

Cost of Living and Top Jobs in the South Central Coast Region

Presented by: SCC Center of Excellence

Vision 2030 Regional Workshop

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SOUTH CENTRAL COAST

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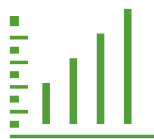


California
Community
Colleges



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The COE provide **quality labor market data and information** to help colleges with:



Assessing labor
market needs



Reviewing career
education programs



Investing in new career
education programs



Grant program planning
and investment

**We aspire to be the leading source of workforce information
and insight for California's community colleges.**

COE Team

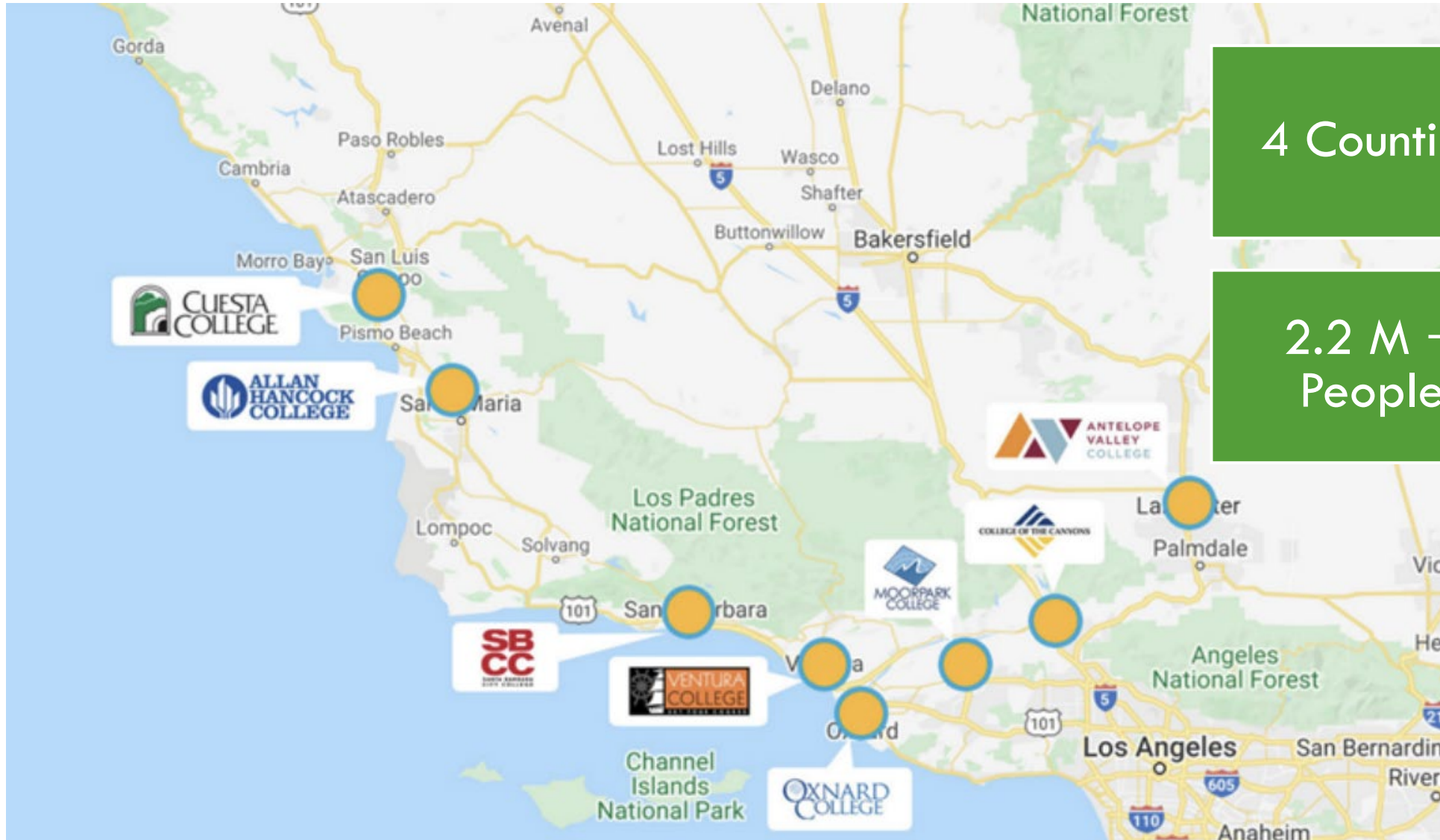


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South Central Coast Region



4 Counties

8
Community
Colleges

2.2 M +
People

79,000+
CTE Students
(2023-24)



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The Minimum Salary You Need To Be Happy in Every State



California is 49th out of 51
\$143,220



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California...

