

# The Economic Value of the Riverside Community College District's Career and Technical Education





**T**HE RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT'S<sup>1</sup> Career and Technical Education (RCCD's CTE) creates value in many ways. The colleges play a key role in helping CTE students increase their employability and achieve their individual potential. The colleges draw students to the region, generating new dollars and opportunities for the RCCD Service Area.<sup>2</sup> The colleges provide students with the education, training, and skills they need to have fulfilling and prosperous careers. Furthermore, the colleges are places for students to meet new people, increase their self-confidence, and promote their overall health and well-being.

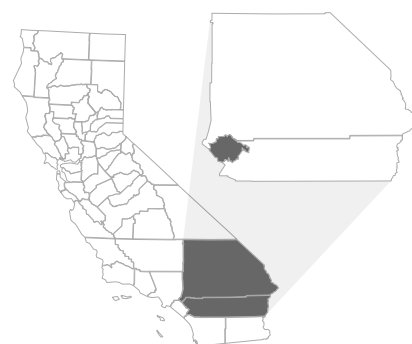
RCCD's CTE influences both the lives of students and the regional economy. The colleges support a variety of industries in the RCCD Service Area, serve regional businesses, and benefit society as a whole in California from an expanded economy and improved quality of life. Additionally, the benefits created by RCCD's CTE extend to the state and local government through increased tax revenues and public sector savings.

This study measures the economic impacts created by RCCD's CTE on the business community and the benefits the colleges generate in return for the investments made by their key stakeholder groups—students, taxpayers, and society. The following two analyses are presented:

 **Economic impact analysis**

 **Investment analysis**

All results reflect employee, student, and financial data, specific to CTE and provided by RCCD for fiscal year (FY) 2023-24.<sup>3</sup> Impacts on the RCCD Service Area economy are reported under the economic impact analysis and are measured in terms of added income. The returns on investment to CTE students, taxpayers, and society in California are reported under the investment analysis.



**The RCCD Service Area  
(in San Bernardino and  
Riverside Counties, CA)**

RCCD's CTE influences both the **lives of CTE students** and the **regional economy**.

<sup>1</sup> The Riverside Community College District consists of Moreno Valley College, Norco College, and Riverside City College.

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this analysis, the RCCD Service Area is comprised of the following 40 zip codes in Riverside and San Bernadino counties: 91708, 91752, 92503, 92505, 92860, 92877, 92878, 92879, 92880, 92881, 92882, 92883, 92508, 92518, 92551, 92552, 92553, 92554, 92555, 92556, 92557, 92570, 92571, 92599, 92313, 92316, 92324, 92337, 92501, 92502, 92504, 92506, 92507, 92509, 92514, 92516, 92517, 92519, 92521, 92522.

<sup>3</sup> Due to data limitations, the number of CTE faculty and staff and CTE revenues and expenditures were estimated by Lightcast using a proportion based on CTE credits.



# Economic impact analysis



RCCD's CTE promotes economic growth in the RCCD Service Area through its direct expenditures and the resulting expenditures of CTE students and regional businesses. The colleges serve as employers and buyers of goods and services for their CTE operations. The colleges' CTE activities attract students from outside the RCCD Service Area, whose expenditures benefit regional vendors. In addition, the colleges are primary sources of higher education to the RCCD Service Area residents and suppliers of trained workers to regional industries, enhancing overall productivity in the regional workforce.

## Operations spending impact



RCCD's CTE adds economic value to the RCCD Service Area as an employer of regional residents and a large-scale buyer of goods and services. In FY 2023-24, the colleges employed 343 full-time and part-time CTE faculty and staff, 55% of whom lived in the RCCD Service Area. Total payroll specific to RCCD's CTE was \$155.7 million, much of which was spent in the region for groceries, mortgage and rent payments, dining out, and other household expenses. In addition, the colleges spent \$97.9 million on expenses related to CTE facilities, supplies, and professional services.

RCCD's CTE operations spending added \$197.2 million in income to the region during the analysis year. This figure represents the colleges' CTE payroll, the multiplier effects generated by the in-region CTE spending of the colleges and their employees, and a downward adjustment to account for funding received from regional sources. The \$197.2 million in added income is equivalent to supporting 756 jobs in the region.

