

Labor Market Analysis: 1012.00 – Applied Photography

Commercial Photography – Associate of Arts (A.A.) degree; Certificate requiring 60+ semester units; Certificate requiring 16 to fewer than 30 semester units

Los Angeles Center of Excellence, April 2024

Program Endorsement:	Endorsed: All Criteria Met <input type="checkbox"/>	Endorsed: Some Criteria Met <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not Endorsed <input type="checkbox"/>
Program Endorsement Criteria			
Supply Gap:	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Living Wage: (Entry-Level, 25 th)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Education:	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emerging Occupation(s)			
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SUMMARY

This report analyzes whether local labor market demand is being met by community college programs aligned with the identified middle-skill occupation(s)¹ 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. While entry-level wages are lower than the self-sufficiency standard wage in both Los Angeles and Orange counties, more than one-third of current workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree as their highest level of education.

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

Key Findings

Supply Gap

- 853 annual job openings are projected in the region through 2027. This number is substantially greater than the three-year average of 120 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

- \$16.56 is the typical entry-level hourly wage for photographers, which is lower than Los Angeles County's self-sufficiency standard hourly (\$18.10/hour).²

Educational Attainment

- A high school diploma or equivalent is the typical entry-level education for photographers according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).
- 34% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree, according to national educational attainment data.

Community college supply

- 12 community colleges issued awards related to applied photography in the greater LA/OC region.
- 119 awards (degrees and certificates) were conferred on average each year between 2019 and 2022.

Other postsecondary supply

- 2 educational institutions in the LA/OC region offer programs related to applied photography.
- 1 award was 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 occupations.

- **Photographers (27-4021)** Photograph people, landscapes, merchandise, or other subjects. May use lighting equipment to enhance a subject's appearance. May use editing software to produce finished images and prints. Includes commercial and industrial photographers, scientific photographers, and photojournalists.³

OCCUPATIONAL DEMAND

Exhibit 1 shows the five-year occupational demand projections for photographers. In the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region, the number of jobs related to this occupation is projected to decrease by 1% through 2027. However, there will be nearly 900 job openings per year through 2027 due to retirements and workers leaving the field. The majority of jobs in 2022 for photographers (80%) 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 [Photographers \(bls.gov\)](https://www.bls.gov/occupations/27-4021)

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	7,730	7,680	(50)	(1%)	681
Orange	1,972	1,893	(79)	(4%)	171
Total	9,702	9,572	(129)	(1%)	853

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+ is included in order to visualize upcoming replacement demand for these occupations. The occupation in this report has a lower-than-average risk of automation, as well as a smaller share of older workers in the field. Across all jobs in California, 81% of workers are employed full-time. There is a smaller percentage of photographers 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
Photographers	7,730	7,680	(1%)	681	21%	92.2	74%

*The average percentage of workers aged 55 and older across all occupations in the greater LA/OC region is 27%. These occupations have a smaller share of older workers, which typically indicates fewer replacements 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 photographers 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 photographers are \$16.56, which is below the self-sufficiency standard wage for one adult (\$18.10 in Los Angeles County). Experienced workers can expect to earn wages of \$49.60, which is higher than the self-sufficiency standard (Exhibit 3).

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*
Photographers	\$16.56	\$29.11	\$49.60	\$60,600

*Rounded to the nearest \$100

Orange County

The typical entry-level hourly wages for photographers are \$15.45, which is below the self-sufficiency standard wage for one adult (\$20.63 in Orange County). Experienced workers can expect to earn wages of \$49.74, which is higher than the self-sufficiency standard (Exhibit 4).

