



FOR LABOR MARKET RESEARCH
SOUTH CENTRAL COAST

WINTER 2026

A scenic landscape photograph showing rolling green hills and mountains in the background, partially obscured by a thick layer of white fog or low clouds. In the foreground, there is a residential neighborhood with houses and trees. The sky is clear and blue.

Opportunities and Strategies to Support Adult Learner Success



POWERED BY



California
Community
Colleges

• Table of Contents

- Executive Summary..... 4
 - Key Findings..... 4
- Introduction 5
- Defining the Adult Population and Adult Learners 6
 - Adult Population Demographics 6
- Identifying Potential Opportunities for Adult Learners..... 13
 - Occupations for Advancement 13
 - Below Living Wage Advancement Occupations 15
 - Above Living Wage Advancement Occupations 17
- Addressing Barriers for Adult Learners 20
 - Financial Barriers and Financial Aid Eligibility 20
 - Scheduling 21
 - Prior Learning 21
 - Cultural and Attitudinal Barriers 22
 - Enrollment Practices 23
- Conclusion..... 24
 - Implications for Practice 24
 - Limitations and Areas for Future Research..... 25
- Appendix A: Methodology and Data Sources..... 26
 - Demographic Data..... 26
 - Occupational Data..... 26
 - Community College Program Data..... 27
- Appendix B: Labor Market Data for Advancement Occupations..... 28
- Appendix C: Endnotes..... 32



• Table of Exhibits

Exhibit 1: Projected Percentage of Population in California by Age Group, 2020 to 2070..... 5

Exhibit 2: Race and Ethnicity of Adult Population..... 6

Exhibit 3: Population by Sex..... 7

Exhibit 4: Educational Attainment..... 7

Exhibit 5: Labor Force Participation Rate..... 8

Exhibit 6: Unemployment Rate..... 9

Exhibit 7: Limited English Proficiency..... 9

Exhibit 8: Mode of Transportation to Work for Adult Workers..... 10

Exhibit 9: Average Commute Time, in Minutes, for Adult Workers..... 11

Exhibit 10: Percentage of Adults With and Without Children..... 12

Exhibit 11: Average Number of Children For Adults With Children..... 12

Exhibit 12: Percentage of Adult Workers in Low Quality Occupations by Sector..... 13

Exhibit 13: Comparison of Labor Market Data for Low-Quality and Advancement Occupations..... 14

Exhibit 14: SCC Region Community Colleges with Training Programs for Below Living Wage Advancement Occupations..... 16

Exhibit 15: SCC Region Community Colleges with Training Programs for Above Living Wage Advancement Occupations..... 18

Exhibit 16: Labor Market Data for Advancement Occupations..... 28



• Executive Summary

This report was prepared by the South Central Coast Center of Excellence (SCC COE) to inform the development of programs, pathways, and services that advance adult learner success across the SCC Region. This report integrates quantitative population and labor market data with a qualitative literature review to examine adult population characteristics, identify advancement occupations for adults currently employed in Low-Quality jobs, and analyze barriers adult learners face alongside evidence-based strategies to address them.

As California community colleges face a projected decline in the population of traditional college-age students, institutional sustainability will increasingly depend on their ability to engage and support adult learners. At the same time, rapid technological change, including the growing use of artificial intelligence, is reshaping labor markets and accelerating the need for reskilling and career transitions. These trends underscore the urgency for colleges to adapt program design, delivery models, and support structures to better meet the needs of adult learners.

These findings highlight the importance of intentionally engaging adult learners to expand economic mobility across the SCC Region. Future SCC COE research will deepen this work through partnerships with regional community colleges, workforce development partners, and employers to center adult learner voices and co-create equitable, workforce-aligned pathways to opportunity.

Key Findings



Adult Population

- Adults represent 66% of the SCC Region population, with approximately 530,000 adults holding a high school diploma or less and approximately 325,000 that have completed some college but not a degree.
- Labor force participation and unemployment rates vary by race and ethnicity, with higher rates of unemployment for Black or African American and Hispanic or Latino adults. These groups also have the longest commute times across the region.
- Hispanic or Latino adults have the highest rates of limited English proficiency and have more children than other groups, suggesting they may have more caregiving responsibilities.



Occupational Advancement

- Approximately 14% of adult workers are employed in Low-Quality occupations. These jobs are concentrated in the Retail, Hospitality and Tourism, and Advanced Manufacturing sectors.
- The SCC COE identified 48 in-demand advancement occupations that offer higher wages and benefits compared to Low-Quality occupations.
- SCC community colleges currently offer programs aligned with 45 of these occupations, creating opportunities to leverage existing programs to enhance career mobility for adults across the region.



Barriers and Supports

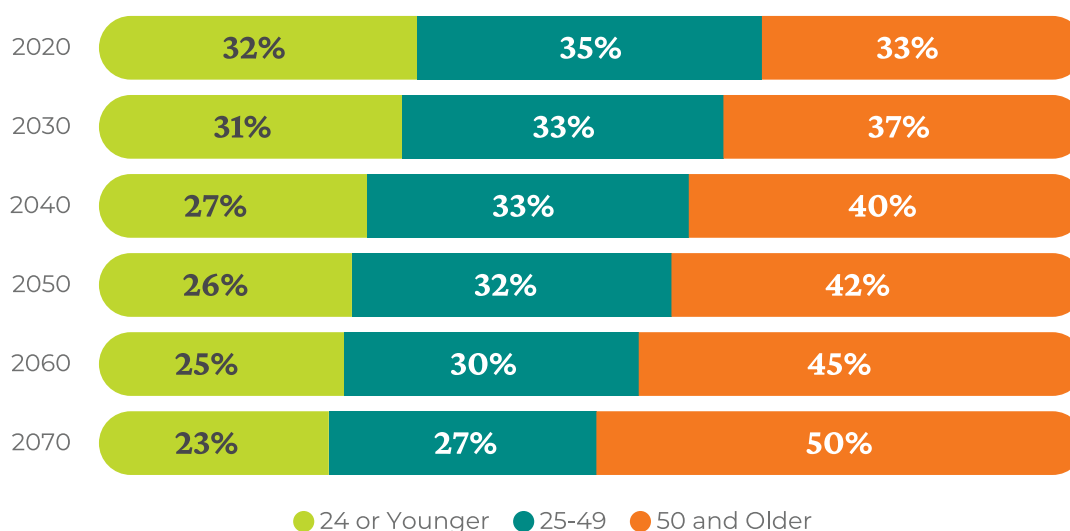
- Adult learners face distinct barriers related to financial aid policies, scheduling, recognition of prior learning, campus culture, and enrollment processes.
- Evidence-based strategies to address these barriers include flexible scheduling, Credit for Prior Learning, adult-centered Strategic Enrollment Management, targeted financial aid outreach, and institutional practices that affirm adult learners' identities and experiences.

• Introduction

Community colleges across the nation are navigating a period of significant demographic transition. Enrollment among traditional college-age students, defined as undergraduate students ages 18 to 24 who typically enroll immediately after high school, has declined. Educational pathways for these students typically assume full-time study with fewer work and caregiving responsibilities. At the same time, there is growing employer demand for postsecondary credentials that demonstrate workforce readiness and skills.¹

Within California, community colleges face declining enrollment among recent high school graduates, placing fiscal pressure on institutions and intensifying the need to engage new student populations.² This issue is likely to persist for the foreseeable future, as the share of individuals age 24 and younger and age 25 to 49 are projected to decline throughout the state. Conversely, the percentage of individuals age 50 and older is projected to steadily increase, as shown in Exhibit 1.

Exhibit 1: Projected Percentage of Population in California by Age Group, 2020 to 2070



Despite these challenges, recent research and reporting indicate that adult learners are returning to education in increasing numbers, driven by labor market instability, wage stagnation, automation, and the growing influence of artificial Intelligence on employment pathways.⁴ Nationally, more than one million individuals in their 40s are enrolled in undergraduate or graduate programs, often seeking career transitions, higher wages, or increased job security.⁵ According to one study, “in recent years, career transitions are more common than before as employees seek to gain knowledge, skills, and abilities that are in demand.”⁶ Additionally, “workers find themselves needing additional postsecondary education to earn family-sustaining wages, and companies find themselves unable to fill talent gaps at every level.”⁷

The decline in enrollment among traditional college-age students and increased demand for postsecondary credentials provides an opportunity for community colleges to focus on adult reskilling and align postsecondary education with workforce needs.^{8,9,10,11} Adult learners represent a significant population that can help stabilize enrollment while addressing workforce shortages, underscoring the importance of centering adult learners within institutional planning, workforce alignment, and equity initiatives.

• Defining the Adult Population and Adult Learners

For the purposes of this report, the SCC COE defines the adult population as all individuals age 25 and older, while adult learners are defined as undergraduate students age 25 and older who are enrolled in postsecondary education. This population includes returning students, first-generation college students, parents and caregivers, veterans, career changers, and recent immigrants.¹² Adult learners are not a monolithic group and their needs differ from traditional college-age students due to the complexity of balancing education with work, caregiving, and financial obligations.¹³

The number of potential adult learners represents a substantial opportunity for institutions to expand adult-focused pathways.¹⁴ Nearly 5.5 million Californians age 25 and older have completed a high school diploma as their highest level of education.¹⁵ Additionally, over 5.3 million Californians have completed “some college, no degree” as their highest level of education, having accumulated credits without completing a credential.¹⁶ Within the SCC region, 35% of adults (nearly 530,000) have a high school diploma or less as their highest level of education and 22% (nearly 325,000) have completed some college, but did not obtain a degree.

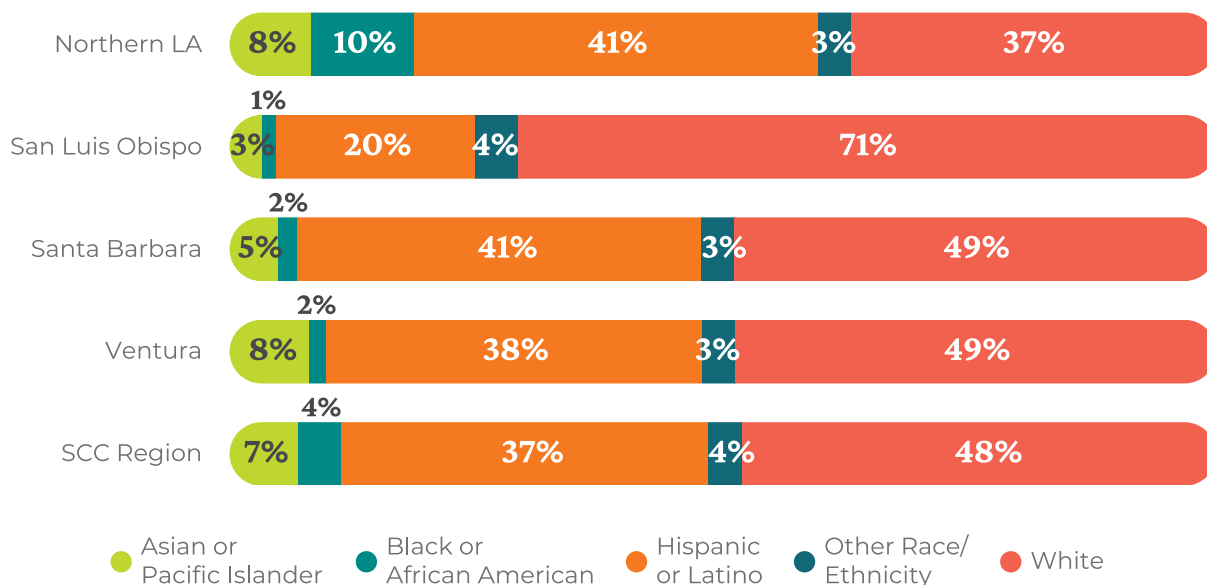
Adult Population Demographics

To understand the challenges adult learners may face, it is important to first understand the demographics of the adult population across the SCC Region and its counties. This section considers several characteristics of the adult population including race and ethnicity, sex, education and employment, English proficiency, and transportation usage.