- has the 3rd highest living costs behind Hawaii and Massachusetts:
 - \$53,171 /yr in avg. household spending for housing, health care, taxes, food, and transportation – [Forbes](#)
- ...has the nation's 4th highest level of [income disparity](#)
 - Average Income of Bottom 99%: \$55,152
 - Average Income of Top 1%: \$1.69 million
- ...the nation's highest level of poverty – [Census Bureau](#)
- ...has nearly 1/3 of its population living in poverty or near poverty – [Public Policy Institute of California](#)
- ...ns...carry the most debt of any state – [driven by mortgage debt.](#)

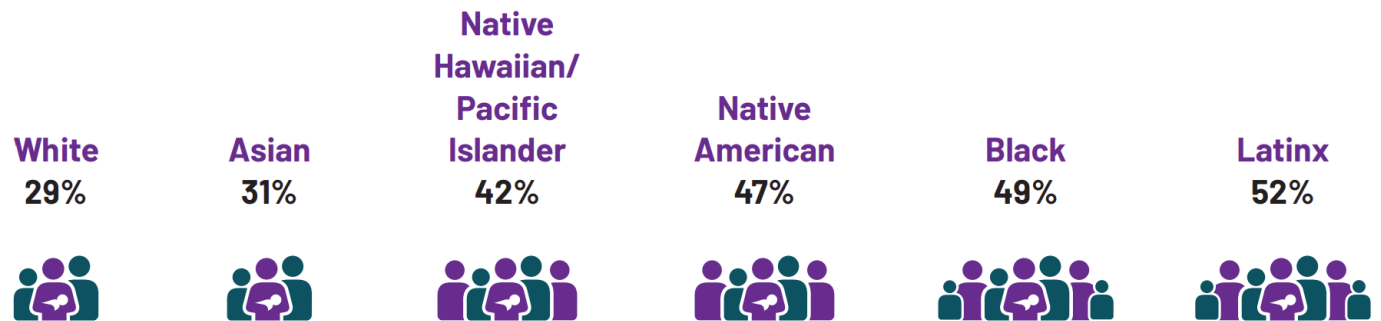
Living on the Brink: The True Cost of Being Californian

Living on the Brink

The True Cost of Being Californian

- “From 2018 and 2021, California witnessed huge leaps in the cost of living in the Central Coast counties such as Santa Barbara (40%) and Santa Cruz (45%).”
- Housing and childcare costs continue to climb in most counties.

Figure 2. Percentage of California Households Struggling to Make Ends Meet by Race and Ethnicity, 2023



MIT Living Wage Calculator

- “The living wage shown is the hourly rate that an **individual** in a household must earn to support his or herself and their family. The assumption is the sole provider is working full-time (2080 hours per year). The tool provides information for individuals, and households with one or two working adults and zero to three children. In the case of households with two working adults, all values are **per working adult, single or in a family** unless otherwise noted.”

