

**Labor Market Assessment:
 Veterinary Technologists, Technicians, Assistants &
 Laboratory Animal Caretakers
 (TOP 0102.10 Veterinary Technician [Licensed])
 (CIP 01.8301 Veterinary/Animal Health Technology/
 Technician and Veterinary Assistant)**



FOR LABOR MARKET RESEARCH
INLAND EMPIRE/DESERT

Inland Empire/Desert Center of Excellence, April 2026

Prepared by: Christopher Cruzcosa, ccruzcosa@iegocollaborative.org

Summary

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

Program LMI Endorsement Criteria		
Supply Gap	Yes ✓	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Comments:</i> There is <i>projected</i> to be 319 annual job openings throughout the Inland Empire/Desert region, which is more than the 165 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 (165).	
Living Wage	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No ✓
	<i>Comments:</i> One of the two occupations has entry-level hourly wages above the IE/D living wage of 20.42¹ , which accounts for the minority (35%) of annual job openings .	
Education	Yes ✓	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Comments:</i> One of the two occupations has some college or postsecondary degree or associate degree as their typical entry-level education level, which accounts for the minority (35%) of annual job openings . However, more than 33% of all workers in the field (48%) 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)
 - Veterinary Assistants and Laboratory Animal Caretakers (31-9096)
- Middle-Skill (typically require training/education above a HS diploma but less than a bachelor’s degree)
 - Veterinary Technologists and Technicians (29-2056)

Summary of findings

Demand

- The number of jobs related to the assessed occupations is projected to increase 7% through 2029, with 319 annual job openings (new and replacement jobs).
- Hourly entry-level wages for one of the two occupations are above living wage at the 25th percentile hourly wage, with all occupations ranging from \$17.81 to \$21.75 in IE/D.
- There were 563 online job postings from 126 employers over the past 12 months with the highest postings for veterinary assistants and registered veterinary technicians.
- Most job postings for target occupations require a high school diploma or equivalent (87%), followed by a associate degree (13%), and above a bachelor’s degree (1%).

Supply

- On average, there were 165 annual awards conferred by educational institutions over the last 3 years in related fields: 0 from community colleges and 165 from other institutions (e.g., 4-year universities, private schools).
- California community college students that exited these programs in the 2023-24 academic year earned a median annual wage of \$35,908 (\$17.26 per hour).
- 26% of California students that exited their program in 2023-24 reported that they are now earning a living wage.

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 Veterinary Technician (Licensed) (TOP 0102.10) programs prepare students for employment using knowledge of the laws and regulations, principles and practices, and licensure requirements that prepare individuals to assist the veterinarian, biological researcher or other scientist in applying knowledge of veterinary medical assisting procedures and techniques (Taxonomy of Programs, 2023). The knowledge, skills, and abilities trained by Veterinary Technician (Licensed) programs lead to employment in occupations related to veterinary technology.

Job Demand

In 2024, there were 2,054 jobs in occupations related to veterinary technology in the IE/D region. Regional employment for this occupation group is projected to increase by 7% through 2029 with 319 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 veterinary technology, IE/D Region, 2024-2029

Occupation	SOC	2024 Jobs	2029 Jobs	2024 - 2029 % Change	5-Yr Openings (New + Replacement Jobs)	Annual Openings (New + Replacement Jobs)
Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	29-2056	968	1,044	8%	548	110
Veterinary Assistants and Laboratory Animal Caretakers	31-9096	1,086	1,158	7%	1,044	209
Total		2,054	2,202	7%	1,592	319

SOURCE: LIGHTCAST 2026.2

Job Postings

The following analysis for occupations related to veterinary technology 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 veterinary technology over the last 12 months and the median posting duration. Over the previous 12 months, there were 563 unique job postings for occupations related to veterinary technology in the region from 126 employers.

