

Photographers

Labor Market Analysis: San Diego County

October 2020

Summary



The San Diego-Imperial Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research (COE) developed this brief to assist community colleges in the region with decision-making in processes such as program development. According to available labor market information, *Photographers* has a labor market demand of 202 annual job openings, while average demand for a single occupation in San Diego County is 277 annual job openings. Five educational institutions in San Diego County supply 92 awards for this occupation, which suggests that there is a supply gap in the labor market. This occupation's entry-level earnings are below the living wage; however, the median earnings are above the living wage. According to the California Community Colleges' outcomes data, 38 percent of students statewide who completed a related program (e.g., Applied Photography) earned a living wage, compared to 52 percent of students who completed Career Education programs in general. The typical entry-level education for *Photographers* is a high school diploma or equivalent. This brief recommends proceeding with caution when developing a **new** program because 1) entry-level earnings are below the living wage and 2) an average number of annual openings exist.

Introduction

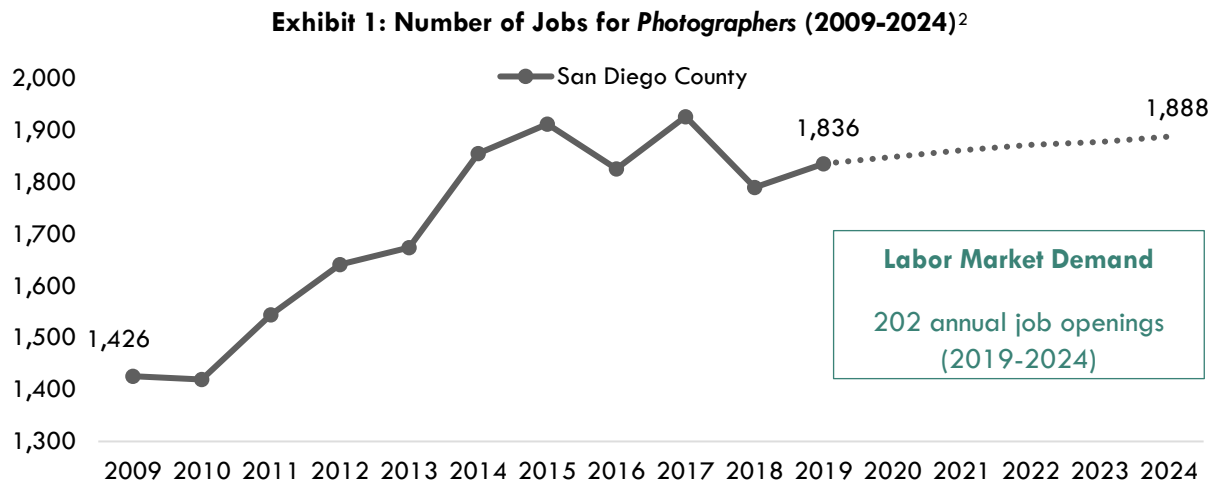
This report provides labor market information in San Diego County for the following occupational code in the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC)¹ system:

Photographers (SOC 27-4021): Photograph people, landscapes, merchandise, or other subjects, using digital or film cameras and equipment. May develop negatives or use computer software to produce finished images and prints. Includes scientific photographers, aerial photographers, and photojournalists. Sample reported job titles include:

- Photojournalist
- News Photographer
- Portrait Photographer
- Advertising Photographer
- Sports Photographer
- Newspaper Photojournalist
- Commercial Photographer
- Studio Owner
- Photo Editor

Projected Occupational Demand

Between 2019 and 2024, *Photographers* are projected to increase by 52 net jobs or three percent (Exhibit 1). Employers in San Diego County will need to hire 202 workers annually to fill new jobs and backfill jobs due to attrition caused by turnover and retirement, for example.



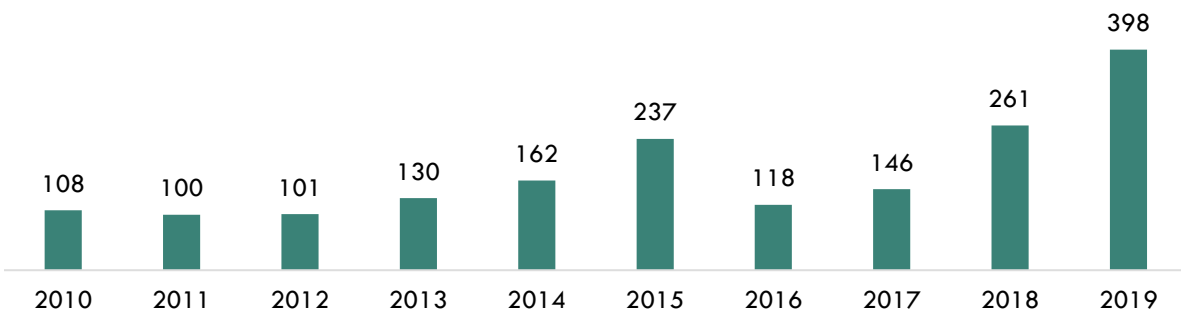
¹ The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system is used by federal statistical agencies to classify workers into occupational categories for the purpose of collecting, calculating or disseminating data. [bls.gov/soc](https://www.bls.gov/soc/).

