



All News Stories, Magazine Articles, & Press Releases

## CAMP FIRE



### Wildcat Returns to Wild

ASHLEY GEBB \* FEBRUARY 15, 2019

A rehabilitated bobcat that suffered fifth-degree burns in the Camp Fire was released to its new home at the University's Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve.

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### Planting Hope, Harvesting Joy

SARAH DEFORREST \* DECEMBER 21, 2018

For their final project, "Agricultural Leadership" students raised more than \$35,000 in toys, blankets, backpacks, gift cards, and other gifts for schools and families directly impacted by the Camp Fire.

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### Alum Brings Healing with #ButteStrong Design

SEAN MURPHY \* DECEMBER 20, 2018

It took Chico State alum Zac Acker less than three minutes to sketch out the design, & when he posted it on the 12 Volt Tattoo Facebook page, it was clear the #ButteStrong design was a remembrance for what Paradise residents had lost in the Camp Fire—as well as what it still had.

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### Beer-Crafting Alums Respond With Resilience

TRAVIS SOUDERS \* DECEMBER 18, 2018

Answering the call to raise money for the Sierra Nevada Camp Fire Relief Fund, brewers from across the country have signed on to sell Resilience, an IPA crafted from donated ingredients and packaged in Sierra Nevada cans.

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### Faculty Act to Care for Animals

ASHLEY GEBB \* DECEMBER 17, 2018

Whether working with official groups or tapped by their colleagues to help, faculty members were among volunteers who rushed to support animal rescue efforts after the Camp Fire.

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### From the President: Recounting the Camp Fire

GAYLE HUTCHINSON \* DECEMBER 12, 2018

President Gayle Hutchinson reflects on the Camp Fire, as well as how we will rise as a community to recover and rebuild.

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### Camp Fire Survivors: In Their Own Words

TRAVIS SOUDERS \* DECEMBER 11, 2018

Seven Camp Fire survivors opened up about their escapes, their lives since the fire broke out, and the ongoing challenges they face. Here are their accounts, in their own words, as shared for #WeAreChico.

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### Chico State Cyclists Circle up to Help Teammate

SEAN MURPHY \* DECEMBER 10, 2018

Some teammates are just teammates. But when one member of the Chico State Cycling Team asked for help building a line break around his home as the Camp Fire marched through the foothills, his teammates didn't hesitate to help.

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### Chico State Greeks Join Forces to Provide For Evacuees

TRAVIS SOUDERS \* DECEMBER 7, 2018

With Phi Kappa Tau leading the way in rounding up donations, Chico State fraternities and sororities came together with a big day-one donation drive to provide for evacuees and victims of the Camp Fire.

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### Teachers Help Teachers Color Classrooms with Love

ASHLEY GEBB \* DECEMBER 5, 2018

School of Education students joined educators from across Butte County to Color a Classroom with Love, providing Paradise teachers who lost their classrooms in the Camp Fire with a start on the supplies they need to resume teaching.

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### Students Care for Evacuees' Physical and Mental Wellness

SEAN MURPHY \* DECEMBER 4, 2018

Dozens of cots lined East Avenue Church in tidy rows, a stark contrast to the chaos from which Camp Fire evacuees fled. Every face reflected the effects of exhaustion mixed with terror, the air of uncertainty as thick as the smoke outside.

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### Student Team Lends a Hand to Help Livestock

ASHLEY GEBB \* NOVEMBER 30, 2018

Combining love of agriculture with large animal expertise, the Livestock Judging Team cleaned pens and fed donkeys, horses, llamas and other creatures displaced by the Camp Fire.

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### Harnessing the Power of Purchasers

ASHLEY GEBB \* NOVEMBER 28, 2018

Chico State purchasing staff put their unique expertise to work for the county's Camp Fire taskforce responsible for sourcing, buying, and paying for critical supplies.

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### Feeding Those Affected by the Flames

SEAN MURPHY \* NOVEMBER 27, 2018

The nonprofit World Central Kitchen has served up thousands of meals for Camp Fire first responders and evacuees—efforts fueled by Chico State volunteers.

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### Creating Comfort and Order out of Chaos

ASHLEY GEBB \* NOVEMBER 23, 2018

When a group of Chico State students found a Camp Fire evacuation shelter in need of aid to track those in its care who were displaced, establish a medical records system, and help with filling prescriptions, they launched into action.

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### Answering the Call for Care

TRAVIS SOUDERS \* NOVEMBER 20, 2018

In the wake of the Camp Fire, all volunteers are being routed through the nonprofit Caring Choices. Students, employees, and alumni are helping lead the charge of vetting and assigning applicants where they are needed most.

