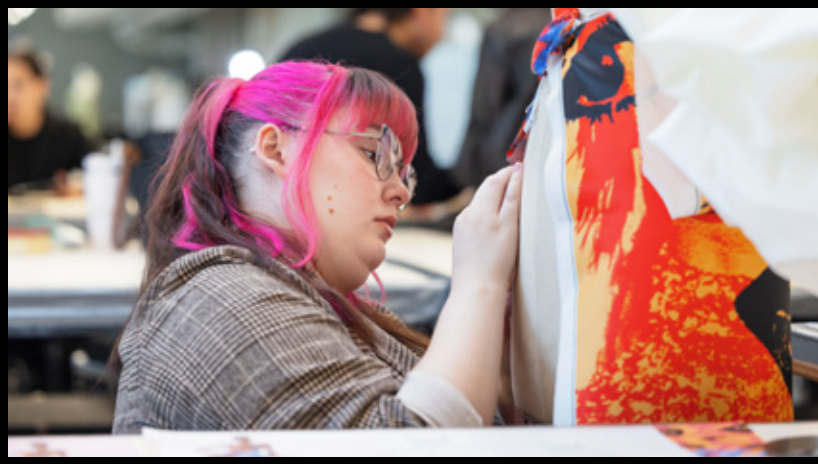
OTIS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

THE FUTURE IS CREATIVE

OTIS COLLEGE IMPACT REPORT 2025-2026








A Message from President Charles Hirschhorn

Dear Friends,

At Otis College, we see how creativity transforms lives, industries, and communities. Thanks to your generosity, our talented students are provided with the opportunity to realize their potential as artists, designers, and creative leaders who will shape what comes next.

Because of your support, students from across Los Angeles, the U.S., and around the world have access to an Otis education and an opportunity to develop their ideas, strengthen their voices, and prepare for meaningful creative careers. With 98% of our students receiving financial aid and 35% being the first in their families to attend college, philanthropy is essential to ensuring that an exceptional art and design education remains within reach.

The impact extends far beyond financial aid. Your support helps students gain valuable professional experience through internships and industry mentorships; explore emerging technologies and new modes of creative practice; and access the resources required to thrive throughout their education and beyond. It enables Otis to build programs that respond to student needs while remaining at the forefront of a changing creative landscape they will enter as graduates.

This work has never been more important. The creative economy is evolving rapidly as new technologies transform how we work, communicate, design, and tell stories. At Otis, we are preparing students to not simply adapt to this change, but to help lead it with imagination, curiosity, technical expertise, and a distinctly human point of view.

Throughout this report, you will see that commitment in action. Scholarships open doors to an Otis education; our Internship Equity Fund making professional opportunities more accessible than ever; students experimenting with emerging technology through our AI Incubation Lab; and partnerships that continue to connect young creatives with industry professionals and new career pathways.

Behind these efforts are people like you who believe that an investment in creative students is an investment in our collective future.

On behalf of our students, faculty, staff, and the entire Otis College community, thank you for your generosity and partnership. Your support empowers a new generation of artists and designers to imagine a creative future and contribute meaningfully to the world around them.

With gratitude,

Charles Hirschhorn
President
Otis College of Art and Design

OTIS AT A GLANCE

WHO WE ARE

Otis College of Art and Design educates a diverse community of students to become highly-skilled, well-informed, and responsible professionals—empowering them to shape the world.

WHO WE SERVE

Otis serves a dynamic community of 1,200 students across eight BFA degree programs and two MFA programs.

BFA DEGREES

ANIMATION
FASHION DESIGN
FINE ARTS
GAME AND ENTERTAINMENT DESIGN
GRAPHIC DESIGN
ILLUSTRATION
PRODUCT DESIGN
TOY DESIGN

MFA DEGREES

FINE ARTS
GRAPHIC DESIGN



OTIS COLLEGE BY THE NUMBERS

98%
of students receive financial aid

96%
of students are employed within one year of graduation

70%
are students of color

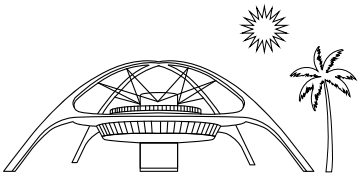
35%
are first-generation college students

OTIS AT A GLANCE

A CLOSER LOOK: 2025-2026 ACADEMIC YEAR

325
graduates

120
students participated in internships



894
adult students served by Otis College Extension

450
students accessed the Student Food Pantry

48%
of new students are from Los Angeles County

SCHOLARSHIPS

375+
scholarships awarded

73
were first-generation college students

15
recipients were U.S. veterans



"This scholarship has helped cover my tuition and eased a lot of my financial stress. If it were not for my financial aid and scholarships, I wouldn't have been able to attend Otis. Knowing that others believe in my potential as an artist pushes me to work harder toward my professional goals in the animation industry."

