Economic and Workforce Development Plan 2025-2030:

Empowering California's Future Workforce –

A Strategic Plan Aligned with Vision 2030 of California Community Colleges and the SOCCCD Inspire 2035 Framework

Preface and Acknowledgements

Preface

Welcome to the Economic and Workforce Development Plan for Saddleback College, spanning the years 2025 to 2030. As an institution dedicated to fostering excellence in education and addressing the evolving needs of our community, Saddleback College is proud to present this comprehensive plan, firmly aligned with the statewide Vision 2030 framework for California Community Colleges and the South Orange County Community College District's Inspire 2035 priorities.

In these pages, you will find a strategic roadmap that not only charts our course for the next five years but also reflects our unwavering commitment to economic empowerment and workforce development. Rooted in the principles of inclusivity, innovation, and collaboration, this plan embodies our resolve to be catalysts for positive change, driving sustainable growth and prosperity in the regions we serve.

As we embark on this journey, we invite our stakeholders—students, faculty, staff, industry partners, policymakers, and community members—to join us in realizing our shared vision of a vibrant and equitable future. Together, we can harness the transformative power of education to open doors, create pathways, and shape meaningful opportunities for all.

Finally, this plan builds on the statewide Vision 2030 goals and is further guided by the South Orange County Community College District's Inspire 2035 framework, ensuring that the District's six Strategic Priorities—Student-Centered, Equitable Access, Equitable Outcomes, Economic and Social Mobility, Community Vitality and Engagement, and Workplace Culture—serve as the foundation for every initiative.

Acknowledgements

The completion of the Economic and Workforce Development Plan would not have been possible without the dedication and contributions of numerous individuals and organizations. We extend our sincere appreciation to the following:

- **The faculty and staff of Saddleback College** for their unwavering commitment to academic excellence, student success, and the integration of innovative practices that bring this plan to life.
- **Our students**, whose aspirations and achievements inspire us to continually advance the quality and relevance of our programs and services.
- **Our industry partners**, whose collaboration and insights have been invaluable in shaping workforce development initiatives and ensuring they remain responsive to industry needs.
- **The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office**, for providing strategic guidance and support in aligning our efforts with the visionary **Vision 2030** framework.
- **The South Orange County Community College District**, for its leadership and commitment to the Inspire 2035 framework, which grounds this plan in the District's six Strategic Priorities: Student-Centered, Equitable Access, Equitable Outcomes, Economic and Social Mobility, Community Vitality and Engagement, and Workplace Culture.
- **Our local and state government partners** for their advocacy and investment in higher education and workforce development.
- **The broader community** for their ongoing support and engagement, which enriches the educational experience and strengthens our collective impact.
- Lastly, **all contributors** who shared their time, expertise, and feedback throughout the planning process, ensuring this document reflects the diverse perspectives and aspirations of our stakeholders.

Together, we are forging a path toward a future of opportunity and prosperity for all — grounded in the transformative power of education, guided by the statewide Vision 2030 pillars, and driven by the District's Inspire 2035 priorities.

Dr. Elliot Stern

President, Saddleback College

Table of Contents

Preface and Acknowledgements 2

Preface 2

Acknowledgements 3

Table of Contents 4

Executive Summary 8

Guiding Principles for the EWD Plan and Saddleback's EWD Program 8

Key Components of the EWD Plan 9

The key components of the EWD Plan include 9

Introduction 10

Background of Saddleback College 10

Defining Economic Development and Workforce Development 10

Vision 11

Mission 11

Values 11

Overview of Vision 2030 of California Community Colleges 11

Vision 2030 is guided by four key pillars 12

Alignment with SOCCCD's Inspire 2035 Strategic Priorities 12

Themes, Objectives, and Action Steps 14

Themes 14

Objectives 15

Action Steps 16

Orange County Economic and Workforce Outlook 16

A. Economic Context and Regional Profile 16

Orange County Profile 16

Saddleback College's Service Area 17

B. Current Economic Conditions 17

Current Economic Trends in Saddleback College's Service Area 17

Current Economic Trends 17

C. Workforce Demographics and Labor Supply 20

Demographics by Sector 20

Ethnicity by Sector 21

Age by Sector 22

Sex by Sector 23
Sector Supply 24
Annual Openings by Sector 25
U.S. News & World Report 2023 Best Jobs by Sector 26
D. Challenges and Opportunities 27
Challenges and Opportunities for Economic Development 27
Key Challenges 27
Emerging Opportunities 28
Lightcast's Automation Index by Sector 28
E. Workforce Needs Assessment by Industry 29
Demand for Skilled Labor in Key Industries 30
Healthcare 30
Health Occupational Criteria Data 30
Technology and Information Technology (IT) 34
Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and Digital Media Occupational Criteria Data 35
Advanced Manufacturing 37
Advanced Manufacturing Occupational Criteria Data 38
Hospitality and Tourism 39
Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism Occupational Criteria Data 40
Business and Professional Services 41
Business and Entrepreneurship Occupational Criteria Data 42
F. Forecast and Future Trends 45
OC Economic Forecast 45
External Trends Affecting Saddleback's EWD Planning 45
Resilient Jobs by Sector 46
Projected Growth and Emerging Trends in the Workforce 47
Projected 5-Year Percent Change by Sector 47
G. Implications for Saddleback College 48
Emerging Cross-Sector Workforce Trends 48
Vision 2030 Goals and Objectives Alignment 49
Saddleback College's Commitment to Vision 2030 Goals 49
Objectives for Economic and Workforce Development 50

Strategies for Economic Development 50
Collaboration with Industry Partners 51
Support for Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development 51
Regional Economic Development Initiatives 51
Workforce Training Programs 52
Contract Education and Customized Training 52
Contract Education Funding Sources 53
Continuing Education and Professional Development 53
Apprenticeship Programs 54
Overview of Existing Programs at Saddleback College 54
Career Technical Education (CTE) Programs 54
Program Review, Revitalization, and Discontinuance 54
Discover Your NextGen Workforce 55
Work Experience Education (WEE), formerly Cooperative Work Experience (CWE) 56
Adult Education and Basic Skills 56
Assessment of Program Effectiveness and Student Outcomes 56
Expansion and Enhancement Strategies 57
Integration of Technology and Innovation 57
Technology and Innovation 57
Leveraging Technology for Workforce Training 58
Incorporating Emerging Technologies into Curriculum 58
Promoting Innovation Ecosystems and Partnerships 59
Equity and Inclusion Initiatives 59
Addressing Disparities in Access and Opportunity 59
Diversity and Inclusion in Workforce Development Programs 60
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion 60
Outreach to Underrepresented Communities 61
Partnerships and Collaborations 62
Business partners and resources 62
Collaboration with Government Agencies and Local Stakeholders 63
Industry-Academia Partnerships and Work-Based Learning Opportunities 63
International Collaboration for Global Competitiveness 63
Funding and Resource Allocation 64

Sources of Funding for EWD Initiatives 64
Budget Allocation for Workforce Training Programs 65
Grant Opportunities and Philanthropic Support 65
Monitoring and Evaluation Framework 66
Key Performance Indicators for Success 66
Evaluation Metrics for Program Effectiveness 66
Continuous Improvement Strategies 67
Conclusion 67
References 69

Executive Summary

The Economic and Workforce Development (EWD) Plan for Saddleback College, spanning 2025 to 2030, outlines a strategic approach to fostering economic growth, advancing workforce development, and aligning with the statewide Vision 2030 framework for California Community Colleges.

Rooted in Saddleback College's unwavering dedication to educational excellence and community engagement, this plan underscores our commitment to catalyzing positive change in the region we serve. Through collaboration with industry partners, government agencies, and community stakeholders, our goal is to meet the evolving demands of the economy while equipping students with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in the future workforce.

Adding depth to this statewide alignment, the plan is also anchored in the South Orange County Community College District's (SOCCCD) Inspire 2035 framework, which defines six Districtwide Strategic Priorities: Student-Centered, Equitable Access, Equitable Outcomes, Economic and Social Mobility, Community Vitality and Engagement, and Workplace Culture. By embedding these priorities into every initiative, the EWD Plan ensures that Saddleback College addresses both workforce and economic needs while fostering a holistic, inclusive, and future-focused educational ecosystem — advancing the District's mission to empower students, transform lives, and strengthen communities through education.

Guiding Principles for the EWD Plan and Saddleback's EWD Program

These guiding principles reflect Saddleback College's commitment to Vision 2030 and Inspire 2035. They define the philosophy and direction of the EWD program, ensuring that every effort supports student success, workforce readiness, and regional economic vitality.

- The EWD program will make a measurable, positive contribution to regional economic and workforce development, with Saddleback students and graduates being highly sought after by employers.
- All faculty, staff, and administrators are integral to EWD efforts, contributing to a culture of collaboration that reflects the Student-Centered and Workplace Culture priorities of Inspire 2035.
- The EWD program will leverage Saddleback's existing strengths, expertise, and curriculum to deliver innovative, high-quality learning experiences aligned with Vision 2030's focus on equity and future-ready education.
- Seamless services and instruction — a true 'pipeline of services' — will be integrated within the college and with external partners, reflecting Inspire 2035's emphasis on Community Vitality and Engagement and Vision 2030's commitment to access and opportunity.
- The EWD program will support students in identifying career interests and goals, selecting career pathways, and successfully completing programs of study leading to employment and/or advanced degrees.
- The EWD program will monitor student progress and success from enrollment to employment, aligning with Vision 2030's student success pillars and Inspire 2035's Equitable Outcomes priority.

- The EWD program will strategically utilize available public funding, competitive grants, and revenue from fee-based and contract education programs to ensure sustainability and long-term impact.

These guiding principles ensure every initiative reflects Vision 2030's statewide direction and Inspire 2035's districtwide priorities — providing a clear foundation for all strategies, objectives, and actions in this plan.

Key Components of the EWD Plan

The EWD Plan is guided by the statewide Vision 2030 framework for California Community Colleges and further strengthened by the SOCCCD's Inspire 2035 priorities. Together, these frameworks ensure that Saddleback College's initiatives reflect a shared commitment to equity, innovation, and workforce readiness while meeting the evolving needs of our students, employers, and the regional economy.

The key components of the EWD Plan include

1. **Economic Landscape Analysis –** A thorough examination of current economic trends and opportunities in Saddleback College's service area, identifying key industries and growth sectors.
2. **Workforce Needs Assessment –** An assessment of the demand for skilled labor, projected growth trends, and emerging opportunities in the workforce, informing programmatic priorities.
3. **Alignment with Vision 2030 Goals –** A clear commitment to aligning with the statewide Vision 2030 goals, particularly those focused on economic and workforce development, ensuring our initiatives reflect California's broader educational and workforce mission.
4. **Integration of Inspire 2035 Priorities –** A deliberate connection to SOCCCD's six Districtwide Strategic Priorities: Student-Centered, Equitable Access, Equitable Outcomes, Economic and Social Mobility, Community Vitality and Engagement, and Workplace Culture. This ensures that every strategy embodies a student-focused, equitable, and community-driven approach.
5. **Strategies for Economic Development –** Outlining comprehensive strategies for fostering economic growth, supporting entrepreneurship, and driving regional economic development initiatives, in alignment with Vision 2030 objectives and Inspire 2035 priorities.
6. **Workforce Training Programs –** Providing an overview of existing workforce training programs and strategies to enhance program effectiveness, expand access, and meet the evolving needs of employers and students.
7. **Integration of Technology and Innovation –** Leveraging emerging technologies and innovation ecosystems to enhance workforce readiness and competitiveness, supporting **Vision 2030's** future-focused direction.
8. **Equity and Inclusion Initiatives –** Addressing disparities in access and opportunity, promoting diversity and inclusion in all workforce development programs, and reaching underrepresented communities.

9. **Partnerships and Collaborations –** Strengthening collaboration with government agencies, industry partners, and international stakeholders to broaden impact and support regional economic and workforce development.
10. **Funding and Resource Allocation –** Developing strategies to secure funding, allocate resources effectively, and leverage grant opportunities to sustain EWD initiatives.
11. **Monitoring and Evaluation Framework –** Establishing key performance indicators, evaluation metrics, and continuous improvement strategies to ensure accountability, impact, and long-term sustainability.

This plan firmly positions Saddleback College as a regional leader in aligning education with economic opportunity, workforce innovation, and community vitality. By aligning with the statewide Vision 2030 framework and the district's Inspire 2035 priorities, Saddleback College reaffirms its commitment to shaping a vibrant, equitable, and prosperous future for our students, our community, and the state of California.

Introduction

Background of Saddleback College

Saddleback College, located in Mission Viejo, California, has been a cornerstone of economic and workforce development in the region for decades. With a commitment to providing high-quality education and training programs, Saddleback College plays a vital role in meeting the evolving needs of industries in Orange County and beyond. The college offers a wide range of certificate programs, associate degrees, and workforce training initiatives designed to equip students and employees with the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in today's competitive job market.

Through strong partnerships with local businesses, community organizations, and government agencies, Saddleback College remains dedicated to fostering economic growth, enhancing workforce capabilities, and supporting the region's overall prosperity. These efforts are guided first by the statewide Vision 2030 framework for California Community Colleges and further reinforced by the SOCCCD's Inspire 2035 framework. Together, these frameworks ensure that Saddleback's EWD strategies are student-centered, equity-driven, and aligned with the District's six Strategic Priorities — Student-Centered, Equitable Access, Equitable Outcomes, Economic and Social Mobility, Community Vitality and Engagement, and Workplace Culture — advancing the District's mission to empower students, transform lives, and strengthen communities.

Defining Economic Development and Workforce Development

Economic development is the process through which a community generates, retains, and reinvests wealth to enhance the overall quality of life. Its ultimate objective is to improve the well-being of individuals residing within a community, state, or nation.

Workforce development focuses on equipping individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to secure meaningful employment and adapt to changing industry demands. Whereas economic development emphasizes creating job opportunities, workforce development ensures that individuals are prepared to fill those roles. In addition to strategies such as tax incentives

that stimulate business growth, community colleges play a critical role in workforce development by delivering education and training aligned with employer needs and regional economic priorities.

These definitions frame Saddleback College's work under Vision 2030 and Inspire 2035, ensuring that economic and workforce development are fully integrated with student success, equity, and community vitality.

Vision

Inspired by a passion for teaching and learning and a belief in human potential, Saddleback College transforms the lives of its students by offering high-quality, career-building, and life-enriching education.

Mission

Saddleback College empowers its diverse student body to achieve personal, academic, and economic advancement through equitable and innovative educational experiences.

Values

Saddleback College embraces:

- **Empowerment –** We empower students through challenging, collaborative, and engaging educational experiences.
- **Excellence –** We dedicate ourselves to excellence in academics, student support, and service to the community.
- **Inclusivity –** We create a welcoming environment in which all members of our college community have equitable opportunities and feel capable, nurtured, and respected.
- **Integrity –** We promote honesty, transparency, and accountability.
- **Openness –** We cultivate a learning environment open to diverse perspectives and the free exchange of ideas.
- **Partnership –** We strive to develop strong and lasting partnerships across the college and with the surrounding community.
- **Success –** We place our highest priority on helping students achieve their academic and career goals.
- **Sustainability –** We promote environmental sustainability and use our resources responsibly.

These values guide Saddleback's alignment with the statewide Vision 2030 pillars and the SOCCCD's Inspire 2035 priorities, ensuring that every initiative we undertake supports student success, advances equity, and strengthens community vitality.

Overview of Vision 2030 of California Community Colleges

California Community Colleges' Vision 2030 is the statewide framework that outlines the collective aspirations, goals, and commitments of the state's community college system to ensure

equitable access to quality higher education and workforce training for all Californians. Envisioned as a roadmap for the future, Vision 2030 seeks to transform the community college experience, empower students to achieve their educational and career goals, and drive economic prosperity and social mobility across the state (California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, Vision 2030, 2025).

Vision 2030 is guided by four key pillars

1. **Access and Equity –** Ensuring that all Californians, regardless of background or circumstance, have equitable access to affordable, high-quality higher education and workforce training opportunities. This pillar emphasizes removing barriers to access, expanding outreach and support services, and promoting diversity and inclusion within the community college system.
2. **Student Success and Completion –** Fostering a culture of achievement by providing comprehensive support services, personalized academic advising, and targeted interventions to help students overcome obstacles and persist to completion. This pillar emphasizes improving retention rates, increasing graduation and transfer rates, and ensuring students are fully prepared for success in the workforce or further education.
3. **Workforce Development and Economic Mobility –** Aligning community college programs with the needs of the labor market, promoting industry-relevant skill development, and expanding opportunities for workforce training and apprenticeships. This pillar highlights the role of community colleges in driving economic growth, supporting regional workforce needs, and creating pathways for upward mobility for individuals and families.
4. **Leadership and Innovation –** Promoting a culture of innovation, continuous improvement, and collaboration among community colleges, industry partners, government agencies, and community stakeholders. This pillar underscores the importance of embracing emerging technologies, implementing evidence-based practices, and cultivating strong leadership at every level to drive systemic change and achieve Vision 2030's goals.

Through these pillars, Vision 2030 positions California Community Colleges as engines of social and economic progress — empowering individuals to achieve their full potential and building stronger, more resilient communities across the state. By working collectively to implement Vision 2030 strategies, community colleges can play a transformative role in shaping California's future, ensuring that every student has the opportunity to thrive in the 21st-century economy.

Alignment with SOCCCD's Inspire 2035 Strategic Priorities

Saddleback College's EWD Plan is deliberately structured to advance the statewide Vision 2030 framework for California Community Colleges and to reflect the six Districtwide Strategic Priorities outlined in SOCCCD's Inspire 2035 plan. This dual alignment ensures that Saddleback College's vision and mission are not simply aspirational statements, but actionable commitments that translate into measurable progress for students, employers, and the broader community (California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, Inspire 2035, 2025).

Below is a mapping of the six Inspire 2035 priorities to the strategies embedded in the EWD Plan, demonstrating how they also advance the equity-driven, learner-centered direction of Vision 2030:

Districtwide Priority	**EWD Plan Strategies**
Student-Centered	Deliver high-quality, career-building education that helps students identify career goals, select pathways, and successfully complete programs leading to employment or transfer. Expand flexible formats (online, evening, weekend) to meet the needs of diverse learners.
Equitable Access	Address barriers that prevent underserved students from enrolling and persisting by strengthening outreach efforts, expanding scholarship and financial aid programs, and leveraging support services like TRIO, EOPS/CARE, DSPS, and WIOA.
Equitable Outcomes	Use a Monitoring & Evaluation Framework with KPIs (placement rates, completion rates, graduate earnings) and employer surveys to ensure programs lead to real-world success and continuously align curriculum with industry needs.
Economic + Social Mobility	Build industry advisory boards, expand internship and apprenticeship programs, and deliver Career Technical Education (CTE) and Contract Education aligned with labor market data to equip students for high-demand jobs and upward mobility.
Community Vitality + Engagement	Act as a catalyst for positive change by engaging local government, industry, and community partners, participating in regional economic initiatives, and embedding sustainability and civic engagement into programs.
Workplace Culture & Growth	Invest in professional development for faculty and staff, foster a culture of collaboration and innovation, and emphasize the vital role all employees play in driving workforce development and student success.

The following visual illustrates how Inspire 2035's six priorities feed into Saddleback's EWD Plan, reinforcing the alignment between district vision and college action:

Grounded in the statewide Vision 2030 framework and SOCCCD's six Districtwide Strategic Priorities, the EWD Plan integrates these guiding principles to shape its strategies and objectives. This combined alignment ensures that every initiative is student-centered, equity-driven, and community-focused — laying the groundwork for fostering economic prosperity and workforce innovation across the region.

Themes, Objectives, and Action Steps

The Themes, Objectives, and Action Steps outlined in this plan are grounded in the statewide Vision 2030 framework for California Community Colleges and aligned with the SOCCCD's Inspire 2035 priorities. Together, these frameworks ensure that every initiative is student-centered, equity-driven, and future-focused — advancing Saddleback College's mission to empower students, transform lives, and strengthen communities through education.

Themes

These themes advance Vision 2030's learner-centered, equity-driven direction while reflecting Inspire 2035's six Strategic Priorities. They translate these guiding frameworks into actionable goals for Saddleback College's EWD Plan.