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### CSU, Chico Rises to Support Campus and Greater Community Directly Impacted by the Camp Fire

SEAN MURPHY \* NOVEMBER 14, 2018

Chico State is working to understand and address the impact of current wildfires on the heart of its institution—students, faculty, and staff—as well as provide mutual aid to emergency responders.

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### The Rise of Megafires

ASHLEY GEBB \* NOVEMBER 5, 2018

As wildfires grow faster, larger, and more deadly every day, alumni and faculty share professional and personal perspectives on what's happening, why, and how we can respond.

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Jason Halley / University Photographer

## TEACHERS HELP TEACHERS COLOR CLASSROOMS WITH LOVE

ASHLEY GEBB • DECEMBER 5, 2018

ALL STORIES CAMP FIRE NEWS PHILANTHROPY

Sifting through piles of school supplies, Aleece Feldhaus found the calendar she needed for her classroom. It would go perfectly with the stand she bought for her first year of teaching.

That's when it all rushed back, all at once.

The stand was gone. So was the alphabet line she had tacked up years ago, the mural she lovingly painted on her classroom wall, and every other artifact she used to inspire and educate her special education students. The Camp Fire had taken it all.

Watching footage of burning Paradise Elementary School, run in loops on the news, gave Feldhaus (English, '10) recurring heartbreak. And with every day that passes, she remembers something else that she loved, that her students loved, that has been reduced to ashes.

On Saturday, Butte County teachers and Chico State students who aspire to become educators joined forces to give Feldhaus and others a fresh start on rebuilding their classrooms. As she selected new supplies at Hooker Oak Elementary, she found herself hopeful for one of the first times since the fire.

"It's really emotional to me because it represents the routine, the routine we can all go back to," Feldhaus said. "Everyone is so sweet and helpful and ready to give. What we want to do for our students is what people are doing for us."

Alumni Monica Brown (Liberal Studies, '03), a transitional kindergarten teacher at Hooker Oak, and Amy Niess (Liberal Studies, '99), a fifth-grade teacher at Fairview Elementary in Orland, came up with the concept to Color a Classroom with Love two weeks ago. They imagined a supply drive to restock essentials and other enriching items Paradise teachers lost in the fire to ensure they have at least some tools to support their thousands of displaced students when school resumed this Monday.



"The teachers' village sticks together," — Monica Brown (center), who spearheaded the supply drive Paradise fire victims with Amy Niess (left).

"It takes years to build a classroom into essentially a second home," Niess said. "I thought something has to help them. They are going to come in with nothing, and they have lost so much. Let's take one worry away."

She and Brown [put the request on social media](#), looking for donations of supplies and funds to get new classrooms off the ground. The first flyer was shared more than 1,000 times. The second flyer, with a link to an Amazon Wish List, was shared more than 7,000 times.



Personalized notes were written for many items purchased through Amazon, expressing condolences and hope for Paradise teachers.

Within days, donations began pouring in to Hooker Oak School, each delivery between 20 and 100 boxes, multiple times a day. Their origins were from across the country—including Ohio, New York, Nebraska, and Maine—as well as gifts from Italy, England, and Bermuda.

By Saturday, the Hooker Oak gymnasium was bursting with crayons and glue sticks, notebooks and dictionaries, new backpacks and child-size chairs. A stream of teachers led into the school's double doors, each patiently waiting for a tag on which to write their name and grade level. Hugs and tears repeated themselves in cycles.

"We've seen a lot of crying," Brown said, noting she witnessed expressions of joy to be reunited, and also sadness with every

realization of something else taken by the flames.

Teachers with a few years or decades of experience lost items ranging from stuffed animals that young students practice reading out loud with to carpets colored with a map of the United States. Also gone are simple, critical supplies like glue, colored pencils, and tactile shapes that they purchased themselves to augment lessons despite diminished state funding.

"I had one of those! Can we have that?" Feldhaus exclaimed, as one of her teaching assistants pulled a number line from a stack. She grinned as she also spotted notebooks that matched those she used to have, textbook-sized whiteboards, and folders for students' reading lessons.



Aleece Feldhaus searches for items to replace those she has built up over years of teaching, all of which was lost in the Camp Fire.

Aiding teachers in their shopping sprees were 25 aspiring educators from Chico State's School of Education, all wearing Wildcats Rise T-shirts.

