October 2023

Labor Market Analysis

American Sign Language (ASL)

Prepared by Central Valley/Mother Lode Center of Excellence

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Table of Contents

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Summary

The Central Valley/Mother Lode Center of Excellence developed this report for Taft College to determine whether there is demand in the local labor market that is not being met by the supply from postsecondary programs. This report summarizes labor market demand, wages, skills, and postsecondary supply for Interpreters and Translators.

- Interpreters and Translators (SOC 27-3091)

Key Findings

- **Occupational Demand —** Interpreters and translators have a labor market demand of 39 annual job openings in the South Central Valley/Southern Mother Lode (SCV/SML) subregion. Between 2022 and 2027, interpreters and translators are projected to have a demand of 39 annual job openings and jobs with a growth projection of 15%.

- **Wages —** The entry-level earnings for interpreters and translators is $22.23/ hour which is higher than the living wage in the SCV/SML subregion, which is $11.91/hour for a single adult.[1]

- **Employers and Occupational Titles —** Employers in the SCV/SML subregion include Prescient Technologies, Hanna Interpreting Services, and United States Department of the Treasury. The most common job title is sign language interpreters.

- **Skills and Certifications —** The top baseline skill is communication, the top specialized skill is language interpretation, and the top software skill is Microsoft Software. The most in-demand certification is a National Interpreter Certification (NIC).

- **Education —** A bachelor's degree is typically required for interpreters and translators.

- **Supply and Demand Analysis —** An analysis of supply and demand reveals that there are 39 annual openings (i.e., demand) and 77 average annual postsecondary degrees awarded (i.e., supply) in the SCV/SML subregion. This suggests an oversupply of 38 workers. In the CVML region, there are 111 annual openings and 83 awards were conferred suggesting an undersupply of 28 workers.

Recommendation

Based on a comparison of demand and supply, there is an oversupply of trained workers in the SCV/SML subregion, but a shortage of interpreters and translators in the CVML region. The Center of Excellence recommends that Taft College proceeds with caution in the development of programs to address the shortage of Interpreters and Translators workers.

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[1] The term "living wage" in Center of Excellence reports is calculated by averaging the self-sufficiency wages from the Insight Center's California Family Needs Calculator for each county in the subregion: https://insightcced.org/tools-metrics/self-sufficiency-standard-tool-for-california/.

Introduction

The Central Valley/Mother Lode Center of Excellence developed this report to provide Taft College with labor market information for interpreters and translators. The geographical focus for this report is the South Central Valley/Southern Mother Lode (SCV/SML) subregion, but regional demand and supply data has been included for broader applicability and use. Analysis of the program and occupational data related to *Interpreters and Translators* is included in the report. The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) System codes and occupational titles used in this report from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and O*NET OnLine are shown below.
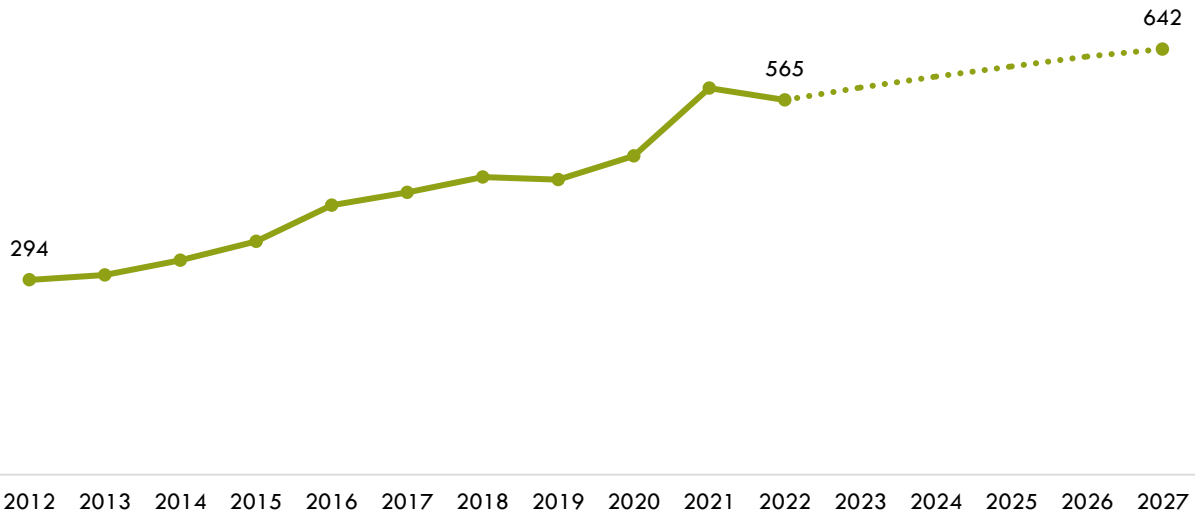
Interpreters and Translators (SOC 27-3091)