Race and Ethnicity

Across the SCC Region, white adults remain the largest racial and ethnic group, accounting for 48% of the population, followed closely by Hispanic or Latino adults (37%), as shown in Exhibit 2. Notably, Northern LA has a higher concentration of Hispanic or Latino adults (41%), while San Luis Obispo County has a substantially higher white adult population (71%) compared to the overall SCC Region.

Exhibit 2: Race and Ethnicity of Adult Population

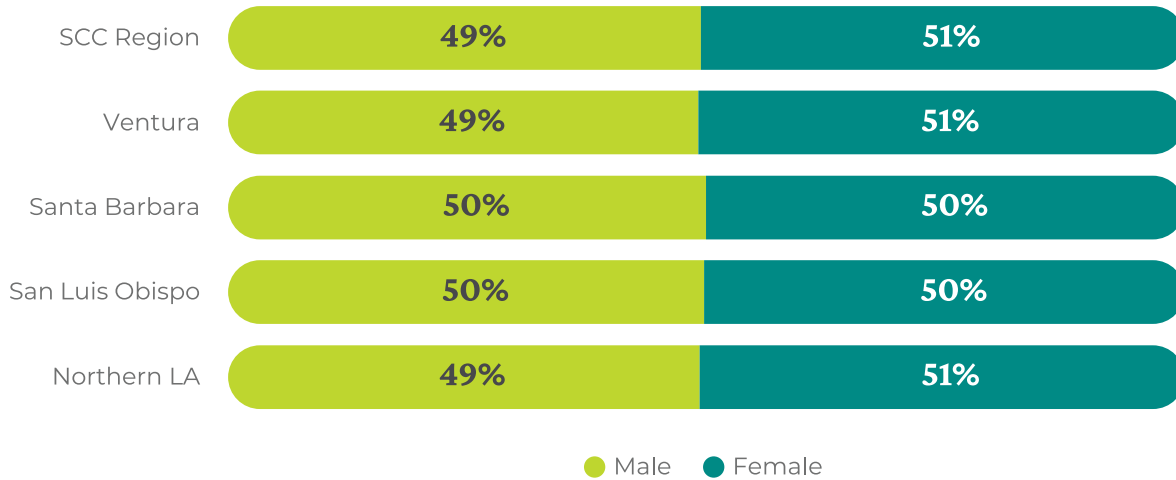


DEFINING THE ADULT POPULATION AND ADULT LEARNERS, CONTINUED

Sex

The adult population across the SCC Region is split nearly evenly by sex, with women making up a slight majority (51%) of the population. This near parity is consistent across all subregions, as shown in Exhibit 3.

Exhibit 3: Population by Sex

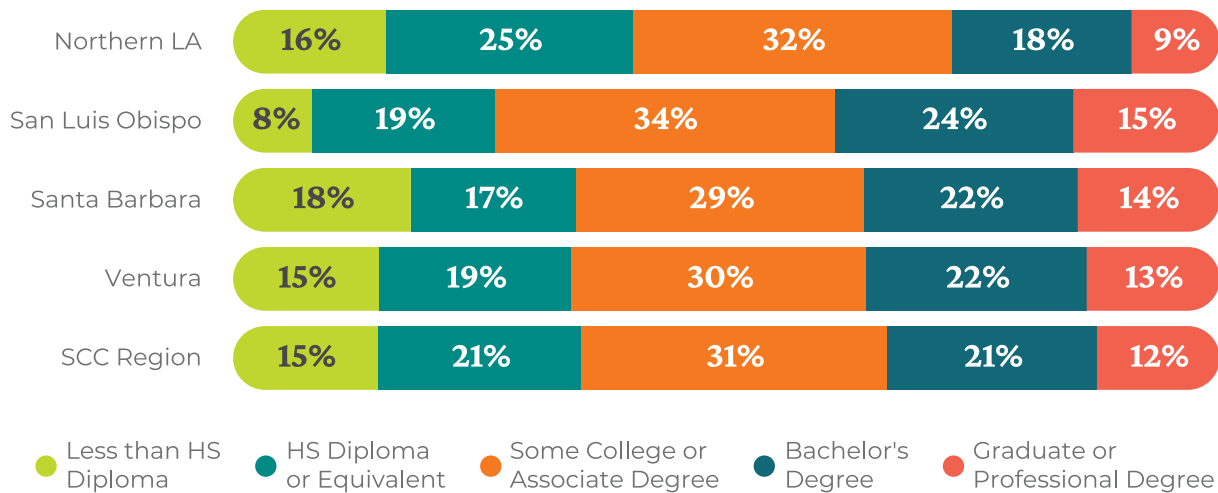


Education and Employment

Approximately 31% of adults across the SCC Region have completed some college or an associate degree as their highest level of education, the largest share of any education level. Additionally, the percentage of adults that have completed a high school diploma or equivalent (21%) is equivalent to those that completed a bachelor’s degree (21%), while a smaller percentage have completed a graduate or professional degree (12%). Notably, 15% of adults have completed less than a high school diploma.

Examining differences across the four SCC counties, Santa Barbara and Northern LA counties have a slightly higher concentration of adults without a high school diploma (18% and 16%, respectively). Conversely, San Luis Obispo County has a comparatively larger share of adults that have completed a bachelor’s (24%) or graduate or professional degree (15%). The educational attainment for adults in the SCC Region and its four counties are shown in Exhibit 4.

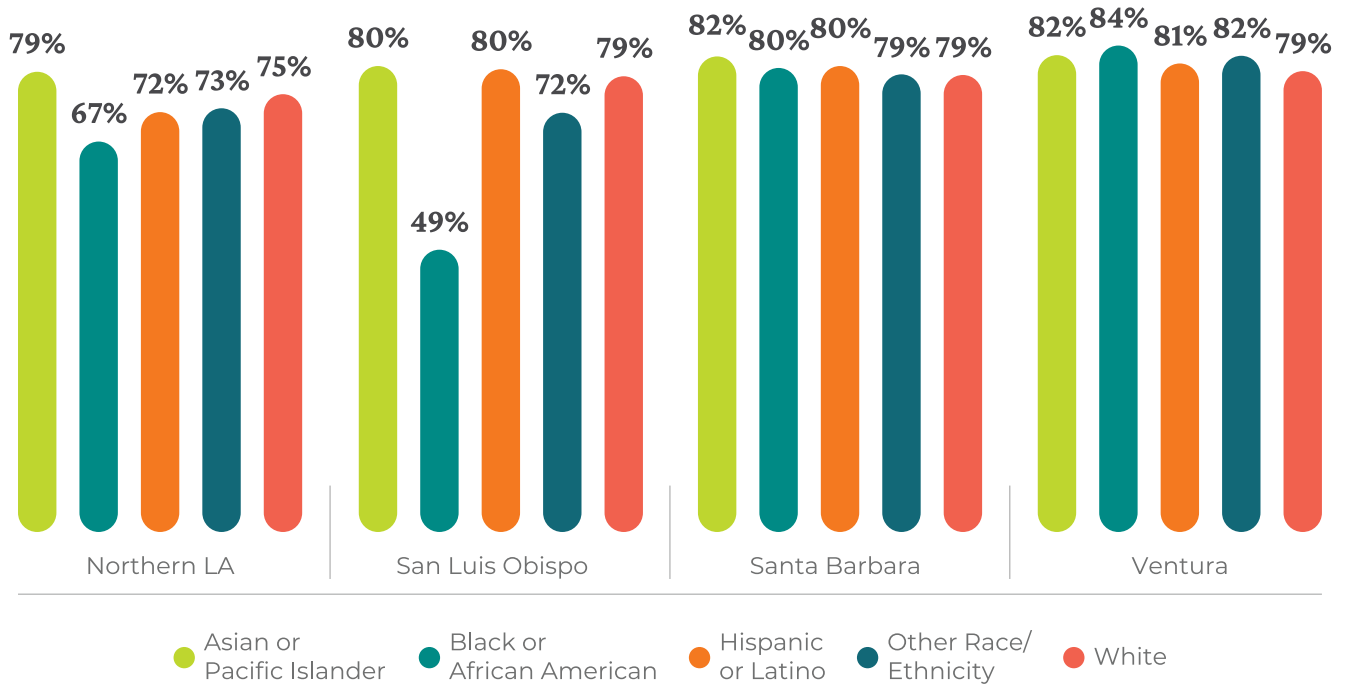
Exhibit 4: Educational Attainment



DEFINING THE ADULT POPULATION AND ADULT LEARNERS, CONTINUED

Exhibit 5 shows how labor force participation rates across the SCC Region are generally high across most racial and ethnic groups, particularly in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties, where participation is consistently around 80% or higher for all groups. Notable disparities remain in Northern LA and San Luis Obispo counties, where Black or African American adults have lower labor force participation rates relative to other groups.

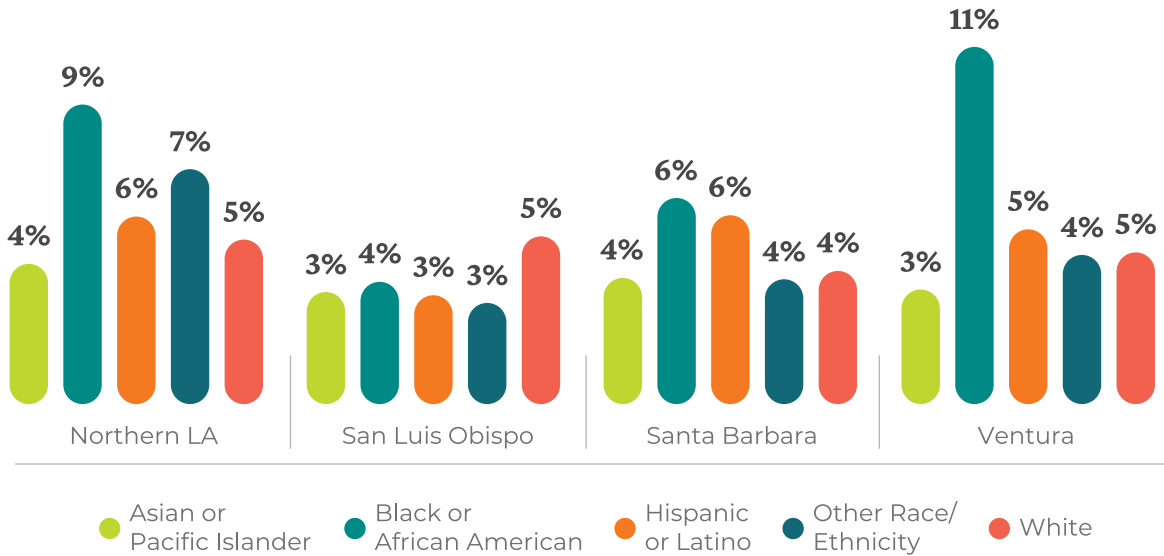
Exhibit 5: Labor Force Participation Rate



DEFINING THE ADULT POPULATION AND ADULT LEARNERS, CONTINUED

The adult unemployment rate across the SCC Region varies by race and ethnicity, with Black or African American adults consistently experiencing the highest unemployment in each subregion, ranging from 4% in San Luis Obispo County to 11% in Ventura County. In contrast, Asian or Pacific Islander and White adults generally have lower unemployment rates across the region, as shown in Exhibit 6.