Junior Liz Arevalo, who is majoring in liberal studies and aspires to teach kindergarten one day, checked people in and told them what to expect and where to find items for their grade level. She served as a personal shopper for a few, helping navigate the overwhelming outpouring of generosity aisle by aisle.

"There were tears and a lot of smiles, which I think is really important right now," she said. "We can all use a smile."

Knowing she will eventually have her own classroom and thinking of all the care her teachers poured into their spaces over the years, fostering her own passion for education, Arevalo was driven to give back.

"This is my community. I grew up in Chico. I live on the Skyway and I saw all those [evacuees] coming down," she said. "It hurts. You are used to fires in California but it's here. This is our home."



Keaton Kirkpatrick picked out backpacks to fill with supplies for students, who, like their teachers' losing their classrooms, had lost their school supplies in the fire.

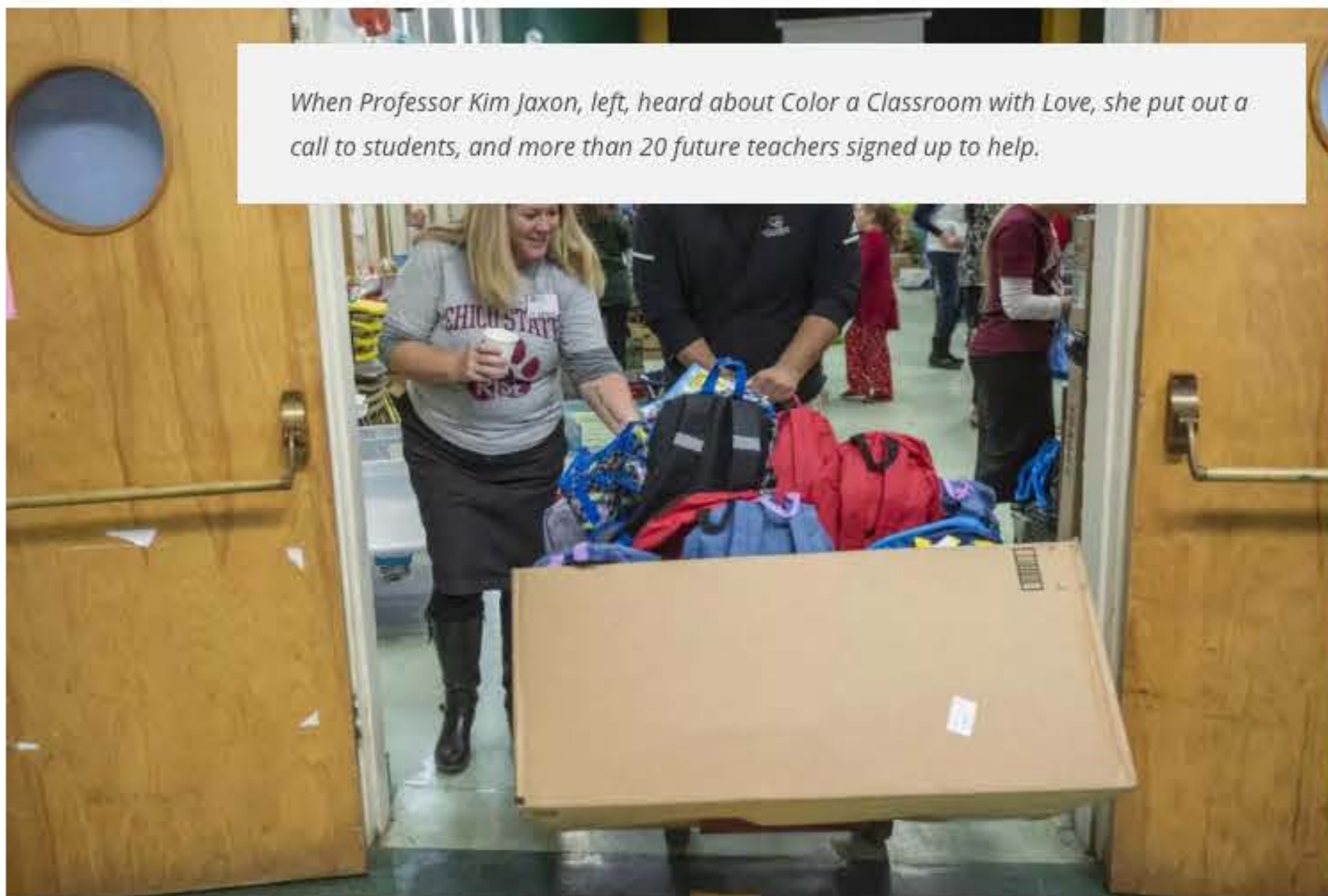
Keaton Kirkpatrick restocked tables, and whenever he saw someone struggling, he asked how he could help, whether it was searching out a certain item or filling backpacks for students who also had lost all their supplies. A graduate student pursuing his master's in English and aspiring to become a professor, he said it doesn't matter what you teach—educators all share a common thread.