1. **Innovation and Technology Integration –** Embrace technological advancements and foster innovation in curriculum development and delivery methods to prepare students for

evolving workforce demands.
Supports: Student-Centered, Economic + Social Mobility, Workplace Culture & Growth

2. **Equity and Inclusion –** Promote access, diversity, and inclusion in workforce development initiatives to ensure that all students have equitable opportunities for success.
   Supports: Equitable Access, Equitable Outcomes, Student-Centered
3. **Partnerships and Collaboration –** Forge strategic partnerships with industry, government, and community stakeholders to enhance workforce training programs and address regional workforce needs collaboratively.
   Supports: Community Vitality + Engagement, Economic + Social Mobility
4. **Sustainability and Green Jobs –** Incorporate sustainability principles into workforce training programs and support the growth of green jobs in alignment with environmental sustainability goals.
   Supports: Community Vitality + Engagement, Economic + Social Mobility
5. **Global Competitiveness –** Equip students with global perspectives, cross-cultural competencies, and skills to thrive in a competitive global economy.
   Supports: Economic + Social Mobility, Workplace Culture & Growth

Objectives

These objectives operationalize the themes and ensure that Vision 2030 and Inspire 2035 are embedded into Saddleback College's workforce development strategy:

1. **Enhance Curriculum Relevance –** Ensure curriculum content and delivery methods remain current and relevant to industry needs, with a focus on emerging technologies and future workforce trends.
2. **Expand Access and Equity –** Increase access to workforce training programs for underrepresented populations, including low-income students, minorities, and individuals with disabilities, to promote equity and diversity in the workforce.
3. **Strengthen Industry Partnerships –** Cultivate strategic partnerships with local employers, industry associations, and trade organizations to develop internship opportunities, work-based learning experiences, and job placement pathways for students.
4. **Promote Sustainable Practices –** Integrate sustainability principles into workforce training programs across disciplines, fostering the growth of green industries and supporting environmentally responsible practices.
5. **Foster Entrepreneurship and Innovation –** Create an entrepreneurial ecosystem that encourages creativity, risk-taking, and innovation among students, faculty, and community members, fostering the development of new businesses and job opportunities.
6. **Expand International Engagement –** Develop international partnerships and exchange programs to provide students with opportunities for global experiences, internships, and cross-cultural learning opportunities.
7. **Support Lifelong Learning –** Establish pathways for ongoing skill development and lifelong learning through continuing education programs, professional development opportunities, and retraining initiatives for displaced workers.
8. **Enhance Student Support Services –** Strengthen support services, including career counseling, academic advising, and financial aid assistance, to ensure that all students receive the support they need to succeed in workforce training programs.

Action Steps

Each action step advances the pillars of Vision 2030 and reflects Inspire 2035 priorities, translating statewide and district goals into tangible initiatives that benefit students, employers, and the broader community:

1. Conduct regular industry needs assessments to identify emerging skills gaps and inform curriculum development efforts.
2. Expand outreach and recruitment efforts to attract a diverse student population, including underrepresented groups, to workforce training programs.
3. Establish industry advisory boards to provide input on program design, curriculum development, and industry-relevant skills training.
4. Develop and implement sustainability-focused curriculum modules and certificate programs in collaboration with environmental organizations and industry partners.
5. Launch entrepreneurship incubators and innovation hubs on campus to provide resources, mentorship, and funding opportunities for student entrepreneurs.
6. Establish study abroad programs, international internships, and exchange agreements with universities abroad to promote global competency among students.
7. Provide targeted support services for adult learners, veterans, and individuals transitioning to new careers, including academic advising, career coaching, and financial assistance programs.
8. Strengthen partnerships with local workforce development agencies, community-based organizations, and employers to expand access to work-based learning opportunities, apprenticeships, and job placement services.

By implementing these themes, objectives, and action steps, Saddleback College will address the evolving needs of students, employers, and communities while advancing its economic and workforce development goals for 2025–2030. This integrated approach operationalizes the statewide Vision 2030 framework and the district's Inspire 2035 priorities, translating both into tangible, measurable outcomes that foster equity, innovation, and workforce readiness.

Orange County Economic and Workforce Outlook

A. Economic Context and Regional Profile

Orange County Profile

Orange County, California, often regarded as small but mighty, is depicted aptly in the just-published 2023-2024 Orange County Community Indicators report, conducted by the Orange County Business Council and partners. Despite its modest land area of 799 square miles, which includes 42 miles of coastline, Orange County's 34 cities and unincorporated lands accommodate a dense population of 3,926 persons per square mile, totaling just over 3.1 million people. Surprisingly, it is more densely populated than Los Angeles and accounts for 8% of California's total population. The county's median age, recorded as 39.2 years in 2021, is steadily increasing, with the percentage of residents over the age of 65 projected to rise from 18% to 29% by 2060, while other age groups decline. Presently, the majority of Orange County's population is White (41.1%), followed by Hispanic/Latino (36.8%), although projections suggest a shift by 2060,

with Hispanics/Latinos comprising 40.3% and Whites 35.9% of the population. The Asian population (18.1%) is projected to decrease slightly, while Multiracial and African American populations are expected to see slight increases. Remarkably, over a third of Orange County's residents were born in other countries.

In terms of education and income, Orange County residents generally fare better than those in neighboring counties or the state as a whole. Approximately 43.1% of adults over 25 hold a bachelor's degree or higher, and 16.3% possess a graduate or professional degree. The median income in Orange County stands at $100,559. However, the county also grapples with some of the highest housing costs in Southern California. Home prices have soared by 91% over the last decade, though they have marginally decreased since their peak in April 2022. Prospective first-time homebuyers require a minimum qualifying income of $192,600 to afford an "entry-level" median-priced home of $1,016,190. Rentals are equally unaffordable, with prices surging by 10.9% in the last year. To afford a one-bedroom apartment at the fair market rent of $2,113, one must earn $40.63 per hour. For those earning minimum wage, affording the same apartment would necessitate an astounding 105 hours of work per week.

The impact of high housing costs is disparate among racial and ethnic groups in Orange County. Whites (64%) and Asians (63%) exhibit higher rates of homeownership, while those identifying as "some other race" (64.2%), Native Americans (60.9%), and Hispanic/Latinos (61.5%) have the highest rates of renter-occupied housing (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 8).

Saddleback College's Service Area

Saddleback College serves a diverse region encompassing cities such as Mission Viejo, Lake Forest, Laguna Hills, and surrounding communities in Southern Orange County, California. With a vibrant mix of industries, a strong entrepreneurial spirit, and a highly educated workforce, the service area presents both opportunities and challenges for economic development and workforce training initiatives.

B. Current Economic Conditions

Current Economic Trends in Saddleback College's Service Area

Understanding the current economic trends in Saddleback College's service area is crucial for informing strategic decisions related to workforce development, program offerings, and community engagement. By conducting a comprehensive analysis of economic indicators, employment trends, and industry dynamics, Saddleback College can identify opportunities for growth, assess workforce needs, and align its programs with the evolving demands of the local economy.

Current Economic Trends

Job Growth and Employment Rates: Saddleback College's service area has experienced steady job growth in recent years, driven by key sectors such as healthcare, technology, hospitality, and professional services. Unemployment rates have remained relatively low compared to state and national averages, reflecting a robust and resilient local economy.

Orange County as a whole experiences significant prosperity; however, 9.9% of its residents live below the poverty line. While 19.2% of its population earns $200,000 or more annually, nearly a quarter falls into the low to very low-income bracket, earning between $10,000 and $49,999 per year (12.3%, 7%, and 4.9%, respectively). The median household income for Orange County's white population is $110,482, followed by Asians at $103,291. In contrast, Hispanics/Latinos earn $81,025, individuals identifying as "some other race" earn $75,885, and Pacific Islanders earn the least with $68,226.

Another indicator of Orange County's economic vitality is its robust economic health. The county's gross regional product (GRP), akin to gross domestic product (GDP), reached $284 billion in 2022, exceeding that of 25 states. As of October 2023, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports Orange County's unemployment rate at 3.2%, the lowest in Southern California and below both California and the United States averages.

Orange County boasts a diverse array of businesses in terms of size and industry. Small businesses, with fewer than 50 workers, constitute 96.2% of all businesses and employ 43.6% of the county's workforce. Larger businesses are also on the rise, with 187 employing more than 500 workers in 2022 (a 7% increase from the previous year), and those with 1,000 or more workers increasing to 67 from 62 in 2021. Employment has seen growth in six industry clusters between Q4 2021 and Q4 2022: tourism, defense and aerospace, energy and environment, health services, construction, and biomedical. However, four industry clusters - computer software, communication, computer hardware, and business and professional services - witnessed declines during the same period. The following sections of this plan will explore Orange County’s occupational landscape in greater detail, drawing from the OC COE analysis (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 8).

Industry Diversification: The service area boasts a diverse economic landscape, with a mix of traditional industries and emerging sectors. Healthcare and biomedical sciences, technology and innovation, tourism and hospitality, and professional services are among the leading industries driving economic growth and employment opportunities in the region.

The Orange County Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research (OC COE) has examined labor market dynamics in the region. This thorough analysis explores Orange County's economic sectors to offer valuable insights for strategic planning efforts in the community college system. The study focuses on eleven occupational sectors, supplemented by an additional category labeled "Other," to aid in identifying priority sectors and informing local and regional strategic initiatives. The sectors examined in this report are as follows (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 9):

1. Advanced Manufacturing
2. Advanced Transportation and Logistics
3. Agriculture, Water, and Environmental Technologies
4. Business and Entrepreneurship
5. Education and Human Development
6. Energy, Construction, and Utilities
7. Health
8. Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and Digital Media
9. Life Sciences and Biotechnology

10. Public Safety
11. Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism
12. Other*

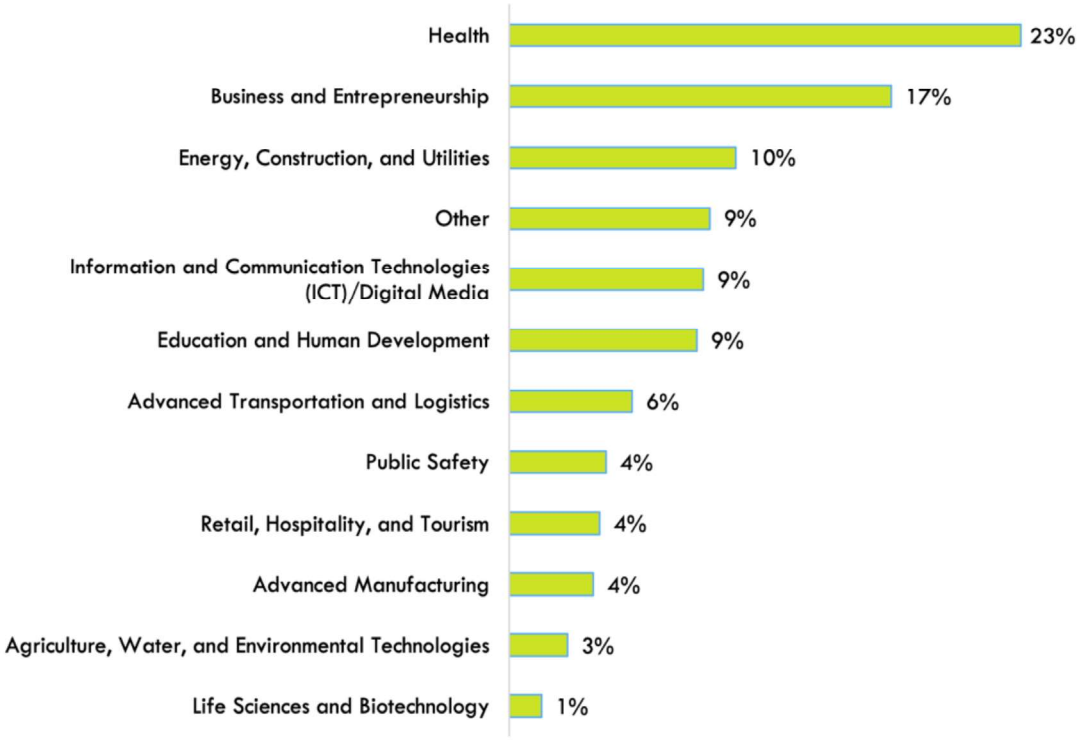
The ‘Other’ category includes occupations that do not fit neatly into the predefined sectors established by the California Community College Chancellor’s Office (CCCCO). It serves as a catch-all designation for occupations that are less common, highly specialized, or lack a well-defined industry association.

To ensure a comprehensive understanding, the analysis initially considered all 796 occupations within the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system. Occupations with fewer than 10 jobs in 2022 were excluded as statistically insignificant. The remaining 775 occupations, representing Orange County's labor force, were then categorized into CCCCO sectors. Each occupation underwent evaluation against eight criteria, earning one point for meeting each criterion. The OC COE research established a cutoff of four points as appropriate. Subsequently, the final selection of 338 occupations in this report met or exceeded this benchmark and underwent meticulous examination. This rigorous selection process ensures that the analysis focuses on occupations with significant impacts on Orange County's sectors (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 9).

Before delving into individual sectors, it is important to understand how these sectors compare to one another in Orange County based on the eight criteria utilized throughout the report. The following observations are notable regarding the number of occupations in each sector based on the 338 occupations analyzed (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 14).

- Health comprises the largest number of occupations, constituting nearly a quarter of all occupations analyzed in this report.
- Half of all occupations in this report are within three sectors: Health (23%); Business and Entrepreneurship (17%); and Energy, Construction, and Utilities (10%).
- Life Sciences and Biotechnology (1%) have the fewest number of occupations, followed by Agriculture, Water, and Environmental Technologies (3%).
- Public Safety, Retail, Hospitality and Tourism, and Advanced Manufacturing each account for 4% of the occupations in this report.

Exhibit 1 illustrates the percentage distribution, by sector, of the 338 occupations analyzed in this report (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 14).



C. Workforce Demographics and Labor Supply

Workforce Demographics: The workforce in Saddleback College's service area is characterized by a high level of educational attainment, with a significant proportion of residents holding bachelor's degrees or higher. However, disparities exist in terms of income, access to education, and employment opportunities, particularly among underserved and marginalized communities.

Demographics by Sector

In addition to scrutinizing labor market information, it is crucial to consider the demographics of individuals employed in the 338 occupations examined within this report. This section delves into demographic details for each sector, aiming to highlight variances across sectors.

Within the specific sector segments of this report, demographic profiles of individuals within the occupations are compared with those of the Orange County population and students enrolled in the TOP codes corresponding to the occupation. This comparison serves to identify potential diversity and equity concerns that could be addressed by community college programs.

Demographic data regarding the occupations, sectors, and the Orange County population is derived from the Census Bureau’s American Community Survey, while student demographic data is sourced from LaunchBoard. For detailed demographic breakdowns of each occupation analyzed in this report, please refer to Appendix D (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 23).

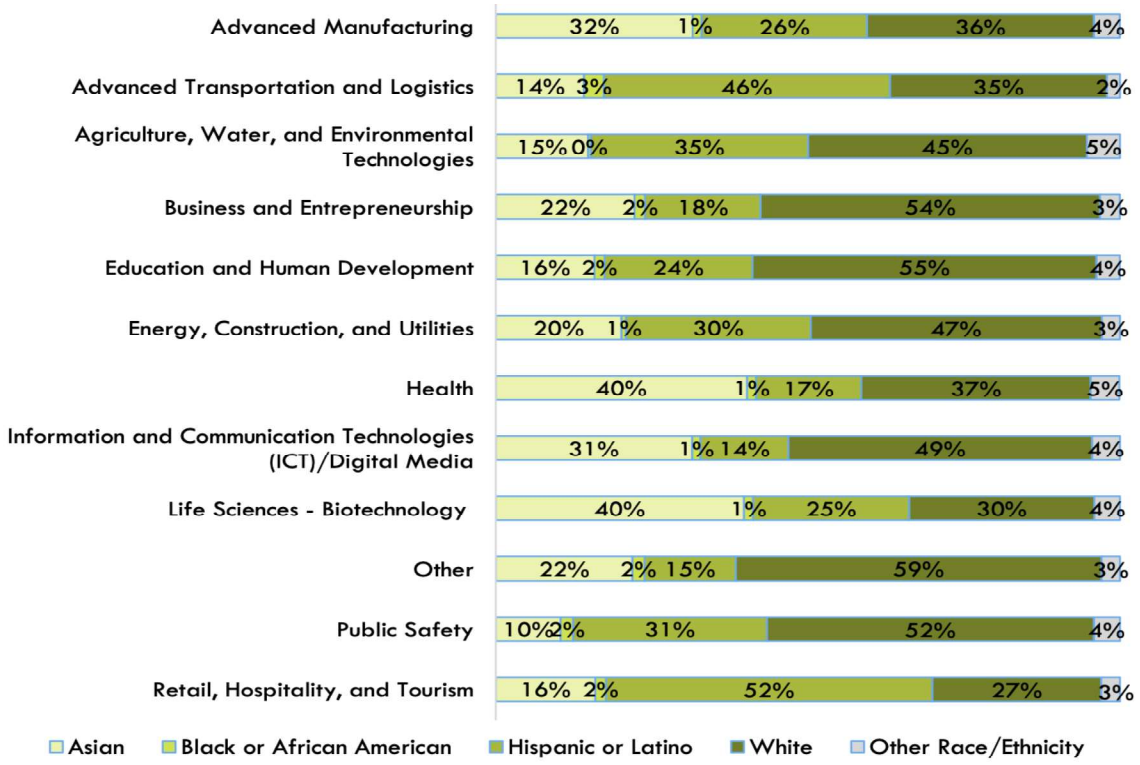
Ethnicity by Sector

While the Census Bureau's data collection and reporting encompass five races and classify ethnicity as either "Hispanic or Latino" or "Not Hispanic or Latino," the CCCCO (California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office) collects and reports data on eight races/ethnicities. To reconcile these disparities, the ethnicity data presented throughout this report focuses on five distinct ethnic categories: Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, white, and Other Race/Ethnicity (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 23).

Below are notable observations of the sectors categorized by ethnicity:

- White workers constitute the plurality or majority in 8 of the 12 sectors:
    - Advanced Manufacturing (36%)
    - Agriculture, Water, and Environmental Technologies (45%)
    - Business and Entrepreneurship (54%)
    - Education and Human Development (55%)
    - Energy, Construction, and Utilities (47%)
    - Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)/Digital Media (49%)
    - Other (59%)
    - Public Safety (52%)
- Asian workers represent the plurality in 2 sectors:
    - Health (40%)
    - Life Sciences and Biotechnology (40%)
- Hispanic or Latino workers make up the largest share in Advanced Transportation and Logistics (46%) and form the majority in Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism (52%).
- Black or African American workers account for 3% or less in each sector, slightly above the Black or African American population in Orange County (2%).

Exhibit 2 displays the breakdown of ethnicity by sector (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 24).



Age by Sector

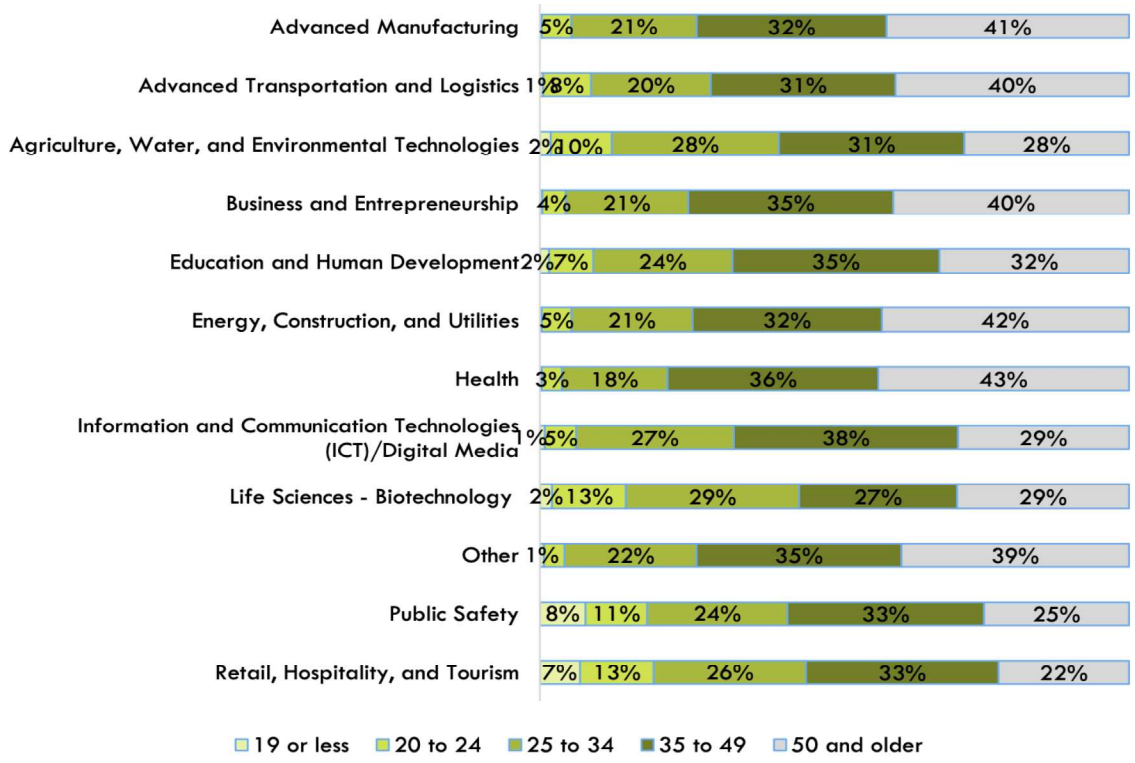
Both the Census Bureau and CCCCO gather data on age. The CCCCO consolidates student data into five age groups on LaunchBoard: 19 or less, 20 to 24, 25 to 34, 35 to 49, and 50 and older. For this report, Census Bureau data was curated and structured to align with these age brackets. It is essential to recognize that the 19 or less age group typically exhibits lower labor force participation rates compared to the general population, resulting in a smaller representation when examining occupational data (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 25).