-MIT Living Wage Calculator



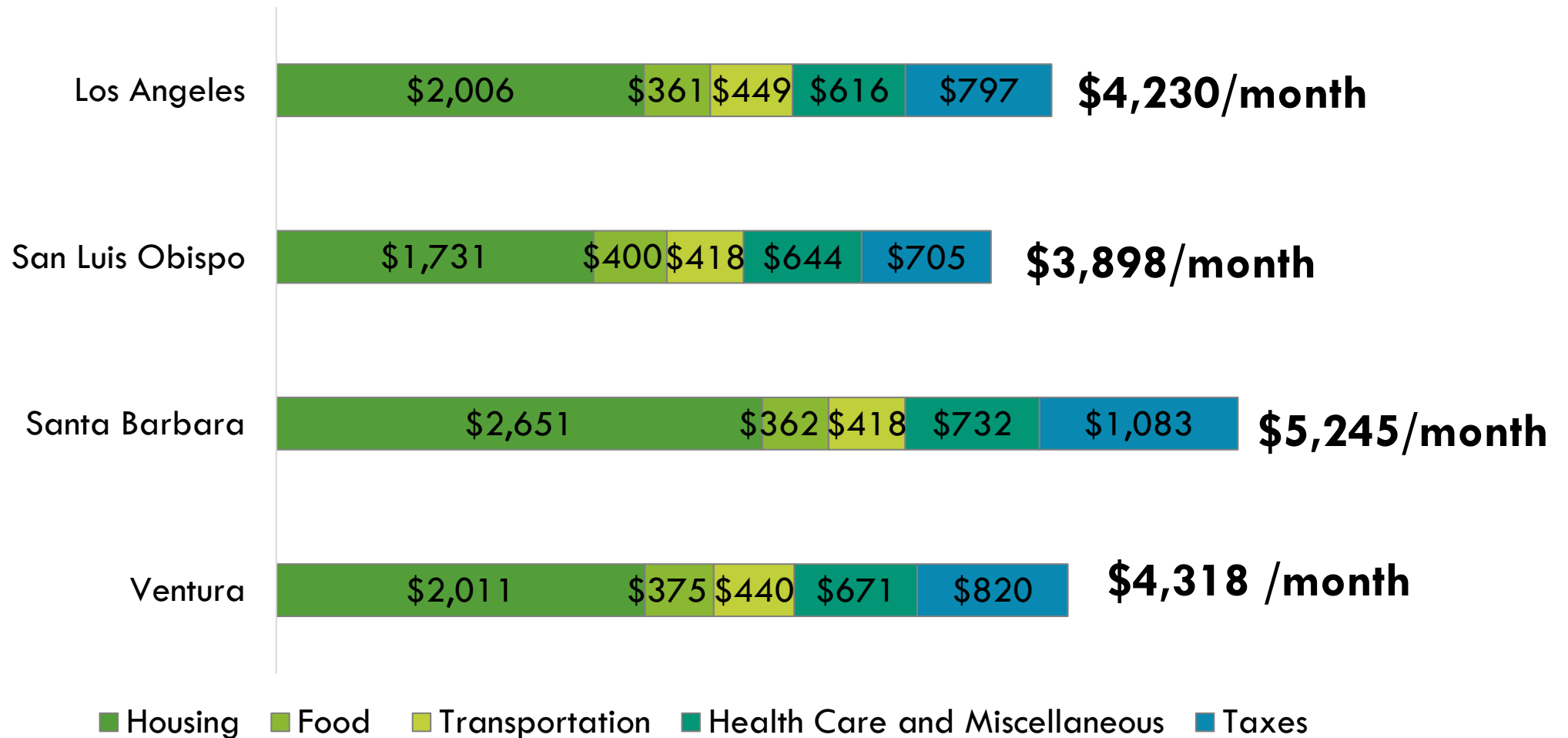
University of Washington Self-Sufficiency Standard

- The University of Washington's School of Social Work Center for Women's Welfare Self-Sufficiency Standard defines the income working families need to meet a minimum yet adequate level, taking into account family composition, ages of children, and geographic differences in costs*. The Standard is an affordability and living wage economic security measure that provides an alternative to the official poverty measure

Cost of Living Across South Central Coast Region

Source	San Luis Obispo	Northern LA	Ventura	Santa Barbara
MIT Living Wage (2025)	\$26.55	\$27.81	\$29.59	\$30.98
Self-Sufficiency Standard (2024)	\$22.15	\$24.03	\$24.53	\$29.80

Average Monthly Costs for Single Adult, South Central Coast Region Counties



Cost of Living

Public Policy Institute of California

Five Fast Facts on the Cost of Living in California

1. Housing is still expensive
2. Food takes a big bite out of budgets
3. Energy, utilities, and fuel have spiked
4. Public college tuition is still reasonable
5. Health insurance is available to most—but spending on health care is similar to other states.

“While wages in California are up, they have barely outpaced inflation. Working families may be able to manage some higher costs, but others—such as retirees—have limited bandwidth to cope with rising prices.”

