

Athletic Training and Sports Medicine

Inland Empire/Desert Region (Riverside and San Bernardino counties)

This workforce demand report uses state and federal job projection data developed before the economic impact of COVID-19. The COE is monitoring the situation and will provide more information as it becomes available. Please consult with local employers to understand their current employment needs.

Summary

- Two community college programs, athletic training and sports medicine (TOP 1228.00) and fitness trainer (TOP 0835.20), provide the knowledge, skills, and abilities that lead to two occupations; a community college-level occupation, exercise trainers and group fitness instructors, and a bachelor's degree occupation, athletic trainers.
- The summary and recommendation in this report focus on the community college-level, exercise trainers and group fitness instructors occupation.
- Exercise trainers and group fitness instructors are projected to have 454 annual job openings through 2025, despite decreasing overall employment by 6%.
- The median hourly earnings for this occupation are \$15.67 per hour, below the \$24.36 per hour self-sustainable wage for a single adult with one child. The 75th percentile hourly wage for this occupation is \$24.93 per hour, surpassing the self-sustainability threshold.
- Regional community colleges issued an annual average of seven awards in athletic training and sports medicine (TOP 1228.00) programs and ten annual average awards in fitness trainer (TOP 0835.20) programs.
- The Centers of Excellence recommends caution developing athletic training and sports medicine programs due to the low median hourly earnings for the community college-level, exercise trainers and group fitness instructors occupation trained by these programs. See the [recommendation section](#) for further detail.

Introduction

California Community College athletic training and sports medicine (TOP 1228.00) programs prepare students for employment in athletic training, injury treatment, rehabilitation, fitness assessment, and related fields (Taxonomy of Programs, 2012). The occupations described in this report are relevant to athletic training and sports medicine programs and are collectively referred to as the athletic training occupational group. The athletic training occupational group is separated into community college-level and bachelor's degree-level occupations to illuminate job opportunities for individuals with varying education levels.

The exercise trainers and group fitness instructors (SOC 39-9031) **community college-level occupation** typically requires a high school diploma or equivalent and one month or less of on-the-job training. Approximately 29% of incumbent workers in this occupation have a community college-level education, some college or an associate degree, as their highest level of education.

The athletic trainers (SOC 29-9091) **bachelor's degree-level athletic training occupation** included in this report typically requires workers to obtain a bachelor's degree before employment. Students enrolled in an athletic training and sports medicine program may gain transferable skills.

This report's educational supply and employment demand portions focus solely on the community college-level jobs students are likely to obtain after completing a community college athletic training and sports medicine program. The bachelor's degree-level employment demand portion of this report is provided to illustrate the job opportunities available to students willing to complete a four-year degree.

Job Counts and Projections

In 2020, there were 3,168 combined athletic training jobs in the region. Overall employment in this group is expected to decrease by 5% over the next five years. The community college-level occupation will have 454 annual job openings due to job replacement needs. The bachelor's degree-level occupation is expected to increase employment by 19% over the next five years, adding 28 jobs and have 14 annual job openings. Exhibit 1 displays the job counts, five-year projected job growth, job openings, and the share of incumbent workers age 55 years and greater working in the athletic training occupational group.

Exhibit 1: Five-year projections for the athletic training occupational group, 2020-2025

Occupation	2020 Jobs	2025 Jobs	5-Yr % Change (New Jobs)	5-Yr Openings (New + Replacement Jobs)	Annual Openings (New + Replacement Jobs)	% of workers age 55+
Community College-level Occupation						
Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors	3,014	2,840	(6%)	2,269	454	17%
Community College-level Total	3,014	2,840	(6%)	2,269	454	17%
Bachelor's Degree-level Occupation						
Athletic Trainers	155	183	19%	71	14	20%
Bachelor's Degree-level Total	155	183	19%	71	14	20%
Total	3,168	3,023	(5%)	2,340	468	17%

Source: Emsi 2021.3

Exhibit 2 displays the number of online job advertisements posted over the last 12 months, along with the regional and statewide average time to fill athletic training positions. Since there were only 30 job ads listed for athletic trainers in the region, the job advertisement search for this occupation was expanded to the state level to provide generalizable results. Regional athletic trainer job advertisements account for approximately 6% of the 544 statewide job advertisements.

On average, local employers fill online job postings for exercise trainer and group fitness instructor positions within 45 days, two days shorter than the statewide average, indicating that local employers may face similar challenges filling open positions than other employers in California as a whole.

