

Labor Market Analysis: 1302.00 – Interior Design and Merchandising *Interior Architecture and Design – Certificate requiring 16 to fewer than 30 semester units*

Los Angeles Center of Excellence, May 2024

Program Endorsement:	Endorsed: All Criteria Met	☒	Endorsed: Some Criteria Met	☐	Not Endorsed	☐	
Program Endorsement Criteria							
Supply Gap:	Yes	☒		No	☐		
Living Wage: (Entry-Level, 25th)	Yes	☒		No	☐		
Education:	Yes	☒		No	☐		
Emerging Occupation(s)							
Yes			☐	No			☒

SUMMARY

This report analyzes whether local labor market demand is being met by community college programs aligned with the identified middle-skill occupation¹ or whether a shortage of workers exists. Labor market demand is measured by annual job openings while education supply is measured by the number of awards (degrees and certificates) conferred on average each year.

Based on the available data, there appears to be a supply gap for the one identified middle-skill occupation in the region. Furthermore, entry-level wages exceed the self-sufficiency standard wage in both Los Angeles and Orange counties, and approximately one-third of current workers in the field have completed an associate degree or less education as their highest educational attainment.

Recommendation: Due to all three program endorsement criteria being met, the Los Angeles Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research (LACOE) endorses this proposed program.

Key Findings

Supply Gap

- 600 annual job openings are projected in the region through 2027. This number is greater than the three-year average of 326 awards conferred by educational institutions in the region.

¹ Middle-skill occupations typically require some postsecondary education, but less than a bachelor's degree. The COE classifies middle-skill jobs as the following:

- All occupations that require an educational requirement of some college, associate degree or apprenticeship;
- All occupations that require a bachelor's degree, but also have more than one-third of their existing labor force with an educational attainment of some college or associate degree; or
- All occupations that require a high school diploma or equivalent or no formal education, but also require short- to long-term on-the-job training where multiple community colleges have existing programs.

Living Wage

\$25.11 is the typical entry-level hourly wages for interior designers, which is higher than Los Angeles County's self-sufficiency standard hourly (\$18.10/hour).²

Educational Attainment

- A bachelor's degree is the typical entry-level education for interior designers, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).
- 30% of workers in the field have completed an associate degree or less education, according to national educational attainment data.

Community college supply

- 6 community colleges issued awards related to interior design and merchandising in the greater LA/OC region.
- 199 awards (degrees and certificates) were conferred on average each year between 2019 and 2022.

Other postsecondary supply

- 4 educational institutions in the LA/OC region offer programs related to interior design.
- 127 awards were conferred on average each year by other postsecondary institutions throughout the greater LA/OC region.

TARGET OCCUPATIONS

LA COE prepared this report to provide regional labor market and postsecondary supply data related to one middle-skill occupation. Although this occupation typically requires a bachelor's degree, it is considered middle-skill because approximately one-third of workers in the field have completed an associate degree or less education as their highest educational attainment.

- **Interior Designers (27-1025)** Plan, design, and furnish the internal space of rooms or buildings. Design interior environments or create physical layouts that are practical, aesthetic, and conducive to the intended purposes. May specialize in a particular field, style, or phase of interior design.³

OCCUPATIONAL DEMAND

Exhibit 1 shows the five-year occupational demand projections for interior designers. In the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region, the number of jobs related to this occupation is projected to increase by 1% through 2027. There will be 600 job openings per year through 2027 due to job growth and replacements. The majority of jobs in 2022 for these interior designers (75%) were located in Los Angeles County.

² Self-Sufficiency Standard wage data was pulled from The Self-Sufficiency Standard Tool for California. For more information, visit: <http://selfsufficiencystandard.org/california>.

³ [Interior Designers \(bls.gov\)](https://www.bls.gov/occupations/interior-designers)

Exhibit 1: Current employment and occupational demand, Los Angeles and Orange counties⁴

Geography	2022 Jobs	2027 Jobs	2022-2027 Change	2022-2027 % Change	Annual Openings
Los Angeles	4,816	4,905	89	2%	460
Orange	1,584	1,555	(29)	(2%)	140
Total	6,400	6,460	60	1%	600

Detailed Occupation Data

Exhibit 2 displays the current employment and projected occupational demand for the target occupation in Los Angeles County. The percentage of workers aged 55+ and automation index is included in order to visualize upcoming replacement demand for this occupation. Interior designers have a lower-than-average risk of automation, and a larger share of older workers in the field. There is a smaller percentage of interior designers working full-time compared to the average across all jobs, signaling that this occupation may lend itself to part-time or gig-based employment.