Exhibit 2. Job ads and posting duration, IE/D Region, May 2025 – April 2026

Job Title	Job Ads	Median Posting Duration
Veterinary Assistants and Laboratory Animal Caretakers	299	25 days
Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	264	31 days
Total	563	

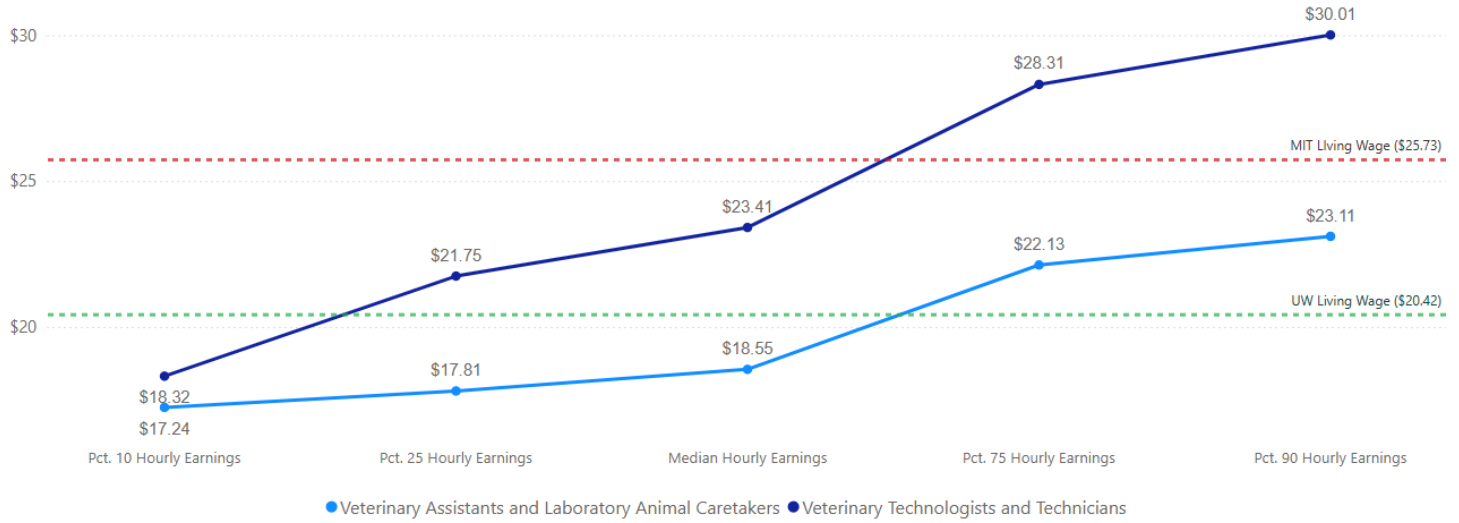
SOURCE: LIGHTCAST 2026.2

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 veterinary technology 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, 2024



Description	Pct. 10 Hourly Earnings	Pct. 25 Hourly Earnings	Median Hourly Earnings	Pct. 75 Hourly Earnings	Pct. 90 Hourly Earnings
Veterinary Assistants and Laboratory Animal Caretakers	\$17.24	\$17.81	\$18.55	\$22.13	\$23.11
Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	\$18.32	\$21.75	\$23.41	\$28.31	\$30.01

SOURCE: 2026.2

All projected entry-level earnings (that is, the earnings of the lowest paid 25% of employees in the IE/D) for one of the two occupations were above the UW Self-Sufficiency Standard for the IE/D (see Exhibit 3). The occupations listed were both 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 veterinary technology over the last 12 months. The salary information of online job ad data suggests employers advertise entry level hourly wages between \$19.20 and \$23.38 (estimated to be equal to an annual salary between \$39,936 and \$48,630).

Exhibit 4. Hourly earnings of job postings by percentile, IE/D Region, May 2025 – April 2026



SOURCE: LIGHTCAST 2026.2

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 veterinary technology 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, May 2025 – April 2026

Job Title	Unique Postings
Veterinary Assistants	190
Registered Veterinary Technicians	155
Veterinary Technicians	74
Veterinary Technician Assistants	40
Emergency Veterinary Technicians	18
Credentialed Veterinary Technicians	11
Veterinary Assistants/Receptionists	9
Lead Veterinary Technicians	8

SOURCE: LIGHTCAST 2026.2

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. VCA Animal Hospitals and the County of Riverside 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 de-duplicated. 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, I/E/D Region, May 2025 – April 2026

Company	Total/Unique (May 2025 - Apr 2026)	Posting Intensity	Median Posting Duration
VCA Animal Hospitals	175 / 48	4 : 1	18 days
County Of Riverside	129 / 35	4 : 1	47 days
PetVet Care Centers	106 / 29	4 : 1	n/a
Banfield Pet Hospital	80 / 28	3 : 1	19 days
PetCo	148 / 22	7 : 1	20 days
Ethos Veterinary Health	73 / 18	4 : 1	13 days
Medical Management International	30 / 17	2 : 1	23 days
Veterinary Emergency Group	19 / 8	2 : 1	19 days
Shotvet	22 / 8	3 : 1	23 days
Computer Sciences Corporation	13 / 7	2 : 1	29 days