Exhibit 2: Job ads and time to fill

Occupation	Job Ads	Regional Average Time to Fill (Days)	Statewide Average Time to Fill (Days)
Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors	463	45	47
Athletic Trainers*	544	-	38
Total	1,007	45	46

Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

*Displays statewide job advertisement information

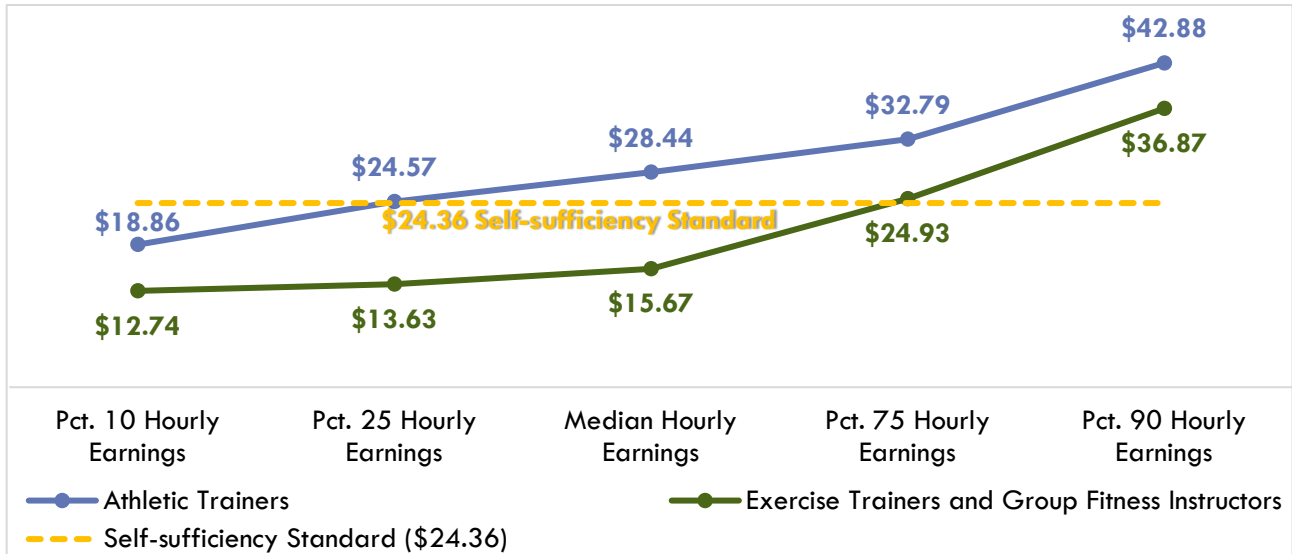
Earnings and Benefits

Community colleges should ensure their training programs lead to employment opportunities that provide self-sustainable income. The University of Washington estimates that a self-sufficient hourly rate for a single adult with one school-age child is \$24.36 per hour or \$51,452 annually in Riverside County; \$23.73 per hour or \$50,119 annually in San Bernardino County (Pearce, 2021). For this study, the higher hourly earnings requirement in Riverside County is adopted as the self-sufficiency standard for the two-county region.

The 25th percentile hourly earnings for the bachelor's degree, athletic trainers occupation is \$24.57 per hour, surpassing the self-sufficiency standard. The hourly earnings for community college-level, exercise trainers and group fitness instructors occupation exceeds the self-sufficiency standard at the 75th percentile, indicating that only the top 25% of workers in the field earn a self-sustainable wage.

Exhibit 3 displays the hourly earnings for the athletic training occupational group compared to the regional self-sufficiency standard.

Exhibit 3: Hourly earnings by percentile



Source: Emsi 2021.3

According to the California Labor Market Information Division's occupational guides, benefits for exercise trainers and group fitness instructors vary by employer, with about half of all health clubs offering medical insurance and other benefits nationally. Many part-time exercise trainers and group fitness instructors do not enjoy the same benefits. Benefits information is not available for athletic trainers (Detailed Occupational Guides, 2021).

Advertised Salary from Online Job Ads

Exhibit 4 displays online job ad salary data for the athletic training occupational group over the last 12 months. Online job ad salary information reveals that employers are willing to pay this occupational group between \$53,000 and \$63,000 annually, above the region's \$51,452 annual (\$24.36 hourly) self-sufficiency standard. Consider the salary information with caution since only 60% (602 out of 1,007) of online job postings for these occupations provided salary information. The salary figures are prorated to reflect full-time, annual wage status.

