

State funding for the CR's GROVE program ending

March 17, 2022



In the Fall of 2019, College of the Redwoods was included in a three-year, state funded pilot program that helped CR expand the Redwoods Room & Board Scholarship and establish the GROVE—an innovative program that offered many services, including short-term hotel vouchers, counseling, academic support, food security, transportation vouchers, and local agency referrals. Unfortunately, the state grant funding for the GROVE pilot project will sunset at the end of the spring 2022 semester.

It has been our privilege to provide students opportunities for housing and food insecurity over the last several years. However, hotel vouchers, rental assistance, and other financial contributions were always intended to be a short-term fix for students in crisis, not a long-term solution.

Our long-term objective has always been to transition students out of the GROVE program and into permanent, stable housing and employment situations. It is our hope that this support, along with their CR education, will allow them to become self-sufficient, productive members of our community.

Over the program's three-year term, we were able to provide a total of 403 students with critical assistance in the areas of case management, hotel vouchers, rental assistance, Arcata House referrals, scholarships, and utility assistance.

In the fall of 2022, many of the lessons learned, community and campus partnerships, and resources identified during the GROVE pilot project will be rolled in to a Basic Needs and Wellness Center on campus. In essence, it is an expansion of the current campus food pantries, which offer light meals to students while on campus, canned and bulk food staples to bring home, hygiene kits, help connecting to the state CalFresh food assistance program, and other resource referrals. Next door on the Eureka campus, students can also find clothing and other household supplies.

For now, our immediate goal is a purposeful transition of students out of existing GROVE service provisions in a way that is consistent with existing campus and community resources and that supports the student in maintaining the positive outcomes achieved in the program.

In an effort to provide students with guidance during the transition, a series of workshop on important topics like financial planning, housing programs, employment, and medical and food assistance will be provided from on-campus and off-campus service providers.

We are also committed to ensure all students are connected with the following resources before the end of the program:

- Cal-Fresh
- Medi-Cal
- Housing Resources
- Campus Special Programs (EOPS, Trio, and career Center Services)
- The Room and Board Scholarship (if eligible)
- A Personalized Transition Plan
- A Crisis Management Plan (As Necessary)
- An Exit Meeting with their Counselor