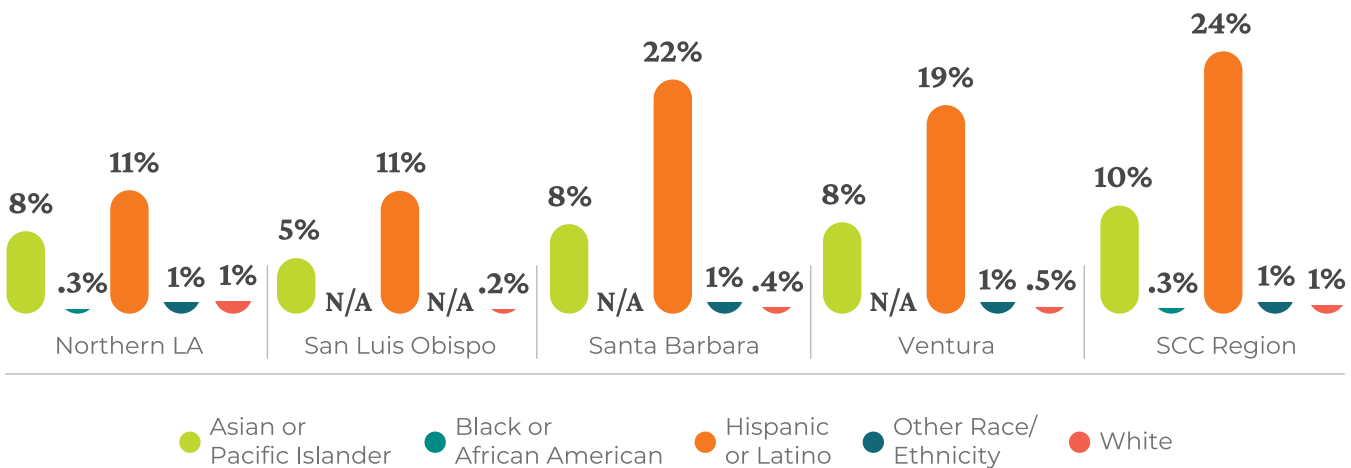
Exhibit 6: Unemployment Rate



English Proficiency

Exhibit 7 shows how Hispanic or Latino adults have higher rates of limited English proficiency across the SCC Region, reaching particularly high levels in Santa Barbara County (22%) and Ventura County (19%). Approximately 10% of Asian or Pacific Islander adults have limited English proficiency across the region. In contrast, less than 1% of White and Black or African American adults have limited English proficiency across all subregions.

Exhibit 7: Limited English Proficiency



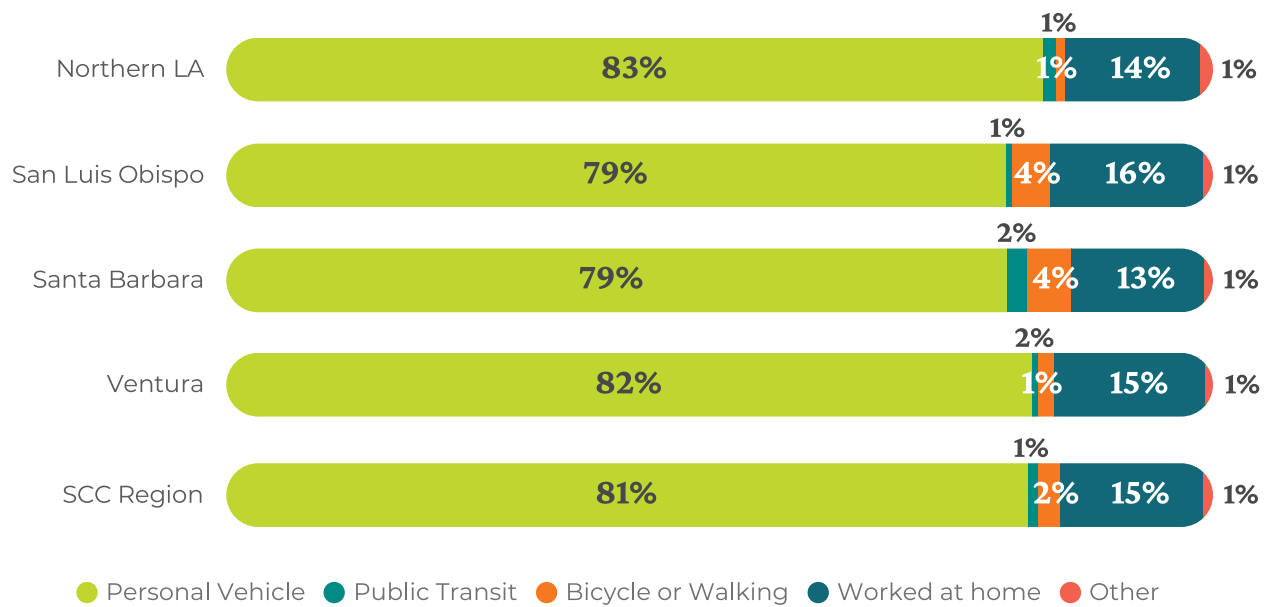
DEFINING THE ADULT POPULATION AND ADULT LEARNERS, CONTINUED

Transportation and Commuting

Exhibit 8 shows how adult workers overwhelmingly rely on personal vehicles as their primary mode of transportation to work across the SCC Region. Approximately 81% of adult workers in the region commute by personal vehicle, with rates ranging from 79% in San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties to 83% in Northern Los Angeles County. This pattern aligns with other regional data that shows nearly all adults in the region have access to at least one vehicle.

Other forms of commuting, such as public transit, biking, or walking, account for a small share of commuters, generally less than 5% across counties. Notably, 16% of adult workers across the SCC Region worked from home.

Exhibit 8: Mode of Transportation to Work for Adult Workers



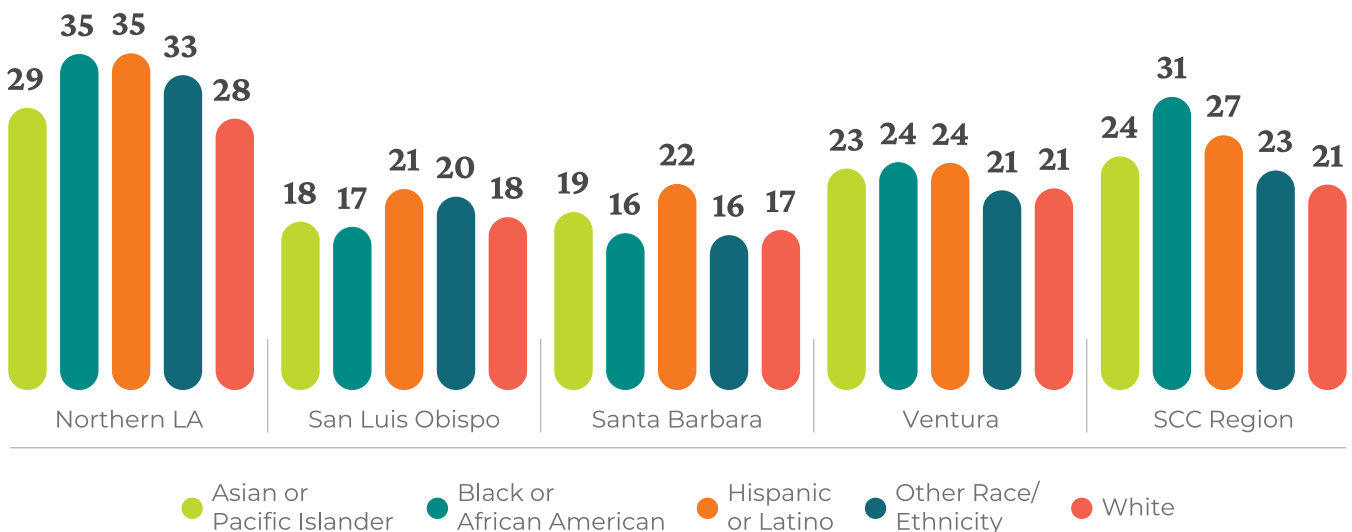
DEFINING THE ADULT POPULATION AND ADULT LEARNERS, CONTINUED

“Additionally, ‘workers find themselves needing additional postsecondary education to earn family-sustaining wages, and companies find themselves unable to fill talent gaps at every level.’”

Exhibit 9 shows that average commute times for adult workers vary by both region and race and ethnicity, Northern Los Angeles County adult workers have the longest commutes overall, particularly for Black or African American and Hispanic or Latino workers, whose average commute times are approximately 35 minutes. In contrast, adult workers in San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties have shorter average commute times across all racial and ethnic groups, generally ranging between 16 and 22 minutes. Adult workers in Ventura County have more moderate commute times, clustering in the low-to-mid 20-minute range for all groups.

Across the SCC region overall, Black or African American and Hispanic or Latino adult workers experience longer average commute times than White workers, which may be reflective of regional and racial disparities in access to nearby employment opportunities.

Exhibit 9: Average Commute Time, in Minutes, for Adult Workers



DEFINING THE ADULT POPULATION AND ADULT LEARNERS, CONTINUED

Children and Family Composition

Exhibit 10 shows that 55% of adults in the SCC Region do not have children while 45% have children. The proportion of adults with children varies by county, ranging from 35% in San Luis Obispo County to 52% in Northern Los Angeles County.