Exhibit 4: Advertised salary information

Occupations	Number of job postings	Real-Time Salary Information				Average Annual Salary
		Less than \$35,000	\$35,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 to \$74,999	More than \$75,000	
Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors	323	23%	36%	22%	19%	\$53,000
Athletic Trainers*	279	4%	24%	54%	18%	\$63,000

Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

*Displays statewide job advertisement information

Employers, Skills, Education, Work Experience, and Certifications

Exhibit 5 displays the employers posting the most job ads during the last 12 months. Displaying employer names provides some insight into where students may find employment after completing a program. The employer posting the most job advertisements for exercise trainers and group fitness instructors in the region is Planet Fitness. The Educational Services industry (NAICS 62) accounted for 51% of online job ads for athletic trainers, with the University of California and California State University systems posting the most advertisements for athletic trainers in California.

Exhibit 5: Employers posting the most job ads for the athletic training occupational group

Occupation	Top Employers	
Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors (n=405)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planet Fitness LA Fitness Svetness Personal Training YMCA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety 1st Aquatics Pristine Fitness, Inc. Crunch Fitness StretchLab Temecula
Athletic Trainers* (n=499)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of California California State University ATvantage Athletic Training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select Medical Work Right NW

Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

*Displays statewide job advertisement information

Exhibit 6 lists a sample of specialized and employability skills employers seek when looking for workers to fill athletic training positions. Specialized skills are occupation-specific skills that employers request for industry or job competency. Employability skills are foundational skills that transcend industries and occupations; this category is often referred to as "soft skills." The skills requested in job postings may be utilized to guide curriculum development.

Exhibit 6: Sample of in-demand skills from employer job ads

Occupation	Specialized skills	Employability skills
Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors (n=356)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Teaching Customer Service Yoga Pilates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication Skills Physical Abilities Detail-Oriented Teamwork/Collaboration Energetic
Athletic Trainers* (n=435)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Rehabilitation Injury Prevention Sports Injuries Physical Therapy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication Skills Teamwork/Collaboration Physical Abilities Organizational Skills Building Effective Relationships

Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

*Displays statewide job advertisement information

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, approximately (20%-29%) of incumbent workers in this field hold a community college-level of educational attainment; "some college, no degree" and an "associate degree." Online job advertisements indicate that most employers (85%) seeking exercise trainers and group fitness instructors sought candidates with a high school diploma or equivalent. The majority (65%) of employers posting advertisements for athletic trainers sought candidates with a bachelor's degree. Exhibit 7 displays the typical entry-level education, educational attainment, and the minimum advertised education requirements for the athletic training occupational group.

Exhibit 7: Typical entry-level education, educational attainment, and minimum advertised education requirements

Occupation	Typical Entry-Level Education Requirement	CC-Level Educational Attainment*	Number of Job Ads	Real-Time Minimum Advertised Education Requirement		
				High school or vocational training	Associate degree	Bachelor's degree or higher
Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors	High school diploma or equivalent	29%	210	85%	3%	12%
Athletic Trainers**	Bachelor's degree	20%	429	34%	1%	65%

Source: Emsi 2021.3, Burning Glass – Labor Insights

*Percentage of incumbent workers with a Community College Award or Some Postsecondary Coursework

**Displays statewide job advertisement information

Exhibit 8 displays the work experience typically required to enter each occupation and the real-time work experience requirements from employer job ads. Job advertisements indicate that the majority of employers sought candidates with zero to two years of work experience.

Exhibit 8: Work experience required and real-time work experience requirements

Occupation	Work Experience Typically Required	Real-Time Work Experience			
		Number of job postings	0 – 2 years	3 – 5 years	6+ years
Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors	None	100	97%	3%	-
Athletic Trainers*	None	258	55%	39%	6%

Source: Emsi 2021.3, Burning Glass – Labor Insights

*Displays statewide job advertisement information

Approximately 25% of job advertisements for exercise trainers and group fitness instructors sought candidates with their personal fitness trainer certification. According to the National Academy of Sports Medicine (NASM), individuals must complete a training program and pass the final exam to obtain a personal fitness trainer certification. Before certification, an individual must possess a high school diploma or GED and

obtain a cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and automated external defibrillator (AED) certification (NASM, 2021).