Cost of Living



You know it's bad when
even superheroes can't
afford fuel prices



Housing Costs Across South Central Coast Cities Northern Los Angeles and Ventura Counties

Santa Clarita



Median Home Price
\$1,126,184



Median Rent
\$3,424/month

Lancaster



Median Home Price
\$670,520



Median Rent
\$2,038/month

Oxnard



Median Home Price
\$562,557



Median Rent
\$1,986/month

Simi Valley



Median Home Price
\$717,707



Median Rent
\$2,655/month

Ventura



Median Home Price
\$772,730



Median Rent
\$2,160/month



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Housing Costs Across South Central Coast Cities Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties

Santa Barbara



Median Home Price
\$1,327,170



Median Rent
\$2,467/month

Santa Maria



Median Home Price
\$423,586



Median Rent
\$1,916/month

San Luis Obispo



Median Home Price
\$809,516



Median Rent
\$1,903/month



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South Central Coast Top Jobs and Equity Assessment



- South Central Coast Top Jobs and Equity Assessment
 - Identifies “Top Jobs” in the SCC Region
 - Examines demographic disparities among:
 - Workers in Top Jobs
 - Students in vocational programs that train for Top Jobs

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the report



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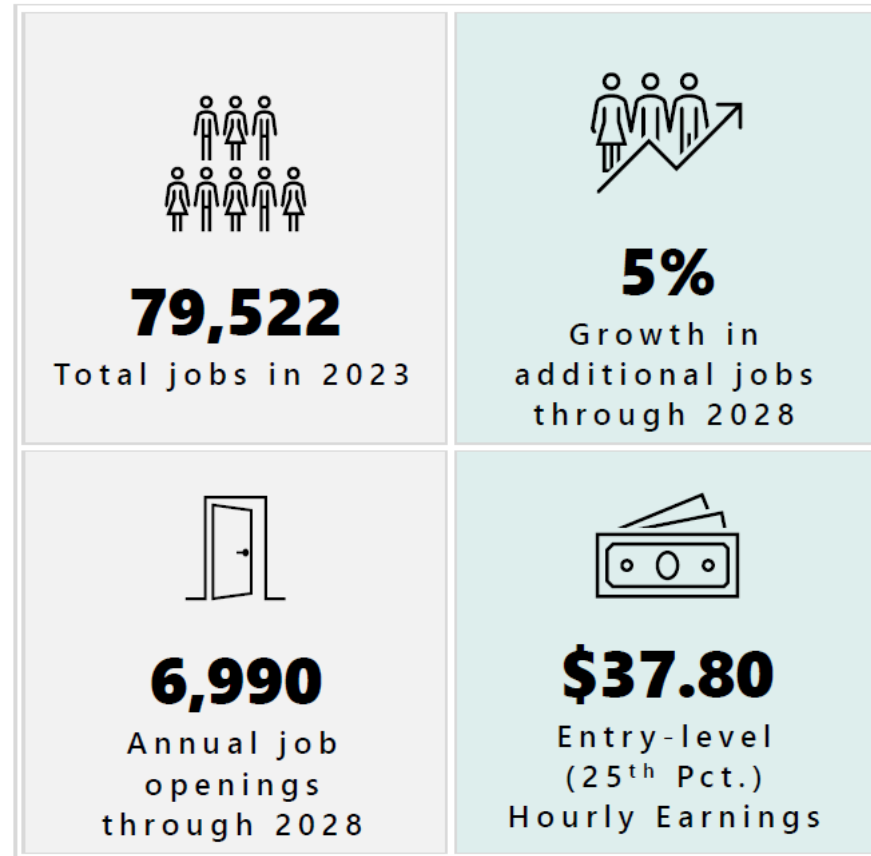
South Central Coast Top Jobs and Equity Assessment: Top Jobs

- Top Jobs were identified based on the following criteria:
 - **Middle skill:** occupations that typically require more than a high school diploma but less than a bachelor's degree
 - **Demand:** at least 36 annual job openings, which is the median across all occupations, throughout the region from 2023 to 2028
 - **Growth:** projected positive job growth through 2028 in the region
 - **Living wage:** typical entry-level hourly earnings at or above the South Central Coast regional living wage of \$25.12
- Based on the above criteria, **37 of the 798 occupations in the SOC system were classified as Top Jobs**