"I can't begin to imagine the loss," he said. "I can't imagine losing [your classroom] on top of so much more. To help someone through [something] that unimaginable is all we want to do."

Cries of "Good luck!" and "One day at a time!" bid the teachers goodbye as they pulled away from the

school curb, their cars stuffed solid with scissors and erasers, flashcards and foam numbers, board games and backpacks. Plans are in the works to create an Adopt a Classroom program to continue giving these teachers and their students what they need to have a rich educational environment. Details will be posted on [their Facebook page](#).

"We want to continue giving support, not just next week but into next year," Niess said. "We want these kids to have a sense of normalcy again. Our thoughts are always on how we can help our students."



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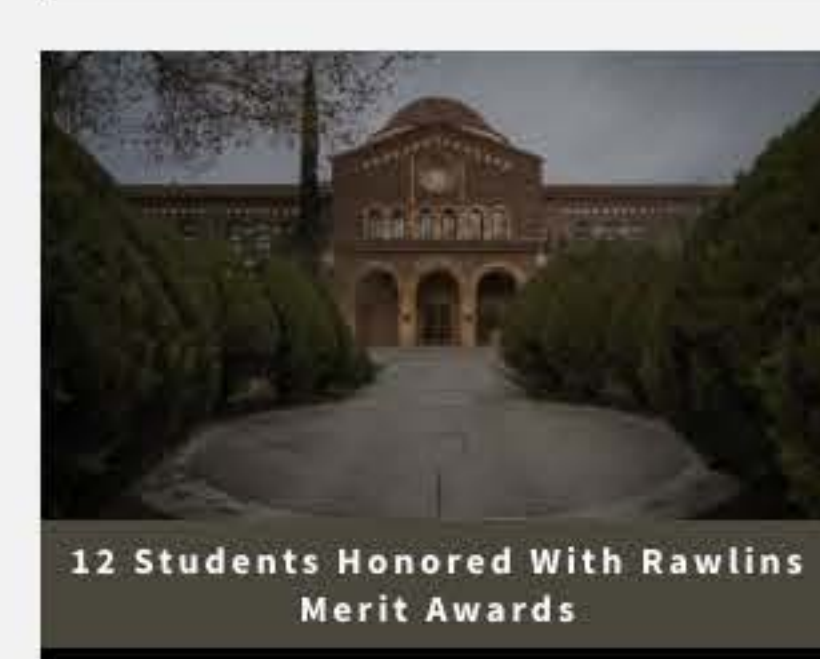
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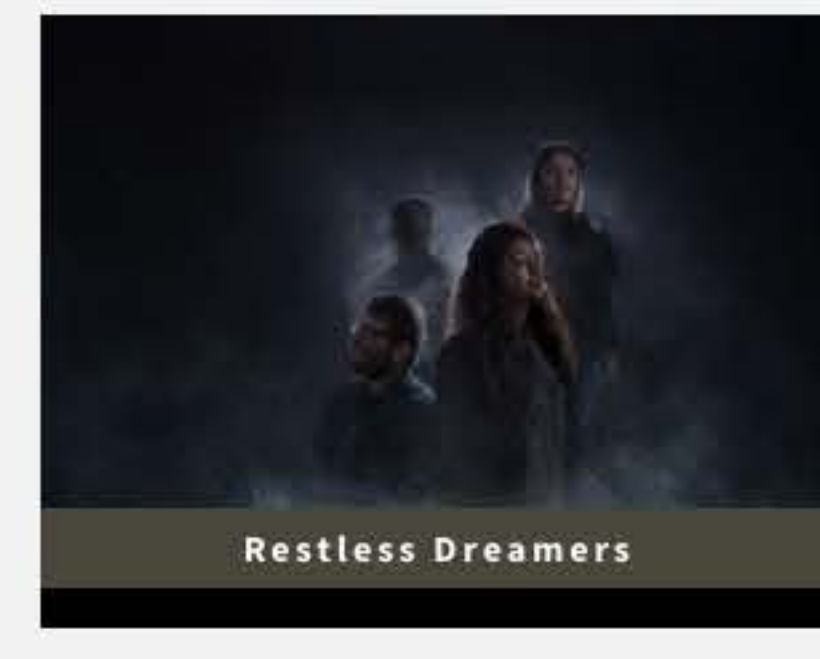