- **Job Description:** Interpret oral or sign language, or translate written text from one language into another.
- **Knowledge:** English Language, Foreign Language, Customer and Personal Service, Education and Training, Administrative
- **Skills:** Speaking, Active Listening, Reading Comprehension, Writing, Critical Thinking

Employment

Exhibit 1a shows trends for interpreters and translators in the SCV/SML subregion. Between 2022 to 2027, the number of jobs for interpreters and translators is projected to increase by 42, growing by 15%.

Exhibit 1a. Historical employment and projected occupational demand for occupations related to *Interpreters and Translators* in the SCV/SML subregion, 2012-2027

642

565

294

2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024 2025 2026 2027

Interpreters and translators in the SCV/SML subregion employed 282 workers in 2022 (Exhibit 1b).

Exhibit 1b. Current employment and projected occupational demand for occupations related to *Interpreters and Translators* in the SCV/SML subregion, 2022-2027

Occupation	2022 Jobs	2027 Jobs	5-Year Change	5-Year % Change	Annual Openings
Interpreters and Translators	282	324	42	15%	39
TOTAL	**282**	**324**	**42**	**15%**	**39**

Wages

The average living wage for a single adult in the SCV/SML subregion is $11.91/hour.[2] Exhibit 2 shows the entry-level hourly wages for interpreters and translators.[3]

Exhibit 2. Hourly wages for occupations related to *Interpreters and Translators* in the SCV/SML subregion

Occupation	25th Percentile Hourly Earnings	Median Hourly Earnings	75th Percentile Hourly Earnings
Interpreters and Translators	$22.23	$25.73	$36.27

Job Postings

There were 98 unique job postings for occupations related to interpreters and translators in the SCV/SML subregion from April 2023 to September 2023.[4]

Top Employers

The top employers with the most job postings are listed in Exhibit 3. The top employers in online job postings were Prescient Technologies, Hanna Interpreting Services, and United States Department of the Treasury.

Exhibit 3. Top employers of *Interpreters and Translators* in job postings

Employer
Prescient Technologies
Hanna Interpreting Services
United States Department of the Treasury
Innovative Integrated Health
Ilingo2.Com
Orchid Interpreting
Kaweah Health
Cantalk
United Language Group
Sorenson Communications

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[2] The term "living wage" in Center of Excellence reports is calculated by averaging the self-sufficiency wages from the Insight Center's California Family Needs Calculator for each county in the subregion: https://insightcced.org/tools-metrics/self-sufficiency-standard-tool-for-california/.
[3] Note: 10th and 25th percentiles are considered entry-level wages while 75th and 90th are considered experienced wages, which may be obtained through long-term employment or extra training, etc.

[4] Other than occupational titles and job titles, the categories below can be counted one or multiple times per job posting, and across several areas in a single posting. For example, a skill can be counted in two different skill types, and an employer can indicate more than one education level.

Top Job Titles

Exhibit 4 shows the most common job titles for interpreters and translators in the SCV/SML subregion.

Exhibit 4. Top job titles in job postings for *Interpreters and Translators*

Job Title
Sign Language Interpreters
Interpreters
Spanish Interpreters

Salaries

Exhibit 5 shows the "Market Salaries" for interpreters and translators. These are calculated by Lightcast using a machine learning model built from millions of job postings every year. This accounts for adjustments based on location, industry, skills, experience, education, among other variables.

Exhibit 5. Market salaries for *Interpreters and Translators*

Market Salary	Job Postings
$49,000-$54,999	23
$85,000-$126,000	17
$61,000-$66,999	15
$37,000-$42,999	14
$43,000-$48,999	10

Education

Of the 98 unique job postings, 95 listed a preferred or minimum educational requirement for the position being filled. Among those, 39% requested a high school, 23% requested an associate degree, and 23% requested a master's degree (Exhibit 6).

Exhibit 6. Education levels requested in job postings for *Interpreters and Translators*

Education Level	Job Postings	% of Job Postings
High school or GED	37	39%
Associate degree	22	23%
Bachelor's degree	22	23%
Master's degree	9	9%
Ph.D. or professional degree	5	5%

Baseline, Specialized, and Software Skills

Exhibit 7 depicts the top baseline, specialized, and software skills in job postings. The most commonly requested baseline skill is communication. The most commonly requested specialized skill is language interpretation. The most commonly requested software skill is Microsoft Software.