South Central Coast Top Jobs and Equity Assessment: Top Jobs

- Collectively, these 37 Top Jobs:
 - Accounted for nearly 80,000 jobs throughout the region in 2023
 - Are projected to grow 5% through 2028
 - Are projected to have nearly 7,000 annual job openings per year between 2023 and 2028
 - Have typical entry-level wages of \$37.80, which is above the SCC regional living wage of \$25.12
 - Span nine occupational sectors



South Central Coast Top Jobs and Equity Assessment: Top Jobs

Exhibit 1: Top Job Sectors in the South Central Coast Region

Sector	# of Top Jobs	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	5-Year Change	5-Year % Change	Annual Openings	Entry-Level Hourly Wage
Advanced Manufacturing	2	3,467	3,559	92	3%	355	\$26.44
Advanced Transportation & Logistics	7	9,565	9,997	433	5%	909	\$31.14
Agriculture, Water & Environmental Technologies	1	334	341	7	2%	44	\$25.37
Business & Entrepreneurship	4	17,752	18,501	749	4%	1,592	\$37.02
Education & Human Development	1	446	466	21	5%	55	\$34.45
Energy, Construction & Utilities	6	12,158	12,536	378	3%	1,156	\$29.07
Health	9	26,348	28,266	1,917	7%	2,057	\$44.80
Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)/Digital Media	1	799	817	18	2%	63	\$27.84
Other	1	352	353	2	0%	39	\$25.93
Public Safety	5	8,302	8,596	294	4%	722	\$44.59
Total	37	79,522	83,432	3,910	5%	6,990	\$37.80



South Central Coast Top Jobs and Equity Assessment

Sector	Occupation (SOC)	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	5-Year Change	5-Year % Change	Annual Openings	Entry-Level Hourly Wage
Adv. Manufacturing	First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers (51-1011)	2,791	2,877	87	3%	289	\$25.53
	Engineering Technologists and Technicians, Except Drafters, All Other (17-3029)	676	682	6	1%	66	\$30.16
Adv. Transportation and Logistics	First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers (49-1011)	2,880	2,972	92	3%	263	\$30.44
	Logisticians (13-1081)	1,730	1,851	120	7%	167	\$33.79
	Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists (49-3031)	1,163	1,188	24	2%	106	\$27.03
	Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers (11-3071)	1,170	1,206	35	3%	102	\$35.47
	Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics, Except Engines (49-3042)	1,116	1,140	24	2%	101	\$28.12
	Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technicians (49-3011)	978	1,056	78	8%	94	\$28.85
	Commercial Pilots (53-2012)	527	585	58	11%	77	\$36.38



South Central Coast Top Jobs and Equity Assessment

Sector	Occupation (SOC)	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	5-Year Change	5-Year % Change	Annual Openings	Entry-Level Hourly Wage
Ag., Water and Env. Technologies	Forest and Conservation Technicians (19-4071)	334	341	7	2%	44	\$25.37
	General and Operations Managers (11-1021)	13,743	14,402	659	5%	1,250	\$37.74
Business and Entrepreneurship	Administrative Services Managers (11-3012)	1,728	1,760	31	2%	142	\$39.03
	Cost Estimators (13-1051)	1,373	1,395	22	2%	121	\$27.36
	Facilities Managers (11-3013)	908	944	37	4%	78	\$36.96
Education and Human Development	Kindergarten Teachers, Except Special Education (25-2012)	446	466	21	5%	55	\$34.45



South Central Coast Top Jobs and Equity Assessment

Sector	Occupation (SOC)	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	5-Year Change	5-Year % Change	Annual Openings	Entry-Level Hourly Wage
Energy, Construction and Utilities	First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers (47-1011)	4,292	4,413	121	3%	385	\$30.57
	Electricians (47-2111)	3,889	4,044	154	4%	381	\$25.28
	Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators (47-2073)	2,192	2,261	69	3%	205	\$28.93
	Construction and Building Inspectors (47-4011)	793	794	1	0%	94	\$30.12
	Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers (49-9051)	604	637	32	5%	55	\$41.01
	Civil Engineering Technologists and Technicians (17-3022)	388	388	0	0%	37	\$30.47
Health	Registered Nurses (29-1141)	16,746	17,865	1,119	7%	1,169	\$50.17
	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses (29-2061)	3,703	4,002	299	8%	356	\$30.93
	Dental Hygienists (29-1292)	1,491	1,565	74	5%	123	\$52.09
	Psychiatric Technicians (29-2053)	991	1,037	46	5%	96	\$35.99
	Physical Therapist Assistants (31-2021)	531	616	85	16%	95	\$33.12
	Radiologic Technologists and Technicians (29-2034)	1,029	1,103	74	7%	72	\$33.92
	Paramedics (29-2043)	604	710	107	18%	52	\$29.27
	Respiratory Therapists (29-1126)	644	715	71	11%	48	\$39.41
	Surgical Technologists (29-2055)	610	653	43	7%	47	\$27.39