Exhibit 10: Percentage of Adults With and Without Children

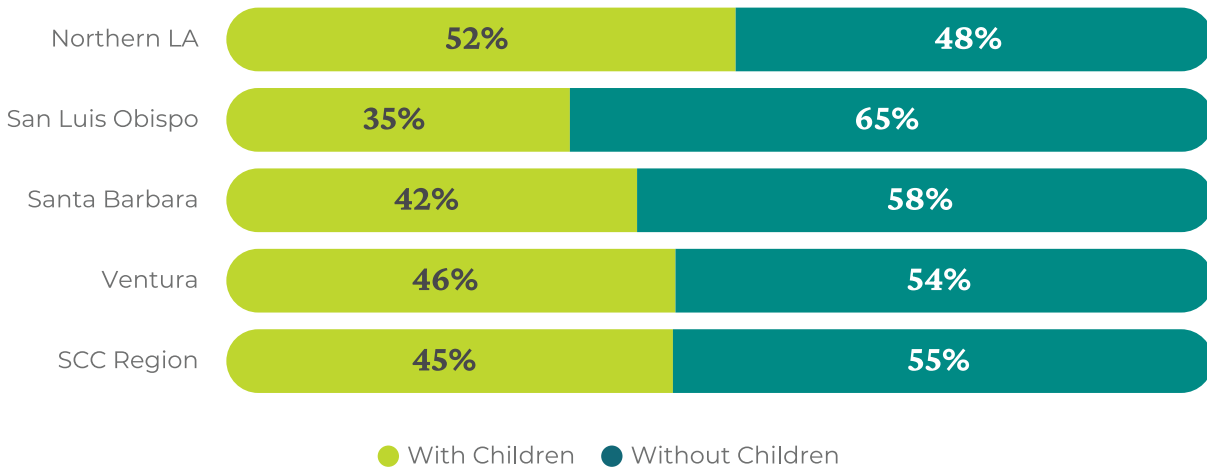
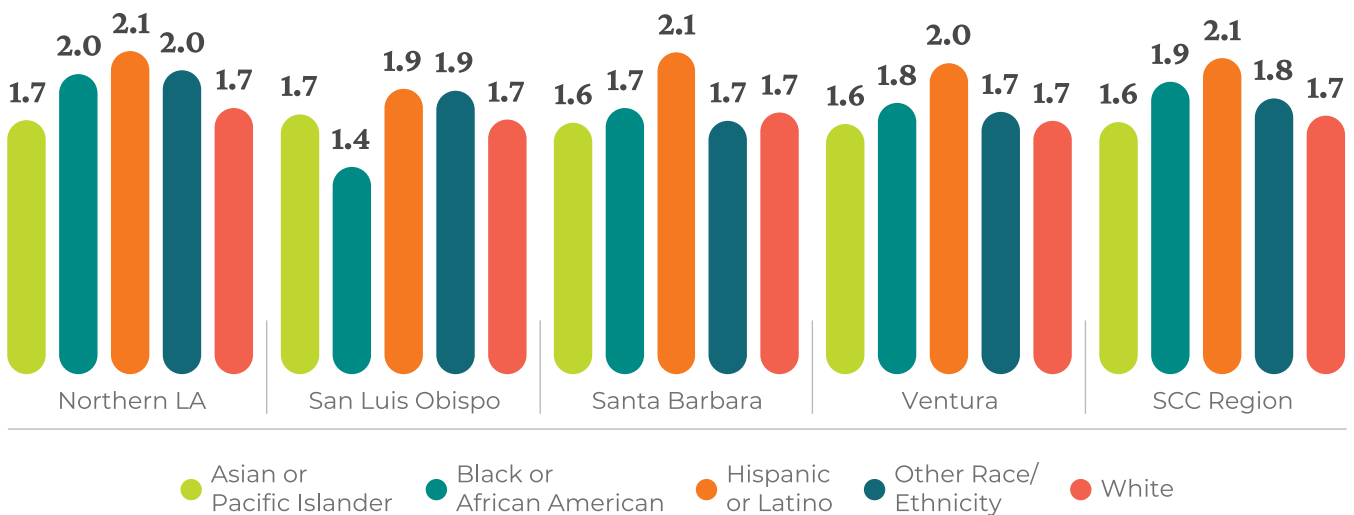


Exhibit 11 shows that across the South Central Coast region, adults with children have an average of approximately 1.6 to 2.1 children, with modest variation by county and race and ethnicity. Hispanic or Latino adults consistently report the highest average number of children across all regions, reaching 2.1 children in Northern Los Angeles and Santa Barbara counties and across the SCC region overall. In contrast, Asian or Pacific Islander and White adults tend to have fewer children, ranging between 1.6 and 1.8 children across counties.

Exhibit 11: Average Number of Children for Adults With Children



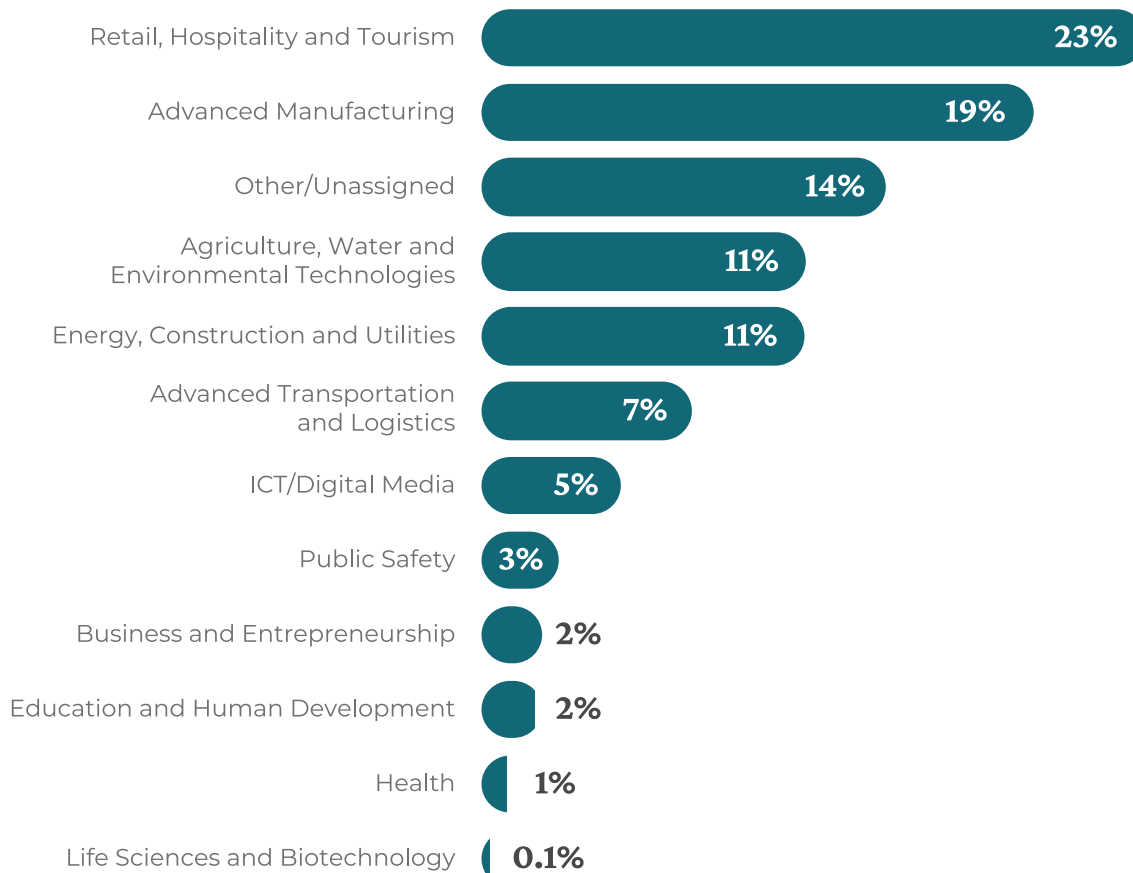
● Identifying Potential Opportunities for Adult Learners

Occupations for Advancement

As shown in the previous section, the adult population represents a diverse group of individuals. Examining demographic data for adult workers across the SCC Region shows that approximately 14% of adult workers are employed in Low-Quality occupations. These occupations play an important role as entry points into the labor market and as accessible employment opportunities for many workers, but do not typically offer the same long-term financial security and career mobility as higher quality occupations.

Of the 14% of adult workers in Low-Quality occupations, 23% are working in Retail, Hospitality and Tourism jobs, followed by Advanced Manufacturing (19%), and Other/Unassigned (14%). Exhibit 12 shows the number and percentage of adult workers in Low-Quality occupations by sector.

Exhibit 12: Percentage of Adult Workers in Low Quality Occupations by Sector



Adult workers in sectors with high percentages of Low-Quality jobs could be targeted for educational programs that can help them advance in their careers, earn higher wages, and receive more benefits. Workers in low-wage and low-quality jobs typically have less upward mobility. Nationally, “only 43 percent of workers in low-wage occupations leave low-wage work” over a 10-year period.¹⁷ These low-wage occupations nationally are similar to the Low-Quality occupations within the SCC Region and are concentrated in clusters such as assemblers and machine operators, food services, and customer service. Targeted training and reskilling programs could help these workers break the cycle of low-wage job transitions.

IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADULT LEARNERS: OCCUPATIONS FOR ADVANCEMENT, CONTINUED

Identifying Advancement Occupations through Labor Market Data

To support career mobility for adults in the SCC Region, the SCC COE analyzed labor market data for potential occupations that adult workers and learners can consider for upward advancement. These Advancement Occupations are:

- **Middle-skill:** occupations that typically require more than a high school diploma, but less than a bachelor’s degree.¹⁸
- **Medium- or High-Quality:** occupations that meet the criteria to be considered Medium- or High-Quality based on the SCC COE’s analysis of occupations in the South Central Coast Labor Market Landscape.¹⁹
- **Meet at least two of the following three criteria in the SCC COE’s Job Quality Framework:**²⁰
 - **Demand:** at least 34 projected job openings through 2029.
 - **Living Wage:** entry-level wages that meet or exceed the SCC Region Self-Sufficiency Standard living wage of \$25.12 per hour.
 - **Employer-Sponsored Health Coverage:** more than 65% of workers in the occupation have employer-sponsored health coverage.

A total of 177 occupations meet these criteria. Of those, 48 occupations were in the top 25 by either demand or wages. A full list of these 48 Advancement Occupations, along with labor market data for each occupation, are listed in Appendix B. Key data points for these Advancement Occupations are listed in the graphic following in the next column.

Exhibit 13 shows a comparison of Low-Quality Occupations to these 48 Advancement Occupations. On average, wages for these 48 occupations are 60% higher than Low-Quality occupations.