Exhibit 7. In-demand baseline, specialized, and software skills for *Interpreters and Translators* in job postings

Baseline Skills	Specialized Skills	Software Skills
Communication	Language Interpretation	Microsoft Software
English Language	American Sign Language (ASL)	Business Software
Customer Service	Vocabulary	Epic EMR
Spanish Language	Sign Language Interpretation	Spreadsheets
Writing	Hearing Disorders	IBM WebSphere MQ

Certifications

Of the 98 job postings, there were 64 certifications listed. Among those, 22% indicated a need for a National Interpreter Certification (NIC). The next top certification is a Court Interpreter Certification (Exhibit 8).

Exhibit 8. Top *Interpreters and Translators* certifications requested in job postings

Certifications	% of Job Postings
National Interpreter Certification (NIC)	22%
Court Interpreter Certification	6%
No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) Standards	3%
Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA)	2%
Registered Behavior Technician (RBT)	2%

Education, Work Experience, & Training

A bachelor's degree is typically required for interpreters and translators (Exhibit 9).

Exhibit 9. Education, work experience, training, and Current Population Survey results for occupations related to *Interpreters and Translators*[5]

Occupation	Typical Entry-level Education	Work Experience Required	Typical On-The-Job Training	CPS
Interpreters and Translators	Bachelor's degree	None	None	35.5%

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[5] "Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey," Bureau of Labor Statistics, https://www.bls.gov/cps/.

Supply

An analysis of program data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) for the last three program years shows that, on average, 77 awards were conferred in the SCV/SML subregion (Exhibits 10 and 11).

Exhibit 10. TOP and CIP codes for *Interpreters and Translators*

| TOP Titles	CIP Titles
0850.00 - Sign Language	16.1601 - American Sign Language (ASL)

Exhibit 11. Postsecondary supply for *Interpreters and Translators* for Program Years 2019-20 through 2021-22

TOP/ CIP Code- Title	College	Associate Degree	Certificate 30 < 60 Semester Units	Certificate 16 < 30 Semester Units	TOTAL
0850.00 - Sign Language	Bakersfield	35			**35**
	Fresno City	17			**17**
	Reedley College	3		5	**8**
	San Joaquin Delta	4	2		**6**
	Sequoias	17			**17**
SCV/SML TOTAL		**72**	**0**	**5**	**77**
CVML TOTAL		**76**	**2**	**5**	**83**

*SCV/SML awards

There is an oversupply of 38 interpreters and translators workers in the SCV/SML subregion and an undersupply of 28 workers in the region (Exhibit 12).

Exhibit 12. *Interpreters and Translators* workforce demand (annual job openings), postsecondary awards (supply), and additional students needed to fill gap in the SCV/SML subregion and region
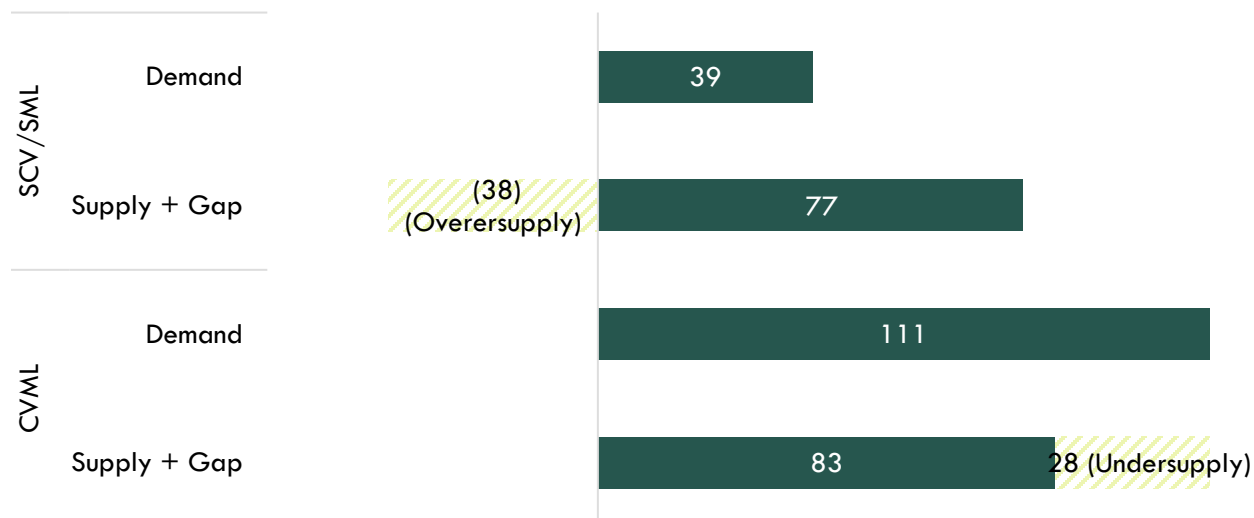
Student Outcomes