Exhibit 2: Current employment, projected occupational demand, percentage of workers aged 55+, Los Angeles County⁵

Occupation	2022 Jobs	2027 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	% Aged 55 and older*	Automation Index**	% Full Time Workers***
Interior Designers	4,816	4,905	2%	460	30%	82.9	59%

*The average percentage of workers aged 55 and older across all occupations in the greater LA/OC region is 27%. Interior designers have a larger share of older workers, which typically indicates greater replacement needs to offset the amount of impending retirements.

**The automation index captures an occupation's risk of being affected by automation with a base of 100. An automation index greater than 100 indicates a higher-than average risk of automation; less than 100 indicates a lower-than-average risk.

***In California, 81% of workers are employed full-time.

WAGES

The labor market endorsement in this report considers the entry-level hourly wages for interior designers in Los Angeles County as they relate to the county's self-sufficiency standard wage. Orange County wages are included below in order to provide a complete analysis of the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region.

Los Angeles County

The typical entry-level hourly wages for interior designers are \$25.11, which is above the self-sufficiency standard wage for one adult (\$18.10 in Los Angeles County). Experienced workers can expect to earn wages of \$46.26.

⁴ Five-year change represents new job additions to the workforce. Annual openings include new jobs and replacement jobs that result from retirements and separations.

⁵ Ibid.

Exhibit 3: Earnings for occupations in Los Angeles County

Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)	Median Annual Earnings*
Interior Designers	\$25.11	\$34.45	\$46.26	\$71,700

*Rounded to the nearest \$100

Orange County

The typical entry-level hourly wages for interior designers are \$24.77, which is above the self-sufficiency standard wage for one adult (\$20.63 in Orange County). Experienced workers can expect to earn wages of \$44.57.

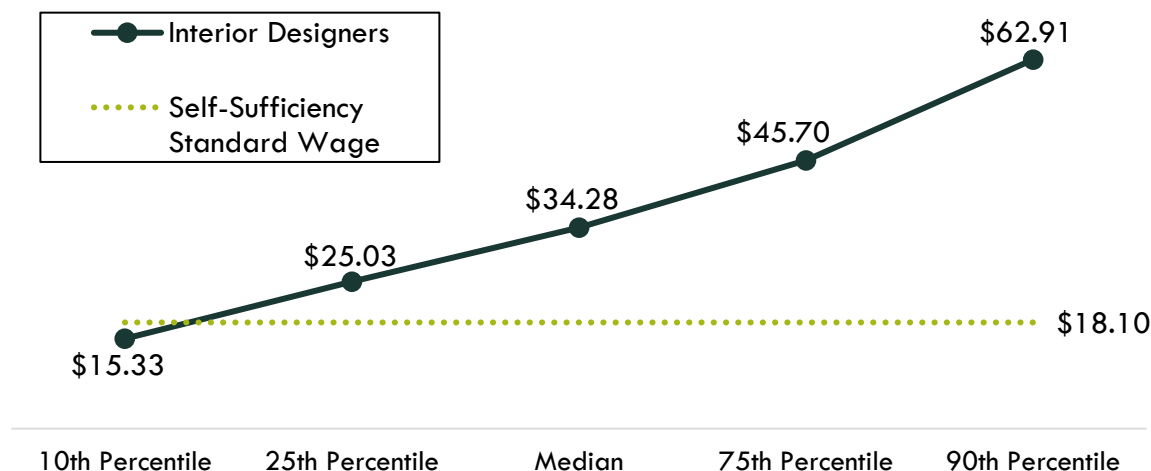
Exhibit 4: Earnings for occupations in Orange County

Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)	Median Annual Earnings*
Interior Designers	\$24.77	\$33.85	\$44.57	\$70,400

*Rounded to the nearest \$100

Across the greater Los Angeles and Orange County region, the average entry-level hourly earnings for the occupations in this report are \$25.03; this is above the living wage for one single adult in Los Angeles County (\$18.10). Exhibit 5 shows the average hourly wage for the occupations in this report, for entry-level to experienced workers.

Exhibit 5: Average hourly earnings for interior designers, Los Angeles and Orange counties



JOB POSTINGS

There were 1,112 online job postings for interior designers listed in the past 12 months in Los Angeles and Orange counties. Job postings were analyzed for the most common job titles, skills, and employers associated with the target occupations in this report (Exhibit 6).

Exhibit 6: Most commonly requested job titles, skills and employers in job postings, Los Angeles and Orange counties

Top Job Titles	Top Skills	Top Employers
• Interior designers • Kitchen and bath designers • Interior design assistants • Designers • Interior design project managers	• AutoCAD • Project management • Autodesk Revit • SketchUp (3D modeling software) • Space planning	• The Home Depot • Restoration Hardware • La-Z-Boy • Dunn-Edwards Corporation • Floor & Decor

In the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region, 48% of the interior designer job postings listed a minimum educational requirement. The number and percentage of job postings by educational level appear in exhibit 7.