SOURCE: LIGHTCAST 2026.2

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, I/E/D Region, May 2025 – April 2026

Common skills	Total Postings	Skill Growth Relative to Market
Communication	300	Stable
Compassion	163	Rapidly Growing
Detail Oriented	103	Stable
Customer Service	102	Stable
Management	89	Stable
Operations	85	Stable
Cleanliness	77	Growing
Multitasking	75	Growing
Computer Literacy	56	Lagging
Professionalism	56	Growing
Interpersonal Communications	39	Growing
Leadership	39	Growing

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

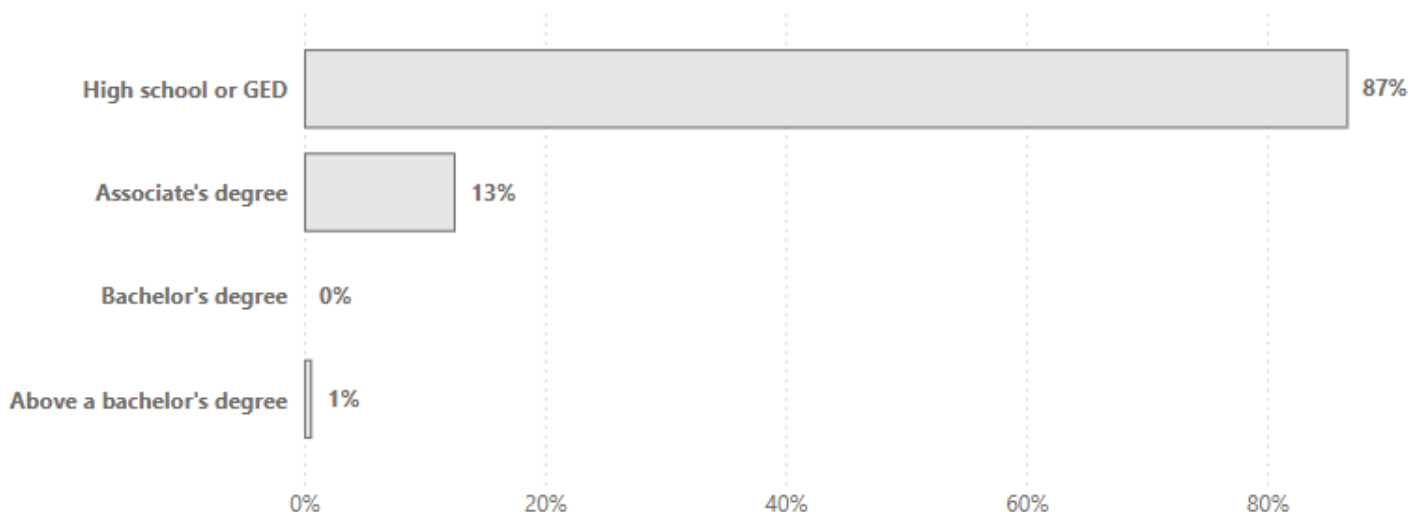
Specialized skills	Total Postings	Skill Growth Relative to Market
Surgery	236	Growing
Medication Administration	195	Growing
Anesthesia	150	Growing
Medical Records	140	Growing
Animal Handling	133	Growing
Laboratory Testing	133	Growing
Safe Restraining Techniques (Veterinary)	132	Stable
Vital Signs	130	Growing
Petcare	87	Rapidly Growing
Sterilization	87	Growing

Computer Skills	Total Postings	Skill Growth Relative to Market
Medical Software	10	Growing
Practice Management Software	8	Stable
Microsoft Excel	7	Growing
Microsoft Office	7	Growing
Microsoft Outlook	6	Rapidly Growing
Collaborative Software	3	Growing
Firewall	2	Growing

SOURCE: LIGHTCAST 2026.2

Exhibit 8 includes the minimum educational requirements from job postings for this occupational group with high school diploma or equivalent (87%) significantly greater than associate degree (13%) or above a bachelor's degree (1%).