Below are notable observations regarding the sectors categorized by age:

- Among the 12 sectors, workers aged 50 and older constitute the plurality in 7 sectors:
    - Health (43%)
    - Energy, Construction, and Utilities (42%)
    - Advanced Manufacturing (41%)
    - Advanced Transportation and Logistics (40%)
    - Business and Entrepreneurship (40%)
    - Other (39%)
    - Life Sciences and Biotechnology (29%)
    - Advanced Manufacturing and Other sectors rank second and third respectively in terms of entry-level hourly wages, at $32.44 and $32.03.
- Workers aged 35 to 49 are the majority in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)/Digital Media (38%), Education and Human Development (35%), Public Safety

(33%), Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism (33%), and Agriculture, Water, and Environmental Technologies (31%).
    - Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)/Digital Media boasts the highest hourly wage among sectors at $37.82.
- Public Safety and Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism stand out with the highest percentage of young workers (24 years or younger) at 19% and 20%, respectively.
    - It is worth noting that Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism is the sole sector with an entry-level hourly wage below both Insight and MIT Living Wages.

Exhibit 3 shows the breakdown of age by sector (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 26).



Sex by Sector

Currently, the Census Bureau's data collection does not include questions or data on gender identity, solely focusing on biological sex. Conversely, as of 2019, the CCCCO collects and reports data on three genders: female, male, and non-binary. Furthermore, to comply with the Family Educational Privacy Rights Act (FERPA), the CCCCO masks data for small groups to protect student identities. Consequently, the sex data examined in this report encompasses biological sex while acknowledging any masked student data, potentially including non-binary students or those who did not specify a gender (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 27).

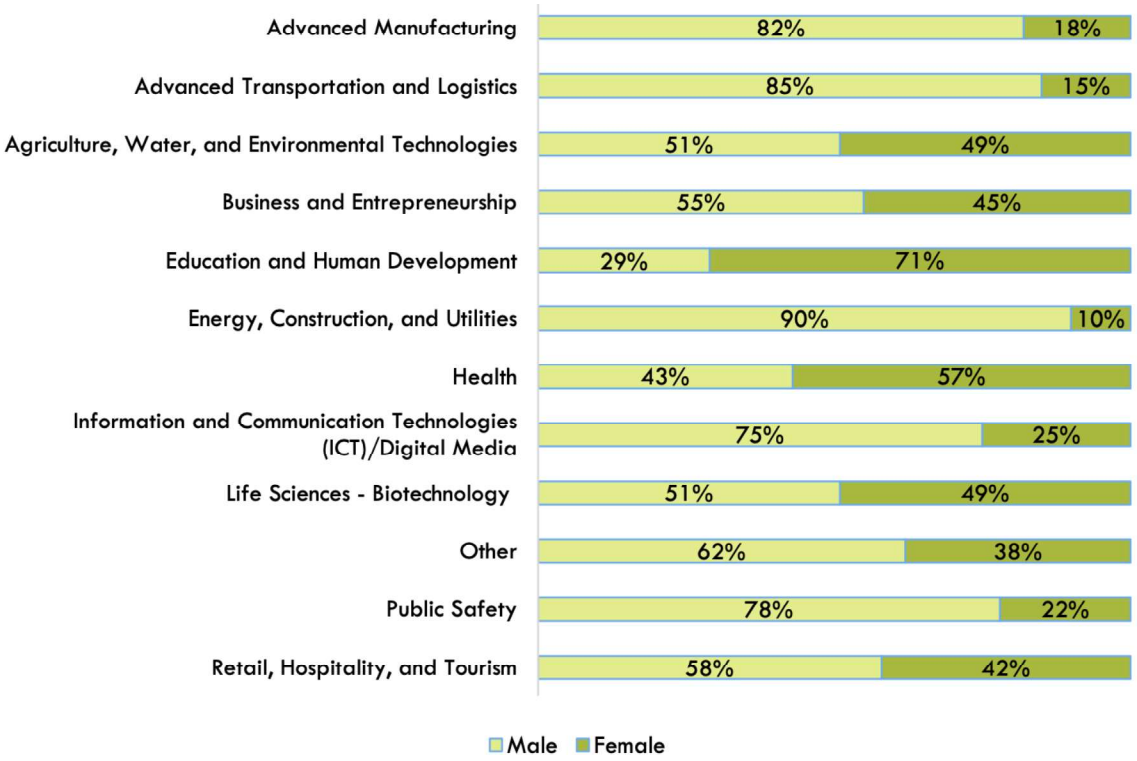
Here are key observations regarding sex data across sectors:

- Male workers constitute the majority in 10 out of 12 sectors.
- Female workers hold the majority in only 2 sectors: Education and Human Development (71%) and Health (67%).

- Men represent at least 75% of the workforce in Energy, Construction, and Utilities (90%); Advanced Transportation and Logistics (85%); Advanced Manufacturing (82%); Public Safety (78%); and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)/Digital Media (75%).
    - Except for Advanced Transportation and Logistics, these sectors are among the top five with the highest typical entry-level wages.
    - Energy, Construction, and Utilities (10%) have the lowest female representation among sectors.

These insights underscore the gender dynamics within various sectors, shedding light on areas where gender imbalances exist.

Exhibit 4 shows the breakdown of sex by sector (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 27).



Sector Supply

In this section, the number of educational awards (degrees and certificates) conferred, otherwise known as supply, at community colleges and non-community college institutions in Orange County is compared to the annual openings (demand) of the 338 occupations analyzed in this report to determine the county's labor gap by sector. Examining supply in relation to demand is crucial to understanding labor gaps and areas of opportunity that can be addressed by educational programs throughout the region. Labor gaps are defined as the difference between demand and supply. The full supply methodology is included in Appendix A, while the TOP codes that correspond to each sector are included in Appendix C (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 30).

Among the 12 sectors, Business and Entrepreneurship boasts the most substantial gap (22,793), closely trailed by Health (19,524), then Education and Human Development (9,898). In contrast,

Life Sciences and Biotechnology has the smallest gap (423), followed by Agriculture, Water, and Environmental Technologies (574).

It is noteworthy that three sectors have more community college awards than non-community college awards: Advanced Transportation and Logistics; Public Safety; and Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism.

Exhibit 5 shows the breakdown of annual openings compared to supply and resulting labor gap by Sector (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 30).

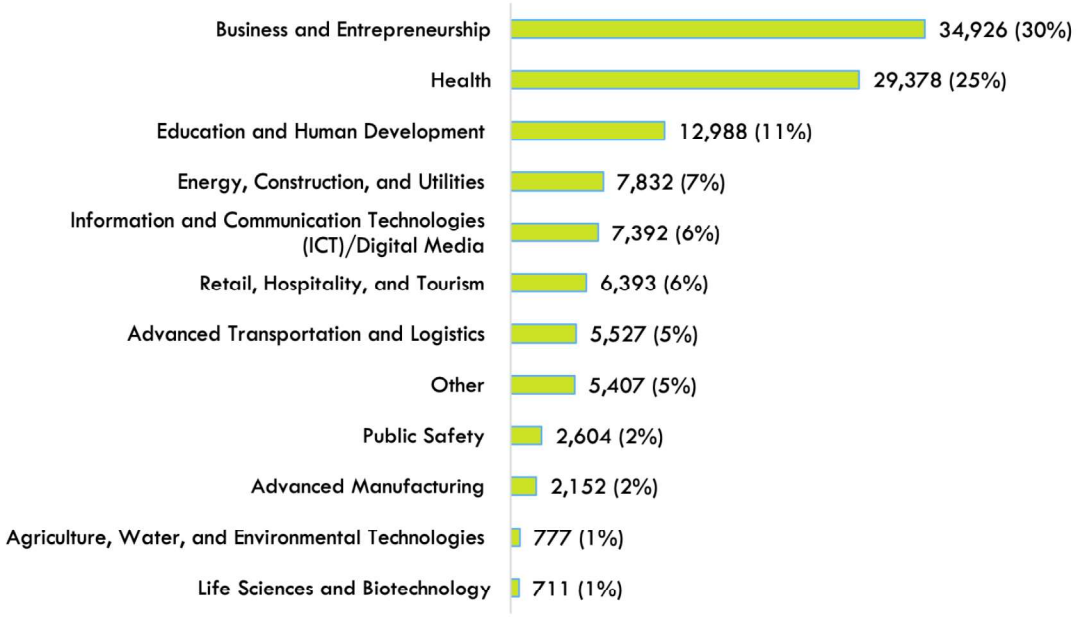
Sector	Annual Openings	Total Supply	CC Awards	Non-CC Awards	Labor Gap
Advanced Manufacturing	2,152	925	261	664	1,227
Advanced Transportation and Logistics	5,527	785	718	67	4,742
Agriculture, Water, and Environmental Technologies	777	203	58	145	574
Business and Entrepreneurship	34,926	12,133	5,164	6,969	22,793
Education and Human Development	12,988	3,090	1,021	2,069	9,898
Energy, Construction, and Utilities	7,832	1,368	522	846	6,464
Health	29,378	9,854	2,127	7,727	19,524
Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)/Digital Media	7,392	3,459	1,290	2,169	3,933
Life Sciences and Biotechnology	711	288	55	233	423
Public Safety	2,604	1,886	1,117	769	718
Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism	6,393	638	580	58	5,755
Other	5,407	3,383	292	3,091	2,024

Annual Openings by Sector

Annual openings, also referred to as "demand," represent the anticipated number of job opportunities available each year up to 2027. This figure encompasses both new job creations and the need to fill vacancies resulting from retirements or individuals exiting the workforce. Below are notable observations regarding Orange County's occupational annual openings through 2027 by sector (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 17):

- The Business and Entrepreneurship (30%) and Health (25%) sectors are projected to contribute significantly to annual job openings, collectively accounting for 55% of the total.
- Conversely, Public Safety (2%), Advanced Manufacturing (2%), Agriculture, Water, and Environmental Technologies (1%), and Life Sciences and Biotechnology (1%) collectively represent just 6% of all annual openings.

Exhibit 6 shows a detailed breakdown of the projected annual openings by sector for the 338 occupations analyzed in this report (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 17).



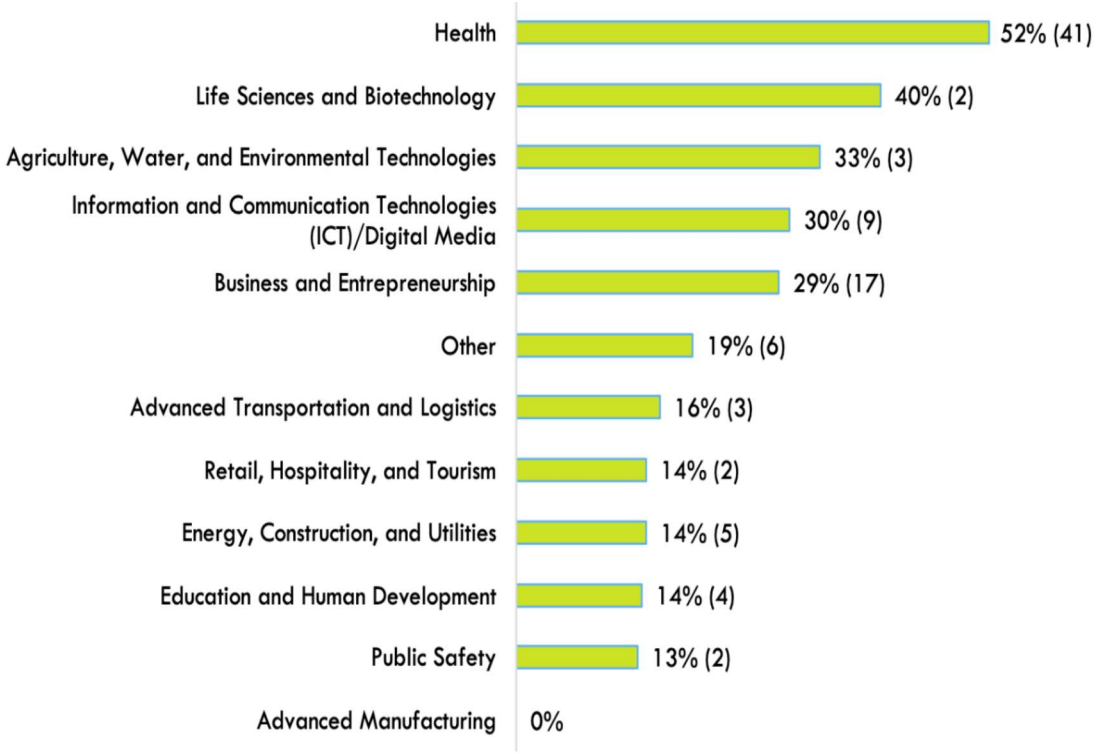
U.S. News & World Report 2023 Best Jobs by Sector

The 338 occupations examined in this report were cross-referenced with U.S. News & World Report's 100 Best Jobs of 2023. U.S. News considers various factors in its Best Jobs rankings, such as projected growth, salary, stress level, and work-life balance. Each occupation researched received one point if it appeared on the U.S. News and World Report 100 Best Jobs 2023 list (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 11).

The following sector observations highlight Orange County's U.S. News & World Report 100 Best Jobs of 2023:

- The Health sector leads with the highest number of occupations in the U.S. News & World Report 2023 Best Job category, comprising 41 qualifying occupations, followed by Business and Entrepreneurship with 17.
- Sectors like Life Sciences and Biotechnology (2), Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism (2), and Public Safety (2) have the fewest number of occupations meeting the U.S. News & World Report 2023 Best Job criteria.
    - However, within the Life Sciences and Biotechnology sector, 2 out of the 5 occupations analyzed in this report meet the criteria, constituting 40% of the sector.
- Advanced Manufacturing stands out as the only sector without at least one occupation meeting this criterion.

Refer to Exhibit 7 for a detailed breakdown showing the percentage and actual number of occupations, by sector, included in the U.S. News & World Report 2023 Best Job list (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 21).



D. Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges and Opportunities for Economic Development

An in-depth analysis of the economic landscape presents a nuanced understanding of the opportunities and challenges that shape Saddleback College's service area. Identifying these factors is crucial for devising effective strategies to stimulate economic growth, foster innovation, and address workforce development needs.

Key Challenges

1. **Income Inequality –** Persistent income disparities, along with unequal access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities, can hinder social mobility and widen economic divides within the service area.
2. **Affordability –** High costs of living, housing affordability issues, and limited access to healthcare and childcare services pose challenges for residents, particularly low-income families, and individuals.
3. **Skills Mismatch –** Mismatches between the skills demanded by employers and those possessed by the workforce can impede economic growth and hinder businesses' ability to fill critical positions.

4. **Climate Change Risks –** Climate change-related risks, such as extreme weather events, sea-level rise, and wildfires, pose threats to infrastructure, property, and livelihoods, requiring proactive mitigation and adaptation strategies.
5. **Global Competition –** Intensifying global competition, trade tensions, and geopolitical uncertainties can affect market access, supply chains, and investment flows, impacting the region's economic resilience and competitiveness.

Emerging Opportunities

1. **Industry Diversification –** The service area exhibits a diverse range of industries, including healthcare, technology, tourism, and professional services. This diversity presents opportunities for cross-sector collaboration, innovation, and the development of niche markets.
2. **Innovation Ecosystem –** The presence of research institutions, technology hubs, and entrepreneurial networks creates an environment conducive to innovation and entrepreneurship. Leveraging these resources can drive economic diversification, job creation, and the emergence of new industries.
3. **Workforce Development Initiatives –** Collaborative efforts between educational institutions, industry partners, and government agencies can enhance workforce development programs, align training with industry needs, and bridge the skills gap in high-demand sectors.
4. **Infrastructure Investments –** Infrastructure projects, such as transportation upgrades, broadband expansion, and green energy initiatives, can stimulate economic activity, attract investment, and improve the region's competitiveness.
5. **Global Market Access –** Access to global markets through trade agreements, foreign direct investment, and export promotion programs can open new opportunities for businesses to expand internationally and diversify revenue streams.

By capitalizing on opportunities, addressing challenges, and fostering collaboration among stakeholders, Saddleback College can play a pivotal role in driving economic development, promoting innovation, and building a more resilient and inclusive economy in its service area. Through targeted investments in workforce development, entrepreneurship, infrastructure, and sustainability initiatives, the College can strengthen long-term economic prosperity and enhance the quality of life for its residents.

By interpreting these economic indicators through the lens of California Community Colleges' Vision 2030 and aligning them with the six Inspire 2035 Strategic Priorities, Saddleback College ensures that its workforce strategies remain data-driven, equity-focused, and fully responsive to the evolving needs of students, employers, and the regional economy.

Lightcast's Automation Index by Sector

Lightcast's Automation Index evaluates the risk of automation for occupations based on four criteria (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 21):

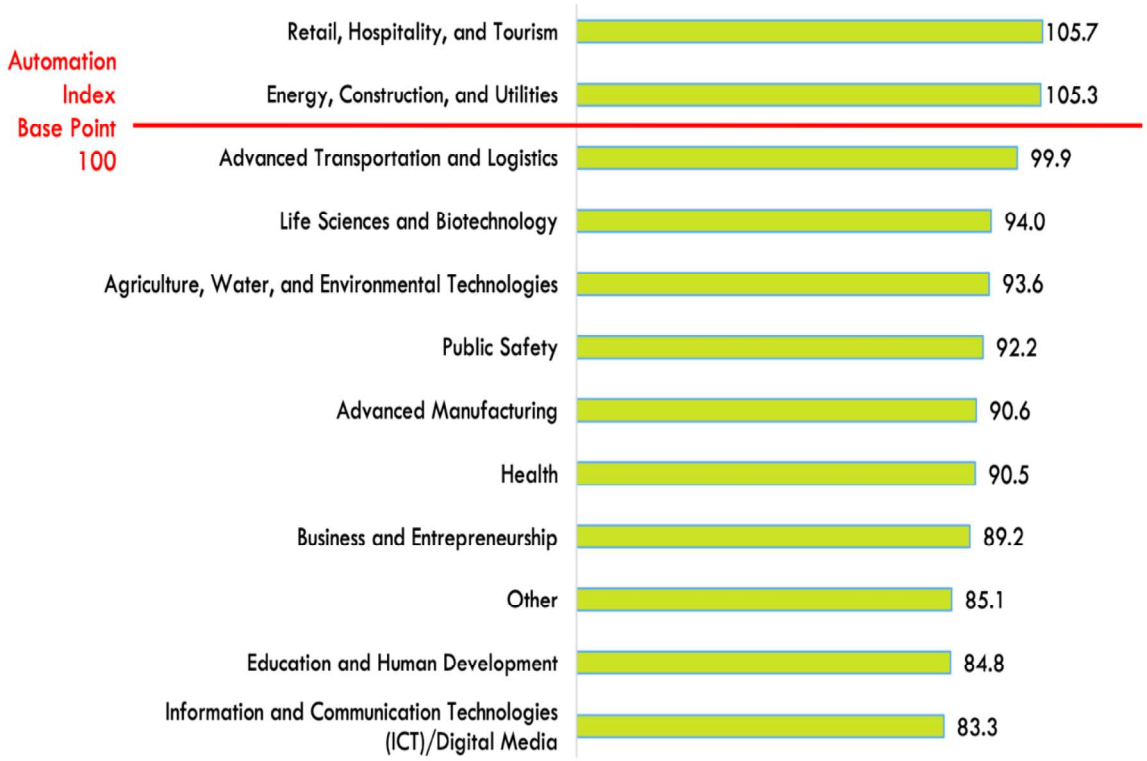
- Percentage of time spent on high-risk work
- Percentage of time spent on low-risk work
- Number of high-risk jobs in compatible occupations
- Overall industry automation risk

Presented on a scale with a base of 100, Lightcast's Automation Index indicates the likelihood of automation affecting an occupation. A score above 100 suggests a higher-than-average risk of automation, while a score below 100 indicates a lower-than-average risk.

Key observations regarding sector automation index from the analysis of 338 occupations are as follows:

- Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism (105.7), along with Energy, Construction, and Utilities (105.3), exhibit the highest risk for automation.
- Remarkably, these are the only two sectors with a Lightcast's Automation Index exceeding 100.
- The Advanced Transportation and Logistics sector (99.9) teeters just below the automation index threshold of 100.
- Conversely, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)/Digital Media (83.3) and Education and Human Development (84.8) demonstrate the lowest susceptibility to automation risk.

Refer to Exhibit 8 for a comprehensive overview of each sector's automation risk based on Lightcast's Automation Index (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 22).



E. Workforce Needs Assessment by Industry

A thorough workforce needs assessment is essential for Saddleback College to align its programs with labor market demands and ensure students gain the skills and competencies needed to succeed in key industries. This assessment analyzes the demand for skilled labor, projected growth, and emerging workforce trends across the service area.