Exhibit 7: Education levels requested in job postings for interior designers, Los Angeles and Orange counties

Education Level	Job Postings	% of Job Postings
Bachelor's degree	407	76%
Associate degree	52	10%
High school diploma or vocational training	75	14%

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists a bachelor's degree as the typical entry-level education for interior designers (Exhibit 8). However, the national-level data indicates 30% of workers in the field have completed associate degree or less education as their highest level of educational attainment. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists the following typical entry-level education levels for the occupations in this report:

Exhibit 8: Entry-level education preferred by employers nationally, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Occupation	Education Level
Interior Designers	Bachelor's degree

EDUCATIONAL SUPPLY

Community College Supply

Exhibit 9 shows the annual and three-year average number of awards conferred by community colleges in the related TOP code: Interior Design and Merchandising (1302.00). The colleges with the most completions in the region are Saddleback, Mt San Antonio, and Orange Coast.

Exhibit 9: Regional community college awards (certificates and degrees), 2019-2022

Appendix A: Regional community college awards (technical and degree), 2019-2022						
TOP Code	Program	College	2019-20 Awards	2020-21 Awards	2021-22 Awards	3-Year Average
1302.00	Interior Design and Merchandising	LA Mission	9	12	19	13
		Mt San Antonio	36	37	49	41
		Santa Monica	31	44	40	38
		LA Subtotal	76	93	108	92
		Fullerton	16	19	26	20
		Orange Coast	41	38	40	40
		Saddleback	47	50	44	47
		OC Subtotal	104	107	110	107
Supply Subtotal/Average			180	200	218	199

Other Postsecondary Supply

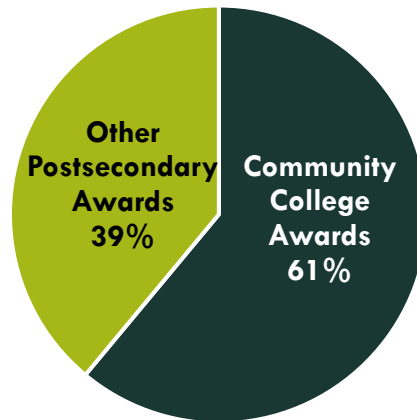
For a comprehensive regional supply analysis, it is important to consider the supply from other institutions in the region that provide training programs for interior designers. Exhibit 10 shows the number of awards conferred by these institutions in relevant programs. Due to different data collection periods, the most recent data is from 2019 to 2022. Between 2019 and 2022, other postsecondary college institutions in the region conferred an average of 127 bachelor's and associate degrees. Bachelor's awards are included since interior designers typically require a bachelor's degree. More than half (52%) of the awards in Exhibit 10 are bachelor's degrees; the rest of the awards are associate degrees (48%).

Exhibit 10: Other regional postsecondary awards, 2019-2022

CIP Code	Program	Postsecondary Institution	2019-20 Awards	2020-21 Awards	2021-22 Awards	3-Year Average
04.0501	Interior Architecture	Woodbury University	6	10	9	8
50.0408	Interior Design	CSU-Long Beach	30	36	35	34
		Fashion Institute of Design & Merch.	44	33	17	31
		Interior Designers Institute	64	51	47	54
Supply Total/Average			144	130	108	127

Exhibit 11 shows the proportion of community college awards conferred in the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region compared to the number of other postsecondary awards for the programs in this report. The majority of awards conferred in these programs are awarded by community colleges in the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region.

Exhibit 11: Percentage of community college awards compared to other postsecondary institution awards in the Los Angeles/Orange County region



Contact information:

Luke Meyer, Director

Los Angeles Center of Excellence

Lmeyer7@mtsac.edu

If for any reason this document is not accessible or if you have specific needs for readability, please contact us and we will do our utmost to accommodate you with a modified version.



POWERED BY



California
Community
Colleges

DATA SOURCES

- O*NET Online
- Lightcast (formerly Emsi)
- Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)
- California Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division, OES
- California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Management Information Systems (MIS)
- Self-Sufficiency Standard at the Center for Women's Welfare, University of Washington
- Chancellor's Office Curriculum Inventory (COCI 2.0)

Important Disclaimer: All representations included in this report have been produced from primary research and/or secondary review of publicly and/or privately available data and/or research reports. Efforts have been made to qualify and validate the accuracy of the data and the reported findings; however, neither the Centers of Excellence, COE host District, nor California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office are responsible for applications or decisions made by recipient community colleges or their representatives based upon components or recommendations contained in this study.

© 2024 California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office,
Centers of Excellence for Labor Market Research, Economic and Workforce Development Program