— Miles Casaso, BFA in Animation

"Without scholarships, I wouldn't be able to go to school here. It means the world to be able to attend my dream school and learn how to do my dream job. I love it here at Otis, and I'm so thankful to have the money to afford it from scholarships."

— Conrad Simpson, BFA in Product Design

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

A VISION FOR THE FUTURE: OTIS LAUNCHES NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

This year, Otis College released its new five-year strategic plan, providing a clear, yet ambitious roadmap for advancing the College while strengthening its impact in the years ahead. The plan is built around the following five guiding principles:

01 Empowering and Supporting our Diverse Community

02 Pursuing Creative and Academic Excellence

03 Increasing Awareness of Otis to Grow our Community

04 Strengthening the College's Financial Foundation

05 Enhancing Campus Infrastructure

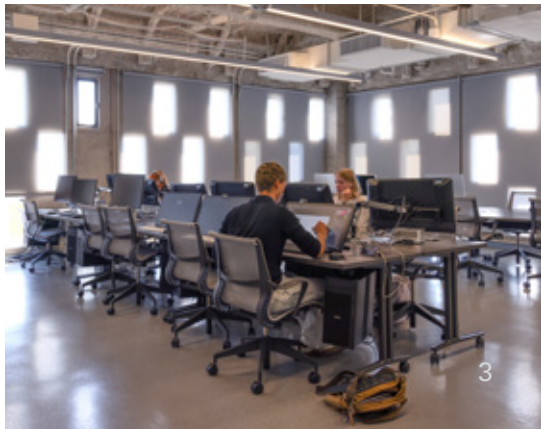
Together, these priorities will ensure the College evolves alongside the creative industries it supports while providing students with the education and experiences they need to thrive.











2025-2026 HIGHLIGHTS

LAUNCH OF THE NEW INTERNSHIP EQUITY FUND

The **Internship Equity Fund** launched this year, providing wages and transportation for otherwise unpaid internships. As this is often a barrier for students with financial need, the Fund makes it possible for more students to pursue meaningful experiences that align with their studies and professional aspirations.

Over the past year, **67 Otis students** participated in internships with more than **45 organizations and artist studios**, including the **Armory Center for the Arts**, **Bang Zoom! Studios**, **Pulse Arts**, artists **Lauren Halsey** and **Sayre Gomez**, among others. For first-generation students and others who may have fewer financial resources or professional connections, this access is especially meaningful.

"As a first-generation college student, opportunities like this allow me to gain valuable industry experience that might not have otherwise been accessible. I am incredibly grateful for the support and for the chance to learn, grow, and prepare for my future career."

— Kayani Ostojich, IndieCade Climate Jam Internship







2025-2026 HIGHLIGHTS

EXPLORING THE NEXT FRONTIER OF CREATIVITY

As artificial intelligence reshapes creative industries, Otis College is working to ensure students have the necessary experience to thoughtfully apply these tools within their creative practices. This year, the College launched an **AI Incubation Lab**, providing students a dedicated environment to explore how AI can expand their creative processes without compromising human imagination or artistic vision.

The inaugural Lab brought together a cohort of students representing majors across the college to experiment and to explore their application across creative disciplines. Working alongside faculty and industry professionals, students were encouraged to not only use new AI tools but to investigate them by testing new approaches, questioning their limitations, and considering how they might become part of an evolving landscape. The Incubation Lab complements broader efforts at Otis to expose students to technologies such as virtual production and real-time rendering.

The exploration culminated in a public AI Incubation Lab Showcase that invited members of the Otis community to experience student work. Projects ranged from concept development and interactive experiences to hybrid creative processes. The exhibition highlighted finished works alongside the research behind them, creating space for students to explore the most pressing question facing today's artists and designers: how can new technologies serve as supportive creative tools while preserving the distinctly human ideas and imagination that give creativity its meaning?