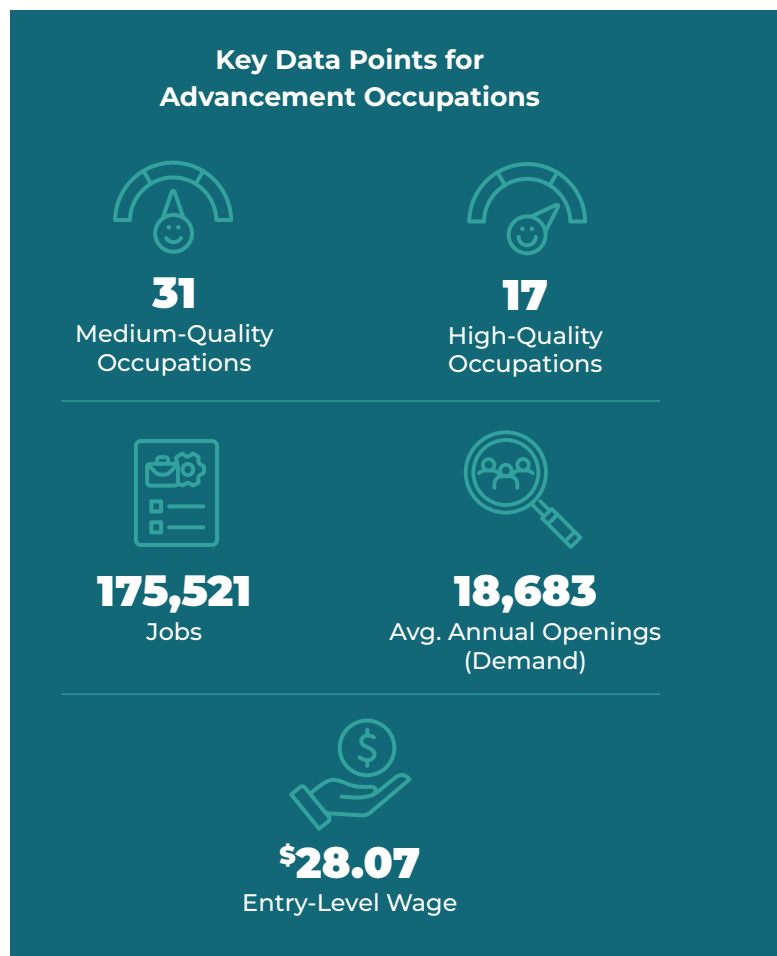


Exhibit 13: Comparison of Labor Market Data for Low-Quality and Advancement Occupations

| Data Point | Low-Quality Occupations | Advancement Occupations |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 2024 Jobs | 102,886 | 175,521 |
| 2024-2029 % Change | (0.1%) | 2% |
| Avg. Annual Openings (Demand) | 17,460 | 18,683 |
| Typical Entry-Level Wage | \$17.56 | \$28.07 |

Several of these Advancement Occupations have entry-level wages above the living wage, while others do not. The following sections analyze below and above living wage Advancement Occupations, highlighting occupations for which SCC Region community colleges offer related training programs.

IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADULT LEARNERS: OCCUPATIONS FOR ADVANCEMENT, CONTINUED

Below Living Wage Advancement Occupations

Of the 48 Advancement Occupations, 33% (16) have entry-level wages below the living wage. However, compared to Low-Quality occupations, typical entry-level wages are \$2.62/hour higher for these occupations, representing a 15% potential increase in wages.

Regional community colleges could engage with adult workers in Low-Quality occupations, or out-of-workforce adults, and advertise these programs and occupations. Colleges could also demonstrate how completing a program can help adults make a career switch or advance in their current position. Some of these programs are in noncredit, which provides a low-cost option that could result in earnings gains.²¹



ADVANCEMENT OCCUPATIONS SPOTLIGHT

Community College Health Pathways

An analysis of health training pathways at California Community Colleges shows that 80% of students that complete health pathways start with either short-term certificates for nursing assistants, medical assistants, and emergency medical services, or a long-term certificate in licensed vocational nursing.²² *Nursing Assistants (31-1131)* and *Medical Assistants (31-9092)* are Advancement Occupations with entry-level wages below the living wage. However, with additional education, adult learners could obtain credentials to become *Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses (29-2061)* or *Registered Nurses (29-1141)*, two above living wage Advancement Occupations.



ADVANCEMENT OCCUPATIONS SPOTLIGHT

AI Exposure and Impacts

Though these occupations are potential advancement opportunities for adult workers in Low-Quality occupations, some of them are highly exposed to general artificial intelligence (AI), suggesting that AI can conduct tasks conducted by workers in these jobs. According to a recent study by the Brookings Institute, clerical and administrative workers have high AI-exposure and lower adaptive capacity to transition to a new job with their current skillset.²³ Occupations such as *Office Clerks, General (43-9061)*, *Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive (43-6014)*, *Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants (43-6013)*, and *Receptionists and Information Clerks (43-4171)* fall into this category. Regional community colleges should consider the potential impacts of AI on these Advancement Occupations as they engage with potential adult learners.

IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADULT LEARNERS: OCCUPATIONS FOR ADVANCEMENT, CONTINUED

Notably, many training programs for these occupations can be completed in less than three months, including programs that train customer service representatives, nursing assistants, and security guards. Others can be completed within one year, including programs for medical assisting and bookkeeping and accounting. Some of these occupations are supervisory and may require previous work experience. Regional community colleges have related training programs for all 16 of these occupations. Exhibit 14 shows the colleges with related programs.

Exhibit 14: SCC Region Community Colleges with Training Programs for Below Living Wage Advancement Occupations

| Occupation (SOC) | Avg. Annual Openings (Demand) | Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25th Percentile) | AHC | AVC | COC | CC | MC | OC | SBCC | VC |
|--|-------------------------------|---|-----|-----|-----|----|----|----|------|----|
| Office Clerks, General (43-9061) | 1,944 | \$18.73 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive (43-6014) | 1,170 | \$21.10 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Customer Service Representatives (43-4051) | 1,056 | \$18.81 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks (43-3031) | 1,043 | \$22.18 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Nursing Assistants (31-1131) | 930 | \$20.15 | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | |
| Security Guards (33-9032) | 928 | \$17.69 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Medical Assistants (31-9092) | 865 | \$20.98 | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers (41-1011) | 766 | \$19.11 | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | |
| Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants (43-6013) | 696 | \$21.29 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Receptionists and Information Clerks (43-4171) | 693 | \$17.57 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products (41-4012) | 580 | \$24.76 | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Social and Human Service Assistants (21-1093) | 429 | \$21.71 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education (25-2011) | 387 | \$18.02 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers (51-9061) | 369 | \$20.13 | | | | | | | | |
| First-Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers (45-1011) | 352 | \$18.19 | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material Moving Workers, Except Aircraft Cargo Handling Supervisors (53-1047) | 294 | \$23.34 | | ✓ | | | | ✓ | | |

College name abbreviations used in the table above: AHC = Allan Hancock College, AVC = Antelope Valley College, COC = College of the Canyons, CC = Cuesta College, MC = Moorpark College, OC = Oxnard College, SBCC = Santa Barbara City College, and VC = Ventura College.

IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADULT LEARNERS: OCCUPATIONS FOR ADVANCEMENT, CONTINUED

Above Living Wage Advancement Occupations

Of the 48 advancement occupations, 67% (32) have entry-level wages above the living wage. Compared to High-Quality occupations, typical entry-level wages are \$21.58/hour higher, representing a 123% potential increase in wages. However, these occupations typically take longer to complete and adult learners entering these programs may face barriers related to scheduling and course availability.

Regional community colleges could target adult workers in Low-Quality occupations that may be interested in longer-term training programs that could lead to significantly higher wages. Hanover Research recommends developing outcomes-focused recruitment, focusing on how a program can help adult learners achieve their goals, and “tailoring information to fit the varying motivations one finds among adult learners.” Considering the different motivations adult learners have, it is important for regional community colleges to communicate program length, cost, and return on investment to potential adult learners.

Training programs for these occupations can be completed in one to two years including for in-demand health occupations like diagnostic medical sonographers, radiologic technologists and technicians, and licensed vocational nurses. Other programs may take two or more years, such as dental hygiene and registered nursing. Finally, some occupations such as electricians and plumbers are apprenticeable, presenting opportunities for adult learners to earn while they learn.



ADVANCEMENT OCCUPATIONS SPOTLIGHT

High-Value Health Programs

The Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) found that throughout California, more than 70% of community college students in high-value health programs are adult learners.²⁴ Examples of these programs include registered nursing, licensed vocational nursing, radiological technology, respiratory therapy, and dental hygiene. All of these programs train for above living wage Advancement Occupations and are offered at one or more SCC Region community colleges. Despite high rates of enrollment for adult learners, PPIC found that family responsibilities, childcare, and finances can create barriers to starting or completing these programs.²⁵



IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADULT LEARNERS: OCCUPATIONS FOR ADVANCEMENT, CONTINUED

Regional community colleges have related training programs for 31 of these occupations. There are only three occupations for which programs are not offered: Elevator and Escalator Installers and Repairers (47-4021), Nuclear Power Reactor Operators (51-8011), and Air Traffic Controllers (53-2021). Exhibit 15 shows the colleges with related programs.

Exhibit 15: SCC Region Community Colleges with Training Programs for Above Living Wage Advancement Occupations

| Occupation (SOC) | Avg. Annual Openings (Demand) | Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25th Percentile) | AHC | AVC | COC | CC | MC | OC | SBCC | VC |
|---|-------------------------------|---|-----|-----|-----|----|----|----|------|----|
| General and Operations Managers (11-1021) | 1,366 | \$35.81 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Registered Nurses (29-1141) | 1,060 | \$51.89 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers (43-1011) | 774 | \$27.99 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers (33-3051) | 421 | \$47.08 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Electricians (47-2111) | 385 | \$25.97 | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | | | ✓ |
| First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers (47-1011) | 385 | \$32.65 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses (29-2061) | 367 | \$32.46 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | |
| Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters (47-2152) | 307 | \$26.01 | ✓ | | | | | | | |
| First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers (51-1011) | 299 | \$27.21 | | | | | | | ✓ | |
| Administrative Services Managers (11-3012) | 155 | \$40.79 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Dental Hygienists (29-1292) | 115 | \$52.95 | | | | | | ✓ | | |
| First-Line Supervisors of Police and Detectives (33-1012) | 73 | \$72.30 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Radiologic Technologists and Technicians (29-2034) | 73 | \$39.47 | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers (49-9051) | 70 | \$40.08 | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | | | ✓ |
| Respiratory Therapists (29-1126) | 49 | \$42.68 | | ✓ | | | | | | |
| First-Line Supervisors of Firefighting and Prevention Workers (33-1021) | 49 | \$47.50 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | | |
| Detectives and Criminal Investigators (33-3021) | 38 | \$47.88 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Computer Network Architects (15-1241) | 36 | \$47.36 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Diagnostic Medical Sonographers (29-2032) | 30 | \$41.21 | ✓ | | ✓ | | | | ✓ | |
| Electrical and Electronics Repairers, Powerhouse, Substation, and Relay (49-2095) | 21 | \$40.33 | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | | | ✓ |
| First-Line Supervisors of Correctional Officers (33-1011) | 20 | \$55.53 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Avionics Technicians (49-2091) | 18 | \$39.57 | | ✓ | | ✓ | | | | |
| Magnetic Resonance Imaging Technologists (29-2035) | 14 | \$39.23 | ✓ | | ✓ | | | | ✓ | |

IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADULT LEARNERS: OCCUPATIONS FOR ADVANCEMENT, CONTINUED

| Occupation (SOC) | Avg. Annual Openings (Demand) | Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25th Percentile) | AHC | AVC | COC | CC | MC | OC | SBCC | VC |
|---|-------------------------------|---|-----|-----|-----|----|----|----|------|----|
| Fire Inspectors and Investigators (33-2021) | 13 | \$41.28 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | | |
| Air Traffic Controllers (53-2021) | 13 | \$52.20 | | | | | | | | |
| Elevator and Escalator Installers and Repairers (47-4021) | 7 | \$38.97 | | | | | | | | |
| Postmasters and Mail Superintendents (11-9131) | 6 | \$51.18 | | | | | | | | ✓ |
| Nuclear Power Reactor Operators (51-8011) | 6 | \$51.00 | | | | | | | | |
| Power Distributors and Dispatchers (51-8012) | 5 | \$48.02 | | | | | ✓ | | | |
| Radiation Therapists (29-1124) | 4 | \$60.69 | ✓ | | | | | | ✓ | |
| Gas Plant Operators (51-8092) | 2 | \$51.62 | | | | | | | | |
| Transit and Railroad Police (33-3052) | 0 | \$43.45 | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | |

College name abbreviations used in the table above: AHC = Allan Hancock College, AVC = Antelope Valley College, COC = College of the Canyons, CC = Cuesta College, MC = Moorpark College, OC = Oxnard College, SBCC = Santa Barbara City College, and VC = Ventura College.