² Emsi 2020.02; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

Online Job Postings

This report analyzes not only historical and projected (traditional LMI) data, but also recent data from online job postings (real-time LMI). Online job postings may provide additional insight about recent changes in the labor market that are not captured by historical data. Between 2010 and 2019, there was an average of 176 online job postings per year for *Photographers* in San Diego County (Exhibit 2). Please note that online job postings do **not** equal labor market demand; demand is represented by annual job openings (Exhibit 1b). Employers may post a position multiple times for various reasons, such as increasing the pool of applicants, for example.

Exhibit 2: Number of Online Job Postings for *Photographers* in San Diego County (2010-2019)³



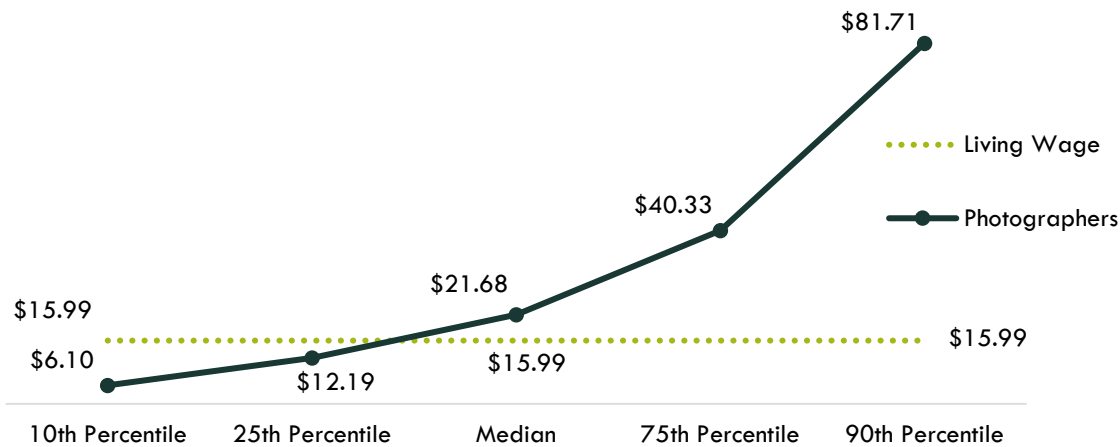
Earnings

Photographers receive entry-level hourly earnings of \$12.19; this is less than the living wage for a single adult in San Diego County, which is \$15.99 per hour (Exhibit 3).⁴

³ Burning Glass Technologies, "Labor Insight Real-Time Labor Market Information Tool." 2010-2019.

⁴ "California Family Needs Calculator (formerly the Self-Sufficiency Standard)," Insight: Center for Community Economic Development, last updated 2018. insightccd.org/2018-self-sufficiency-standard.

Exhibit 3: Hourly Earnings⁵ for Photographers in San Diego County⁶



Educational Supply

Educational supply for an occupation can be estimated by analyzing the number of awards in related Taxonomy of Programs (TOP) or Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes.⁷ There are **three** TOP codes and **seven** CIP codes related to *Photographers* (Exhibit 4). Because these TOP and CIP codes train for a variety of Digital, Arts and Media occupations such as “Desktop Publishers,” “Graphic Designers,” and “Marketing Managers,” for example, there is no one-to-one match between TOP/CIP code and SOC code. As a result, this brief uses a conservative estimate of program supply and only calculates awards from TOP and CIP codes with an asterisk (*) in Exhibit 4.

Exhibit 4: Related TOP and CIP Codes for Photographers

<i>Photographers</i>
TOP 050910: Advertising
TOP 061400: Digital Media*
TOP 101200: Applied Photography*
CIP 9.0702: Digital Communication and Media/Multimedia
CIP 9.0903: Advertising

⁵ 10th and 25th percentiles could be considered entry-level wages, and 75th and 90th percentiles could be considered experienced wages for individuals who may have been in the occupation longer, received more training than others, etc.

⁶ Emsi 2020.02; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

⁷ TOP data comes from the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office MIS Data Mart (datamart.cccco.edu) and CIP data comes from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data).