Approximately 56% of the advertisements for athletic trainers included an athletic trainer certification requirement. According to the National Athletic Trainer Association (NATA), to become a certified athletic trainer, a student must graduate with a bachelor's or master's degree and pass a comprehensive test administered by the Board of Certification (BOC) (NATA, 2021). According to the California Athletic Trainers Association (CATA), California is the only state that does not regulate the profession of athletic training, indicating that individuals of any education level and without certification may refer to themselves as athletic trainers (CATA, 2021). Exhibit 9 displays the certifications required by employers posting job ads for the athletic training occupational group.

Exhibit 9: Certifications typically required in advertisements for the athletic training occupational group

Occupation	Certifications
Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors (n=256)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Aid CPR AED • Personal Fitness Trainer Certification
Athletic Trainers* (n=408)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Athletic Trainer Certification • First Aid CPR AED

Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

*Displays statewide job advertisement information

Athletic Training and Sports Medicine Programs

Exhibit 10 displays completion data for California Community College athletic training and sports medicine (TOP 1228.00) programs between 2017 and 2020. Over the last three academic years, regional community colleges have issued seven awards annually in athletic training and sports medicine programs. The student completion and outcome methodology are available on page 12.

Exhibit 10: 2017-20, Annual average community college awards for the athletic training and sports medicine programs in the Inland Empire/Desert Region

TOP 1228.00 – Athletic Training and Sports Medicine (Local Program Title)	Associate Degree	Certificate requiring 18 to < 30-semester units	Certificate requiring 16 to < 30-semester units	Certificate requiring 6 to < 18-semester units	Total CC Annual Average Awards, Academic Years 2017-20
Chaffey (Athletic Trainer Aide)	-	-	1	0	2
College of the Desert (Sports Medicine)	0	-	-	-	0
Riverside City (Exercise, Sport & Wellness: Athletic Training)	3	1	1	-	5
Total	3	1	3	0	7

Source: MIS Data Mart

Program outcome data may provide a 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 11. The outcome methodology is available in the appendix section of this report.

Exhibit 11: 1228.00 – Athletic training and sports medicine strong workforce program outcomes

Strong Workforce Program Metrics: 1228.00 – Athletic Training and Sports Medicine Academic Year 2017-18, unless noted otherwise	Inland Empire/Desert Region	California
Unduplicated count of enrolled students (2018-19)	141	1,696
Completed 9+ career education units in one year (2018-19)	-	17%
Perkins Economically disadvantaged students (2018-19)	90%	75%
Students who earned a degree, certificate, or attained apprenticeship (2018-19)	-	36
Transferred to a four-year institution (transfers)	12	115
Median annual earnings (all exiters)	\$23,872	\$19,754
Median change in earnings (all exiters)	-	57%
Attained a living wage (completers and skills-builders)	-	32%

Sources: LaunchBoard Community College Pipeline and Strong Workforce Program Metrics

Please note that Fitness Trainer (TOP 0835.20) programs also provides training for the exercise trainers and group fitness instructors occupation. College of the Desert and Riverside City College this program and have issued ten awards annually over the last three academic years.

Athletic Training/Trainer (CIP 51.0913) awards reported by other postsecondary education providers are displayed in Exhibit 12. Completion data is compiled from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) for the most recent three years available. This program awarded 18 annual average Master's degree awards. Due to IPEDS reporting limitations, it is assumed that each award represents a qualified worker since it is unknown if students are earning multiple awards from this program.

Exhibit 12: Other postsecondary educational providers athletic training/trainer programs, three-year annual average credentials in the Inland Empire/Desert Region

51.0913 – Athletic Training/Trainer	Master's Degree	Other Educational Providers Annual Average Credentials, Academic Years 2016-19
California Baptist University	18	18
Total	18	18

Source: IPEDS

Summary and Recommendation for Athletic Training and Sports Medicine Programs

Two community college programs, athletic training and sports medicine (TOP 1228.00) and fitness trainer (TOP 0835.20), provide the knowledge, skills, and abilities that leads to two occupations; a community college-level occupation, exercise trainers and group fitness instructors, and a bachelor's degree occupation, athletic trainers. The summary and recommendation in this report focuses on the community college-level, exercise trainers and group fitness instructors occupation

The exercise trainers and group fitness instructors occupation is expected to decline by 6% over the next five years, but have 454 annual job openings due to job replacement needs. The median hourly earnings for this occupation is \$15.67 per hour, below the self-sustainability standard of \$24.36 per hour in the region. The 75th percentile hourly earnings are \$24.93 per hour, indicating that only the top 25% of workers earn a self-sustainable hourly rate.