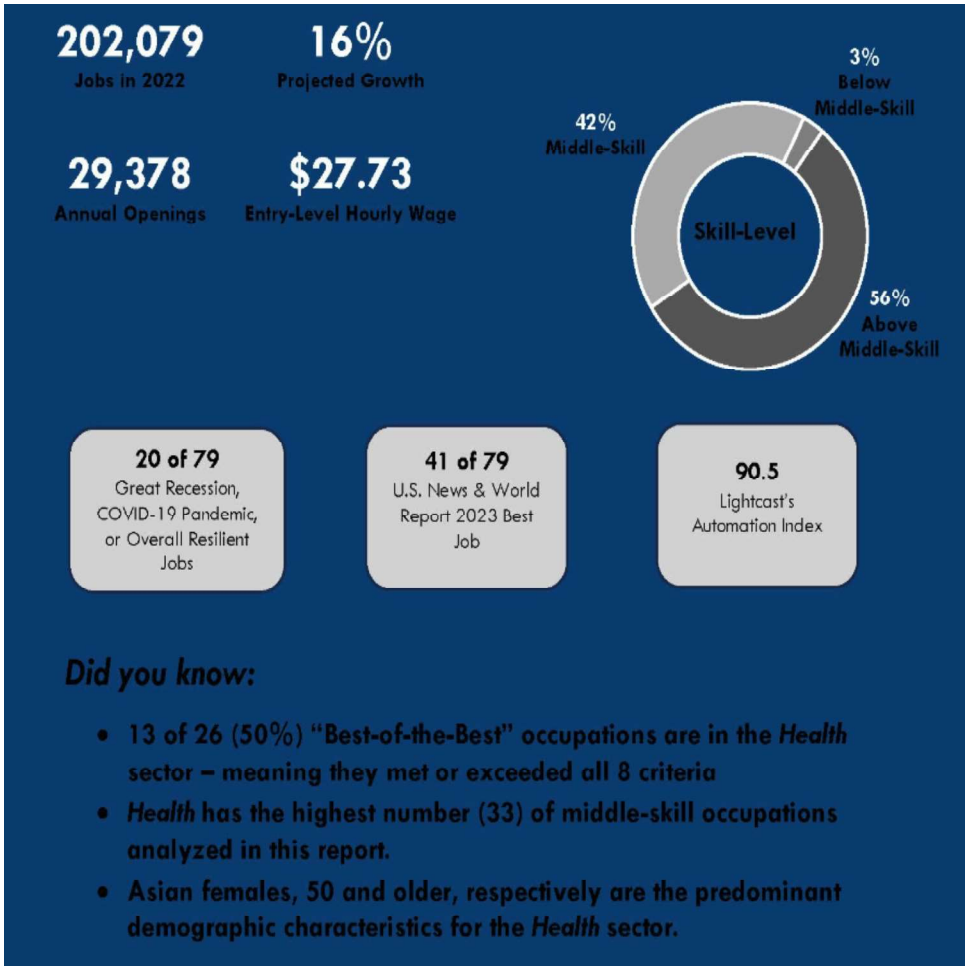
Demand for Skilled Labor in Key Industries

Healthcare

The healthcare sector continues to experience high demand for skilled professionals, including registered nurses, medical assistants, and healthcare administrators. With an aging population and increased healthcare needs, there is a growing need for specialized roles in areas such as geriatrics, telemedicine, and mental health services.

- There are 29,378 annual openings

- There is a 19,524 labor gap-



(Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 76)

Health Occupational Criteria Data

The Heath sector encompasses a range of professions including doctors, dentists, nurses, healthcare support, and administrative roles, typically found in hospitals, private practices, pharmacies, or laboratories. Licensing or certification is often required for these roles due to their direct interaction with patients across various age groups, from newborns to those in hospice care (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 77).

In this section, we delve into the performance of the Health sector in Orange County across eight criteria outlined in this report.
Here are key observations regarding the size and characteristics of the sector based on the analysis of 79 occupations:

- Out of the 79 occupations studied, 44 are classified as above middle-skill, 33 as middle-skill, and 2 as below middle-skill.
- Despite fewer above middle-skill occupations (33), middle-skill occupations constitute 86% of annual jobs.
- Among the 49 occupations meeting the annual openings criteria, 26 are middle-skill, accounting for 53%.
- A total of 41 occupations are recognized as a U.S. News & World Report 2023 Best Job.
- 54 occupations meet both the California Insight's Living Wage and the MIT Living Wage, while 8 fall short of the MIT living wage.
- 13 occupations meet all criteria, representing 15% of all sector jobs.
- The Health sector boasts the second-highest number of occupations (20) meeting criteria related to the Great Recession, COVID-19 Pandemic, or Overall Resilience.
- It also holds the distinction of having the most occupations analyzed in this report, comprising both above middle-skill and middle-skill categories.
- Notably, 50% of all jobs in the "Best-of-the-Best" section belong to the Health sector, the highest representation among all sectors.

Exhibit 9 provides a detailed breakdown of the 79 analyzed occupations within the Health sector, their skill levels, criteria met, and associated data. Shaded cells indicate criteria fulfillment, with lighter shading indicating compliance with California Insight's Living Wage but falling short of the MIT Living Wage for hourly earnings (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 77).

SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Points	2022 Jobs	2022 - 2027 % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Pct. 25 Hourly Earnings	Great Recession, COVID-19 Pandemic, or Overall Resilient	U.S. News & World Report 2023 Best Job	Automation Index
29-1141	Registered Nurses	Middle-Skill	8	25,617	9%	1,996	$48.32	1	1	85.3
11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	Above Middle-Skill	8	4,314	21%	553	$40.87	1	1	75.2
29-1292	Dental Hygienists	Middle-Skill	8	3,126	13%	296	$51.60	1	1	96.8
29-1123	Physical Therapists	Above Middle-Skill	8	2,741	14%	207	$45.50	1	1	85.5
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	Above Middle-Skill	8	1,696	32%	207	$58.95	1	1	83.2
31-2021	Physical Therapist Assistants	Middle-Skill	8	932	22%	185	$32.65	1	1	88.1
29-1127	Speech-Language Pathologists	Above Middle-Skill	8	1,659	18%	167	$39.16	1	1	87.5
29-1071	Physician Assistants	Above Middle-Skill	8	1,502	19%	149	$59.36	1	1	87.8
29-1021	Dentists, General	Above Middle-Skill	8	3,058	8%	142	$29.77	1	1	87.9
29-1122	Occupational Therapists	Above Middle-Skill	8	1,511	13%	132	$46.37	1	1	87.3
19-3033	Clinical and Counseling Psychologists	Above Middle-Skill	8	774	21%	87	$38.24	1	1	85.4
29-1041	Optometrists	Above Middle-Skill	8	1,336	15%	81	$35.36	1	1	83.2
29-2032	Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	Middle-Skill	8	822	17%	76	$45.46	1	1	93.3
29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	Middle-Skill	7	6,721	10%	704	$30.74	0	1	84.8
21-1023	Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Workers	Above Middle-Skill	7	1,461	17%	191	$27.04	1	0	81.7
29-1051	Pharmacists	Above Middle-Skill	7	3,269	5%	161	$64.31	1	1	89.1
29-2034	Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	Middle-Skill	7	1,675	14%	142	$31.42	1	0	94.1
19-3039	Psychologists, All Other	Above Middle-Skill	7	1,104	12%	107	$28.87	1	0	80.2
29-1126	Respiratory Therapists	Middle-Skill	7	1,212	10%	91	$36.60	0	1	93.2
21-1018	Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	Above Middle-Skill	6	3,363	25%	513	$20.80	0	1	84.9
29-2072	Medical Records Specialists	Middle-Skill	6	2,252	7%	198	$21.39	0	1	92.1
21-1022	Healthcare Social Workers	Above Middle-Skill	6	1,184	17%	158	$30.01	0	0	83.5

SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Points	2022 Jobs	2022 - 2027 % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Pct. 25 Hourly Earnings	Great Recession, COVID-19 Pandemic, or Overall Resilient	U.S. News & World Report 2023 Best Job	Automation Index
19-1042	Medical Scientists, Except Epidemiologists	Above Middle-Skill	6	1,535	9%	127	$46.34	0	0	78.6
31-2011	Occupational Therapy Assistants	Middle-Skill	6	460	22%	98	$32.94	0	1	87.3
29-2055	Surgical Technologists	Middle-Skill	6	808	10%	74	$28.31	0	0	89
29-1229	Physicians, All Other	Above Middle-Skill	6	1,481	10%	72	$53.62	0	0	88.9
19-3034	School Psychologists	Above Middle-Skill	6	786	5%	71	$36.69	0	1	85.4
29-1216	General Internal Medicine Physicians	Above Middle-Skill	6	645	7%	28	$43.46	0	1	83.3
29-1223	Psychiatrists	Above Middle-Skill	6	589	9%	28	$81.61	0	1	85.8
31-1128	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	Middle-Skill	5	55,559	25%	12,093	$14.05	0	1	93.6
31-9092	Medical Assistants	Middle-Skill	5	10,273	13%	1,775	$18.29	0	1	97.3
31-9011	Massage Therapists	Middle-Skill	5	4,618	17%	831	$14.91	0	1	86.5
29-2081	Opticians, Dispensing	Middle-Skill	5	1,060	14%	126	$20.76	0	0	92.9
21-1094	Community Health Workers	Middle-Skill	5	808	14%	115	$18.36	0	1	80.6
31-9093	Medical Equipment Preparers	Middle-Skill	5	645	9%	106	$21.55	1	0	110.1
29-1031	Dietitians and Nutritionists	Above Middle-Skill	5	1,153	10%	102	$14.93	0	1	84.7
21-1029	Social Workers, All Other	Above Middle-Skill	5	634	10%	74	$21.95	0	0	81.9
29-1215	Family Medicine Physicians	Above Middle-Skill	5	966	7%	43	$79.08	0	0	85.2
29-2031	Cardiovascular Technologists and Technicians	Middle-Skill	5	446	9%	38	$27.55	0	1	91.7
29-2035	Magnetic Resonance Imaging Technologists	Middle-Skill	5	293	19%	30	$40.30	0	1	92.8
29-1211	Anesthesiologists	Above Middle-Skill	5	674	5%	27	$89.43	0	1	82.1
29-2091	Orthotists and Prosthetists	Above Middle-Skill	5	183	23%	23	$31.30	0	1	91.1
29-1151	Nurse Anesthetists	Above Middle-Skill	5	179	19%	16	$98.35	0	1	90.5
29-1181	Audiologists	Above Middle-Skill	5	195	11%	13	$42.05	0	1	96.2
29-1218	Obstetricians and Gynecologists	Above Middle-Skill	5	279	6%	12	$98.90	1	1	83
19-1041	Epidemiologists	Above Middle-Skill	5	73	17%	7	$29.47	0	1	75
29-1023	Orthodontists	Above Middle-Skill	5	81	8%	4	$91.01	0	1	91.9

SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Points	2022 Jobs	2022 - 2027 % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Pct. 25 Hourly Earnings	Great Recession, COVID-19 Pandemic, or Overall Resilient	U.S. News & World Report 2023 Best Job	Automation Index
29-1022	Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons	Above Middle-Skill	5	46	9%	2	$115.00	0	1	75.1
29-9092	Genetic Counselors	Above Middle-Skill	5	15	30%	2	$45.73	0	1	85.6
29-1024	Prosthodontists	Above Middle-Skill	5	10	11%	1	$40.73	0	1	93.6
31-1131	Nursing Assistants	Middle-Skill	4	9,304	12%	1,683	$18.63	0	0	97
43-6013	Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	Middle-Skill	4	10,356	9%	1,438	$18.07	0	0	93.1
31-9091	Dental Assistants	Middle-Skill	4	6,521	11%	1,132	$18.31	0	0	97.5
21-1093	Social and Human Service Assistants	Middle-Skill	4	4,327	16%	659	$17.33	0	0	89.4
31-9097	Phlebotomists	Middle-Skill	4	1,816	19%	348	$21.67	0	0	104.2
31-9099	Healthcare Support Workers, All Other	Middle-Skill	4	1,595	11%	272	$18.35	0	0	98.4
29-2042	Emergency Medical Technicians	Middle-Skill	4	1,958	17%	229	$16.78	0	0	83.7
29-2099	Health Technologists and Technicians, All Other	Middle-Skill	4	1,851	11%	180	$19.17	0	0	92.1
51-9082	Medical Appliance Technicians	Below Middle-Skill	4	1,082	7%	164	$16.86	1	0	115
31-2022	Physical Therapist Aides	Middle-Skill	4	907	12%	156	$14.95	0	0	92.4
39-9041	Residential Advisors	Below Middle-Skill	4	626	16%	134	$16.78	0	0	94.3
29-2053	Psychiatric Technicians	Middle-Skill	4	822	18%	107	$18.92	0	0	79.4
21-1091	Health Education Specialists	Above Middle-Skill	4	515	10%	69	$22.05	0	0	75.6
21-1015	Rehabilitation Counselors	Above Middle-Skill	4	614	8%	68	$15.27	0	0	80.2
29-1291	Acupuncturists	Above Middle-Skill	4	537	8%	44	$27.13	0	0	82.3
29-2043	Paramedics	Middle-Skill	4	457	17%	42	$24.70	0	0	83.7
29-1011	Chiropractors	Above Middle-Skill	4	727	6%	33	$20.93	0	1	81.8
29-9021	Health Information Technologists and Medical Registrars	Middle-Skill	4	301	14%	29	$27.66	0	0	89.6
29-1221	Pediatricians, General	Above Middle-Skill	4	458	6%	19	$67.66	0	1	82.7
29-1222	Physicians, Pathologists	Above Middle-Skill	4	320	12%	17	$64.45	0	0	88.9
29-1214	Emergency Medicine Physicians	Above Middle-Skill	4	280	8%	13	$97.06	0	0	88.9
29-1224	Radiologists	Above Middle-Skill	4	214	12%	11	$103.52	0	0	88.9

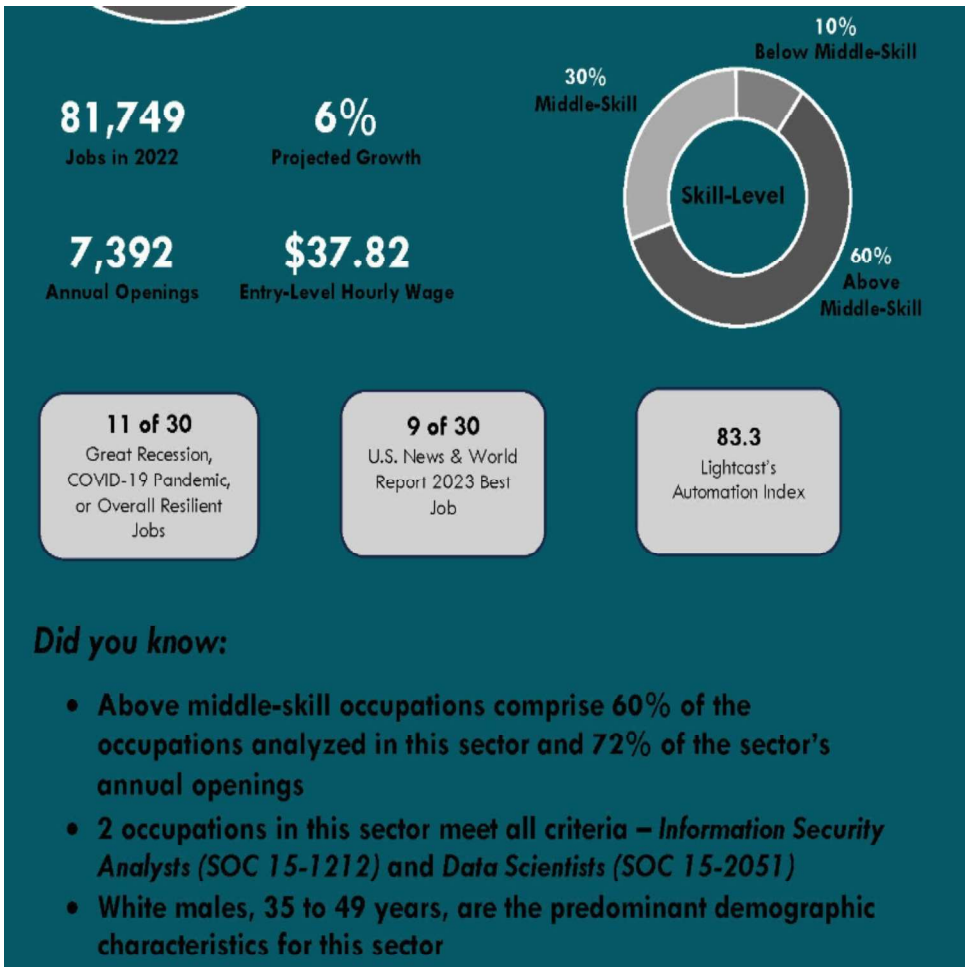
SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Points	2022 Jobs	2022 - 2027 % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Pct. 25 Hourly Earnings	Great Recession, COVID-19 Pandemic, or Overall Resilient	U.S. News & World Report 2023 Best Job	Automation Index
29-1125	Recreational Therapists	Above Middle-Skill	4	88	13%	10	$23.99	0	0	80.4
29-2033	Nuclear Medicine Technologists	Middle-Skill	4	122	12%	10	$51.32	0	0	95.2
29-1081	Podiatrists	Above Middle-Skill	4	194	9%	9	$50.03	0	0	86.6
29-1161	Nurse Midwives	Above Middle-Skill	4	78	12%	6	$65.90	0	0	86.3
31-2012	Occupational Therapy Aides	Middle-Skill	4	30	17%	6	$25.44	0	0	93
29-1124	Radiation Therapists	Middle-Skill	4	73	13%	5	$45.89	0	0	92.7
29-1213	Dermatologists	Above Middle-Skill	4	83	8%	4	$97.25	0	0	88.9
		Total	-	202,079	16%	29,378	$27.73			

Technology and Information Technology (IT)

The technology sector remains a driving force in the region's economy, with demand for skilled IT professionals in areas such as software development, cybersecurity, data analytics, and cloud computing. Emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, and Internet of Things (IoT), present opportunities for specialized roles and innovative solutions.

- There are 7,392 annual openings

- There is a 3,933 labor gap-



(Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 86)

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and Digital Media Occupational Criteria Data

The sector of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and Digital Media comprises two distinct areas. The ICT segment encompasses information technology professionals such as help desk technicians, cybersecurity analysts, database administrators, and software developers, among others. On the other hand, Digital Media encompasses roles like art directors, animators, graphic designers, and web developers, along with various technical specialists in lighting and sound. Workers in these fields often pursue certifications to demonstrate proficiency in specific software or techniques (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 87).

Here are notable data points concerning the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and Digital Media sector:

- Out of the 30 analyzed occupations, 18 are categorized as above middle-skill, 9 as middle-skill, and 3 as below middle-skill.
- Above middle-skill occupations represent 60% of the total occupations assessed in this sector and contribute to 72% of the sector's annual job openings.
- 26 out of the 30 occupations meet the criteria for annual job openings.

- One occupation, Software Developers (SOC 15-1252), accounts for 22% of the sector's annual job openings.
- 23 occupations fulfill both the California Insight's Living Wage and the MIT Living Wage criteria, while 5 fall short of meeting the MIT Living Wage, and 2 fail to meet either living wage standard.
- Nine occupations within this sector are recognized as U.S. News & World Report 2023 Best Jobs.
- Only two occupations, Information Security Analysts (SOC 15-1212) and Data Scientists (SOC 15-2051), meet all criteria.

Exhibit 10 presents a detailed breakdown of the 30 analyzed occupations within the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and Digital Media sector, including their skill levels, met criteria, and associated data. Shaded cells indicate the fulfillment of criteria, with lighter shading indicating compliance with California Insight's Living Wage but not meeting the MIT Living Wage for hourly earnings (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 88).

SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Points	2022 Jobs	2022 – 2027 % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Pct. 25 Hourly Earnings	Great Recession, COVID-19 Pandemic, or Overall Resilient	U.S. News & World Report 2023 Best Job	Automation Index
15-2051	Data Scientists	Above Middle-Skill	8	2,151	16%	233	$34.97	1	1	83.4
15-1212	Information Security Analysts	Above Middle-Skill	8	1,181	17%	133	$45.67	1	1	86.4
15-1252	Software Developers	Above Middle-Skill	7	18,171	11%	1,649	$50.42	0	1	80.2
11-3021	Computer and Information Systems Managers	Above Middle-Skill	7	7,643	6%	667	$62.26	1	1	79.9
15-1241	Computer Network Architects	Middle-Skill	7	1,590	2%	108	$40.71	1	1	87.1
15-1242	Database Administrators	Above Middle-Skill	7	801	5%	65	$34.95	1	1	88.1
15-1232	Computer User Support Specialists	Middle-Skill	6	7,922	4%	691	$25.12	1	0	82.9
15-1299	Computer Occupations, All Other	Above Middle-Skill	6	7,190	3%	562	$28.38	1	0	85.5
15-1211	Computer Systems Analysts	Above Middle-Skill	6	5,164	5%	425	$40.58	0	1	81.7
27-2012	Producers and Directors	Above Middle-Skill	6	2,240	5%	237	$31.17	1	0	89.1
15-1244	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	Middle-Skill	6	2,959	3%	221	$35.61	0	1	87.2
27-1011	Art Directors	Above Middle-Skill	6	2,025	0%	215	$30.85	1	0	81.6
15-1255	Web and Digital Interface Designers	Middle-Skill	6	1,940	9%	204	$25.00	0	0	88.4
15-1253	Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	Above Middle-Skill	6	2,194	9%	200	$37.59	0	0	80.2
15-1254	Web Developers	Middle-Skill	6	1,151	10%	112	$23.61	0	1	88.4
27-1024	Graphic Designers	Above Middle-Skill	5	4,904	0%	448	$21.10	1	0	80.8
27-1014	Special Effects Artists and Animators	Above Middle-Skill	5	1,152	2%	128	$27.47	0	0	72.2
15-1231	Computer Network Support Specialists	Middle-Skill	5	1,415	5%	126	$26.74	0	0	86.9
17-2072	Electronics Engineers, Except Computer	Above Middle-Skill	5	1,834	(1%)	113	$46.61	0	0	85.4
15-1251	Computer Programmers	Above Middle-Skill	5	1,642	(3%)	112	$33.54	0	0	83.3
27-4012	Broadcast Technicians	Middle-Skill	5	725	5%	77	$34.05	0	0	96.3
27-4011	Audio and Video Technicians	Middle-Skill	5	579	15%	76	$21.24	0	0	97.8

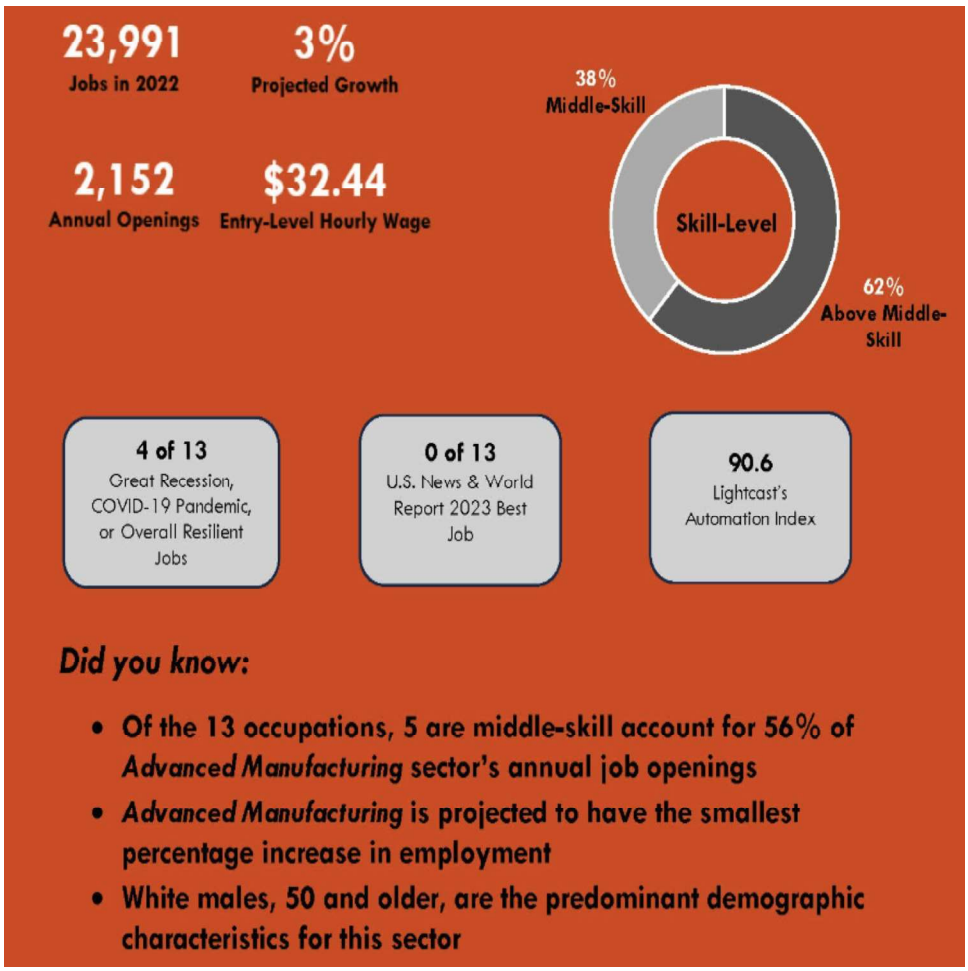
SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Points	2022 Jobs	2022 – 2027 % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Pct. 25 Hourly Earnings	Great Recession, COVID-19 Pandemic, or Overall Resilient	U.S. News & World Report 2023 Best Job	Automation Index
15-1243	Database Architects	Above Middle-Skill	5	403	7%	34	$50.08	1	0	88.1
27-4021	Photographers	Middle-Skill	4	2,262	13%	270	$14.96	0	0	92.2
27-2099	Entertainers and Performers, Sports and Related Workers, All Other	Below Middle-Skill	4	624	13%	91	$18.18	0	0	91.6
27-3099	Media and Communication Workers, All Other	Below Middle-Skill	4	704	1%	66	$22.15	0	0	92.8
27-2041	Music Directors and Composers	Above Middle-Skill	4	587	5%	64	$23.58	0	0	76.4
27-4015	Lighting Technicians	Below Middle-Skill	4	270	12%	34	$24.08	0	0	96.1
15-1221	Computer and Information Research Scientists	Above Middle-Skill	4	250	11%	24	$60.93	0	0	78.5
17-1021	Cartographers and Photogrammetrists	Above Middle-Skill	4	76	8%	7	$34.46	0	0	94.2
		Total	-	81,479	6%	7,392	$37.82			

Advanced Manufacturing

Advanced manufacturing industries, including aerospace, biotechnology, and clean energy, require a highly skilled workforce to support research, development, and production activities. Demand exists for technicians, engineers, and skilled tradespeople with expertise in areas such as advanced materials, robotics, and sustainable manufacturing practices.

- There are 2,152 annual openings

- There is a 1,227 labor gap-



(Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 34)

Advanced Manufacturing Occupational Criteria Data

The sector of Advanced Manufacturing encompasses a range of roles including assembly and production, technician and engineering, and industrial maintenance. Workers in these occupations typically operate within factories and other manufacturing settings. Advanced Manufacturing often involves the utilization of machinery such as computer numerically controlled (CNC) machines, as well as computer-aided design (CAD) or 3D printing machines. Additionally, Advanced Manufacturing professionals deal with robotics, control systems, electro-mechanical technology, and other autonomous systems (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 35).

Here are notable data points regarding the Advanced Manufacturing sector:

- Out of the 13 occupations analyzed, 8 are classified as above middle-skill, 5 as middle-skill, and none are below middle-skill.
- Despite the smaller number of occupations, middle-skill roles contribute to 56% of the annual job openings.
- Ten out of the 13 occupations meet the criteria for annual job openings.
- None of the occupations are identified as a U.S. News & World 2023 Best Job.

- Engineering Technologists and Technicians, Except Drafters, All Other (SOC 17-3029) is the sole occupation that falls short of meeting both the California Insight Living Wage and the MIT Living Wage.
- Industrial Machinery Mechanics is the only occupation with a higher-than-average risk of automation.
- Chemical Engineers (SOC 17-2041), projected to experience the most growth over the next five years, are among the three occupations with the fewest annual openings.
- Advanced Manufacturing occupations analyzed in this sector account for 2% of all annual openings considered in this report and 2.5% of all jobs in Orange County as of 2022.

Exhibit 11 provides a detailed overview of the 13 analyzed occupations within the Advanced Manufacturing sector, including their skill levels, met criteria, and associated data. Shaded cells indicate criteria fulfillment, with lighter shading indicating compliance with the California Insight's Living Wage but not meeting the MIT Living Wage for hourly earnings (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 35).

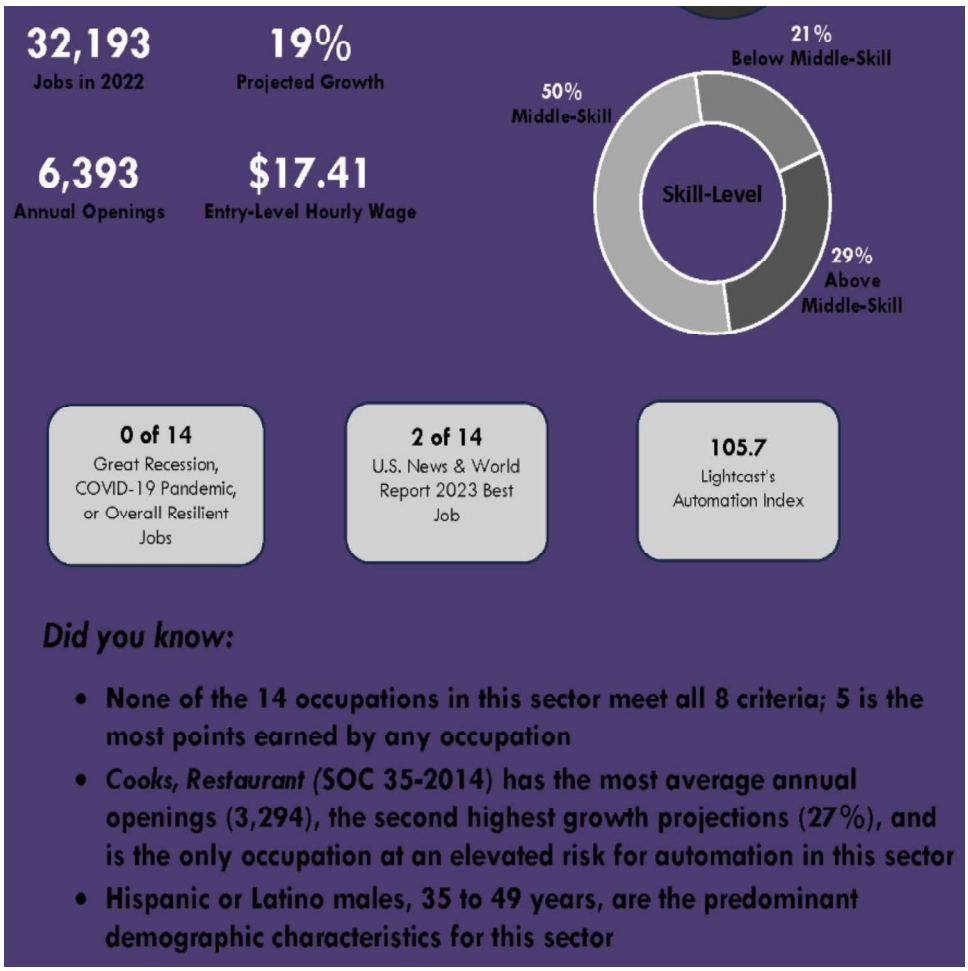
SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Points	2022 Jobs	2022 – 2027 % Change	Annual Openings	Pct. 25 Hourly Earnings	Great Recession, COVID-19 Pandemic, or Overall Resilient	U.S. News & World Report 2023 Best Job	Automation Index
17-2112	Industrial Engineers	Above Middle-Skill	7	3,205	8%	255	$40.38	1	0	92
51-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	Middle-Skill	6	5,682	0%	601	$24.41	1	0	88.6
49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	Middle-Skill	6	2,481	7%	260	$24.22	1	0	109.8
17-2071	Electrical Engineers	Above Middle-Skill	6	3,151	2%	208	$45.85	1	0	84.8
17-2141	Mechanical Engineers	Above Middle-Skill	5	3,119	2%	205	$39.35	0	0	83.4
17-3023	Electrical and Electronic Engineering Technologists and Technicians	Middle-Skill	5	1,689	(1%)	181	$28.70	0	0	98.6
19-5011	Occupational Health and Safety Specialists	Above Middle-Skill	5	1,052	5%	121	$35.13	0	0	92.5
17-2061	Computer Hardware Engineers	Above Middle-Skill	5	1,170	1%	76	$27.27	0	0	83.1
27-1021	Commercial and Industrial Designers	Above Middle-Skill	5	840	0%	74	$28.63	0	0	81.3
17-3029	Engineering Technologists and Technicians, Except Drafters, All Other	Middle-Skill	4	1,086	3%	114	$23.37	0	0	92.1
17-3026	Industrial Engineering Technologists and Technicians	Middle-Skill	4	380	9%	45	$28.60	0	0	94
17-2041	Chemical Engineers	Above Middle-Skill	4	88	10%	7	$41.35	0	0	91.7
19-2032	Materials Scientists	Above Middle-Skill	4	48	8%	5	$31.72	0	0	74.2
		Total	-	23,991	3%	2,152	$32.44	-	-	-

Hospitality and Tourism

The hospitality and tourism industry play a significant role in the region's economy, creating employment opportunities in hotels, restaurants, entertainment venues, and travel agencies. Demand exists for hospitality professionals with skills in customer service, event management, culinary arts, and hospitality management.

- There are 6,393 annual openings

- There is a 5,755 labor gap-



(Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 107)

Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism Occupational Criteria Data

The sector of Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism encompasses a diverse range of roles including retail salespersons, chefs, cooks, waiters and waitresses, concierges, and more. Professionals in these occupations typically operate within shopping centers, restaurants, food serving establishments, or lodging facilities. The nature of Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism roles often involves significant face-to-face interaction and demands a high level of customer service (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 108).

Here are notable data points regarding the Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism sector:

- Out of the 14 occupations analyzed, 4 are classified as above middle-skill, 7 as middle-skill, and 3 as below middle-skill.
- None of the 14 occupations meet all 8 criteria; the highest number of points earned by any occupation is 5.
- All occupations except for Gambling Managers (SOC 11-9071) meet the criterion for annual job openings.
- Two of the occupations are recognized as U.S. News & World 2023 Best Jobs.

- Three occupations fulfill both the California Insight's Living Wage and the MIT Living Wage criteria, while two occupations fall short of meeting the MIT living wage.
- None of the occupations meet the criteria to be considered Great Recession, COVID-19 Pandemic, or Overall Resilient, making this the only sector without at least one occupation meeting this criterion.
- Gambling Managers (SOC 11-9071) are projected to experience the most growth (42%) over the next five years, yet this occupation has the fewest annual openings (8).
- Cooks, Restaurant (SOC 35-2014) have the highest average annual openings (3,294), the second-highest growth projections (27%), and are the only occupation at an elevated risk for automation.

Exhibit 12 provides a detailed overview of the 11 analyzed occupations within the Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism sector, including their skill levels, met criteria, and associated data. Shaded cells indicate criteria fulfillment, with lighter shading indicating compliance with the California Insight's Living Wage but not meeting the MIT Living Wage for hourly earnings (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 108).

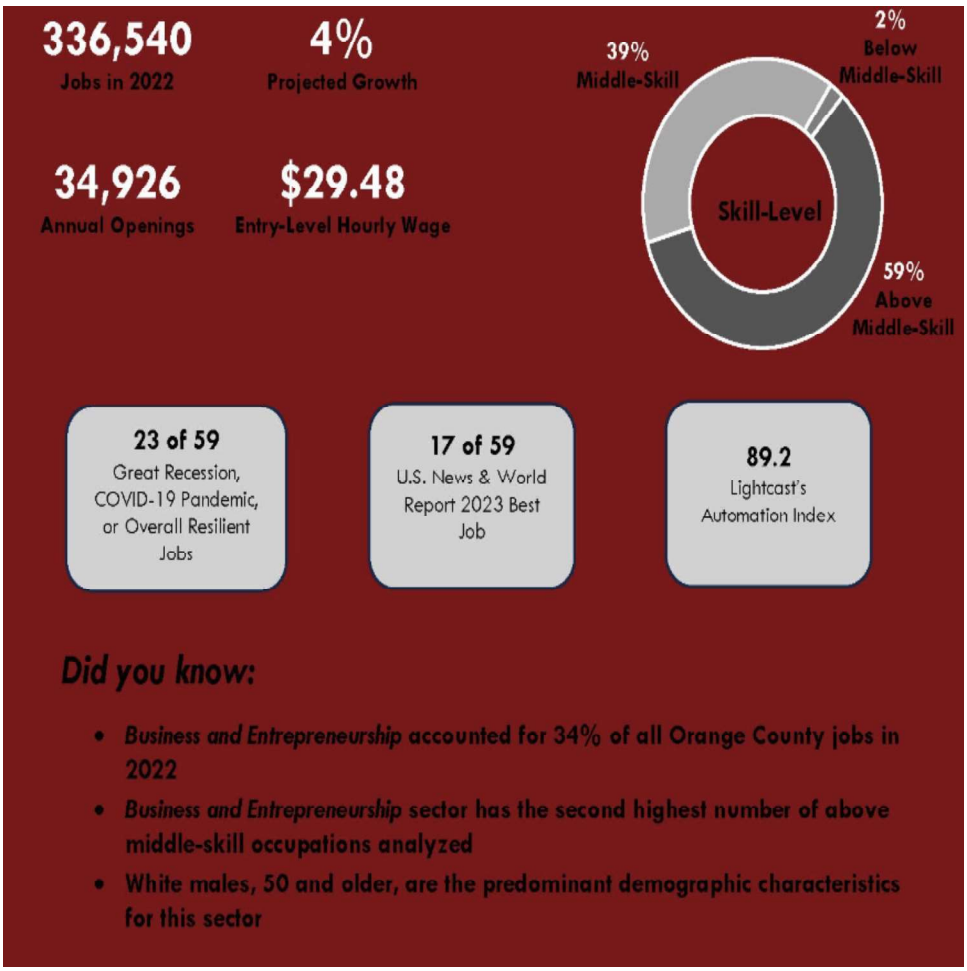
SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Points	2022 Jobs	2022 – 2027 % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Pct. 25 Hourly Earnings	Great Recession, COVID-19 Pandemic, or Overall Resilient	U.S. News & World Report 2023 Best Job	Automation Index
39-9032	Recreation Workers	Below Middle-Skill	5	4,519	14%	1,091	$14.82	0	1	88
35-1011	Chefs and Head Cooks	Middle-Skill	5	1,987	14%	340	$22.49	0	0	93.2
27-1025	Interior Designers	Above Middle-Skill	5	1,551	3%	145	$24.82	0	0	82.9
11-9072	Entertainment and Recreation Managers, Except Gambling	Above Middle-Skill	5	938	13%	135	$22.18	0	0	84.5
27-1022	Fashion Designers	Above Middle-Skill	5	1,072	(1%)	106	$28.68	0	0	82.6
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	Below Middle-Skill	4	14,660	27%	3,294	$15.87	0	1	125
39-1014	First-Line Supervisors of Entertainment and Recreation Workers, Except Gambling Services	Middle-Skill	4	1,583	21%	281	$16.04	0	0	91.4
39-9099	Personal Care and Service Workers, All Other	Below Middle-Skill	4	1,172	17%	255	$14.13	0	0	91.8
13-1121	Meeting, Convention, and Event Planners	Above Middle-Skill	4	1,462	13%	196	$19.83	0	0	90.5
39-1022	First-Line Supervisors of Personal Service Workers	Middle-Skill	4	981	19%	177	$17.25	0	0	91.4
39-7018	Tour and Travel Guides	Middle-Skill	4	654	7%	141	$14.61	0	0	96.4
43-4181	Reservation and Transportation Ticket Agents and Travel Clerks	Middle-Skill	4	948	7%	130	$15.60	0	0	94.4
11-9081	Lodging Managers	Middle-Skill	4	627	14%	94	$19.80	0	0	97.3
11-9071	Gambling Managers	Middle-Skill	4	39	42%	8	$40.72	0	0	93
		Total	-	32,193	19%	6,393	$17.41	-	-	-

Business and Professional Services

Professional services industries, including finance, accounting, marketing, and consulting, require a skilled workforce to support business operations and strategic initiatives. Demand exists for professionals with expertise in financial analysis, digital marketing, project management, and business development.

- There are 34,926 annual openings

- There is a 22,793 labor gap-



(Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 54)

Business and Entrepreneurship Occupational Criteria Data

The Business and Entrepreneurship sector encompasses various roles in accounting, human resources, management, marketing, real estate, sales, secretarial work, and more. It also includes occupations with a significant number of self-employed individuals, such as those in the beauty industry. Professionals in this sector commonly work in banks, marketing agencies, tax preparation facilities, and other office settings. They often utilize office technology, including word processing, presentation, and spreadsheet software (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 55).

Here are notable data points for the Business and Entrepreneurship sector:

- Out of 59 occupations, 35 are classified as above middle-skill, 23 as middle-skill, and 1 as below middle-skill.
- 50 of these occupations meet the criteria for annual openings, with 29 being above middle-skill and 20 being middle-skill.
- Nearly half of all annual openings are for the 29 above middle-skill occupations.
- The Business and Entrepreneurship sector ranks second in terms of the number of above middle-skill occupations.

- 17 occupations are listed as U.S. News & World Report 2023 Best Jobs, with 15 of them being above middle skill.
- 47 occupations meet both the California Insight's Living Wage and the MIT Living Wage criteria, while eight do not meet the MIT living wage.
- Funeral Home Managers (SOC 11-9171) are projected to grow the most (22%) over the next five years but have one of the fewest annual openings (7).
- Four above middle-skill occupations and one middle-skill occupation, General and Operations Managers (11-1021), meet all criteria.
- The Business and Entrepreneurship sector has the highest number of occupations (23 out of 97) meeting criteria related to resilience during events like the Great Recession and COVID-19 pandemic.
- General and Operations Managers are among the top three occupations with the most annual openings out of the 338 occupations analyzed in the report and rank #1.