CIP 10.0201: Photographic and Film/Video Technology/Technician and Assistant*

Photographers

CIP 10.0303: Prepress/Desktop Publishing and Digital Imaging Design*

CIP 50.0102: Digital Arts*

CIP 50.0401: Design and Visual Communications, General*

CIP 50.0406: Commercial Photography*

According to TOP data, **four** community colleges supply the region with awards for this occupation: **MiraCosta College, Palomar College, San Diego City College, and Southwestern College**. According to CIP data, **one** other institution supplies the region with awards, **Argosy University-The Art Institute of California-San Diego** (Exhibit 5).

**Exhibit 5: Number of Awards (Certificates and Degrees) Conferred by Postsecondary Institutions
(Program Year 2014-15 through PY2018-19 Average)**

TOP6 or CIP	TOP6 or CIP Title	3-Yr Annual Average CC Awards (PY16-17 to PY18-19)	Other Educational Institutions 3-Yr Annual Average Awards (PY14-15 to PY16-17)	3-Yr Total Average Supply (PY14-15 to PY18-19)
061400	Digital Media	33	0	33
	• MiraCosta	12	0	
	• Palomar	16	0	
	• San Diego City	5	0	
101200	Applied Photography	43	0	43
	• MiraCosta	14	0	
	• Palomar	14	0	
	• San Diego City	7	0	
	• Southwestern	8	0	
50.0406	Commercial Photography	0	16	16
	• Argosy University-The Art Institute of California-San Diego	0	16	
			Total	92

Demand vs. Supply

Comparing labor demand (annual openings) with labor supply⁸ suggests that there is a **supply gap** for this occupation in San Diego County, with **202** annual openings and **92** awards. Comparatively, there are **2,395** annual openings in California and **1,742** awards⁹ (Exhibit 6).

Exhibit 6: Labor Demand (Annual Openings) Compared with Labor Supply (Average Annual Awards)

Community Colleges and Other Postsecondary Educational Institutions	Demand (Annual Openings)	Supply (Total Annual Average Supply)	Supply Gap or Oversupply
San Diego	202	92	110
California	2,395	1,742	653

While “supply” in the labor market is generally measured by the number of awards in related programs, the COE understands that an individual may obtain more than one award, resulting in potentially overestimated supply numbers. To address this challenge, the COE compared the number of awards with the number of unduplicated students “who earned a degree or certificate or attained apprenticeship journey status,” as defined by the California Community Colleges LaunchBoard, Strong Workforce Program.¹⁰ According to this information, the three-year average number of unduplicated students who completed Applied Photography (101200) programs in San Diego-Imperial was 28, which suggests that a supply gap exists for this occupation. This supports the claim above. Unfortunately, the number of unduplicated students is only available for TOP data and not CIP data. Therefore, the COE uses award data in the main demand and supply (gap) analysis. The COE encourages readers to look at the trends rather than the absolute numbers in the supply gap analysis due to nuances in labor market research.

Please note: This is a basic analysis of supply and demand of labor. The data does not include workers currently in the labor force who could fill these positions or workers who are not captured by publicly available data. This data should be used to discuss the potential gaps or oversupply of workers; however, it should not be the only basis for determining whether or not a program should be developed.

⁸ Labor supply can be found from two different sources: EMSI or the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office MIS Data Mart. EMSI uses CIP codes while MIS uses TOP codes. Different coding systems result in differences in the supply numbers.

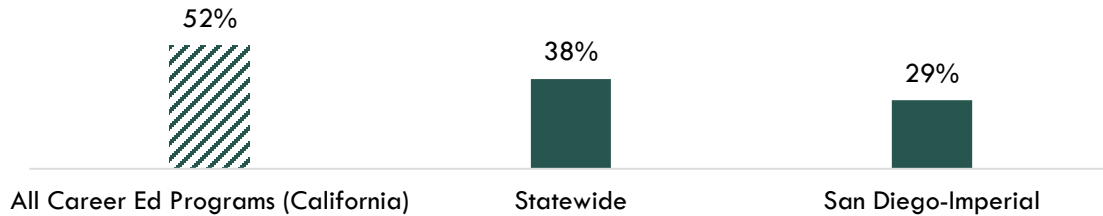
⁹ “Supply and Demand,” Centers of Excellence Student Outcomes, coecc.net/Supply-and-Demand.aspx.

¹⁰ “California Community Colleges Strong Workforce Program,” California Community Colleges, calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/SWP.aspx.