2025-2026 HIGHLIGHTS

DESIGNING NEW POSSIBILITIES

For over 25 years, Otis mentor projects have challenged students to respond to real-world creative briefs while receiving guidance and feedback from working designers throughout the process, from initial concept fittings to final presentations. These collaborations provide students with an invaluable opportunity to learn from professionals while discovering how their talents can translate across creative industries.

For the past three years, Activision Blizzard and Fashion Design have partnered on projects inspired by some of the company's most recognized franchises while gaining experience in physical garment construction and digital game design. Students developed looks inspired by the angels and demons of the Diablo game franchise while learning to use digital fashion tools such as CLO and Marvelous Designer under the guidance of the Activision Blizzard team. Meanwhile, Game and Entertainment Design students developed virtual runway environments for the Fashion Design students' avatars, providing an additional layer of cross-disciplinary collaboration that also mirrored how artists and designers work together professionally across different areas of expertise.

Students also developed athletic wear that incorporated character-inspired designs, with Marc Mejia and Hanna Jun returning as mentors. They translated their ideas into digital garments and model avatars, while Otis alumnus Andres Perez ('23 BFA Fashion Design) created a digital runway for avatars to present their looks. The ambitious project merged fashion, gaming, and digital production, demonstrating how traditional design expertise is taking on new relevance as disciplines increasingly intersect. Most importantly, the relationship is encouraging students to consider career options they might not have previously imagined.



2025-2026 HIGHLIGHTS

FROM IMAGINATION TO FABRICATION

This summer, Otis launched its inaugural **Creative Trades Lab**, combining art, design, and skilled trades in an innovative program designed for Los Angeles-area high school students. The program offered students an opportunity to explore how creative thinking and hands-on technical expertise intersect in today's industries.

Thanks to support from Harbor Freight Tools for Schools, Otis College Extension partnered with TGR Foundation to provide 24 students in a fully paid, three-week immersive program hosted on the Otis campus.

The experience introduced students to the breadth of career possibilities available at the intersection of creativity and skilled trades. In California, creative industries account for one in every 10 jobs, with many requiring individuals who understand how to fabricate and translate creative ideas into physical forms. Through guest lectures, site visits, industry mentorship, career-mapping workshops, and portfolio and résumé development, participants gained a broad understanding of how the skills they were developing could be a gateway to new educational and professional opportunities.

"This gave me a deeper understanding of the creativity, precision, and hard work behind actually interacting in building things hands-on. If I were to see this bench at a park, I would've never thought so much went into it, but now that I actually made it, it opened my eyes to the craftsmanship of things that look so regular. It has deepened my love for design and turning ideas into something real because you feel like you are a part of something bigger."

— Sierra Hashimi



2025-2026 HIGHLIGHTS

TWENTY YEARS OF THOUGHT LEADERSHIP ON THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

For nearly two decades, the **Otis College Report on the Creative Economy** has provided critical insight into the industries and trends driving California's creative economy. Since its launch in 2007, the Report has evolved from a single annual publication into a broader research program designed to provide industry leaders, policymakers, educators, and creatives with timely data and analysis.

Today, that work includes focused studies examining emerging issues and industries alongside the **Otis Creative Economy Dashboard**, the only free and interactive resource of its type that allows users to explore current and historical data, individual creative sectors, and trends across California. Together, these resources make Otis's research more accessible and responsive to a creative landscape undergoing rapid change.

In 2026, Otis released two focused reports: one examining the scope and impact of Los Angeles's sizable nonprofit arts sector and the challenges of the post-pandemic funding environment, and another exploring the emerging influence of AI on creative industries. The reports were launched at public events hosted at The Getty and Snap Inc. headquarters, respectively. Together, the events welcomed over 600 attendees, while the reports have generated more than 2,000 downloads to date.







OTIS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

THANK YOU!

Every opportunity, partnership, and student success story featured in this report is strengthened by a community that believes in the transformative power of education. Thank you for being a part of it, and for your continued engagement, generosity, and belief in Otis students and the creative future of tomorrow.

Your partnership ensures that talented students have access to the education, experiences, resources, and connections they need to realize their potential and thrive. Together, we create opportunity, open doors, and empower a new generation of artists, designers, and creative leaders to shape the future. **Learn more at otis.edu/give**