

Labor Market Analysis: 0835.20 – Fitness Trainer

Strength and Conditioning Specialist - Certificate requiring 16 to fewer than 30 semester units

Los Angeles Center of Excellence, June 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 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. While entry-level wages are lower than the self-sufficiency standard wage in both Los Angeles and Orange counties, more than 40% of current workers in the field have completed an associate degree as their highest educational attainment.

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

Key Findings

Supply Gap

- 4,216 annual job openings are projected in the region through 2027. This number is greater than the three-year average of 183 awards conferred by educational institutions in the region.
 - However, the exercise trainers and group fitness instructors SOC code includes all fitness teacher jobs, and not solely strength and conditioning specialists. Therefore, the number of annual job openings is overstated for strength and conditioning specialists.

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.

- Over the past 12 months in the LA/OC region, there were 74 online job postings for strength and conditioning specialists.

Living Wage

- \$16.88 is the typical entry-level hourly wages for exercise trainers and group fitness instructors, 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 exercise trainers and group fitness instructors, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).
- 41% of workers in the field have completed an associate degree or less education, according to national educational attainment data.

Community college supply

- 16 community colleges issued awards related to fitness training in the greater LA/OC region.
- 112 awards (degrees and certificates) were conferred on average each year between 2021 and 2023.

Other postsecondary supply

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

TARGET OCCUPATION

The LA COE prepared this report to provide regional labor market and postsecondary supply data related to one middle-skill 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.³

OCCUPATIONAL DEMAND

Exhibit 1 shows the five-year occupational demand projections for exercise trainers and group fitness instructors. In the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region, the number of jobs related to this occupation is projected to increase by 21% through 2027. There will be more than 4,200 job openings per year through 2027 due to job growth and replacements. It is important to note that the exercise trainers and group fitness instructors (39-9031) SOC code includes all exercise training jobs and not strength and conditioning specialists. Therefore, the data in Exhibit 1 is

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 [Fitness Trainers and Instructors \(bls.gov\)](https://www.bls.gov/occupations/39-9031)

overstated for strength and conditioning specialists. The majority of jobs in 2022 for this middle-skill occupation (71%) were located in Los Angeles County.

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	12,308	14,714	2,406	20%	2,947
Orange	4,949	6,184	1,236	25%	1,269
Total	17,257	20,899	3,642	21%	4,216

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 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. There is a smaller percentage of exercise trainers and group fitness instructors 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*	Auto-mation Index**	% Full Time Workers***
Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors	12,308	14,714	20%	2,947	16%	84.4	44%

*The average percentage of workers aged 55 and older across all occupations in the greater LA/OC region is 27%. This occupation has 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 exercise trainers and group fitness instructors 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.

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.

Los Angeles County

The typical entry-level hourly wages for exercise trainers and group fitness instructors are \$16.88, 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 \$31.63, which is higher than the self-sufficiency standard (Exhibit 3).

Exhibit 3: Earnings for occupation in Los Angeles County

Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)	Median Annual Earnings*
Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors	\$16.88	\$23.69	\$31.63	\$49,300

*Rounded to the nearest \$100

Orange County

The typical entry-level hourly wages for exercise trainers and group fitness instructors are \$16.58, which is below the self-sufficiency standard wage for one adult (\$20.63 in Orange County). Experienced workers can expect to earn wages of \$31.02, which is higher than the self-sufficiency standard (Exhibit 4).

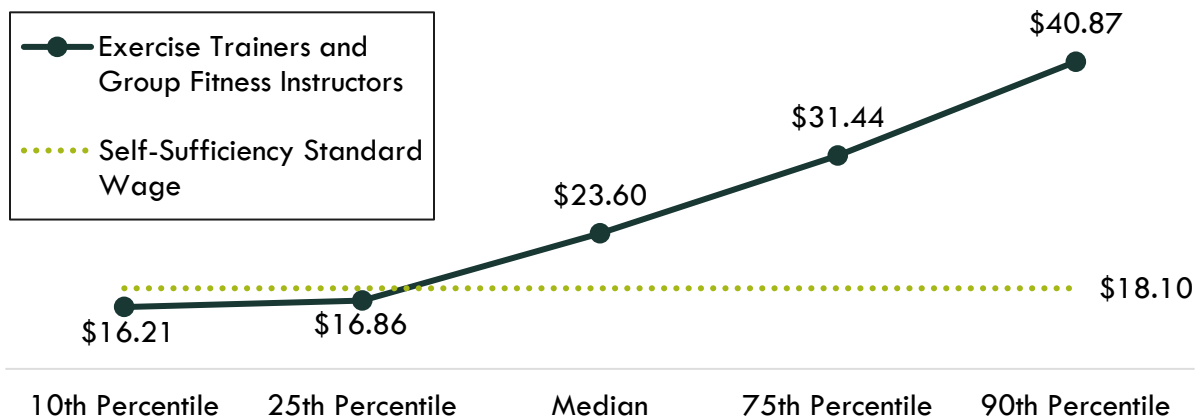
Exhibit 4: Earnings for occupations in Orange County

Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)	Median Annual Earnings*
Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors	\$16.58	\$23.33	\$31.02	\$48,500

*Rounded to the nearest \$100

Across the greater Los Angeles and Orange County region, the average entry-level hourly earnings for the occupation in this report are \$16.86; 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 occupation in this report, for entry-level to experienced workers.