South Central Coast Top Jobs and Equity Assessment

Sector	Occupation (SOC)	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	5-Year Change	5-Year % Change	Annual Openings	Entry-Level Hourly Wage
ICT/ Digital Media	Web and Digital Interface Designers (15-1255)	799	817	18	2%	63	\$27.84
Other	Legal Support Workers, All Other (23-2099)	352	353	2	0%	39	\$25.93
Public Safety	Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers (33-3051)	4,674	4,803	129	3%	405	\$47.45
	Firefighters (33-2011)	1,847	1,934	87	5%	162	\$31.52
	Public Safety Telecommunicators (43-5031)	493	524	31	6%	58	\$31.21
	First-Line Supervisors of Police and Detectives (33-1012)	715	738	23	3%	55	\$65.89
	First-Line Supervisors of Firefighting and Prevention Workers (33-1021)	573	597	24	4%	42	\$48.32

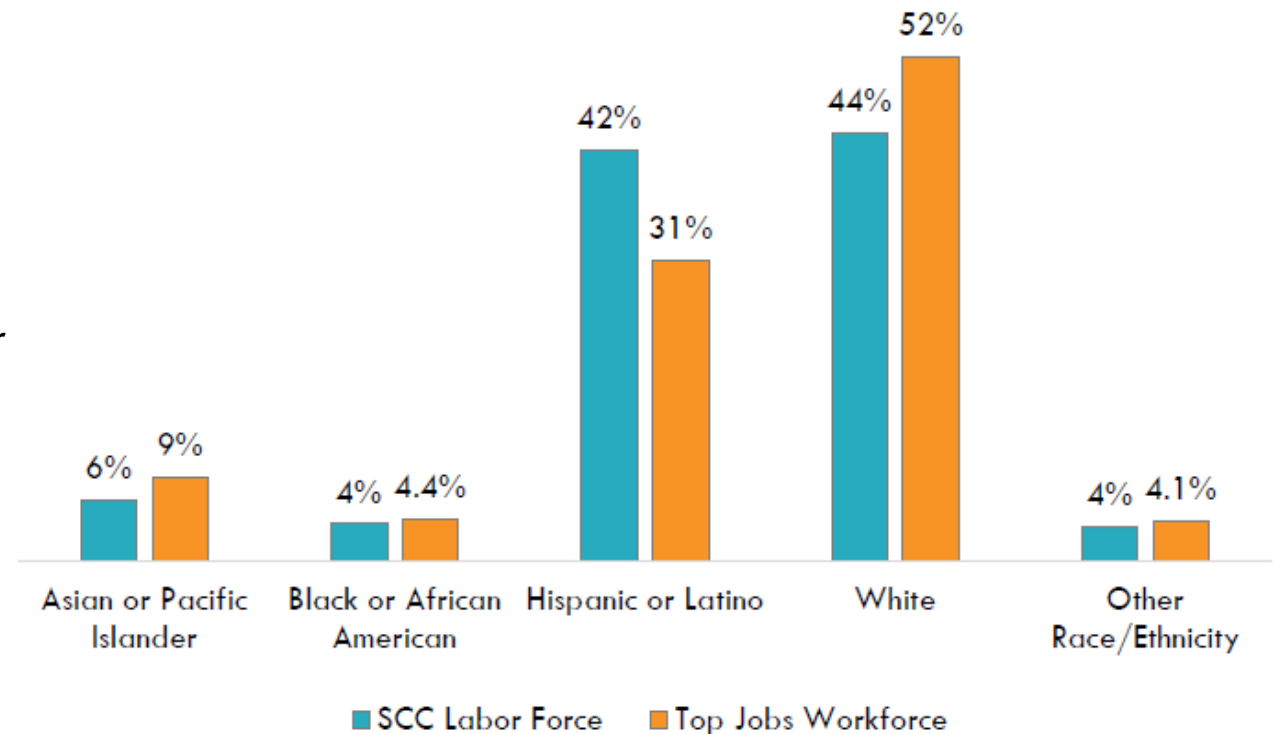


South Central Coast Top Jobs and Equity Assessment

- SCC Labor Force and Top Jobs Workforce

- The shares of white and Asian or Pacific Islander workers in Top Jobs are greater than their shares of the SCC labor force.
- Conversely, the percentage of Hispanic or Latino workers in Top Jobs is substantially lower than the SCC labor force overall.