## Student spending impact



Around 27% of CTE students attending RCCD originated from outside the region in FY 2023-24, and some of these CTE students relocated to the RCCD Service Area to attend the colleges. These CTE students may not have come to the region if the colleges did not exist. In addition, some in-region CTE students, referred to as retained CTE students, would have left the RCCD Service Area if not for the existence of RCCD. While attending the colleges, these relocated and retained CTE students spent money on groceries, accommodation, transportation, and other household expenses. This spending generated \$74.6 million in added income for the regional economy in FY 2023-24, which supported 1,162 jobs in the RCCD Service Area.

Impacts created by  
RCCD's CTE in FY 2023-24



Operations spending impact

**\$197.2 million**

+



Student spending impact

**\$74.6 million**

+



Alumni impact

**\$480.0 million**



Total economic impact

**\$751.8 million**

OR



Jobs supported

**8,852**



## Alumni impact



The education and training the colleges provide for regional residents has the greatest impact. Since the colleges were established, CTE students have studied at RCCD and entered the regional workforce with greater knowledge and new skills. Today, thousands of former RCCD CTE students are employed in the RCCD Service Area. As a result of their education from RCCD, the CTE students receive higher earnings and increase the productivity of the businesses that employ them. In FY 2023-24, RCCD's CTE alumni generated \$480.0 million in added income for the regional economy, which is equivalent to supporting 6,934 jobs.

## Total impact

RCCD's CTE added \$751.8 million in income to the RCCD Service Area economy during the analysis year, equal to the sum of the operations spending impact, the student spending impact, and the alumni impact. For context, the \$751.8 million impact was equal to approximately 1.2% of the total gross regional product (GRP) of the RCCD Service Area. This contribution that the colleges provided on their own was greater than the entire Educational Services industry in the region.

RCCD's CTE total impact can also be expressed in terms of jobs supported. The \$751.8 million impact supported 8,852 regional jobs, using the jobs-to-sales ratios specific to each industry in the region. This means that one out of every 78 jobs in the RCCD Service Area is supported by the activities of the colleges and their CTE students. In addition, the \$751.8 million, or 8,852 supported jobs, stemmed from different industry sectors. For instance, among non-education industry sectors, the spending of RCCD's CTE and their CTE students and the activities of their alumni in the Health Care & Social Assistance industry sector supported 1,304 jobs in FY 2023-24. If the colleges did not exist, these impacts would not have been generated in the RCCD Service Area.

### RCCD's CTE impact by industry (jobs supported)



1,304

Health Care & Social Assistance



1,148

Other Services (except  
Public Administration)



1,000

Accommodation & Food Services



922

Professional & Technical Services



751

Retail Trade

**One out of every 78 jobs** in the RCCD Service Area is supported by the activities of the colleges and their CTE students.



# Investment analysis



An investment analysis evaluates the costs associated with a proposed venture against its expected benefits. The analysis presented here evaluates RCCD's CTE as an investment from the perspectives of students, taxpayers, and society in California. As with the economic impact analysis, this analysis considers only FY 2023-24 activities.

## Student perspective



In FY 2023-24, RCCD's CTE served 27,834 credit students. In order to attend the colleges, the CTE students paid for tuition, fees, books, and supplies. They also took out loans and will incur interest on those loans. Additionally, CTE students gave up money they would have otherwise earned had they been working instead of attending college. The total investment made by RCCD's CTE students in FY 2023-24 amounted to a present value of \$82.0 million, equal to \$26.8 million in out-of-pocket expenses (including future principal and interest on student loans) and \$55.2 million in forgone time and money.

In return for their investment, RCCD's CTE students will receive a stream of higher future earnings that will continue to grow throughout their working lives. For example, the average associate degree graduate from FY 2023-24 will see annual earnings \$9,100 higher than a person with a high school diploma or equivalent working in California. Over a working lifetime, the benefits of an associate degree over a high school diploma will amount to an undiscounted value of \$373,100 in higher earnings per graduate. The present value of the cumulative higher future earnings that RCCD's FY 2023-24 CTE students will receive over their working careers is \$672.3 million.