There is no outcomes data from California Community College Chancellor's LaunchBoard for 0850.00 - Sign Language.

Recommendation

This report suggests there is an oversupply of 39 workers in the SCV/SML subregion and a shortage of 28 workers in the CVML region for interpreters and translators. Based on these findings, it is recommended that Taft College proceeds with caution in the development of programs to address the shortage of *Interpreters and Translators* workers in the region.

Appendix: Methodology & Data Sources

Data Sources

Labor market and educational supply data compiled in this report derive from a variety of sources. Data were drawn from external sources, including the Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc., the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Management Information Systems Data Mart and the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). Below is the summary of the data sources found in this study.

Data Type	Source
Labor Market Information/Population Estimates and Projections/Educational Attainment	Economic Modeling Specialists, Intl. (Lightcast). Lightcast occupational employment data are based on final Lightcast industry data and final Lightcast staffing patterns. Wage estimates are based on Occupational Employment Statistics (QCEW and Non-QCEW Employees classes of worker) and the American Community Survey (Self-Employed and Extended Proprietors). Occupational wage estimates also affected by county-level Lightcast earnings by industry: economicmodeling.com.
Typical Education Level and On-the-job Training	Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) uses a system to assign categories for entry-level education and typical on-the-job training to each occupation for which BLS publishes projections data: https://www.bls.gov/emp/tables/educational-attainment.htm.
LaunchBoard	Chancellor's LaunchBoard. https://www.calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/SWP.aspx
Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment Estimates	California Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division: labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov.
Job Posting and Skills Data	Lightcast: https://lightcast.io/.
Additional Education Requirements/ Employer Preferences	The O*NET Job Zone database includes over 900 as well as information on skills, abilities, knowledge, work activities and interests associated with specific occupations: onetonline.org.

Key Terms and Concepts

Annual Job Openings: Annual openings are calculated by dividing the number of years in the projection period by total job openings.

Education Attainment Level: The highest education attainment level of workers age 25 years or older.

Employment Estimate: The total number of workers currently employed.

Employment Projections: Projections of employment are calculated by a proprietary Economic Modeling Specialists, Intl. (LIGHTCAST) formula that includes historical employment and economic indicators along with national, state and local trends.

LaunchBoard (Attained the Living Wage): Among SWP students who exited college and did not transfer to any postsecondary institution, the proportion who attained the district county living wage for a single adult measured immediately following academic year of exit

LaunchBoard (Median Annual Earnings): Among SWP students who exited the community college system and who did not transfer to any postsecondary institution, median earnings following the academic year of exit.

LaunchBoard (Median Change in Earnings): Among SWP students who exited and who did not transfer to any postsecondary institution, median change in earnings between the second quarter prior to the beginning of the academic year of entry and the second quarter after the end of the academic year of exit from the last college attended.

LaunchBoard (Job Closely Related to Field of Study): Among SWP students who responded to the CTE Outcomes Survey and did not transfer to any postsecondary institution, the proportion who reported that they are working in a job very closely or closely related to their field of study.

Living Wage: The cost of living in a specific community or region for one adult and no children. The cost increases with the addition of children.

Occupation: An occupation is a grouping of job titles that have a similar set of activities or tasks that employees perform.

Percent Change: Rate of growth or decline in the occupation for the projected period; this does not factor in replacement openings.

Replacements: Estimate of job openings resulting from workers retiring or otherwise permanently leaving an occupation. Workers entering an occupation often need training. These replacement needs, added to job openings due to growth, may be used to assess the minimum number of workers who will need to be trained for an occupation.

Total Job Openings (New + Replacements): Sum of projected growth (new jobs) and replacement needs. When an occupation is expected to lose jobs, or retain the current employment level, number of openings will equal replacements.

Typical Education Requirement: represents the typical education level most workers need to enter an occupation.

Typical On-The-Job Training: indicates the typical on-the-job training needed to attain competency in the skills needed in the occupation.