Exhibit 13 illustrates the 59 occupations in the Business and Entrepreneurship sector, their skill levels, criteria met, and associated data. Shaded cells indicate which criteria were met, with lighter shades denoting cases where the California Insight's Living Wage was met but not the MIT Living Wage for hourly earnings criteria (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 55).

SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Points	2022 Jobs	2022 - 2027 % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Pct. 25 Hourly Earnings	Great Recession, COVID-19 Pandemic, or Overall Resilient	U.S. News & World Report 2023 Best Job	Automation Index
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	Middle-Skill	8	28,261	7%	2,957	$37.02	1	1	82.2
13-1161	Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	Above Middle-Skill	8	12,149	10%	1,476	$26.39	1	1	88.6
11-3031	Financial Managers	Above Middle-Skill	8	11,599	7%	1,055	$53.14	1	1	85.8
11-9151	Social and Community Service Managers	Above Middle-Skill	8	2,240	14%	269	$27.08	1	1	85.7
15-2031	Operations Research Analysts	Above Middle-Skill	8	894	12%	87	$31.09	1	1	91.2
13-1111	Management Analysts	Above Middle-Skill	7	14,021	6%	1,486	$27.74	1	1	91.1
13-1071	Human Resources Specialists	Above Middle-Skill	7	9,849	6%	1,077	$27.00	1	1	83.8
11-2022	Sales Managers	Above Middle-Skill	7	10,950	0%	900	$37.29	1	1	85.7
13-2052	Personal Financial Advisors	Above Middle-Skill	7	5,371	4%	431	$30.56	1	1	89.4
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	Above Middle-Skill	6	19,015	5%	1,852	$30.06	0	1	93.1
11-9199	Managers, All Other	Above Middle-Skill	6	15,499	4%	1,353	$28.78	1	0	84.5
13-1082	Project Management Specialists	Above Middle-Skill	6	11,651	5%	1,078	$35.83	1	0	86.8
11-2021	Marketing Managers	Above Middle-Skill	6	6,223	3%	588	$53.78	0	1	76.7
13-1028	Buyers and Purchasing Agents	Middle-Skill	6	5,762	(4%)	569	$27.46	1	0	93.4
11-3012	Administrative Services Managers	Middle-Skill	6	3,784	4%	352	$40.26	1	0	81
11-1011	Chief Executives	Above Middle-Skill	6	4,556	(2%)	337	$50.31	1	0	82
13-1051	Cost Estimators	Middle-Skill	6	3,362	1%	317	$29.73	1	0	96.5
13-2051	Financial and Investment Analysts	Above Middle-Skill	6	3,484	4%	285	$35.44	0	1	89
27-3031	Public Relations Specialists	Above Middle-Skill	6	2,777	6%	281	$25.27	0	1	90
11-3121	Human Resources Managers	Above Middle-Skill	6	2,571	4%	240	$49.21	1	0	84
11-3051	Industrial Production Managers	Above Middle-Skill	6	2,682	(1%)	191	$40.71	1	0	80.9
11-3013	Facilities Managers	Middle-Skill	6	1,635	6%	157	$36.09	1	0	81
13-2099	Financial Specialists, All Other	Above Middle-Skill	6	1,709	5%	154	$24.97	1	0	89

SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Points	2022 Jobs	2022 - 2027 % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Pct. 25 Hourly Earnings	Great Recession, COVID-19 Pandemic, or Overall Resilient	U.S. News & World Report 2023 Best Job	Automation Index
13-2028	Property Appraisers and Assessors	Middle-Skill	6	1,014	(1%)	91	$25.85	1	0	89.4
13-1131	Fundraisers	Above Middle-Skill	6	703	13%	86	$24.70	0	0	85.8
13-2061	Financial Examiners	Above Middle-Skill	6	625	10%	65	$29.88	0	0	89.8
43-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	Middle-Skill	5	17,341	1%	1,936	$27.24	0	0	91.8
41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	Middle-Skill	5	18,535	(4%)	1,822	$23.72	0	0	91.5
13-1199	Business Operations Specialists, All Other	Above Middle-Skill	5	16,507	5%	1,719	$23.12	1	0	86.8
41-3021	Insurance Sales Agents	Middle-Skill	5	9,804	0%	944	$23.03	1	0	96
43-6011	Executive Secretaries and Executive Administrative Assistants	Middle-Skill	5	6,309	(7%)	706	$26.85	0	0	92.4
13-2072	Loan Officers	Above Middle-Skill	5	7,052	(3%)	541	$21.02	0	1	91.7
41-9021	Real Estate Brokers	Middle-Skill	5	3,708	5%	382	$26.13	0	0	99.2
41-4011	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Technical and Scientific Products	Above Middle-Skill	5	3,708	(1%)	374	$35.74	0	0	93.5
41-1012	First-Line Supervisors of Non-Retail Sales Workers	Middle-Skill	5	3,726	(5%)	335	$24.45	0	0	81.4
13-1031	Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators	Middle-Skill	5	2,906	(13%)	218	$29.02	0	0	89.4
13-1141	Compensation, Benefits, and Job Analysis Specialists	Above Middle-Skill	5	1,143	3%	105	$28.22	0	0	86.4
13-2041	Credit Analysts	Above Middle-Skill	5	1,265	(2%)	101	$30.09	0	0	92.2
41-9031	Sales Engineers	Above Middle-Skill	5	929	(2%)	96	$38.77	0	0	85.4
13-2053	Insurance Underwriters	Above Middle-Skill	5	1,217	(12%)	86	$34.61	0	0	95
11-3061	Purchasing Managers	Above Middle-Skill	5	902	2%	79	$51.48	0	0	88.7
43-4171	Receptionists and Information Clerks	Middle-Skill	4	9,023	10%	1,474	$16.45	0	0	94.2

SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Points	2022 Jobs	2022 - 2027 % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Pct. 25 Hourly Earnings	Great Recession, COVID-19 Pandemic, or Overall Resilient	U.S. News & World Report 2023 Best Job	Automation Index
41-3091	Sales Representatives of Services, Except Advertising, Insurance, Financial Services, and Travel	Below Middle-Skill	4	12,116	3%	1,398	$22.20	0	0	96.7
39-5012	Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists	Middle-Skill	4	6,988	14%	1,232	$13.66	0	0	98
39-5092	Manicurists and Pedicurists	Middle-Skill	4	6,652	21%	1,204	$14.00	0	1	102.2
41-3031	Securities, Commodities, and Financial Services Sales Agents	Above Middle-Skill	4	7,894	2%	707	$23.06	0	0	92.8
11-9141	Property, Real Estate, and Community Association Managers	Middle-Skill	4	8,008	1%	691	$21.43	0	0	83.8
39-5094	Skincare Specialists	Middle-Skill	4	1,911	19%	362	$14.13	0	0	93.7
43-3051	Payroll and Timekeeping Clerks	Middle-Skill	4	2,731	(5%)	298	$21.54	1	0	101.1
43-4011	Brokerage Clerks	Middle-Skill	4	600	(3%)	69	$21.90	0	0	98
11-2032	Public Relations Managers	Above Middle-Skill	4	660	6%	62	$46.91	0	0	85.1
23-2093	Title Examiners, Abstractors, and Searchers	Middle-Skill	4	633	0%	62	$24.63	0	0	87.3
11-3131	Training and Development Managers	Above Middle-Skill	4	585	4%	57	$45.38	0	0	84.3
13-2054	Financial Risk Specialists	Above Middle-Skill	4	623	3%	54	$36.56	0	0	89
39-5091	Makeup Artists, Theatrical and Performance	Middle-Skill	4	166	12%	30	$41.35	0	0	97.5
11-2033	Fundraising Managers	Above Middle-Skill	4	216	11%	23	$39.20	0	0	85.1
15-2011	Actuaries	Above Middle-Skill	4	179	4%	12	$45.62	0	1	75
11-9171	Funeral Home Managers	Middle-Skill	4	51	22%	7	$24.29	0	0	83.9
19-3032	Industrial-Organizational Psychologists	Above Middle-Skill	4	66	6%	6	$35.91	0	1	87
		Total	-	336,540	4%	34,926	$29.48	-	-	-

F. Forecast and Future Trends

OC Economic Forecast

The Woods Center for Economic Analysis and Forecasting at California State University, Fullerton's College of Business and Economics, led by Drs. Anil Puri and Mira Farka, presents an annual economic forecast providing a three-year outlook for the national, state, and Orange County economies every October. This year's report, titled "Economic Forecast 2024: MISSION IMPOSSIBLE? Searching for Growth in an Inflationary Economy," offers a comprehensive analysis indicating that these economies have largely returned to pre-pandemic levels. While this overall trend is positive, the forecast also anticipates an eventual downturn, as outlined in the excerpt below (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 8):

"Despite a historic increase in interest rates over the past year and a half, resilient consumer spending and easing supply constraints have sustained economic activity. However, signs of weakening economic momentum are emerging, and our baseline scenario predicts a garden-variety recession sometime in the second half of 2024. Soft landings are rare in economic fluctuations, and we expect Southern California, including Orange County, to experience a downturn similar to the national economy. The Orange County unemployment rate is projected to average 3.5% in 2023, rise to 4.5% in 2024, and slightly decrease to 4.2% in 2025. The lowest point in unemployment is expected towards the end of 2024 and the beginning of 2025, with rates reaching 5% or higher" (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 8).

For more detailed information, including tables outlining the economic forecast for the national, Southern California, Orange County, and neighboring counties, please refer to the full report.

External Trends Affecting Saddleback's EWD Planning

As Saddleback College refines its EWD plan for 2025–2030, it must account for a range of external trends that will shape strategies, programs, and outcomes. Understanding these forces is essential for adapting to evolving economic conditions, technological advances, and societal shifts.

Key trends include:

1. **Technological Advancements –** Rapid progress in automation, AI, and robotics is transforming industries and job roles. Saddleback must ensure its training programs remain relevant and equip students with future-ready skills.
2. **Globalization and International Competition –** Increasing global interconnectivity creates both opportunities and challenges. Preparing students with cross-cultural competencies and global perspectives will be key for success in a global workforce.
3. **Demographic Shifts –** An aging population and growing diversity impact workforce supply and demand. Programs will need to address shortages in critical sectors while serving a broader range of learners.
4. **Environmental Sustainability and Green Jobs –** Rising demand for renewable energy and sustainable practices creates opportunities for green workforce training programs.
5. **Remote Work and Telecommuting –** The post-pandemic workforce embraces flexible arrangements. Students should graduate comfortably with remote collaboration tools, virtual teamwork, and digital professionalism.

6. **Gig Economy and Freelancing –** Non-traditional work arrangements are expanding. Saddleback can help students succeed by offering courses in entrepreneurship, freelancing, and self-employment skills.
7. **Healthcare Industry Growth –** Driven by an aging population and demand for services, healthcare continues to expand. Expanding healthcare-related training programs can fill urgent workforce gaps.
8. **Policy and Regulatory Changes –** Shifts in workforce development priorities and education policies will influence funding, program focus, and long-term strategy. Staying informed and responsive will be essential.

By monitoring and adapting to these trends, Saddleback College can ensure its EWD plan stays relevant, future-focused, and responsive to students, employers, and the community. These efforts directly support Vision 2030's call for workforce-aligned education and reinforce Inspire 2035's priorities of economic mobility, community vitality, and student-centered innovation.

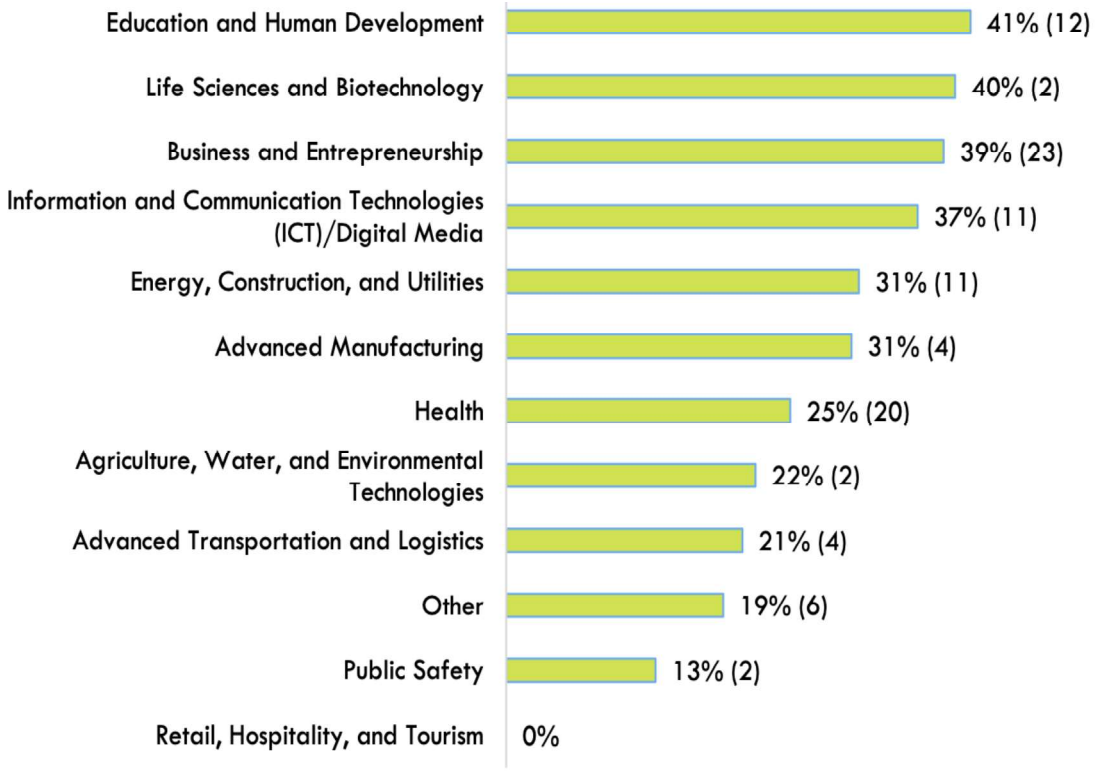
Resilient Jobs by Sector

The OC COE published Resilient Jobs & Jobs for Recovery in March 2023. This report conducted an exhaustive analysis of past economic downturns in Orange County to project which occupations would be resilient – stable jobs, openings, and wages – in future economic downturns. The 338 occupations analyzed in this report received one point if they were considered a "Great Recession", "COVID-19 Pandemic", or "Overall Resilient" – otherwise known as a "Resilient Job" in Resilient Jobs & Jobs for Recovery (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 19).

The following sector observations highlight Orange County's Resilient Jobs among the 338 occupations examined in this report:

- Approximately one-third of the analyzed occupations within the Education and Human Development (41%); Life Sciences and Biotechnology (40%); Business and Entrepreneurship (39%); and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)/Digital Media (37%) sectors are categorized as Resilient Jobs.
    - It is essential to consider the absolute number of Resilient Jobs within each sector. For instance, while 40% of Life Sciences and Biotechnology occupations are Resilient Jobs, this sector comprises only 5 occupations in total.
- In terms of actual occupations, the Business and Entrepreneurship (23) and Health (20) sectors boast the highest number of Resilient Jobs.
    - Consequently, these sectors also encompass the most occupations overall.
- Notably, Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism stand out as the only sectors without any Resilient Jobs.
    - Remarkably, despite its lack of Resilient Jobs, Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism, with a weighted entry-level hourly wage of $17.41, fails to meet either living wage metric.

Refer to Exhibit 14 for a detailed breakdown showing the percentage and actual number of occupations classified as Resilient Jobs for each sector among the 338 occupations analyzed in this report. Great Recession, COVID-19 Pandemic, or Overall Resilient Criteria by Sector (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 20).



Projected Growth and Emerging Trends in the Workforce

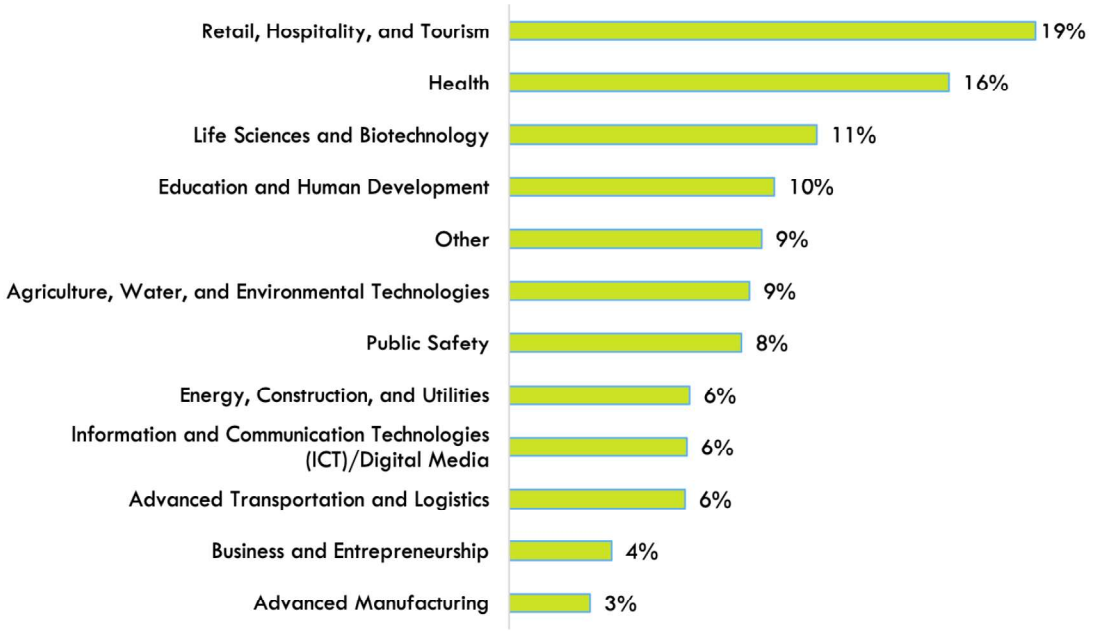
Projected 5-Year Percent Change by Sector

Over the period from 2022 to 2027, the number of jobs for the 338 occupations in Orange County is expected to increase by 8.27%, which is nearly two percentage points higher than the projected 6.62% increase across all occupations. Here are some notable observations regarding the percentage change in jobs by sector through 2027 (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 16):

- Sectors expected to experience the largest percentage increase in employment include Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism (19%); Health (16%); and Life Sciences and Biotechnology (11%).
- However, it is important to note that Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism occupations account for only 3% of Orange County's jobs in 2022, and Life Sciences and Biotechnology make up just 1%. This indicates that while these sectors show significant growth percentagewise, the actual number of jobs represented by this growth is relatively small.
- Advanced Manufacturing is projected to have the smallest percentage increase in employment at 3%, followed by Business and Entrepreneurship at 4%. However, it is worth mentioning that Business and Entrepreneurship had the most jobs in Orange

County in 2022. Therefore, despite the modest growth rate, the 4% increase still represents a substantial number of jobs.

Exhibit 15 provides a detailed breakdown of the projected 5-year percent change by sector for the 338 occupations analyzed in this report (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 16).



G. Implications for Saddleback College

Understanding these current economic trends enables Saddleback College to tailor its workforce development programs, curriculum offerings, and outreach efforts to meet the evolving needs of the local labor market. By aligning its programs with high-growth industries, fostering entrepreneurship and innovation, and expanding access and equity, Saddleback College can play a pivotal role in advancing economic prosperity and social mobility in its service area.

Emerging Cross-Sector Workforce Trends

In addition to sector-by-sector growth projections, several overarching trends are shaping the future workforce landscape in Orange County. These trends cut across multiple sectors and influence the types of skills, programs, and partnerships Saddleback College should prioritize. **Key emerging trends include:**

1. **Remote Work and Telecommuting –** The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the adoption of remote work and telecommuting arrangements, leading to a shift in workforce dynamics and employment preferences. Emerging trends include hybrid work models, digital nomadism, and the need for remote collaboration tools and cybersecurity solutions.
2. **Green Jobs and Sustainability –** The growing emphasis on environmental sustainability and renewable energy sources is driving demand for green jobs in sectors such as renewable energy, energy efficiency, sustainable agriculture, and green construction.

Emerging trends include circular economy practices, carbon footprint reduction, and environmental stewardship initiatives.

3. **Digital Transformation and Automation –** The ongoing digital transformation of industries is reshaping the workforce landscape, with automation, artificial intelligence, and robotics automating routine tasks and creating demand for digital skills and technological literacy. Emerging trends include the integration of smart technologies, digital twin simulations, and autonomous systems in various industries.
4. **Healthcare Innovation and Telehealth –** Innovation in healthcare delivery models, such as telehealth, remote patient monitoring, and personalized medicine, is driving demand for healthcare professionals with expertise in digital health technologies, telemedicine platforms, and health informatics. Emerging trends include virtual reality simulations, wearable health devices, and predictive analytics for healthcare management.
5. **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) –** Increasing awareness of diversity, equity, and inclusion issues is driving demand for professionals with expertise in DEI initiatives, cultural competence training, and inclusive leadership practices. Emerging trends include diversity recruiting strategies, unconscious bias training, and the integration of DEI metrics into organizational performance evaluations.