The CTE students' benefit-cost ratio is 8.2. In other words, for every dollar CTE students invest in an education at RCCD in the form of out-of-pocket expenses and forgone time and money, they will receive a cumulative value of \$8.20 in higher future earnings. Annually, the CTE students' investment in RCCD has an average annual internal rate

### CTE students see a high rate of return for their investment in RCCD's CTE



Average annual return for RCCD CTE students  
**23.9%**



Stock market 30-year average annual return  
10.1%

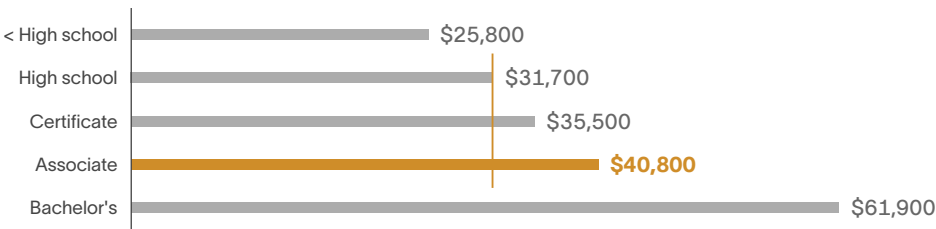


Interest earned on savings account (national deposit rate)  
0.5%

Source: Forbes' S&P 500, 1994-2023; FDIC.gov, March 2023

### Average earnings by education level at career midpoint

The average associate degree graduate from RCCD's CTE will see an increase in earnings of **\$9,100** each year compared to a person with a high school diploma or equivalent working in California.



Source: Lightcast employment data





of return of 23.9%, which is impressive compared to the U.S. stock market's 30-year average rate of return of 10.1%.

## Taxpayer perspective



RCCD's CTE generates more in tax revenue than it receives. These benefits to taxpayers consist primarily of taxes that the state and local government will collect from the added revenue created in the state. As RCCD's CTE students will earn more, they will make higher tax payments throughout their working lives. CTE students' employers will also make higher tax payments as they increase their output and purchases of goods and services. By the end of the FY 2023-24 CTE students' working lives, the state and local government will have collected a present value of \$242.5 million in added taxes.

Benefits to taxpayers will also consist of savings generated by the improved lifestyles of CTE students attending RCCD and the corresponding reduced government services. Education is statistically correlated with a variety of lifestyle changes. The education that RCCD's CTE students receive will generate savings in three main categories: 1) health care, 2) justice system, and 3) income assistance. Improved health will lower CTE students' demand for national health care services. In addition, costs related to the justice system will decrease. RCCD's CTE students will be more employable, so their reduced demand for income assistance such as welfare and unemployment benefits will benefit taxpayers. Altogether, the present value of the benefits associated with an education through RCCD's CTE will generate \$49.3 million in savings to state and local taxpayers.

Total taxpayer benefits amount to \$291.9 million, the present value sum of the added tax revenue and public sector savings. Taxpayer costs are \$198.4 million, equal to the amount of state and local government funding RCCD's CTE received in FY 2023-24. These benefits and costs yield a benefit-cost ratio of 1.5. This means that for every dollar of public money invested in RCCD's CTE in FY 2023-24, taxpayers will receive a cumulative present value of \$1.50 over the course of the CTE students' working lives. The average annual internal rate of return for taxpayers is 2.7%, which compares favorably to other long-term investments in the public sector.

For every dollar of public money invested in RCCD's CTE, taxpayers will receive a cumulative value of **\$1.50** over the course of the CTE students' working lives.

## Social perspective



Society as a whole in California benefits from the presence of RCCD's CTE in two major ways. Primarily, society benefits from an increased economic base in the state. This is attributed to the added income from CTE students' increased lifetime earnings (added student income) and increased business output (added business income), which raise economic prosperity in California.