• Addressing Barriers for Adult Learners

Although these occupations offer strong pathways for adult learners and opportunities for regional community colleges, understanding the barriers adults face in accessing and completing programs is critical. This section identifies key barriers and highlights evidence-based strategies colleges can use to support adult learner success.

Financial Barriers and Financial Aid Eligibility

A national survey of adult learners found that 56% of adult learners who stopped out of programs did so for monetary reasons.²⁶ For adults not currently enrolled in higher education, financial aid was cited as the second most important factor in motivating them for enrollment.²⁷

However, adult learners often encounter institutional policies and processes that unintentionally disadvantage them because many of these policies are designed around assumptions associated with traditional college-age students. Additionally, “adult learners’ perspectives on financing their current educational pursuits are often formed by their previous postsecondary experiences in which they may have exhausted available grant dollars or taken on loan debt without ending up with a credential of value, or a credential of any kind.”²⁸

While need-based financial aid programs, including the Pell Grant, are available to part-time students, financial aid policies and institutional practices are largely structured around continuous enrollment and linear academic progression. Requirements such as Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), lifetime eligibility limits, and complex recertification processes can disproportionately disadvantage adult learners whose enrollment patterns are shaped by work, caregiving, and economic instability. Policy analysts have proposed resetting SAP standing after a period of non-enrollment specifically to reduce barriers for returning students and adult learners, illustrating that the issue is recognized at the policy level as an access problem.²⁹

A study from California Competes suggests that institutional practices can mitigate financial aid barriers for adult learners even within existing federal policy structures. One rural community college established a dedicated financial aid liaison for adult learners to provide proactive outreach, individualized guidance on eligibility and Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements, and ongoing support throughout the enrollment and completion process. This targeted approach improved adult learners’ ability to navigate financial aid systems and reduced administrative barriers associated with part-time enrollment and non-linear academic pathways.³⁰

The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) recommends several institutional practices to address financial barriers for adult learners, including:

- Reducing or eliminating excess student fees, removing transcript holds for former students that are reengaging with education but owe small balances.
- Revisiting SAP rules to ensure that they are not adding additional penalties for returning adult learners.
- Proactively engage adult learners and conduct targeted financial aid outreach while also training financial aid advisors on adult-learner specific barriers such as SAP, assessment of prior learning, and full-time versus part-time enrollment and its impacts on financial aid.³¹



ADDRESSING BARRIERS FOR ADULT LEARNERS, CONTINUED

Scheduling

Research consistently shows that adult learners are highly motivated to complete postsecondary credentials but must balance education alongside employment, caregiving, and other responsibilities that limit their availability for traditional course schedules.³² When courses are offered primarily during standard daytime hours, follow fixed semester lengths, or lack predictable scheduling patterns, adult learners are more likely to stop out or reduce enrollment intensity.³³ Studies emphasize that these outcomes reflect misalignment between institutional design and adult learners' lived realities.³⁴

Taken together, the literature underscores that scheduling flexibility supports adult learner success.³⁵ Common approaches for flexible scheduling include shorter academic terms such as eight-week courses, evening and weekend scheduling, hybrid and online modalities, and predictable course sequencing that allows students to plan around work and family commitments.³⁶ Programs that offer multiple entry and exit points further reduce risk by enabling adult learners to pause and re-enter education without losing momentum or accumulated progress.³⁷ Furthermore, coherent pathways, clear program maps, and advising that integrates academic planning with labor market information can help improve persistence and completion.³⁸

Collectively, the above findings suggest that flexible pathways and scheduling enable adult learners to persist and complete credentials while maintaining employment and family responsibilities.

Prior Learning

Limited or inconsistent recognition of prior learning can require adult learners to repeat coursework in areas where they already possess substantial professional or life experience, increasing time to completion and overall cost. Enrollment, advising, and onboarding processes are often fragmented across departments, requiring adult learners to navigate complex systems with limited guidance. Collectively, these policies and processes inadvertently create barriers to access, persistence, and completion.³⁹

Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) and Prior Learning Assessment frameworks are identified as effective strategies for mitigating these barriers by recognizing skills acquired through work and life experience.⁴⁰ CPL can significantly shorten the time and cost to degree completion and reduce redundancy for adult learners who have developed relevant competencies outside of formal education.

However, challenges remain. The CPL assessment process can be complex and requires coordinated advising, faculty involvement, and detailed documentation. Additionally, not all industry credentials or experiential learning automatically translate to credit. Some students may incur fees or need support to prepare portfolios for assessments based on their specific work experience. Some colleges have addressed the complexity of portfolio-based assessment by creating structured CPL support systems that provide advising, documentation guidance, and faculty coordination. Evidence from the California Adult Education Program identifies these centralized supports as a promising practice for increasing adult learner access to credit recognition while reducing procedural barriers.⁴¹ Ensuring that CPL opportunities are well-publicized, consistently applied, and embedded in advising practices is essential to maximizing its benefit for adult learners.



ADDRESSING BARRIERS FOR ADULT LEARNERS, CONTINUED



ADVANCEMENT OCCUPATIONS SPOTLIGHT

Credit for Prior Learning in the SCC Region

Across the SCC Region, community colleges use Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) to enable students to earn college credit for knowledge and skills they have already acquired through non-traditional avenues such as work experience, industry certifications, military training, standardized examinations (e.g., CLEP, AP, IB), or student-created portfolios. However, a review of SCC community college websites shows that each college has a slightly different process, intake/interest form, and/or policies.

For example, to pursue CPL at Cuesta College, students must be enrolled and in good standing, complete a Comprehensive Student Education Plan, and petition for assessment through the appropriate academic division; faculty review determines whether prior learning outcomes align with specific course objectives, and approved credit is transcribed on the student's academic record just as if the coursework had been completed through enrollment.⁵⁶

Moorpark, Oxnard, and Ventura colleges have a publicly available CPL petition,⁵⁷ while College of the Canyons⁵⁸ and Santa Barbara City College⁵⁹ have publicly available interest/inquiry forms that students must submit. At Allan Hancock College, CPL policies are outlined Board Policy 4235⁶⁰ while Antelope Valley Colleges CPL policies are included in the academic policies section of the college catalog.⁶¹

Cultural and Attitudinal Barriers

Cultural and attitudinal barriers within campus environments that are oriented toward traditional college-age students may create barriers for adult learners. Research on adult learners' classroom experiences has found that "adult students not only commonly express different classroom experiences and needs than traditional age students, but they are also often underserved and marginalized in campus interactions and supports that assume traditional student roles."⁴²

These findings underscore that campus cultures, student support systems, and instructional practices have historically been designed around the traditional college student. Additionally, "adult learners frequently experience marginalization and feel underserved on campus because institutional environments, norms, and services are often shaped around the expectations of a traditional undergraduate population."⁴³

This marginalization has implications for student success. Research emphasizes that sense of belonging is strongly associated with academic engagement, persistence, and overall wellbeing, particularly for adult learners. Studies show that when students perceive themselves as valued members of the campus community, they are more likely to persist and seek academic support.⁴⁴ The absence of belonging for adult learners can intensify feelings of isolation and contribute to disengagement, as well as stop-out behavior.⁴⁵ Research further suggests that institutional practices that affirm students' identities and life experiences are critical for fostering belonging and improving persistence.⁴⁶

Effective strategies for addressing cultural and attitudinal barriers include:

- Reframing institutional messaging to include adult learners.
- Providing professional development for faculty and staff on adult learner pedagogy and inclusive practices.
- Designing student engagement opportunities that reflect adult learners' schedules, responsibilities, and strengths.⁴⁷

ADDRESSING BARRIERS FOR ADULT LEARNERS, CONTINUED

Institutions that embed adult learners into their mission, representation, and campus culture, are better positioned to foster belonging and improve persistence.⁴⁸ Collectively, these findings suggest that addressing cultural barriers requires not only programmatic change, but a sustained institutional commitment to recognizing adult learners as a central and valued part of the campus community.

Enrollment Practices

Traditional Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) is largely designed around recent high school graduates and assumes full-time, continuous enrollment. As noted throughout this report, adult learners are often part-time and may be re-enrolling in higher education or enrolling for the first time.