- The shares of Black or African American and Other Race/Ethnicity workers in the Top Jobs workforce are comparable to the SCC labor force overall

Exhibit 3: South Central Coast Labor Force and Top Jobs Workforce Race and Ethnicity Distribution



South Central Coast Top Jobs and Equity Assessment

- The following groups are significantly underrepresented in the most Top Jobs:
 - Pre-Career/College Age (33)
 - Hispanic or Latino (24)
 - Women (23)
 - Black or African American (22)

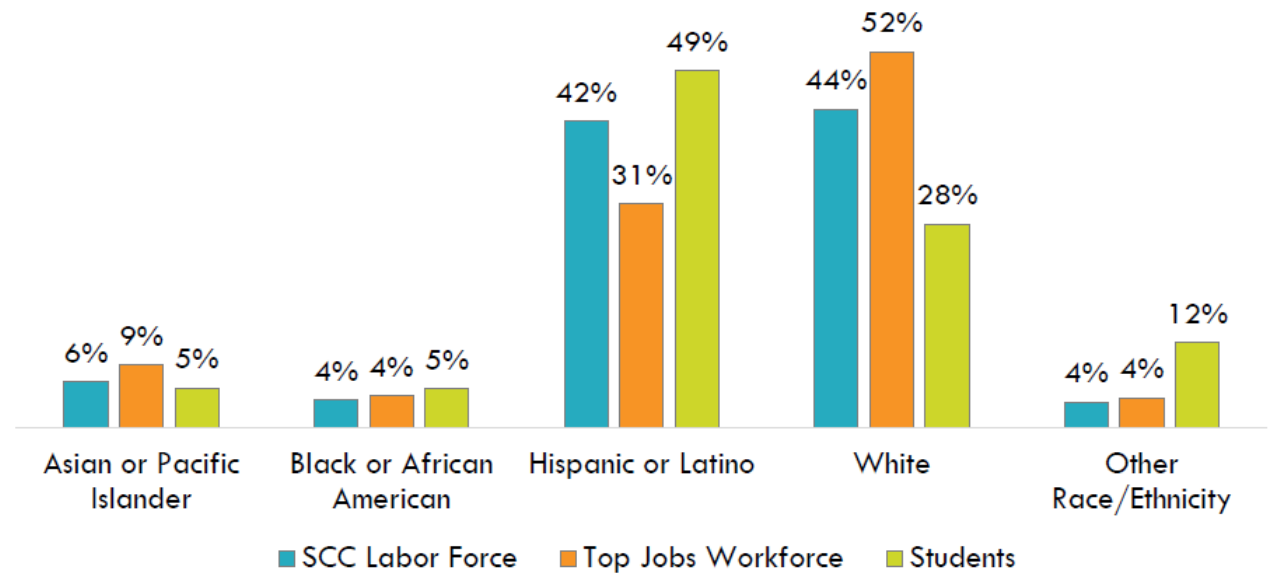
Exhibit 5: Top Jobs with Significant Underrepresentation

Demographic Category	Top Jobs with Underrepresentation
Hispanic or Latino	24
Black or African American	22
White	5
Asian or Pacific Islander	18
Other Race/Ethnicity	18
Females	23
Males	11
Pre-career/College (≤ 24)	33
Early career (25-34)	11
Mid-career (35-54)	8
Late career/retirement (55+)	12

South Central Coast Top Jobs and Equity Assessment

- SCC Labor Force, Top Jobs Workforce, Students in Top Job Vocational Programs
 - Higher of Hispanic or Latino students compared to the share of Hispanic or Latinos in the SCC labor force and Top Jobs workforce.
 - White students made up a smaller share compared to the SCC labor force and Top Jobs workforce.