Benefits to society also consist of the savings generated by the improved lifestyles of RCCD's CTE students. As discussed in the previous section, education is statistically correlated with a variety of lifestyle changes that generate social savings. Note that

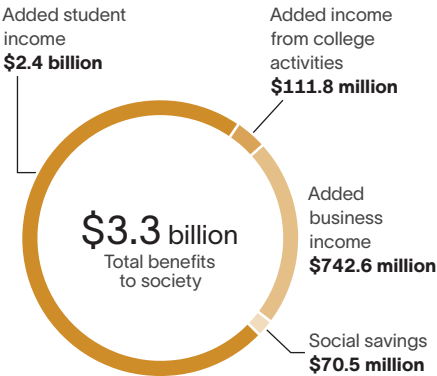


these costs are avoided by the consumers but are distinct from the costs avoided by the taxpayers outlined above. Health care savings include avoided medical costs associated with smoking, obesity, substance abuse, and depression. Justice system savings include avoided costs to the government and society due to less judicial activity. Income assistance savings include reduced welfare and unemployment claims.

Altogether, the social benefits of RCCD's CTE equal a present value of \$3.3 billion. These benefits include \$2.4 billion in added CTE student income, \$742.6 million in added business income, \$111.8 million in added income from college activities, as well as \$70.5 million in social savings related to health, the justice system, and income assistance in California. People in California invested a present value total of \$326.3 million in RCCD's CTE in FY 2023-24. The cost includes all the colleges' expenditures and CTE student costs.

The benefit-cost ratio for society is 10.2, equal to the \$3.3 billion in benefits divided by the \$326.3 million in costs. In other words, for every dollar invested in RCCD's CTE, people in California will receive a cumulative value of \$10.20 in benefits. The benefits of this investment will occur for as long as RCCD's FY 2023-24 CTE students remain employed in the state workforce.

**Social benefits in California from RCCD's CTE**



Source: Lightcast impact model

**Summary of investment analysis results**

The results of the analysis demonstrate that RCCD's CTE is a strong investment for all three major stakeholder groups—students, taxpayers, and society. As shown, CTE students receive a great return for their investments in an education through RCCD's CTE. At the same time, taxpayers' investment in RCCD's CTE returns more to government budgets than it costs and creates a wide range of social benefits throughout California.

**Summary of investment analysis results**

<b>Student perspective</b>		<b>Taxpayer perspective</b>		<b>Social perspective</b>	
Present value benefits <b>\$672.3 million</b>		Present value benefits <b>\$291.9 million</b>		Present value benefits <b>\$3.3 billion</b>	
Present value costs <b>\$82.0 million</b>		Present value costs <b>\$198.4 million</b>		Present value costs <b>\$326.3 million</b>	
Net present value <b>\$590.3 million</b>		Net present value <b>\$93.5 million</b>		Net present value <b>\$3.0 billion</b>	
Benefit-cost ratio	Rate of return	Benefit-cost ratio	Rate of return	Benefit-cost ratio	Rate of return
8.2	23.9%	1.5	2.7%	10.2	n/a*

\* The rate of return is not reported for the social perspective because the beneficiaries are not necessarily the same as the original investors.

# Conclusion

*The results of this study demonstrate that RCCD's CTE creates value from **multiple perspectives**.*

The colleges benefit regional businesses by increasing consumer spending in the region and supplying a steady flow of qualified, trained workers to the workforce. RCCD's CTE enriches the lives of CTE students by raising their lifetime earnings and helping them achieve their individual potential. The colleges benefit state and local taxpayers through increased tax receipts and a reduced demand for government-supported social services. Finally, RCCD's CTE benefits society as a whole in California by creating a more prosperous economy and generating a variety of savings through the improved lifestyles of CTE students.

## About the study

Data and assumptions used in the study are based on several sources, including the FY 2023-24 academic and financial reports specific to RCCD's CTE, industry and employment data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and U.S. Census Bureau, outputs of Lightcast's Multi-Regional Social Accounting Matrix model, and a variety of studies and surveys relating education to social behavior. The study applies a conservative methodology and follows standard practice using only the most recognized indicators of economic impact and investment effectiveness. For a full description of the data and approach used in the study, please contact the district for a copy of the main report.



Lightcast provides colleges and universities with labor market data that help create better outcomes for students, businesses, and communities. Our data, which cover more than 99% of the U.S. workforce, are compiled from a wide variety of government sources, job postings, and online profiles and résumés. Hundreds of institutions use Lightcast to align programs with regional needs, drive enrollment, connect students with in-demand careers, track their alumni's employment outcomes, and demonstrate their institution's economic impact on their region. Visit [lightcast.io/solutions/education](https://lightcast.io/solutions/education) to learn more or connect with us.