

MARITIME ADMINISTRATION
U.S. Department of Transportation
Center of Excellence (CoE) for Domestic Workforce Training and Education

Orange Coast College – Newport Beach, California

The Maritime Administration redesignates Orange Coast College (OCC) as a Center of Excellence for Domestic Maritime Workforce Training and Education (CoE) for its premier Professional Mariner program, state-of-the-art simulation facilities, and extensive instructional fleet. Operating as the only public community college program of its kind in California, OCC's Waterfront Campus in Newport Beach provides comprehensive afloat and ashore vocational pathways, serving as a primary maritime training hub for Southern California and commercial operations worldwide.

Operational Footprint & Assets

OCC's Professional Mariner (PM) program combines structured academic degree pathways with hands-on underway instruction, USCG-approved modular courses, and advanced bridge simulation.

- **Academic Degree & Stackable Certificate Pathways:** Offers a Certificate of Achievement and an Associate of Science (A.S.) degree in Professional Mariner. The curriculum prepares students for direct entry-level vessel employment or transfer to State Maritime Academies.
- **Modern Waterfront Campus Infrastructure:** Features two primary facilities, including the OCC School of Sailing and Seamanship (housing two USCG-approved classrooms and a nautical library) and the Professional Mariner Training Center (containing an upgraded Radar/ECDIS Lab, three oversized USCG-approved classrooms, and a Transas Full Mission Bridge Simulator).
- **Instructional Fleet Assets:** Maintains a fleet of over three dozen sailing and power vessels ranging from 14 to 92 ft, anchored by the flagship vessel *Anacapa* (96 ft, 151 Gross Tons), donated in 2022 for dockside and underway instruction.
- **USCG Approvals & Industry Endorsements:** Issues USCG-approved certificates for Master 100 Tons, Radar Observer Unlimited, RFPNW, STCW-95 Basic Safety, and Boat Handling & Seamanship (awarding 60 sea service days), alongside recognized credentials from US Powerboating, US Sailing, Red Cross, and CA Boating & Waterways.

Workforce & Regional Impact

OCC serves as a direct talent provider for commercial shipping, passenger ferries, tugboats, private charters, harbor departments, and oceanographic research fleets.

- **Immediate Industry Placement:** Many students secure paid maritime employment after completing just one semester in the program. Surveys indicate that among workforce-seeking alumni, 39.3% work for pay on vessels, 38.2% hold shore-based maritime jobs, and over 51% plan to obtain or currently hold their Merchant Mariner Credential (MMC).
- **Industry Internship Network:** Coordinates supervised internships with leading regional employers, including Catalina Express, Catalina Flyer, University of Southern California cross-channel fleet, Two Harbors-Catalina Harbor Department, Newport Aquatic Center, and South Coast Shipyard.

- **K-12 & Equity Outreach:** Hosts hands-on boat handling sessions for Port of Los Angeles High School CTE students; partners with Santa Ana Unified School District (SAUSD) for dual-enrollment summer tracks in Yacht Keeping and Engine Maintenance; and conducts annual career outreach for foster care youth at Samueli Academy.
- **Endowed Scholarship Support:** Sustains student financial support through a \$500,000 endowment from the Linda and Tod White Charitable Fund (\$25,000 awarded annually for tuition, TWIC, and MMC fees) and grant awards from the Port of Long Beach.

Strategic Outlook

With the expansion of its Professional Mariner Training Center and bridge simulation capabilities, Orange Coast College continues to broaden its mariner continuing education offerings, adding specialized STCW endorsements such as RFPNW and Able Seaman ratings. By bridging high school CTE programs, community college associate degrees, and professional USCG credentials, OCC maintains a robust pipeline of skilled mariners essential to Pacific coastal trade and the regional blue economy.