or associate degree (3%) or above a bachelor’s degree (0%).

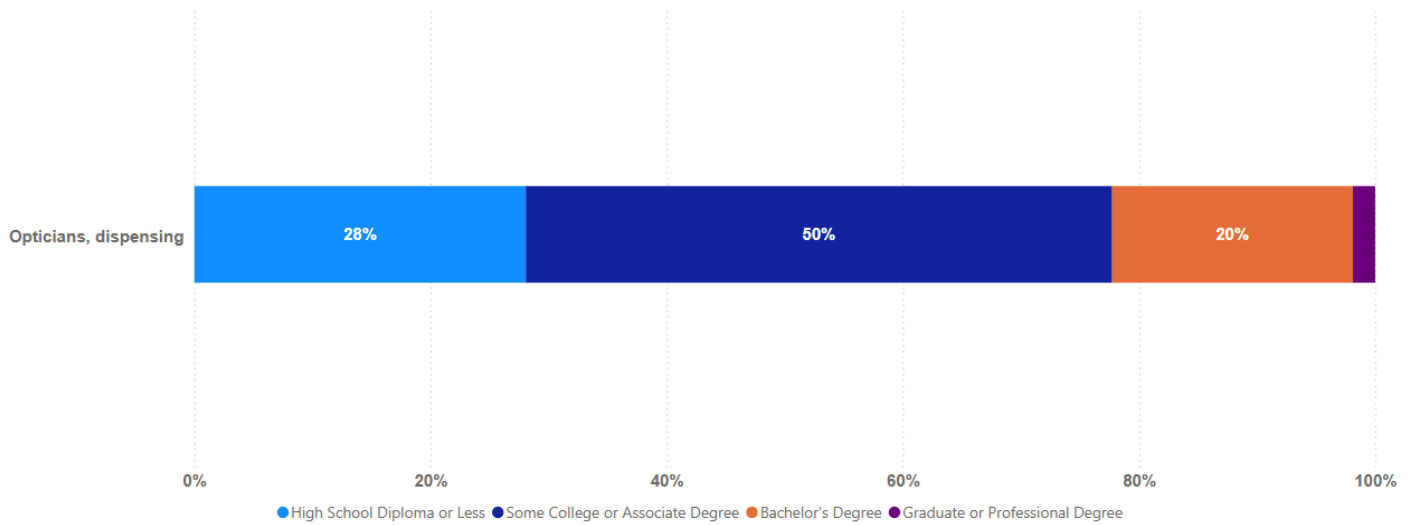
Exhibit 8 Minimum educational requirements in job postings for this occupational group, IE/D Region, Mar 2024 – Feb 2025



SOURCE: LIGHTCAST 2025.1

For the assessed occupation, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) education attainment data in Exhibit 9 for current professionals in the occupations of interest indicates that 50% of workers have completed some college or an associate degree as their highest level of education.

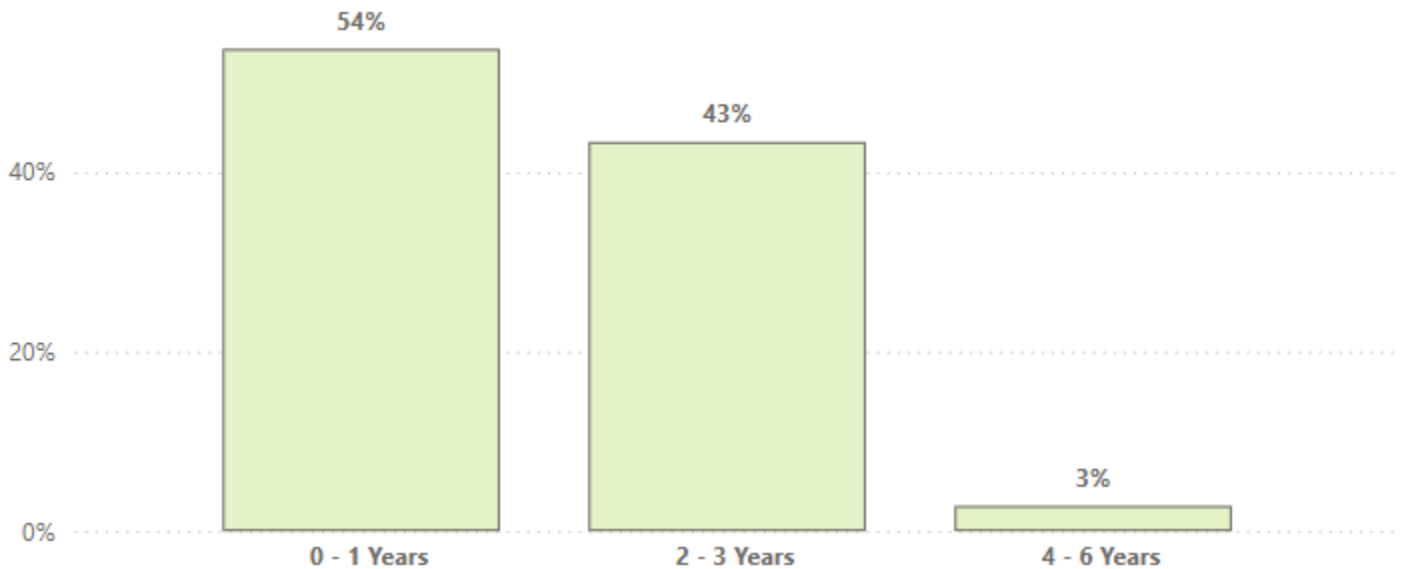
Exhibit 9 National-level Education Attainment for the Occupational Group



SOURCE: BLS 2021

Exhibit 10 displays the work experience typically required from employer job ads for this occupational group. The majority (54%) of employers listing minimum experience requirements sought candidates with 0-1 years of previous work experience.