By conducting a comprehensive workforce needs assessment, Saddleback College can identify opportunities for program development, curriculum enhancement, and industry partnerships to meet the evolving demands of the labor market and ensure that students are well-prepared for success in their chosen careers. This proactive approach also supports Vision 2030's workforce development goals and aligns with Inspire 2035's focus on economic mobility, equitable outcomes, and community vitality.

Vision 2030 Goals and Objectives Alignment

Saddleback College is committed to aligning its strategic initiatives with the visionary goals outlined in California Community Colleges' Vision 2030 and ensuring these efforts complement the SOCCCD Inspire 2035 priorities. This dual alignment reflects our dedication to driving economic prosperity, fostering workforce development, and empowering individuals to achieve their educational and career aspirations.

In this section, we outline Saddleback College's commitment to Vision 2030 goals and articulate specific objectives for economic and workforce development that also reinforce Inspire 2035's emphasis on student-centered learning, equitable access, and economic mobility.

Saddleback College's Commitment to Vision 2030 Goals

1. **Access and Equity –** Saddleback College is committed to expanding access to higher education and workforce training programs for all Californians, regardless of background or circumstance. We strive to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment where every student has the opportunity to succeed and thrive.
2. **Student Success and Completion –** Saddleback College is dedicated to promoting student success and completion by providing comprehensive support services, personalized academic advising, and high-quality educational experiences. We are

committed to increasing retention rates, improving graduation and transfer rates, and ensuring that students are well-prepared for success in the workforce or further education.

3. **Workforce Development and Economic Mobility –** Saddleback College plays a pivotal role in driving economic mobility and workforce development in our community. We collaborate with industry partners, government agencies, and community organizations to develop industry-relevant training programs, support entrepreneurship, and address regional workforce needs.
4. **Leadership and Innovation –** Saddleback College fosters a culture of leadership and innovation among students, faculty, staff, and administrators. We embrace emerging technologies, implement evidence-based practices, and cultivate strong leadership at all levels to drive systemic change and achieve the goals of Vision 2030.

Objectives for Economic and Workforce Development

1. **Enhance Curriculum Relevance –** Align program offerings with the needs of key industries, integrate emerging technologies, and incorporate real-world experiences into classroom learning.
2. **Expand Access and Equity –** Expand access to workforce training programs for underrepresented populations—including low-income students, minorities, veterans, and individuals with disabilities—through targeted outreach and support services.
3. **Advance Diversity and Inclusion –** Promote cultural competency, address equity gaps, and create inclusive learning environments where all students feel valued and supported.
4. **Strengthen Industry Partnerships –** Partner with local employers, industry associations, and trade organizations to develop internship opportunities, work-based learning experiences, and job placement pathways for students.
5. **Promote Sustainability and Innovation –** Integrate environmental stewardship into workforce training programs, foster entrepreneurship, and support research and development initiatives.

By aligning our efforts with Vision 2030 goals and reinforcing the Inspire 2035 priorities of Community Vitality, Economic Mobility, and Equitable Outcomes, Saddleback College aims to play a transformative role in shaping a more equitable, prosperous, and sustainable future for our students, our community, and the state of California.

Building on these objectives, Saddleback College has developed a comprehensive set of strategies to drive economic development and workforce advancement.

Strategies for Economic Development

As part of Saddleback College's commitment to driving economic prosperity and fostering workforce development, we have developed a set of strategic initiatives aimed at catalyzing economic growth, promoting innovation, and supporting entrepreneurial endeavors within our service area. These strategies intentionally advance Inspire 2035 priorities—Community Vitality, Economic Mobility, and Workplace Culture—while also supporting the broader district framework of Student-Centered learning, Equitable Access, and Equitable Outcomes.

The following strategies outline our approach to economic development through collaboration with industry partners, support for entrepreneurship and small business development, and participation in regional economic development initiatives.

Collaboration with Industry Partners

Saddleback College recognizes the importance of forging strategic partnerships with industry leaders, businesses, and employers to align educational programs with the evolving needs of the labor market. Our collaboration efforts include:

1. Establishing industry advisory boards for each academic department to provide input on curriculum development, industry trends, and workforce needs.
2. Creating internship and apprenticeship programs that offer students hands-on experience in real-world settings while giving businesses access to trained talent.
3. Collaborating with industry associations and trade organizations to identify emerging skills gaps, develop specialized training programs, and promote career pathways in high-demand sectors.
4. Hosting industry information sessions, forums, networking events, and career fairs to connect students, faculty, and industry professionals—fostering a culture of collaboration and knowledge exchange.

Support for Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development

Saddleback College recognizes the vital role that entrepreneurship and small business development play in driving economic growth and job creation. Our initiatives include:

1. Launching an entrepreneurship center or incubator on campus to provide aspiring entrepreneurs with resources, mentorship, and access to capital.
2. Offering entrepreneurship courses, workshops, and seminars covering business planning, marketing, finance, and legal considerations.
3. Partnering with Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs), chambers of commerce, and economic development agencies to deliver technical assistance, training, and networking opportunities.
4. Facilitating collaborations between students, faculty, and local businesses to support innovation, research, and the commercialization of innovative technologies and products.

Regional Economic Development Initiatives

Saddleback College is committed to actively participating in regional economic development initiatives that promote collaboration, innovation, and sustainable growth. This includes:

1. Engaging in economic development task forces, councils, and committees to identify shared priorities, leverage resources, and advocate for policies that support economic growth and job creation.
2. Collaborating with local governments, chambers of commerce, economic development agencies, and other stakeholders to attract investment, retain businesses, and expand opportunities.

3. Supporting workforce development initiatives, infrastructure projects, and industry clusters that enhance the region's competitiveness, resilience, and quality of life.
4. Leveraging academic expertise, research capabilities, and community resources to address regional challenges such as affordable housing, transportation, and environmental sustainability.

By implementing these strategies for economic development, Saddleback College aims to strengthen ties with industry partners, empower entrepreneurs, and contribute to the long-term economic vitality and prosperity of our community. Through collaboration, innovation, and a shared commitment to economic development, we can create a more vibrant, inclusive, and resilient economy for future generations. These efforts not only advance Inspire 2035 priorities but also fulfill Vision 2030's commitment to aligning education with workforce needs—ensuring Saddleback College continues to be a driver of equitable access, student success, and economic mobility across the region.

Workforce Training Programs

As a key component of Saddleback College's mission to drive economic development and support workforce readiness, the college offers a diverse array of workforce training programs. These initiatives are designed to equip students with the skills and competencies needed to thrive in high-demand industries.

Grounded in labor market data — and aligned with Vision 2030's focus on workforce development and Inspire 2035 priorities for economic mobility — these programs provide a vital bridge between education and employment. This section offers an overview of existing programs, evaluates their effectiveness and student outcomes, and outlines strategies for continued expansion and enhancement.

Contract Education and Customized Training

The Saddleback College EWD Initiative provides a full spectrum of solutions for workforce training — from no-cost to low-cost general instruction to highly tailored programs for industry partners. These services prepare current and future workers to stay competitive in applying emerging technologies, while also helping businesses cultivate corporate cultures that boost creativity, productivity, and quality.

Our customized training services represent an entrepreneurial response at the local level, addressing the immediate needs of businesses, industry, and government employers. Through training and consulting services, Saddleback College's EWD initiative delivers targeted, in-demand solutions to meet workforce challenges that directly impact economic success.

These programs serve a wide range of key industry sectors across Orange County, including:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Advanced Transportation and Renewables
- Energy (Efficiency) & Utilities
- Global Trade and Logistics
- Healthcare
- Information & Communication Technologies (ICT) & Digital Media

- Life Sciences & Biotech
- Retail/Hospitality/Tourism
- Small Business

Saddleback's contract education programs are highly customizable, offering not-for-credit training designed to respond to the specific, immediate needs of local employers. The EWD team also manages a California Employment Training Panel (ETP) Multiple Employer Contract (MEC), leveraging state funds to subsidize training costs for industry partners.

In 2023, the EWD team delivered not-for-credit customized fee-based training (contract education) to a total of eight industry partners (i.e., clients), trained 1,866 industry partner employees, for a total of 21,751 hours of training, and a total valid hour value of $535,074. Clients included:

- Advantech Co. Ltd
- Alcon Research Ltd
- Amazon.com Inc.
- Broadley James Corporation
- Campbell Engineering Inc.
- Catalina Cylinders, Inc.
- Connectec Co. Inc.
- Embee Processing
- EPC Power Corporation
- Fluxergy
- Masimo Corporation
- Sierra Pacific Industries (Shasta County)

Training topics ranged from Lean Six Sigma, GD&T, Blueprint Reading, and Root Cause & Corrective Action to Frontline Leadership, Quality Management Systems, MS Office, and Business & Management Skills.
By aligning training with labor market needs — and with Inspire 2035 priorities for economic mobility and community impact, as well as Vision 2030's focus on workforce development — Saddleback continues to strengthen local businesses and provide students with a direct pipeline to employment opportunities.

Contract Education Funding Sources

- California Employment Training Panel (ETP)
- Local and Regional Strong Workforce Program (SWP)
- Direct Invoice

Continuing Education and Professional Development

Saddleback College also offers a variety of continuing education and professional development programs for working professionals looking to upskill or transition into new careers. Topics range from project management and digital marketing to graphic design and English as a Second Language (ESL), serving both career changers and those seeking advancement in their current fields.

Apprenticeship Programs

Through partnerships with local employers and labor unions, Saddleback College supports apprenticeship programs in culinary arts, construction, electrical, plumbing, carpentry, and other trades. These programs combine paid, on-the-job training with classroom instruction, creating direct pathways to certification and journeyman status for students while supplying employers with a pipeline of skilled talent. These programs directly reflect Vision 2030's commitment to workforce-aligned education and Inspire 2035's focus on economic mobility by creating accessible pathways into skilled trades.

Overview of Existing Programs at Saddleback College

Saddleback College offers a comprehensive range of workforce training programs designed to meet the needs of both traditional and non-traditional students.

Career Technical Education (CTE) Programs

These programs span high-demand fields such as healthcare, information technology, advanced manufacturing, hospitality management, and automotive technology. CTE offerings combine classroom instruction with hands-on training, internships, and industry-recognized certifications, preparing students for entry-level positions and long-term career growth in their chosen fields.

The EWD division strengthens these programs by conducting comprehensive Labor Market Information (LMI) research and analysis, ensuring that CTE offerings remain aligned with regional workforce needs and evolving industry trends. This intentional alignment ensures CTE programs support both Vision 2030's workforce pillars and Inspire 2035's priorities for student success and equitable access.

Program Review, Revitalization, and Discontinuance

Saddleback College employs three distinct processes—Program Review**,** Revitalization, and Discontinuance—to ensure that CTE programs remain compliant with college standards, responsive to student success metrics, and aligned with regional labor market demand.

In the EWD Plan, these processes are strengthened by integrating robust Labor Market Information (LMI) into every stage of review. Revitalization serves as a proactive approach to retool and redesign underperforming programs in high-demand occupations, industries, or sectors, while Discontinuance evaluates low-performing programs that do not meet current or projected workforce needs. Both processes provide opportunities to redesign or realign programs and certificates to increase effectiveness and improve student outcomes.

Program Review is conducted by program faculty to ensure course content and delivery remain current and relevant. Revitalization and Discontinuance reviews are typically led by faculty outside of the program, working alongside administrators and industry representatives, to provide an objective, market-driven evaluation. The EWD department supports these efforts by conducting all LMI research and analysis for CTE programs.

The EWD division draws LMI from trusted sources such as Lightcast (formerly EMSI), and Data Vista, to analyze regional job markets. The college shares current career and salary data on its website for all degree and certificate programs, helping students make informed program-of-study decisions. The Division of Economic and Workforce Advancement also provides LMI for program updates, reviews, course revisions, and the creation of new programs. These analyses follow the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Program and Course Approval Handbook (PCAH) guidelines, addressing factors such as Net Job Market (supply/demand, job numbers), earning potential, and program credibility.

Every two years, the college develops a Career Education Board Report that documents labor market demand, identifies unnecessary duplication, and assesses program effectiveness, consistent with California Education Code. This process helps ensure programs prepare students for in-demand occupations and may lead to programs being recommended for a Program Vitality Inquiry or the Discontinuance Process if warranted. Every three years, a comprehensive, self-evaluative Program Review is conducted to assess program effectiveness and determine resource allocation needs.

Additionally, Career Education advisory committees meet regularly to provide input on the quality, content, relevance, and currency of CTE programs. Their feedback ensures that curriculum remains aligned with evolving industry standards and that students acquire the skills employers need to remain competitive.

Discover Your NextGen Workforce

The tight labor market continues to pose significant recruiting challenges for many Orange County companies—and this shortage is projected to persist well beyond the pandemic. Contributing factors include a decline in population growth, limits on immigration, and the aging of the baby boomer generation. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, many open positions are expected to remain unfilled through 2030, the year when the youngest baby boomers reach the traditional retirement age.

Saddleback College is uniquely positioned to help companies build their workforce and address these challenges through a wide range of services, programs, and employer engagement initiatives—the core priorities of Saddleback's EWD division. Over the past two years alone, the EWD team has connected with more than 3,000 local businesses through customer outreach and business development efforts, sharing resources to support their workforce development and hiring needs.

Recruiting skilled talent is both expensive and time-intensive. A recent report estimates the average cost per hire for non-executive employees in 2021 was $4,425 (up from $4,129 in 2019). By partnering with Saddleback, companies can save time and money by leveraging our talent pipeline of students and graduates.

One key tool is Handshake, Saddleback College's campus-wide career management platform that provides students with a centralized hub for jobs, internships, career events, and professional networking. Employers who register with Handshake can:

- Post jobs and internships

- Share information about hiring events and career fairs
- Directly message students interested in connecting with their company

By integrating platforms like Handshake with employer outreach, Saddleback College not only helps local employers access a next-generation workforce but also provides students with direct pathways to meaningful employment opportunities.

Work Experience Education (WEE), formerly Cooperative Work Experience (CWE)

Filling an average position in the U.S. takes 36 to 42 days, and it can take up to 12 weeks for a new hire to become fully productive. For many businesses, that's time and money they cannot afford to lose—especially in today's tight labor market. Saddleback College's work-based learning programs help reduce those costs by connecting employers with skilled candidates and building a pipeline of future talent.

The WEE program is one of Saddleback's most effective workforce resources. Through WEE, students earn college credit for training they receive on the job, while employers benefit from motivated interns who are ready to contribute. Companies can offer paid or unpaid internships under WEE and evaluate how well students meet the learning objectives set at the start of each semester.

For employers, WEE provides a low-risk, high-reward opportunity to "test drive" new talent—identifying the perfect match for their workforce needs. For students, WEE delivers hands-on experience, industry exposure, and career momentum, helping them build the skills and connections necessary to succeed in their chosen fields.

Adult Education and Basic Skills

Saddleback College offers adult education and basic skills programs for individuals seeking to strengthen their literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency. These programs serve as an essential entry point for students who may be re-entering education, transitioning into new careers, or preparing for college-level coursework.

By providing instruction in reading, writing, math, and English as a Second Language (ESL), these programs help learners build the foundational skills necessary to succeed in higher education, workforce training, and employment. They also support broader community goals by promoting lifelong learning, economic mobility, and inclusive access to education for all. These programs uphold Vision 2030's access and equity goals while supporting Inspire 2035's mission of expanding opportunity for all learners.

Assessment of Program Effectiveness and Student Outcomes

Saddleback College continuously evaluates the effectiveness of its workforce training programs and monitors student outcomes to ensure ongoing alignment with industry needs and student success goals.

Key metrics used to assess program performance include:

1. **Employment Placement Rates –** Tracking the percentage of graduates who secure employment in their field of study within six months of graduation. Consistently high placement rates reflect program relevance and effectiveness in meeting workforce demands.
2. **Student Completion Rates –** Monitoring program completion rates to evaluate retention and success. Strong completion rates demonstrate that students are progressing toward—and achieving—their educational and career goals.
3. **Employer Satisfaction Surveys –** Gathering feedback from employers who hire Saddleback graduates to assess satisfaction with graduates' knowledge, skills, and abilities. Positive employer feedback confirms the quality and industry relevance of Saddleback's workforce programs.

Expansion and Enhancement Strategies

To expand and enhance its workforce training programs, Saddleback College will pursue the following strategies:

1. **Curriculum Alignment –** Regularly review and update curriculum to ensure alignment with industry standards, emerging technologies, and evolving workforce needs.
2. **Industry Partnerships –** Deepen collaborations with employers, industry partners, and workforce agencies to identify emerging skills gaps, co-create new training programs, and expand internships and job placement pipelines.
3. **Flexible Delivery Models –** Explore innovative delivery formats—online, hybrid, and accelerated programs—to meet the needs of working adults, non-traditional students, and lifelong learners.
4. **Student Support Services –** Strengthen wraparound support for workforce training students, including academic advising, career counseling, tutoring, and financial aid resources, ensuring that all students have the tools to succeed.

By enhancing and evolving its workforce training programs, Saddleback College will continue to equip students with the skills, knowledge, and real-world experiences they need to thrive in the workforce—and contribute meaningfully to the economic prosperity and vitality of the community. Through collaboration, innovation, and a steadfast commitment to excellence, Saddleback is prepared to meet the changing needs of students, employers, and the region. These efforts reinforce the core commitments of Vision 2030 and Inspire 2035—ensuring Saddleback College remains a leader in delivering student-centered, equity-driven workforce training for the future.

Integration of Technology and Innovation

Technology and Innovation

The service area is home to a growing technology sector, fueled by investments in research and development, collaboration with academic institutions, and a culture of innovation. Companies in fields such as biotechnology, clean energy, software development, and advanced manufacturing are driving technological advancements and creating high-skilled job opportunities.

Saddleback College recognizes the transformative potential of technology and innovation in driving economic growth, enhancing workforce development, and preparing students for success in the digital age. In this section, we outline our strategies for leveraging technology for workforce training, incorporating emerging technologies into our curriculum, and promoting innovative ecosystems and partnerships within our community.

Leveraging Technology for Workforce Training

Saddleback College is committed to leveraging technology to enhance the delivery and effectiveness of our workforce training programs. Our strategies include:

1. **Online Learning Platforms –** Saddleback College offers a variety of online learning platforms and tools to provide flexible, accessible, and interactive learning experiences for students. These platforms enable students to access course materials, participate in discussions, and complete assignments at their own pace, from any location with internet access.
2. **Simulation and Virtual Reality (VR) Training –** Saddleback College integrates simulation and VR training technologies into workforce training programs to provide students with hands-on experience in realistic environments. These technologies allow students to practice skills, troubleshoot problems, and gain confidence in their abilities before entering the workforce.
3. **Remote Workforce Development –** Saddleback College provides remote workforce development opportunities for students, allowing them to participate in virtual internships, apprenticeships, and collaborative projects with employers. These remote opportunities enable students to gain valuable work experience and build professional networks, regardless of their location.

Incorporating Emerging Technologies into Curriculum

Saddleback College is committed to preparing students for careers in emerging fields and industries by incorporating cutting-edge technologies into our curriculum. Our strategies include:

1. **Curriculum Development –** Saddleback College regularly updates and enhances its curriculum to incorporate emerging technologies and industry trends. Our faculty works closely with industry partners, experts, and advisory boards to identify emerging skills and competencies that are in high demand.
2. **Specialized Training Programs –** Saddleback College offers specialized training programs in emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, data analytics, and digital marketing. These programs provide students with the knowledge, skills, and certifications needed to excel in fast-growing and high-demand sectors.
3. **Applied Learning Opportunities –** Saddleback College provides students with hands-on, applied learning opportunities to gain practical experience with emerging technologies. Our students have access to state-of-the-art labs, equipment, and software tools to develop projects, prototypes, and solutions that address real-world challenges.

Promoting Innovation Ecosystems and Partnerships

Saddleback College actively promotes innovative ecosystems and partnerships within our community to foster collaboration, entrepreneurship, and economic development. Our strategies include:

1. **Innovation Centers and Incubators –** Saddleback College supports the development of innovation centers, incubators, and maker spaces on campus to provide students, faculty, and community members with resources, mentorship, and support to turn ideas into viable businesses and products.
2. **Industry Partnerships –** Saddleback College collaborates with local businesses, industry partners, industry associations, and government agencies to promote innovation and entrepreneurship. Through partnerships, we facilitate technology transfer, research collaboration, and commercialization opportunities that benefit our students and the local economy.
3. **Entrepreneurship Education –** Saddleback College offers entrepreneurship education and training programs to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and mindset needed to launch and grow successful ventures. Our entrepreneurship curriculum covers topics such as business planning, marketing, finance, and leadership, empowering students to pursue their entrepreneurial aspirations.

By integrating technology and innovation into our workforce training programs, curriculum, and partnerships, Saddleback College aims to prepare students for the jobs of the future, foster a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship, and drive economic growth and prosperity within our community. These efforts advance Vision 2030's call for leadership and innovation while reinforcing Inspire 2035's focus on economic mobility and workplace culture—ensuring that Saddleback remains at the forefront of preparing students for success in the digital age.