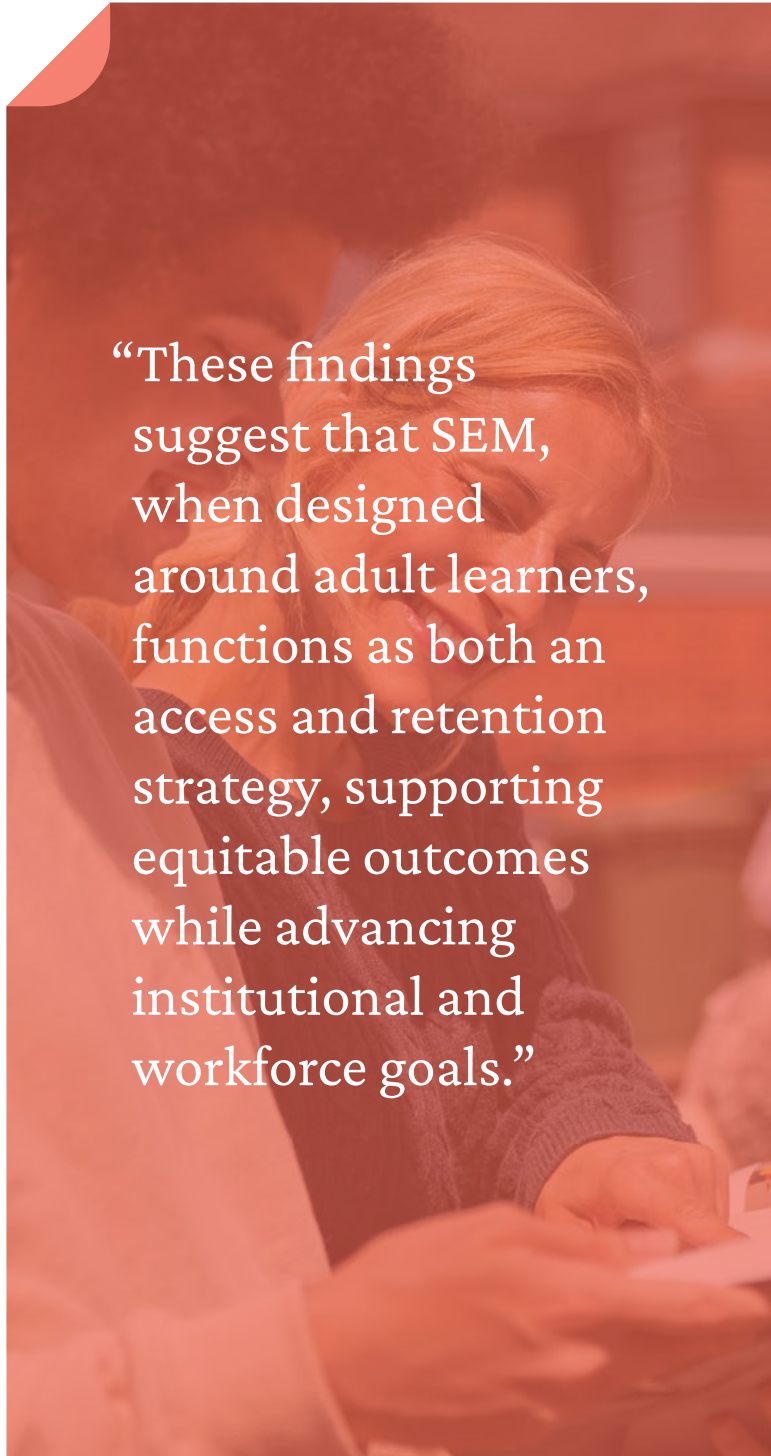
SEM focused on adult learners could improve access, persistence, and reenrollment among adult student populations.⁴⁹ Unlike traditional SEM models, adult-focused SEM restructures recruitment, onboarding, advising, and retention practices to reflect adult learners' distinct life circumstances.⁵⁰ Research indicates that adult learners often disengage due to misalignment between institutional processes and their lived realities.⁵¹

Adult-focused SEM operates through a coordinated set of practices that span the entire student lifecycle. These include:

- Targeted outreach and messaging that speak to adult learners' motivations and goals.
- Onboarding processes that reduce administrative complexity.
- Advising models that integrate academic planning with labor market information and flexible scheduling.
- Early alert systems that identify risk factors tied to work-life disruptions rather than academic performance alone.⁵²

Studies show that institutions implementing these strategies experience improvements in adult learner enrollment, term-to-term persistence, and reenrollment.⁵³

Effective adult-focused SEM requires cross-departmental collaboration among admissions, financial aid, academic affairs, workforce partners, and student support services.⁵⁴ When implemented holistically, SEM allows colleges to shift from reactive, compliance-driven enrollment practices to proactive systems that anticipate adult learners' needs. These findings suggest that SEM, when designed around adult learners, functions as both an access and retention strategy, supporting equitable outcomes while advancing institutional and workforce goals.⁵⁵



“These findings suggest that SEM, when designed around adult learners, functions as both an access and retention strategy, supporting equitable outcomes while advancing institutional and workforce goals.”

• Conclusion


Implications for Practice

The findings from this study carry important implications for regional community colleges and workforce partners across the SCC Region. The size and diversity of the adult population underscore that adult learners are a central constituency for institutional sustainability, workforce alignment, and equity. Adults comprise approximately two-thirds of the regional population and a substantial share of adults are employed in Low-Quality occupations. Community colleges are uniquely positioned to serve as engines of upward mobility by aligning programs and pathways with adult learners' needs and labor market opportunities.

The 48 Advancement Occupations represent an opportunity to leverage existing SCC Region community college programs to support adult career mobility. These occupations offer higher wages and benefits than Low-Quality jobs. However, connecting adults to these programs will require intentional outreach, clear communication about career pathways, and program designs that accommodate adult learners' work and family responsibilities.

The barriers identified in this study suggest that improving adult learner outcomes is not solely a matter of expanding program availability. Financial aid policies, rigid scheduling structures, inconsistent recognition of prior learning, youth-centered campus cultures, and traditional enrollment practices can unintentionally limit access and persistence for adult learners. Evidence-based strategies such as flexible scheduling, Credit for Prior Learning, adult-centered Strategic Enrollment Management, and targeted financial aid support are strategies regional community colleges can use to mitigate and address these barriers.

Finally, the findings reinforce the importance of centering adult learners within institutional planning and decision-making. Colleges that align academic programs, student services, and enrollment practices around adult learners' lived realities are better positioned to improve persistence, completion, and workforce outcomes. For the SCC Region, this implies that adult learner success should be integrated into broader regional strategies related to economic development, equity, and long-term workforce resilience.



“Colleges that align academic programs, student services, and enrollment practices around adult learners’ lived realities are better positioned to improve persistence, completion, and workforce outcomes.”

CONCLUSION, CONTINUED



Limitations and Areas for Future Research

While this study provides an overview of adult population characteristics, potential Advancement Occupations, and barriers to adult learner success in the SCC Region, several limitations should be noted. First, the analysis relies primarily on secondary quantitative data sources and a qualitative review of existing literature. While these sources offer valuable regional and national insights, they cannot fully capture the lived experiences, motivations, and decision-making processes of adult learners themselves.

Second, labor market data used to identify Advancement Occupations reflects current and projected conditions but may not fully account for rapid changes driven by economic shifts, technological advancement, or industry-specific disruptions. As labor markets evolve, some occupations identified as advancement opportunities may change in demand, skill requirements, or job quality, underscoring the need for ongoing data updates and monitoring.

Third, while the report identifies evidence-based strategies shown to support adult learners, it does not evaluate the effectiveness of specific interventions within individual SCC colleges. Institutional context, capacity, and resources vary across colleges, and the implementation and impact of these strategies may differ accordingly.

The SCC COE plans on addressing these limitations in future research that incorporates adult learner voices through qualitative methods such as focus groups, interviews, and community-engaged research. As noted throughout this report, research emphasizes the importance of engaging adult learners as co-creators of solutions rather than passive recipients of services. Building on this insight, the SCC COE plans to work in partnership with regional community colleges, employers, and community organizations to co-design pathways that reflect adult learners' lived experiences and addresses regional workforce needs. These future efforts will strengthen the evidence base and ensure that adult learner strategies are locally grounded, equitable, and responsive to the communities they are intended to serve.

• Appendix A: Methodology and Data Sources

Demographic Data

The Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) is the premier source for detailed population and housing information. The ACS data used in this report was sourced from IPUMS USA, which preserves and harmonizes Census Bureau microdata, specifically using 2023 ACS data. This dataset provides granular, disaggregated information, which is crucial for producing detailed reports on population and workforce demographics. IPUMS data allows for the breakdown of occupational population workforce characteristics by race, gender, age, and education level, enabling deeper analysis of population and workforce diversity.⁶²

Occupational Data

Labor market data was sourced from Lightcast (Datarun 2025.3), a labor market analytics firm that specializes in providing insights for workforce development, economic planning, and education. Lightcast compiles its regional and occupational datasets from a variety of federal and state sources. Among these are the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), which offers detailed industry employment and wage data, and other critical sources such as the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) and Quarterly Workforce Indicators, the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics and Current Population Survey, and data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis.⁶³ These combined resources provide comprehensive insights into employment trends, wage patterns, and industry-specific workforce characteristics across the region.

Advancement Occupations Methodology

The 48 Advancement Occupations identified in this report build upon the SCC COE's Job Quality analysis that was published in Fall 2025. These Advancement Occupations are those that met the following criteria:

- **Middle-skill:** occupations that typically require more than a high school diploma, but less than a bachelor's degree. The full COE definition of middle-skill occupations are:
 - All occupations that require an educational requirement of some college, associate degree or an on-the-job training requirement of 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
 - Occupations with a typical entry-level education of high school diploma or equivalent AND typically require long-term on-the-job training;
 - Exceptions were made for select occupations with a typical entry-level education of high school diploma or equivalent or no formal education plus short or moderate on-the-job training based on a review by the Centers of Excellence.
- **Medium- or High-Quality:** occupations that meet the criteria to be considered Medium- or High-Quality based on the SCC COE's analysis of occupations in the South Central Coast Labor Market Landscape.⁶⁴
- Meet at least two of the following three criteria in the SCC COE's Job Quality analysis:⁶⁵
 - **Demand:** at least 34 projected job openings through 2029.
 - **Living Wage:** entry-level wages that meet or exceed the SCC Region Self-Sufficiency Standard living wage of \$25.12 per hour.
 - **Employer-Sponsored Health Coverage:** more than 65% of workers in the occupation have employer-sponsored health coverage.

APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGY AND DATA SOURCES , CONTINUED

Of the 796 occupations with the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system, 177 met these criteria. To focus the analysis, the SCC COE identified occupations that were in the top 25 by entry-level wages and annual job openings, resulting in the 48 Advancement Occupations analyzed in this report.

Occupational Sectors

The SCC COE categorized each of the 796 occupations within the BLS's SOC system using a SOC-Sector crosswalk that matches BLS SOC codes to CCCCCO Sectors. Occupations were assigned to sectors based on this crosswalk. It is important to note that this crosswalk is a 1:1 crosswalk, meaning that each individual SOC code is assigned to one sector.

LMI Key Terms

The traditional labor market data analyzed in this report includes:

- 2024 Jobs — the number of jobs in 2024.
- 2024–2029 % Change — the projected change in employment, expressed as a percentage. A positive percentage indicates employment is projected to increase, while a negative percentage indicates employment is projected to decrease.
- Avg. Annual Openings (Demand) — the projected number of annual job openings from 2024–2029. This figure takes into account new job creation, as well as turnover due to retirements or workers leaving the field.
- Entry-Level Hourly Earnings — the typical entry-level wages for an occupation; 25% of workers earn less than this amount and 75% earn more.
- Living Wage (Self-Sufficiency Standard) — this figure “measures the floor income necessary for an individual or family to afford basic expenses.” The California Self-Sufficiency Standard Living Wage was last updated in 2024 and is currently \$25.12 for the SCC Region.

Community College Program Data

To identify community colleges that offer related programs for the 48 Advancement Occupations identified in this report, the SCC COE used a crosswalk created by the Centers of Excellence to determine alignment between Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) and Taxonomy of Program (TOP) codes.

TOP codes are used to categorize instructional programs offered at community colleges across the state. TOP codes are also used to organize and report on program offerings, which enables consistent tracking of enrollment, completion, and other performance metrics. Each TOP code represents a specific discipline or field of study, and colleges assign these codes to their programs to ensure alignment with state reporting requirements and to facilitate analysis of educational trends which aligns each program with a Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code.

Once the TOP codes for these 48 occupations were identified, the SCC COE analyzed program data from the Chancellor's Office Curriculum Inventory (COCI). Because COCI may not include every program, particularly for low-unit, local certificates (e.g. Certificate of Completion, Certificate of Proficiency), the SCC COE also reviewed the catalog for each SCC regional community college to identify additional programs that could train for these 48 occupations.