Exhibit 10 Work experience requirements, IE/D Region, Mar 2024 – Feb 2025



SOURCE: LIGHTCAST 2025.1

Student Completions and Program Outcomes

No student completions for the Optical Technology (TOP 1219.00) programs were found over the last three academic years (2020-2023). Based on the lack of data, it appears that in the previous three academic years, 0 regional community colleges issued an average of 0 awards in relevant programs.

Non-Community College Supply

Exhibit 11 displays award completion data available for these IE/D non-community college programs: Optometric Technician/Assistant (CIP 51.1802).

In the previous three academic years, one regional non-community college institution issued an average of three awards in relevant programs.

Exhibit 11 Annual average non-community college awards for optometry programs, IE/D, 2019-2022

CIP	Program	College	2019-2020 Awards	2020-2021 Awards	2021-2022 Awards	3-Year Award Average
51.1802	Optometric Technician/Assistant	North-West College-Riverside	0	9	0	3
Total			0	9	0	3

SOURCE: IPEDS

Strong Workforce Program Outcomes

California SWP program outcome data may provide useful insight into the likelihood of success for the proposed program. Community college student outcome information based on the selected TOP code and region is provided in Exhibit 12.

Exhibit 12 Optical Technology strong workforce program outcomes, IE/D & California, 2022-23

Program Metric Title	Inland Empire	Statewide
Students		123
Earned 9+ Career Education Units		37%
Completed Noncredit Workforce Preparation Milestone		71%
Earned an Award: Degree or Cert or Attained Appren. Journey Level Status		13%
Transferred to a Four-Year Institution: Four-Year Postsecondary Institution		
Median Annual Earnings		\$41,964
Median Change in Earnings		2%
Attained Living Wage		

SOURCE: LAUNCHBOARD

Appendix: Methodology

Exhibit 12 displays the average annual California Community College (CCC) awards conferred during the three academic years between 2020 and 2023 from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Management Information Systems (MIS) Data Mart. Awards are the combined total during the timeframe, divided by three in this case to calculate an annual average. This is done to minimize the effect of atypical variations that might be present in a single year.

Community college student outcome information is from LaunchBoard and based on the selected TOP code and region. These metrics are based on records submitted to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Management Information Systems (MIS) by community colleges, which come from self-reported student information from CCC Apply and the National Student Clearinghouse. Employment and earnings metrics are sourced from California's Employment Development Department's Unemployment Insurance database. When available, outcomes for completers are reported to demonstrate the impact that earning a degree or certificate can have on employment and earnings. For more information on the types of students included for each metric, please see the web link for LaunchBoard's Strong Workforce Program Metrics Data Element Dictionary in the References section (LaunchBoard, 2023a). Finally, employment in a job closely related to the field of study comes from self-reported student responses on the CTE Employment Outcomes Survey (CTEOS) administered by Santa Rosa Junior College (LaunchBoard, 2023a).

Appendix: References

Type of Data	Source
Occupational Projections, Wages, and Job Postings	Traditional labor market information data is sourced from Lightcast, a labor market analytics firm. Lightcast occupational employment data are based on final Lightcast industry data and final Lightcast staffing patterns. Wage estimates are based on Occupational Employment. https://lightcast.io/
Living Wage (UW)	Center for Women's Welfare, University of Washington. (2024). The self-sufficiency standard for California 2024. http://www.selfsufficiencystandard.org/ . This calculation measures the income necessary for an individual of family to afford basic expenses. The data assesses the cost of housing, food, childcare, health care, transportation, and taxes. The living wage for one adult in San Bernardino County is \$20.07 per hour (\$42,392 annually). The living wage for one adult in Riverside County is \$20.76 per hour (\$43,854 annually). The average living wage to represent Inland Empire/Desert is \$20.42 per hour (\$43,123 annually).
Living Wage (MIT)	The living wage is derived from MIT's Living Wage Calculator, which measures the income necessary for an individual of family to afford basic expenses. The data assesses the cost of housing, food, childcare, health care, transportation, and taxes. For more information, see: https://livingwage.mit.edu/pages/methodology The living wage for one adult in San Bernardino County is \$25.17 per hour (\$52,353.60 annually). The living wage for one adult in Riverside County is \$26.30 per hour (\$54,704 annually). The average living wage to represent Inland Empire/Desert is \$25.74 per hour (53,539.20 annually)
Typical Education and Training Requirements, and Educational Attainment	The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) provides information about education and training requirements for hundreds of occupations. BLS uses a system to assign categories for entry-level education, work experience in a related occupation, and typical on-the-job training to each occupation for which BLS publishes projections data. For more information, see https://www.bls.gov/emp/documentation/education/tech.htm
Educational Supply	The CCCCO Data Mart provides information about students, courses, student services, outcomes and faculty and staff. For more information, see: https://datamart.cccco.edu The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Integrated Postsecondary Integrated Data System (IPEDS) collects data on the number of postsecondary awards earned (completions). For more information, see https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data/survey-components/7/completions

Student Metrics and Demographics	LaunchBoard, a statewide data system supported by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office and hosted by Cal-PASS Plus, provides data on progress, success, employment, and earnings outcomes for California community college students. For more information, see: https://www.calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/Home.aspx
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