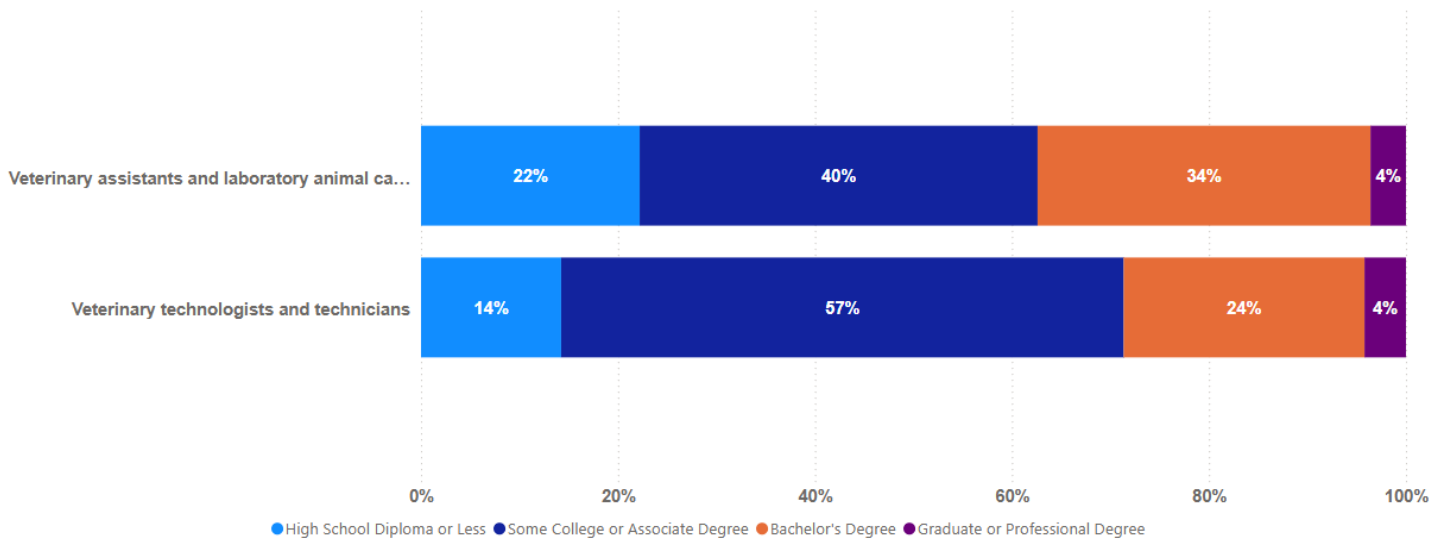
Exhibit 8 Minimum educational requirements in job postings for this occupational group, IE/D Region, May 2025 – April 2026



SOURCE: LIGHTCAST 2026.2

For the assessed occupations, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) education attainment data in Exhibit 9 for current professionals in the occupations of interest indicates that between 40% and 57% of workers have completed some college or an associate degree as their highest level of education.

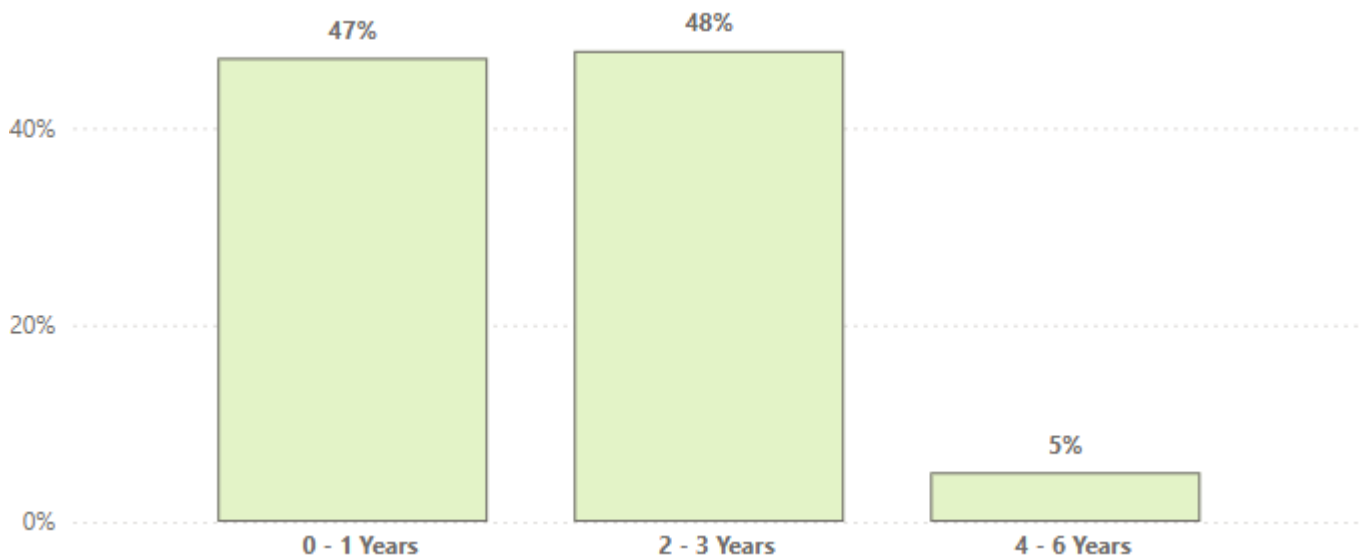
Exhibit 9 National-level Education Attainment for the Occupational Group