Student Outcomes and Regional Comparisons

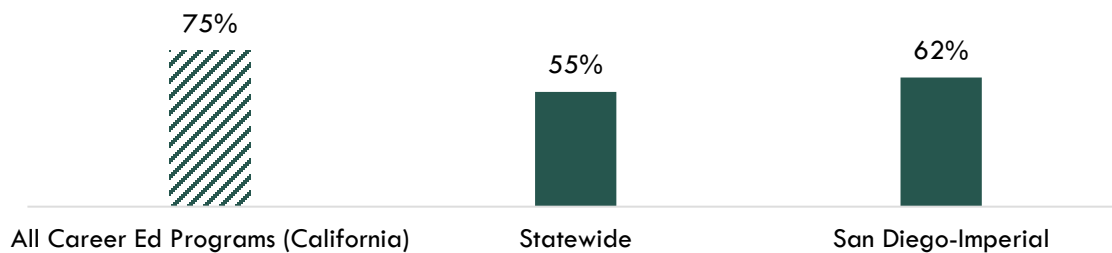
According to the California Community Colleges LaunchBoard, 29 percent of students in the San Diego-Imperial region earned a living wage after completing an Applied Photography (TOP 101200) program, compared to 38 percent statewide and 52 percent of students in Career Education programs in general across the state (Exhibit 7a).

Exhibit 7a: Proportion of Students Who Earned a Living Wage (Applied Photography, PY2016-17)¹¹



According to the California Community Colleges LaunchBoard, 62 percent of students in the San Diego-Imperial region obtained a job closely related to their field of study after completing an Applied Photography programs, compared to 52 percent statewide and 75 percent of students in Career Education programs in general across the state (Exhibit 7b).

Exhibit 7b: Percentage of Students in a Job Closely Related to Field of Study (Applied Photography, PY2016-17)¹²



¹¹ Among completers and skills builders who exited, the proportion of students who attained a living wage. calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/SWP.aspx

¹² Percentage of Students in a Job Closely Related to Field of Study: Among students who responded to the CTEOS, the percentage reporting employment in the same or similar field as their program of study. calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/SWP.aspx

Top Employers and Work Locations

Between January 1, 2017 and December 31, 2019, the top five employers in San Diego County for this occupation were [Iconic Group](#), [Lifetouch](#), [Bella Baby Photography](#), [Mom365](#), and [Tribune Company](#) (Exhibit 8).

Exhibit 8: Top Employers in San Diego County for Photographers¹³

Top Employers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iconic Group • Lifetouch • Bella Baby Photography • Mom365 • Tribune Company 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NBC • Magic Memories • Photogenic Incorporated • Teddy Bear Portraits • Nationwide Studios Incorporated

Skills, Education and Certifications

Exhibit 9 indicates the educational attainment for the occupation found currently in the national labor force. There is typically [moderate-term on-the-job training](#) for this profession. The typical entry-level education is a [high school diploma or equivalent](#).¹⁴

Exhibit 9: National Educational Attainment of Photographers¹⁵

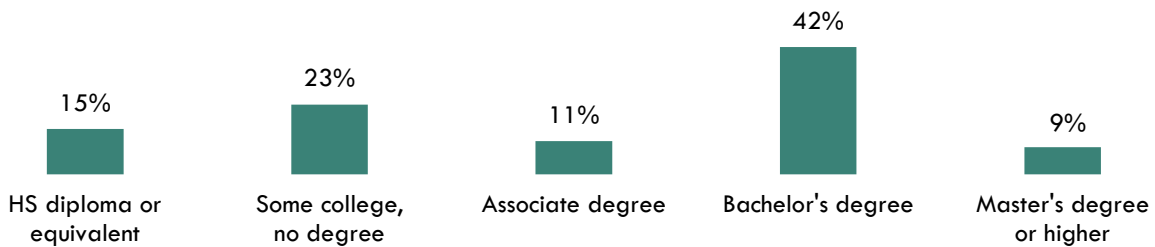


Exhibit 10 lists the top specialized, soft and software skills that appeared in online job postings between January 1, 2017 and December 31, 2019

¹³ Burning Glass Technologies, "Labor Insight Real-Time Labor Market Information Tool." 2017-2019.

¹⁴ Emsi 2020.02; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

¹⁵ "Educational Attainment for Workers 25 Years and Older by Detailed Occupation," Bureau of Labor Statistics, last modified September 4, 2019. bls.gov/emp/tables/educational-attainment.htm.

Exhibit 10: Top Skills for Photographers in San Diego County¹⁶

Specialized Skills	Soft Skills	Software Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photography • Sales • Customer Service • Adobe Photoshop • Lifting Ability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Editing • Creativity • Communication Skills • Computer Literacy • Teamwork / Collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adobe Photoshop • Final Cut Pro • Adobe InDesign • Facebook • Adobe Illustrator

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Important Disclaimers

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

This workforce demand report uses state and federal job projection data that was developed before the economic impact of COVID-19. The COE is monitoring the situation and will provide more information as it becomes available. Please consult with local employers to understand their current employment needs.

¹⁶ Burning Glass Technologies, “Labor Insight Real-Time Labor Market Information Tool.” 2017-2019.