Regional community colleges issued an average of seven awards annually in athletic training and sports medicine (TOP 1228.00) programs and ten awards in fitness trainer (TOP 0835.20) programs. One private educational institution in the region issued 18 Master's degree awards annually in a related athletic training/trainer programs.

The Centers of Excellence recommends caution in developing athletic training and sports medicine programs. While there appears to be an abundance of community college-level job opportunities, the median hourly earnings of \$15.67 fall short of the regional self-sustainability standard. Colleges considering this program should partner with applicable employers to document knowledge, skills, and certifications necessary to ensure that students earn a self-sustainable wage shortly after entering the workforce.

Contact

Michael Goss

Paul Vaccher

Centers of Excellence, Inland Empire/Desert Region

michael.goss@chaffey.edu

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Appendix: Occupation definitions, sample job titles, five-year projections, and earnings for athletic training occupations

Occupation Definitions (SOC code), Education and Training Requirement, Community College Education Attainment

Community College Level Occupation

Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors (39-9031)

Instruct or coach groups or individuals in exercise activities for the primary purpose of personal fitness. Demonstrate techniques and form, observe participants, and explain to them corrective measures necessary to improve their skills. Develop and implement individualized approaches to exercise.

Sample job titles: Aerobics Instructor, Fitness Instructor, Fitness Specialist, Fitness Technician, Fitness Trainer, Group Exercise Instructor, Group Fitness Instructor, Personal Trainer, Private Trainer, Yoga Instructor

Entry-Level Educational Requirement: High school diploma or equivalent

Training Requirement: Less than twelve months on-the-job training

Percentage of incumbent workers with a Community College Award or Some Postsecondary Coursework: 28.6%

Bachelor's Degree Level Occupation

Athletic Trainers (29-9091)

Evaluate and treat musculoskeletal injuries or illnesses. Provide preventive, therapeutic, emergency, and rehabilitative care.

Sample job titles: Athletic Instructor, Athletic Lecturer, Athletic Trainer, Certified Athletic Trainer, Personal Trainer, Resident Athletic Trainer, Women's Athletic Trainer

Entry-Level Educational Requirement: Bachelor's degree

Training Requirement: None

Percentage of incumbent workers with a Community College Award or Some Postsecondary Coursework: 20.2%

Appendix: Methodology

Exhibit 10 displays the average annual California Community College (CCC) awards conferred during the three academic years between 2017 and 2020, from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Management Information Systems (MIS) Data Mart. Awards are the combined total of associate degrees and certificates issued 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 records. 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, 2021 a). 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, 2021 a).

Job advertisement data is limited to the information provided by employers and the ability of artificial intelligence search engines to identify this information. Additionally, preliminary calculations by Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce found that "just 30 to 40 percent of openings for candidates with some college or an associate degree, and only 40 to 60 percent of openings for high school diploma holders appear online" (Carnevale et al., 2014). Online job advertisements often do not reveal employers' hiring intentions; it is unknown if employers plan to hire one or multiple workers from a single online job ad or collect resumes for future hiring needs. A closed job ad may not be the result of a hired worker.

Table 1. 2020 to 2025 job growth, wages, entry-level education, training, and work experience required for the athletic training occupational group

Occupation (SOC)	2020 Jobs	5-Year Change (New Jobs)	5-Year % Change (New Jobs)	Annual Openings (New + Replacement Jobs)	Entry-Experienced Hourly Wage (10 th to 90 th percentile)	Median Hourly Wage (50 th percentile)	Average Annual Earnings	Entry-Level Education & On-The-Job-Training	Work Experience Required
Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors (39-9031)	3,014	(174)	(6%)	454	\$12.74 to \$36.87	\$15.67	\$47,200	High school diploma or equivalent & 1 month	None
Athletic Trainers (29-9091)	155	29	19%	14	\$18.86 to \$42.88	\$28.44	\$65,200	Bachelor's degree & None	None
Total	3,168	(145)	(5%)	468	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Emsi 2021.3