Equity and Inclusion Initiatives

Saddleback College is committed to promoting equity and inclusion within our workforce development programs, ensuring that all individuals, regardless of background or circumstance, have equal access to educational opportunities, resources, and support services. In this section, we outline our initiatives for addressing disparities in access and opportunity, promoting diversity and inclusion, and reaching out to underrepresented communities. These initiatives directly support Vision 2030's Access and Equity pillar by removing barriers and expanding opportunities for all students, while also advancing Inspire 2035 priorities for Student-Centered learning, Equitable Access, and Equitable Outcomes.

Addressing Disparities in Access and Opportunity

Saddleback College recognizes the systemic barriers and disparities that exist in access to education and economic opportunities. Our initiatives to address these disparities include:

1. **Financial Aid and Scholarship Programs –** Saddleback College offers a variety of financial aid and scholarship programs to support students from low-income backgrounds, enabling them to afford tuition, textbooks, and other educational expenses.
2. **Support Services for Underserved Populations –** Saddleback College provides support services, such as academic advising, counseling, tutoring, and mentorship, to help

underserved populations overcome barriers to success and achieve their educational and career goals.

3. **Flexible Learning Options –** Saddleback College offers flexible learning options, such as online courses, evening classes, and weekend programs, to accommodate the needs of working adults, parents, and non-traditional students who may face challenges balancing education with other responsibilities.
4. **Culturally Responsive Teaching and Curriculum –** Saddleback College promotes culturally responsive teaching and curriculum development to ensure that our programs reflect the diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives of our students. Our faculty integrate multicultural perspectives, case studies, and examples into their teaching to create inclusive learning environments where all students feel valued and supported.

Diversity and Inclusion in Workforce Development Programs

Saddleback College is committed to promoting diversity and inclusion within our workforce development programs, recognizing the importance of a diverse workforce in driving innovation, creativity, and competitiveness. Our initiatives to promote diversity and inclusion include:

1. **Diversity Recruitment and Retention –** Saddleback College actively recruits and retains a diverse student body, faculty, and staff through targeted outreach efforts, recruitment events, and diversity training programs. We strive to create a campus community that reflects the rich diversity of our region and fosters a sense of belonging for all individuals.
2. **Inclusive Curriculum and Pedagogy –** Saddleback College integrates diversity and inclusion into its workforce development curriculum and pedagogy, ensuring that students receive education and training that prepares them to work effectively in diverse and multicultural environments. Our curriculum covers topics such as cultural competence, equity, social justice, and inclusive leadership.
3. **Diversity Leadership and Representation –** Saddleback College promotes diversity leadership and representation within its workforce development programs, ensuring that individuals from underrepresented backgrounds have opportunities to take on leadership roles, participate in decision-making processes, and contribute their perspectives to program development and implementation.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

In order to identify potential diversity and equity issues that can be addressed by community college programs, here are notable observations of the demographic characteristics for each sector, along with potentially related labor market information (Centers of Excellence, 2023, p. 28).

- White, Male, 50 and older:
    - Advanced Manufacturing: Predominant demographic characteristics include white males aged 50 and older. This sector also boasts the 2nd highest entry-level wage among all sectors.
    - Business and Entrepreneurship: Similar demographic predominance, with this sector having the highest number of annual openings among all sectors.

    - Energy, Construction, and Utilities: This sector also features white males aged 50 and older as predominant. It ranks 4th in terms of annual openings and entry-level wage among all sectors. The Lightcast Automation Index for this sector is notably high, suggesting a higher-than-average risk of automation.
- White, Male, 35 to 49 years:
    - Agriculture, Water, and Environmental Technologies: Predominant demographic characteristics include white males aged 35 to 49 years. This sector has the lowest share of jobs in 2022 and ranks 2nd lowest in terms of annual openings among all sectors.
    - Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)/Digital Media: Similar demographic predominance, with the highest hourly wage among all sectors. It features the lowest Lightcast Automation Index, indicating a lower-than-average risk of automation.
    - Public Safety: This sector also sees a predominance of white males aged 35 to 49 years.
- White, Female, 35 to 49 years:
    - Education and Human Development: Predominant demographic characteristics include white females aged 35 to 49 years. This sector ranks 3rd highest in terms of jobs in 2022 and boasts a high percentage of occupations above middle-skill. It also features a low Lightcast Automation Index, suggesting a lower-than-average risk of automation.
- Hispanic or Latino, Male, 50+:
    - Advanced Transportation and Logistics: Predominant demographic characteristics include Hispanic or Latino males aged 50 and older. This sector has the 2nd lowest entry-level wages among all sectors and a moderate risk of automation.
- Hispanic or Latino, Male, 35 to 49 years:
    - Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism: Predominant demographic characteristics include Hispanic or Latino males aged 35 to 49 years. This sector is projected to have the highest growth through 2027 but features the lowest entry-level hourly wage among all sectors. It also has the highest risk of automation among all sectors and lacks resilient jobs.
- Asian, Male, 25 to 34 years and 50 and older:
    - Life Sciences and Biotechnology: Predominant demographic characteristics include Asian males aged 25 to 34 years and 50 and older. This sector has the fewest occupations and annual openings of all sectors.
- Asian, Female, 50+:
    - Health: Predominant demographic characteristics include Asian females aged 50 and older. This sector has the 2nd highest number of annual openings and ranks 2nd highest in projected 5-year job increase among all sectors. Additionally, over half of the occupations in this sector are considered a U.S. News & World Report Best Job.

Outreach to Underrepresented Communities

Saddleback College actively engages in outreach efforts to underrepresented communities, including low-income individuals, minorities, veterans, individuals with disabilities, and first-generation college students. Our outreach initiatives include:

1. **Community Partnerships –** Saddleback College partners with local community organizations, schools, churches, and nonprofit agencies to reach out to underrepresented communities and provide them with information about educational opportunities, financial aid, and support services available at the college.
2. **High School and College Pathways Programs –** Saddleback College offers high school and college pathways programs designed to help underrepresented students transition successfully from high school to college, navigate the college admissions process, and access academic and support services to ensure their success.
3. **Specialized Support Programs –** Saddleback College offers specialized support programs for underrepresented student populations, such as WIOA, TRIO, EOPS/CARE, and DSPS, which provide academic, financial, and personal support services to help students overcome barriers to success and achieve their educational goals.

By implementing these equity and inclusion initiatives, Saddleback College aims to create a more equitable, inclusive, and welcoming learning environment where all individuals have the opportunity to thrive and succeed. These efforts directly support Vision 2030's Access and Equity pillar and reinforce Inspire 2035 priorities for Student-Centered learning, Equitable Access, and Equitable Outcomes. Through collaboration, advocacy, and a commitment to social justice, Saddleback College will continue to champion diversity and inclusion within our workforce development programs and across the campus community.

Partnerships and Collaborations

Partnerships and collaborations are central to both Vision 2030 and Inspire 2035, driving Saddleback College's mission to foster civic, cultural, and economic impact. Vision 2030 emphasizes collaboration and shared responsibility in advancing equitable access, student success, and workforce innovation, while Inspire 2035 prioritizes deep community engagement. Saddleback College recognizes the importance of these connections in advancing our mission of driving economic development, fostering innovation, and promoting student success. We actively engage with government agencies, local stakeholders, industry partners, and international collaborators to create mutually beneficial relationships that benefit our students, our community, and our global competitiveness.

Business partners and resources

Saddleback College maintains a vast network of connections with numerous businesses. The EWD division has effectively established this extensive network through a decade-long industry and employer engagement campaign. This initiative has led to the creation of a well-organized system for tracking active industry partners and contacts, which is shared across various college departments. Furthermore, the EWD division collaborates with CTE programs to identify advisory committee members who offer valuable industry insights, thereby enhancing the relevance and alignment of CTE programs with industry needs. Additionally, the college has nurtured numerous long-term relationships with industry partners, resulting in philanthropic support for CTE programs and the Saddleback College Foundation.

Collaboration with Government Agencies and Local Stakeholders

Saddleback College collaborates with government agencies, local governments, economic development organizations, and community stakeholders to address regional workforce needs, promote economic development, and support community engagement. Our strategies for collaboration include:

1. **Strategic Planning and Policy Advocacy –** Saddleback College participates in strategic planning processes and policy advocacy efforts with government agencies and local stakeholders to align our initiatives with regional priorities and secure funding support for workforce development programs and infrastructure projects.
2. **Workforce Development Initiatives –** Saddleback College collaborates with government agencies and local stakeholders to develop and implement workforce development initiatives, such as apprenticeship programs, job training grants, and career pathway programs, that address regional skills gaps and support economic growth.
3. **Community Engagement and Outreach –** Saddleback College actively engages with local communities through outreach events, partnerships with community organizations, and participation in community forums and advisory boards to ensure that our programs and services meet the needs of diverse populations and underserved communities.

Industry-Academia Partnerships and Work-Based Learning Opportunities

Saddleback College fosters partnerships with industry leaders, businesses, and employers to provide students with work-based learning opportunities, internships, and hands-on experiences that complement their classroom learning and prepare them for success in the workforce. Our strategies for industry-academia partnerships include:

1. **Industry Advisory Boards –** Saddleback College convenes industry advisory boards for each academic department to provide input on curriculum development, industry trends, and workforce needs, ensuring that our programs remain relevant and responsive to the demands of the labor market.
2. **Internship and Apprenticeship Programs –** Saddleback College partners with local employers to offer internship and apprenticeship programs that provide students with valuable work experience, mentorship, and networking opportunities in their chosen field of study, while helping employers recruit and train skilled talent.
3. **Collaborative Research and Development –** Saddleback College collaborates with industry partners on research and development projects, technology transfer initiatives, and innovation challenges to solve real-world problems, develop new products and technologies, and drive economic growth and competitiveness.

International Collaboration for Global Competitiveness

Saddleback College recognizes the importance of international collaboration in preparing students for success in the global economy and promoting cross-cultural understanding and cooperation. Our strategies for international collaboration include:

1. **Study Abroad and Exchange Programs –** Saddleback College offers study abroad and exchange programs that allow students to gain international experience, immerse

themselves in diverse cultures, and develop global perspectives that enhance their academic and professional development.

2. **International Partnerships and Agreements –** Saddleback College establishes partnerships and agreements with international institutions, universities, and organizations to facilitate student and faculty exchanges, joint research projects, and collaboration on global challenges and opportunities.
3. **Global Competency Training –** Saddleback College provides training and resources to students, faculty, and staff to develop global competencies, such as intercultural communication, cross-cultural collaboration, and global citizenship, that prepare them to work effectively in multicultural and diverse environments.

By fostering partnerships and collaborations with government agencies, local stakeholders, industry partners, and international collaborators, Saddleback College advances the pillars of Vision 2030 and the priorities of Inspire 2035—ensuring every initiative strengthens equity, workforce development, and community vitality. Through shared goals, shared resources, and shared values, we will continue to build bridges and break down barriers to create a brighter future for all.

Funding and Resource Allocation

Saddleback College recognizes the critical role of funding and resource allocation in supporting our EWD initiatives, ensuring the sustainability and effectiveness of our programs, and advancing our mission of promoting student success and community prosperity. These efforts directly support Vision 2030's focus on workforce development and equity and align with Inspire 2035 priorities for student-centered learning, economic mobility, and community vitality. In this section, we outline the sources of funding for EWD initiatives, our budget allocation for workforce training programs, and opportunities for securing grants and philanthropic support.

Sources of Funding for EWD Initiatives

Saddleback College secures funding from various sources to support our EWD initiatives, including:

1. **State and Federal Grants –** Saddleback College applies for and receives funding from state and federal grants, such as the California Community Colleges EWD Program, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), and the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, to support workforce training programs, career pathway development, and innovation projects.
2. **Local Government Funding –** Saddleback College collaborates with local governments, economic development agencies, and workforce investment boards to secure funding for workforce development initiatives, infrastructure projects, and industry partnerships that support regional economic growth and prosperity.
3. **Industry Partnerships –** Saddleback College partners with industry leaders, businesses, and employers to secure funding for workforce training programs, apprenticeship programs, and research and development projects through corporate sponsorships, donations, and in-kind contributions.
4. **Tuition and Fees –** Saddleback College generates revenue from tuition and fees paid by students enrolled in workforce training programs, continuing education courses, and

professional development workshops, which helps offset the costs of program delivery and support services.

Budget Allocation for Workforce Training Programs

Saddleback College allocates a portion of its annual budget to support workforce training programs and initiatives, including:

1. **Faculty and Staff Salaries –** Saddleback College allocates funds to pay faculty and staff salaries, benefits, and professional development expenses related to the delivery of workforce training programs and support services.
2. **Instructional Materials and Equipment –** Saddleback College allocates funds to purchase instructional materials, textbooks, software licenses, and equipment necessary for delivering high-quality, hands-on training experiences in workforce training programs.
3. **Student Support Services –** Saddleback College allocates funds to support student services such as academic advising, counseling, tutoring, and career placement assistance, which help students succeed in their workforce training programs and transition to employment or further education.
4. **Facilities and Infrastructure –** Saddleback College allocates funds to maintain and upgrade facilities, labs, and equipment used for delivering workforce training programs, ensuring a safe, modern, and conducive learning environment for students and faculty.

Grant Opportunities and Philanthropic Support

Saddleback College actively seeks grant opportunities and philanthropic support to supplement its funding for EWD initiatives, including:

1. **Grant Writing and Administration –** Saddleback College employs grant writing and administration staff to identify funding opportunities, prepare grant proposals, and manage grant awards for workforce development programs, research projects, and community outreach initiatives.
2. **Corporate and Foundation Partnerships –** Saddleback College cultivates partnerships with corporate and foundation donors to secure financial support for workforce training programs, scholarships, endowments, and special initiatives that align with their philanthropic priorities and strategic goals.
3. **Alumni and Donor Engagement –** Saddleback College engages with alumni, donors, and community supporters through fundraising campaigns, donor recognition events, and stewardship activities to solicit contributions and build long-term relationships that sustain our economic and workforce development efforts—reinforcing the Vision 2030 goal of expanding access and opportunity, and Inspire 2035's commitment to community vitality.
4. **Grants development and management –** centrally organized in support of all college divisions – has ensured that CTE programs (e.g., Health Science, Advanced Manufacturing) are well supported in their efforts to tap a variety of grant sources.

By diversifying our funding sources, allocating resources strategically, and leveraging grant opportunities and philanthropic support, Saddleback College ensures the continued success and

impact of our EWD initiatives. These efforts not only sustain programs but also advance the shared objectives of Vision 2030 and Inspire 2035—ensuring our funding model supports student success, equity, and workforce innovation for years to come.

Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

Saddleback College recognizes the importance of establishing a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to assess the effectiveness, impact, and outcomes of our EWD initiatives. This framework is not only essential for accountability and transparency, but also for advancing Vision 2030's focus on workforce development and equitable outcomes and tracking progress toward the six Inspire 2035 Strategic Priorities. In this section, we outline our key performance indicators for success, evaluation metrics for program effectiveness, and continuous improvement strategies to ensure our programs remain responsive to the needs of students, employers, and the community.

Key Performance Indicators for Success

1. **Employment Placement** Rates **–** Measure the percentage of program graduates who secure employment in their field of study within six months of graduation.
2. **Student Completion Rates –** Track the percentage of students who successfully complete their workforce training programs within the expected timeframe.
3. **Employer Satisfaction Surveys –** Solicit feedback from employers who hire our graduates to assess their satisfaction with the knowledge, skills, and abilities of our students.
4. **Retention Rates –** Monitor the percentage of students who persist in their workforce training programs and continue to make progress toward completion.
5. **Program Enrollment –** Evaluate the demand for workforce training programs by tracking enrollment numbers and trends over time.
6. **Graduate Earnings –** Measure the median earnings of program graduates one year after completion to assess the economic impact of our workforce training programs.
7. **Industry Partnerships –** Assess the number and quality of partnerships with local employers, industry associations, and workforce development agencies.

Evaluation Metrics for Program Effectiveness

1. **Assessment of Learning Outcomes –** Evaluate student learning outcomes through assessments, exams, projects, and portfolios to ensure that students are acquiring the knowledge and skills needed for success in their chosen field.
2. **Student Satisfaction Surveys –** Gather feedback from students on their satisfaction with the quality of instruction, support services, facilities, and overall educational experience.
3. **Retention and Persistence Rates –** Analyze retention and persistence rates to identify factors that contribute to student success and barriers to completion.
4. **Employer Feedback –** Collect feedback from employers on the performance of program graduates, including their readiness for employment, job performance, and alignment with industry needs.
5. **Job Placement Data –** Track job placement data for program graduates to assess the effectiveness of career services and job placement assistance.

6. **Graduate Follow-up Surveys –** Conduct follow-up surveys with program graduates to gather information on their employment status, earnings, career advancement, and satisfaction with their educational experience.
7. **Program Cost-Effectiveness –** Evaluate the cost-effectiveness of workforce training programs by comparing the cost per graduate to the economic benefits generated, such as increased earnings and tax contributions.

Continuous Improvement Strategies

1. **Data-Informed Decision Making –** Use data and analytics to inform decision making, identify areas for improvement, and allocate resources strategically.
2. **Stakeholder Engagement –** Engage with students, faculty, staff, employers, alumni, and other stakeholders to gather feedback, solicit input, and ensure that our programs remain responsive to their needs and priorities.
3. **Curriculum Review and Revision –** Regularly review and revise curriculum to incorporate industry feedback, emerging trends, and best practices in workforce development.
4. **Professional Development –** Provide faculty and staff with professional development opportunities, training, and resources to enhance their instructional effectiveness, counseling skills, and cultural competence.
5. **Program Innovation and Experimentation –** Encourage experimentation and innovation in program design, delivery, and assessment to identify effective practices and address emerging challenges.
6. **Benchmarking and Peer Learning –** Benchmark our performance against peer institutions and industry standards to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement, and learn from best practices and successful models.
7. **Quality Assurance and Accreditation –** Maintain accreditation standards and quality assurance processes to ensure the integrity, rigor, and effectiveness of our workforce training programs.

By establishing a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework and implementing continuous improvement strategies, Saddleback College ensures that its workforce training programs remain relevant, data-driven, and impact-oriented. These efforts demonstrate measurable progress toward Vision 2030's goals of access, equity, and workforce development, while fully aligning with Inspire 2035's student-centered, community-focused priorities — ensuring Saddleback continues to lead in preparing students for success and driving regional prosperity.

Conclusion

Saddleback College reaffirms its unwavering commitment to driving economic prosperity, fostering workforce development, and promoting student success in alignment with the visionary goals outlined in Vision 2030 of California Community Colleges and the South Orange County Community College District's Inspire 2035 framework**.** Throughout this Economic and Workforce Development Plan, we have outlined a comprehensive set of strategies, initiatives, and actions to advance these goals and ensure that our programs remain responsive to the evolving needs of our students, our community, and our stakeholders.

We have highlighted our dedication to collaboration with industry partners, government agencies, and local stakeholders to address regional workforce needs, promote innovation, and support economic growth. By forging strong partnerships and leveraging resources, we aim to create a dynamic ecosystem of learning, innovation, and collaboration that empowers individuals to thrive in the workforce and contributes to the vitality of our community.

We have underscored our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion, ensuring that all individuals have equal access to educational opportunities, resources, and support services. Through targeted outreach efforts, culturally responsive curriculum, and inclusive learning environments, we strive to create pathways to success for students from all backgrounds and occupations.

We have outlined our commitment to continuous improvement, using data-driven decision making, stakeholder engagement, and quality assurance processes to enhance the effectiveness, relevance, and impact of our programs. By embracing innovation, experimentation, and best practices, we remain agile and responsive to the changing needs of the economy and the workforce.

As we move forward, Saddleback College remains steadfast in its dedication to advancing Vision 2030 goals and the Inspire 2035 strategic priorities—Student-Centered, Equitable Access, Equitable Outcomes, Economic and Social Mobility, Community Vitality and Engagement, and Workplace Culture. By embedding these priorities into our efforts, we ensure that every initiative contributes to the creation of a stronger, more inclusive, and future-ready workforce.

We are confident that through our collective efforts, we will create a brighter future for our students, our community, and the state of California. Together, we will continue to innovate, collaborate, and lead the way toward a more prosperous and equitable future for all. Every strategy, initiative, and outcome described in this plan is intentionally tied to Vision 2030 goals and Inspire 2035 priorities, ensuring Saddleback's workforce efforts align with district and statewide objectives. Through this alignment, Saddleback College commits to shaping a future-ready workforce that uplifts students, employers, and the community.

References

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. (2025, July 21). Vision 2030: A roadmap for California Community Colleges [PDF]. California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. Retrieved August 18, 2025, from https://www.cccco.edu/-/media/CCCCO-Website/docs/vision2030/vision-2030-report.pdf

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. (2025, June 18). *Inspire 2035: Shaping the future of SOCCCD* [PDF]. South Orange County Community College District. Retrieved August 18, 2025, from https://www.socccd.edu/sites/default/files/2025-06/inspire_2025_brochure_06.18.2025.pdf

Centers of Excellence for Labor Market Research. (2023, November). *Orange County labor market overview* [Report]. California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office.