Exhibit 5: Average hourly earnings for exercise trainers and group fitness instructors, Los Angeles and Orange counties



JOB POSTINGS

Over the past 12 months in the LA/OC region, there were 74 online job postings for strength and conditioning specialists. Job postings were analyzed for the most common job titles, skills, and employers associated with the target occupation 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"> Strength and conditioning coaches Assistant strength and conditioning coaches Strength coaches Strength and conditioning assistants Strength and conditioning coordinators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strength training and conditioning Kinesiology Exercise science CPT coding Athletic training Biomechanics Physiology Sports medicine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> California State University D1 Training LA Fitness Earth Treks Crystal City Climbing Center East LA Regional Center Life Time Fitness

In the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region, 69% of the strength and conditioning-related 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 strength and conditioning-related occupations, Los Angeles and Orange counties

Education Level	Job Postings	% of Job Postings
Bachelor's degree	27	53%
Associate degree	5	10%
High school diploma or vocational training	16	31%

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists a high school diploma or equivalent as the typical entry-level education for exercise trainers and group fitness instructors (Exhibit 8). However, the national-level data indicates 41% of workers in the field have completed an 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 level for the occupation in this report:

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

Occupation	Education Level
Exercise trainers and group fitness instructors	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 codes: Fitness Trainer (0835.20) and Athletic Training and Sports Medicine (1228.00). The colleges with the most completions in the region are Saddleback, Orange Coast, and Mt. San Antonio.

Exhibit 9: Regional community college awards (certificates and degrees), 2021-2023

TOP Code	Program	College	2020-21 Awards	2021-22 Awards	2022-23 Awards	3-Year Average
0835.20	Fitness Trainer	Cerritos	3	5	8	5
		Compton	-	1	2	1
		East LA	-	2	1	1
		Glendale	6	4	3	4
		LA City	2	2	3	2
		LA Harbor	2	1	1	1
		Long Beach	-	-	5	2
		Mt San Antonio	1	5	4	3
		Pasadena	8	11	13	11
		Rio Hondo	1	-	4	2
		LA Subtotal	23	31	44	33
		Cypress	1	7	4	4
		Fullerton	6	1	3	3
		Irvine	-	3	2	2
		Orange Coast	26	28	14	23
		Saddleback	31	34	19	28
		Santa Ana	1	1	2	1
		OC Subtotal	65	74	44	61
		Supply Subtotal/Average			88	105
1228.00	Athletic Training and Sports Medicine	Cerritos	4	12	3	6
		Mt San Antonio	25	9	3	12
		LA Subtotal	29	21	6	19
Supply Subtotal/Average			29	21	6	19
Supply Total/Average			117	126	94	112

Other Postsecondary Supply

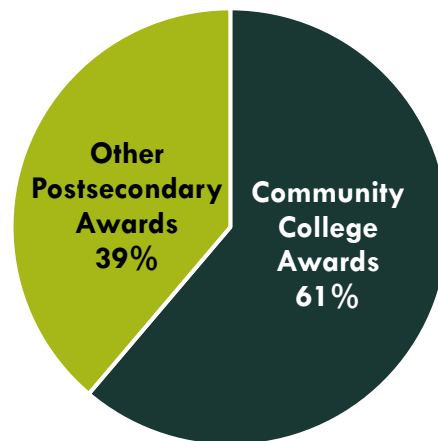
For a comprehensive regional supply analysis, it is important to consider the supply from other institutions in the region that provide training programs for fitness trainers. Exhibit 10 shows the number of awards conferred by these institutions in relevant programs. Due to different data collection periods, the most recent data is from 2020 to 2022. Between 2020 and 2022, other postsecondary college institutions in the region conferred an average of 71 sub-baccalaureate awards. Sub-baccalaureate awards include associate degrees, postsecondary awards, and other academic awards that typically take fewer than four years to complete.

Exhibit 10: Other regional postsecondary awards, 2020-2022

CIP Code	Program	Postsecondary Institution	2019-20 Awards	2020-21 Awards	2021-22 Awards	3-Year Average
31.0507	Physical Fitness Technician	American Fitness and Nutrition Academy	38	30	11	26
		California Healing Arts College	-	5	-	2
		Platt College-Anaheim	-	-	4	1
		Southern California Health Institute	81	30	13	41
Supply Total/Average			119	65	28	71

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



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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)

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