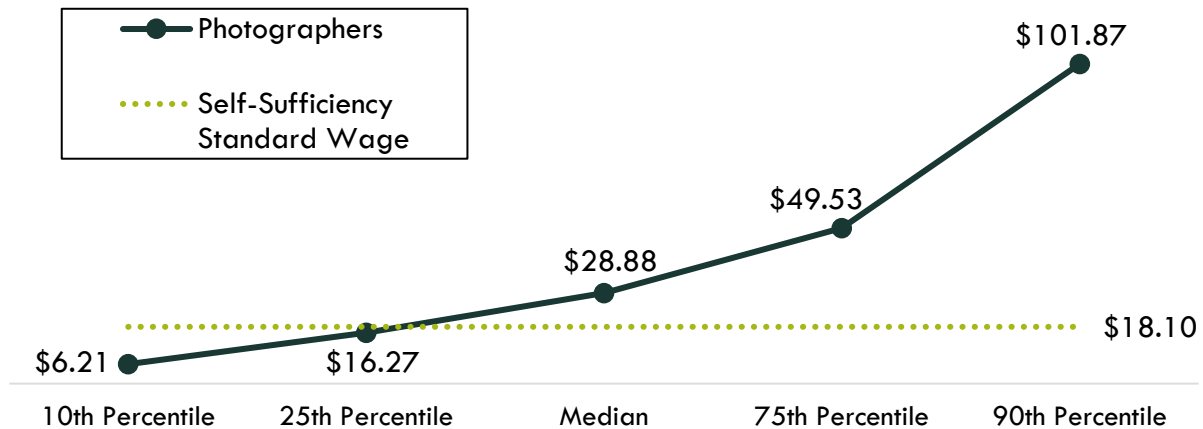
Exhibit 4: Earnings for occupations in Orange County

Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)	Median Annual Earnings*
Photographers	\$15.45	\$27.98	\$49.74	\$58,200

*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 \$16.27; this is below 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 photographers, Los Angeles and Orange counties



JOB POSTINGS

There were 1,351 online job postings for photographers 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photographers • Videographers/Photographers • Graduation photographer • Event photographers • Product photographers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photography • Marketing • Adobe Photoshop • Adobe Photoshop Lightroom • Workflow management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shutterfly • Balfour • Cherry Hill Programs • GradImages • Pro Motion Pix

In the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region, 27% of the photographer 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 photographers, Los Angeles and Orange counties

Education Level	Job Postings	% of Job Postings
Bachelor's degree	93	26%
Associate degree	16	4%
High school diploma or vocational training	250	70%

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists a high school diploma as the typical entry-level education for photographers (Exhibit 8). However, the national-level data indicates 34% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree 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
Photographers	High school diploma or equivalent

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: Applied Photography (1012.00). The colleges with the most completions in the region are Santa Monica, Mt. San Antonio, and Orange Coast.

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

TOP Code	Program	College	2019-20 Awards	2020-21 Awards	2021-22 Awards	3-Year Average
1012.00	Applied Photography	East LA	1	-	6	2
		El Camino	7	10	7	8
		Glendale	5	6	16	9
		LA City	5	8	6	6
		LA Pierce	3	2	7	4
		LA Valley	-	3	11	5
		Mt San Antonio	10	32	30	24
		Pasadena	1	10	4	5
		Santa Monica	33	31	21	28
		LA Subtotal	65	102	108	92
		Cypress	2	2	7	4
		Fullerton	4	5	16	8
		Orange Coast	21	10	16	16
		OC Subtotal	27	17	39	28
Supply Total/Average			92	119	147	119

Other Postsecondary Supply

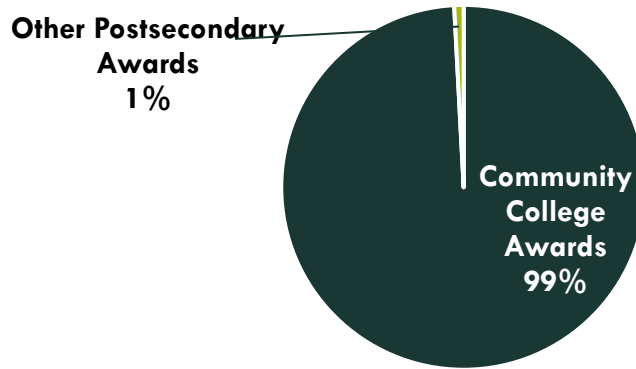
For a comprehensive regional supply analysis, it is important to consider the supply from other institutions in the region that provide training programs for photographers. Exhibit 10 shows the number of awards conferred by these institutions in relevant programs. Due to different data collection periods, the most recent data is from 2019 to 2021. Between 2019 and 2021, other postsecondary college institutions in the region conferred an average of 1 bachelor award annually.

Exhibit 10: Other regional postsecondary awards, 2019-2021

CIP Code	Program	Postsecondary Institution	2019-20 Awards	2020-21 Awards	2021-22 Awards	2-Year Average
10.0201	Photographic and Film/Video Technology/ Technician	Chapman University	-	-	1	-
50.0406	Commercial Photography	Mount Saint Mary's University	-	-	-	1
Supply Total/Average			-	1	1	1

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



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