SOURCE: BLS 2021

Exhibit 10 displays the work experience typically required from employer job ads for this occupational group. The largest grouping (48%) of employers listing minimum experience requirements sought candidates with 2-3 of previous work experience.

Exhibit 10 Work experience requirements, IE/D Region, May 2025 – April 2026



SOURCE: LIGHTCAST 2026.2

Student Completions and Program Outcomes

No student completions for the Veterinary Technician (Licensed) (TOP 0102.10) programs were found over the last three academic years (2021-2024). 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: Veterinary Administrative Services, General (CIP 01.8201), Veterinary/Animal Health Technology/Technician and Veterinary Assistant (CIP 01.8301).

However, student award completion data was not found in the IE/D for other related non-community college programs: Veterinary Reception/Receptionist (CIP 01.8203), Veterinary Administrative/Executive Assistant and Veterinary Secretary (CIP 01.8204).

In the previous three academic years, five regional non-community college institutions issued an average 165 awards in relevant programs.

Exhibit 11 Annual average non-community college awards for veterinary technology programs, IE/D, 2021-2024

CIP	Program	College	2021-2022 Awards	2022-2023 Awards	2023-2024 Awards	3-Year Award Average
01.8101	Veterinary Sciences/Veterinary Clinical Sciences, General	American College of Healthcare and Technology	65	72	81	73
01.8301	Veterinary/Animal Health Technology/Technician and Veterinary Assistant	Carrington College-Ontario	29	0	0	10
01.8301	Veterinary/Animal Health Technology/Technician and Veterinary Assistant	Platt College-Ontario	28	21	35	28
01.8301	Veterinary/Animal Health Technology/Technician and Veterinary Assistant	Platt College-Riverside	28	37	46	37
01.8301	Veterinary/Animal Health Technology/Technician and Veterinary Assistant	San Joaquin Valley College-Ontario	0	10	42	17
Total			150	140	204	165

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 13.

Exhibit 12 Veterinary Technician (Licensed) strong workforce program outcomes, IE/D & California, AY 2023-24

Program Metric Title	Inland Empire	Statewide
Students	-	2,627
Earned 9+ Career Education Units	-	33%
Completed Noncredit Workforce Preparation Milestone	-	65%
Earned an Award: Degree or Cert or Attained Appren. Journey Level Status	-	9%
Transferred to a Four-Year Institution: Four-Year Postsecondary Institution	-	1%
Median Annual Earnings	-	\$35,908
Median Change in Earnings	-	56%
Attained Living Wage	-	26%

SOURCE: DATAVISTA

Appendix: Methodology

Community college student outcome information is from DataVista 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 DataVista's Strong Workforce Program Metrics Data Element Dictionary in the Resources section (DataVista, 2025).

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/California . The COE refers to the Self-Sufficiency Wage as a "living wage." 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)	Glasmeier, A. K. (2024). <i>Living wage calculator</i> . Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Accessed on April 14, 2025, https://livingwage.mit.edu/states/06/locations The living wage is derived from MITs 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	DataVista aims to provide up-to-date and useful information on students within the California Community Colleges and its Adult

Education partners. DataVista is a modernization of the supporting architecture and visualization of metrics previously available on the LaunchBoard.

DataVista is a collaboration between the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office and WestEd, see:

https://datavista.cccco.edu/data_views/swp_report