Exhibit 14: Race/Ethnicity of Students Enrolled in Top Job Vocational Programs



South Central Coast Top Jobs and Equity Assessment: Significant Equity Gaps

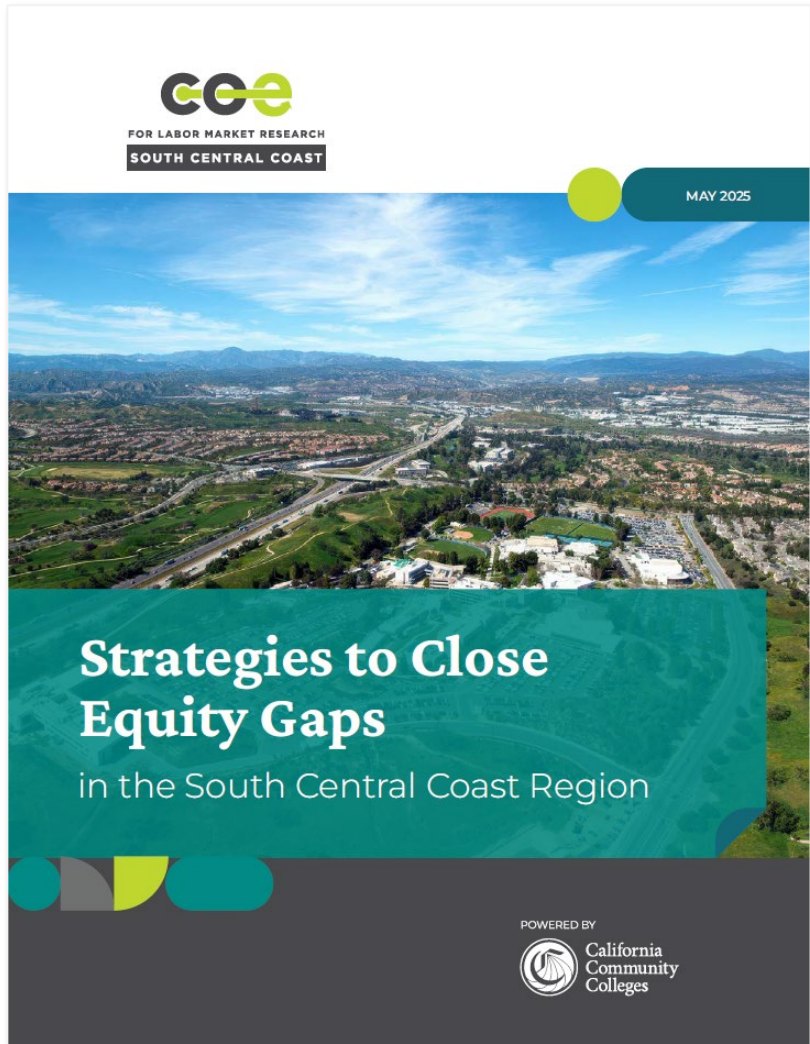
- Hispanic or Latinos are significantly underrepresented in 24 Top Jobs but only 6 Top Job vocational programs. However, they tend to be underrepresented in higher-paying Top Jobs.
- Women are significantly underrepresented in 23 of the 37 Top Jobs, but only 15 of the 44 Top Job vocational programs. These jobs and programs are concentrated in traditional trades such as construction, manufacturing, and transportation, as well as public safety.
- Male workers are underrepresented in 11 of the 37 Top Jobs but 17 of the 44 Top Job vocational programs. These jobs and programs are concentrated in the Health sector.

Takeaways

- There are multiple validated measures of the living wage and cost of living
- No matter how you slice it, the cost of living in California, the SCC Region, and each county in the SCC Region is high and driven by high housing costs
- There are 37 Top Jobs in the SCC Region, all of which are middle-skill and have entry-level wages above the living wage
- However, there are disparities in representation in these Top Jobs, with various groups being underrepresented in Top Jobs and programs that train for them



New Report Announcement!



- Strategies to Close Equity Gaps in the South Central Coast Region
 - Examines barriers to closing the equity gaps identified in the *South Central Coast Top Jobs and Equity Assessment*
 - Provides evidence-based strategies regional community colleges could use to close gaps, as well as case studies from other colleges outside the region and state
 - Releases next week!

South Central Coast Center of Excellence



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