Generally, the SCC COE chose to be specific in connecting occupations to programs when analyzing college catalogs. For example, general business programs could provide office technology and office management skills used by Office Clerks, General (43-9061). However, the SCC COE identified related programs for this occupation as those specifically related to office technology or business information workers. Any errors and/or omissions of colleges with related programs are the sole responsibility of the SCC COE.

• Appendix B: Labor Market Data for Advancement Occupations

Exhibit 16 shows labor market data, including the number of jobs in 2024, projected number of jobs in 2029, change from 2024 to 2029 as a number and percentage, projected number of annual job openings, typical entry-level earnings and education, and Job Quality Level for the 48 Advancement Occupations identified in this study.

Exhibit 16: Labor Market Data for Advancement Occupations

| Sector | Occupation (SOC) | 2024 Jobs | 2029 Jobs | 2024 - 2029 Change | 2024 - 2029 % Change | Avg. Annual Openings | Entry-Level Hourly Earnings | Typical Entry Level Education | Job Quality Level |
|---------------------------------|---|-----------|-----------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Business and Entrepreneurship | Office Clerks, General (43-9061) | 16,753 | 16,364 | (390) | (2%) | 1,944 | \$18.73 | High school diploma or equivalent | Medium |
| Business and Entrepreneurship | General and Operations Managers (11-1021) | 15,173 | 15,772 | 599 | 4% | 1,366 | \$35.81 | Bachelor's degree | High |
| Business and Entrepreneurship | Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive (43-6014) | 10,311 | 10,369 | 57 | 1% | 1,170 | \$21.10 | High school diploma or equivalent | Medium |
| Health | Registered Nurses (29-1141) | 15,982 | 16,999 | 1,017 | 6% | 1,060 | \$51.89 | Bachelor's degree | High |
| Business and Entrepreneurship | Customer Service Representatives (43-4051) | 7,974 | 7,783 | (191) | (2%) | 1,056 | \$18.81 | High school diploma or equivalent | Medium |
| Business and Entrepreneurship | Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks (43-3031) | 9,240 | 9,021 | (219) | (2%) | 1,043 | \$22.18 | Some college, no degree | Medium |
| Health | Nursing Assistants (31-1131) | 5,564 | 6,111 | 547 | 10% | 930 | \$20.15 | Postsecondary nondegree award | Medium |
| Public Safety | Security Guards (33-9032) | 6,628 | 6,869 | 240 | 4% | 928 | \$17.69 | High school diploma or equivalent | Medium |
| Health | Medical Assistants (31-9092) | 5,771 | 6,193 | 422 | 7% | 865 | \$20.98 | Postsecondary nondegree award | High |
| Business and Entrepreneurship | First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers (43-1011) | 8,230 | 8,029 | (201) | (2%) | 774 | \$27.99 | High school diploma or equivalent | Medium |
| Retail, Hospitality and Tourism | First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers (41-1011) | 7,883 | 7,625 | (258) | (3%) | 766 | \$19.11 | High school diploma or equivalent | Medium |
| Health | Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants (43-6013) | 6,311 | 6,497 | 186 | 3% | 696 | \$21.29 | High school diploma or equivalent | Medium |
| Business and Entrepreneurship | Receptionists and Information Clerks (43-4171) | 4,868 | 5,022 | 153 | 3% | 693 | \$17.57 | High school diploma or equivalent | Medium |

APPENDIX B: LABOR MARKET DATA FOR ADVANCEMENT OCCUPATIONS, CONTINUED

| Sector | Occupation (SOC) | 2024 Jobs | 2029 Jobs | 2024 - 2029 Change | 2024 - 2029 % Change | Avg. Annual Openings | Entry-Level Hourly Earnings | Typical Entry Level Education | Job Quality Level |
|---|--|-----------|-----------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Business and Entrepreneurship | Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products (41-4012) | 6,629 | 6,358 | (271) | (4%) | 580 | \$24.76 | High school diploma or equivalent | Medium |
| Health | Social and Human Service Assistants (21-1093) | 3,391 | 3,744 | 353 | 10% | 429 | \$21.71 | High school diploma or equivalent | Medium |
| Public Safety | Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers (33-3051) | 4,940 | 5,115 | 174 | 4% | 421 | \$47.08 | High school diploma or equivalent | High |
| Education and Human Development | Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education (25-2011) | 3,127 | 3,265 | 138 | 4% | 387 | \$18.02 | Associate's degree | Medium |
| Energy, Construction and Utilities | Electricians (47-2111) | 3,971 | 4,106 | 135 | 3% | 385 | \$25.97 | High school diploma or equivalent | High |
| Energy, Construction and Utilities | First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers (47-1011) | 4,366 | 4,520 | 155 | 4% | 385 | \$32.65 | High school diploma or equivalent | Medium |
| Life Sciences and Biotechnology | Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers (51-9061) | 3,137 | 3,101 | (36) | (1%) | 369 | \$20.13 | High school diploma or equivalent | Medium |
| Health | Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses (29-2061) | 3,814 | 4,069 | 255 | 7% | 367 | \$32.46 | Postsecondary nondegree award | High |
| Agriculture, Water and Environmental Technologies | First-Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers (45-1011) | 2,129 | 2,354 | 225 | 11% | 352 | \$18.19 | High school diploma or equivalent | Medium |
| Energy, Construction and Utilities | Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters (47-2152) | 3,285 | 3,386 | 100 | 3% | 307 | \$26.01 | High school diploma or equivalent | Medium |
| Advanced Manufacturing | First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers (51-1011) | 2,906 | 2,969 | 63 | 2% | 299 | \$27.21 | High school diploma or equivalent | High |
| Advanced Transportation and Logistics | First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material Moving Workers, Except Aircraft Cargo Handling Supervisors (53-1047) | 2,748 | 2,836 | 88 | 3% | 294 | \$23.34 | High school diploma or equivalent | Medium |

APPENDIX B: LABOR MARKET DATA FOR ADVANCEMENT OCCUPATIONS, CONTINUED

| Sector | Occupation (SOC) | 2024 Jobs | 2029 Jobs | 2024 - 2029 Change | 2024 - 2029 % Change | Avg. Annual Openings | Entry-Level Hourly Earnings | Typical Entry Level Education | Job Quality Level |
|---------------------------------------|---|-----------|-----------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Business and Entrepreneurship | Administrative Services Managers (11-3012) | 1,797 | 1,831 | 34 | 2% | 155 | \$40.79 | Bachelor's degree | High |
| Health | Dental Hygienists (29-1292) | 1,402 | 1,487 | 85 | 6% | 115 | \$52.95 | Associate's degree | High |
| Public Safety | First-Line Supervisors of Police and Detectives (33-1012) | 973 | 1,008 | 35 | 4% | 73 | \$72.30 | High school diploma or equivalent | High |
| Health | Radiologic Technologists and Technicians (29-2034) | 1,085 | 1,154 | 68 | 6% | 73 | \$39.47 | Associate's degree | High |
| Energy, Construction and Utilities | Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers (49-9051) | 783 | 819 | 36 | 5% | 70 | \$40.08 | High school diploma or equivalent | High |
| Health | Respiratory Therapists (29-1126) | 741 | 811 | 70 | 9% | 49 | \$42.68 | Associate's degree | High |
| Public Safety | First-Line Supervisors of Firefighting and Prevention Workers (33-1021) | 662 | 693 | 31 | 5% | 49 | \$47.50 | Postsecondary nondegree award | High |
| Public Safety | Detectives and Criminal Investigators (33-3021) | 452 | 468 | 16 | 4% | 38 | \$47.88 | High school diploma or equivalent | High |
| ICT/Digital Media | Computer Network Architects (15-1241) | 621 | 626 | 5 | 1% | 36 | \$47.36 | Bachelor's degree | High |
| Health | Diagnostic Medical Sonographers (29-2032) | 439 | 475 | 36 | 8% | 30 | \$41.21 | Associate's degree | High |
| Energy, Construction and Utilities | Electrical and Electronics Repairers, Powerhouse, Substation, and Relay (49-2095) | 226 | 230 | 3 | 1% | 21 | \$40.33 | Postsecondary nondegree award | Medium |
| Public Safety | First-Line Supervisors of Correctional Officers (33-1011) | 222 | 226 | 4 | 2% | 20 | \$55.53 | High school diploma or equivalent | Medium |
| Advanced Transportation and Logistics | Avionics Technicians (49-2091) | 184 | 197 | 13 | 7% | 18 | \$39.57 | Associate's degree | Medium |
| Health | Magnetic Resonance Imaging Technologists (29-2035) | 213 | 222 | 9 | 4% | 14 | \$39.23 | Associate's degree | Medium |
| Public Safety | Fire Inspectors and Investigators (33-2021) | 132 | 139 | 6 | 5% | 13 | \$41.28 | Postsecondary nondegree award | Medium |

APPENDIX B: LABOR MARKET DATA FOR ADVANCEMENT OCCUPATIONS, CONTINUED

| Sector | Occupation (SOC) | 2024 Jobs | 2029 Jobs | 2024 - 2029 Change | 2024 - 2029 % Change | Avg. Annual Openings | Entry-Level Hourly Earnings | Typical Entry Level Education | Job Quality Level |
|---------------------------------------|---|-----------|-----------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Advanced Transportation and Logistics | Air Traffic Controllers (53-2021) | 131 | 133 | 2 | 1% | 13 | \$52.19 | Associate's degree | Medium |
| Energy, Construction and Utilities | Elevator and Escalator Installers and Repairers (47-4021) | 79 | 79 | 0 | 0% | 7 | \$38.97 | High school diploma or equivalent | Medium |
| Other/ Unassigned | Postmasters and Mail Superintendents (11-9131) | 80 | 73 | (7) | (9%) | 6 | \$51.18 | High school diploma or equivalent | Medium |
| Energy, Construction and Utilities | Nuclear Power Reactor Operators (51-8011) | 26 | 39 | 12 | 48% | 6 | \$51.00 | High school diploma or equivalent | Medium |
| Energy, Construction and Utilities | Power Distributors and Dispatchers (51-8012) | 49 | 49 | (0) | (1%) | 5 | \$48.02 | High school diploma or equivalent | Medium |
| Health | Radiation Therapists (29-1124) | 67 | 70 | 2 | 3% | 4 | \$60.69 | Associate's degree | Medium |
| Energy, Construction and Utilities | Gas Plant Operators (51-8092) | 21 | 18 | (2) | (12%) | 2 | \$51.62 | High school diploma or equivalent | Medium |
| Public Safety | Transit and Railroad Police (33-3052) | 1 | 2 | 0 | 7% | 0 | \$43.45 | High school diploma or equivalent | Medium |



• Appendix C: Endnotes

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Important Disclaimers

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. This study examines the most recent data available at the time of the analysis; however, data sets are updated regularly and may not be consistent with previous reports. Efforts have been made to qualify and validate the accuracy of the data and the report findings; however, neither the Centers of Excellence for Labor Market Research (COE), COE host district, nor California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office are responsible for the applications or decisions made by individuals and/or organizations based on this study or its recommendations.



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