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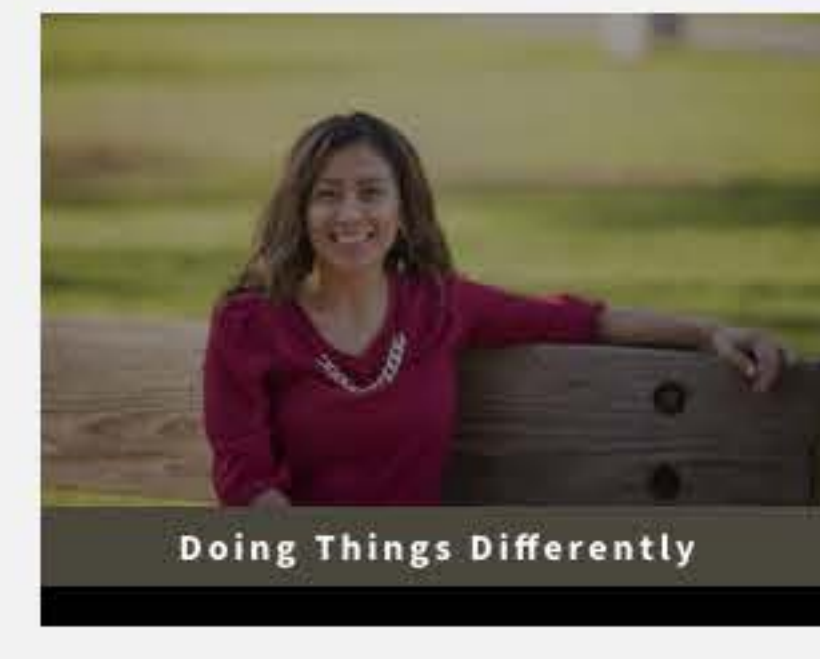
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Doing Things Differently



### ASHLEY GEBB

Ashley Gebb (BA, Journalism, '08) is publications editor at CSU, Chico. She produces the University's signature magazine, Chico Statements, the campus newsletter, Inside Chico State, and the annual pride point booklet, Experience Excellence.





Jason Halley / University Photographer

## CREATING COMFORT AND ORDER OUT OF CHAOS

ASHLEY GEBB ■ NOVEMBER 23, 2018

ALL STORIES CAMP FIRE NEWS PEOPLE PHILANTHROPY UNIVERSITY NEWS

When Kallie Griffin and Bella Engbretson arrived at East Avenue Church on the morning of November 9, they were met with understandable chaos.

East Avenue Church was just one of dozens of shelters—official or otherwise—that had popped up across several counties to support the tens of thousands of people who were displaced by the Camp Fire, the deadliest and most devastating blaze in California history. Three nurses from Feather River Hospital and a paramedic were doing their best to triage 200 or so patients, but they clearly needed help.

"I knew how to do basic triage but I don't have any skills," Griffin said. "Then I realized no one was in charge. They were all writing on scratch pieces of paper. It was like, woah, this is not sustainable for people who are going to be here for an unpredictable amount of time."



Chico State students Hannah Weiglein, Kelsey Taylor, and Kallie Griffin were part of a team of many Chico State students who took over leadership at East Avenue Church to help care for and track evacuees.

Griffin, a cellular and molecular biology major, and Engbretson, a psychology major, decided to do what they could to improve patient care. The shelter needed at least a rudimentary system of logging patients, supporting their medication needs, and tracking what was taking place.

So, the students created an electronic medical records system using Google Docs, establishing a log of each evacuee with first and last names, date of birth, allergies, medications, and conditions. They also created a prescription ordering system to get refills quickly at nearby pharmacies.

"The government aid didn't come for days after. ... If no one had stepped up, if the shelter had not opened, there may have been people who would

have died," Griffin said. "All these people had chronic illness like asthma, uncontrolled diabetes, high blood pressure. We needed to get them their medication as soon as possible."

Other Chico State students soon joined them or created similar systems at other pop-up shelters. Quick to decline any outpourings of gratitude, Griffin and Engbretson humbly acknowledge they were part of the frontline of making sure evacuees were cared for in the days after the Camp Fire's wrath began.

Engbretson, who works at the Student Health Center and as a teaching assistant for a campus lab, said she drew on the expertise and empathy she has witnessed in faculty and staff to take on a leadership role and serve her community in a time of need.

"I go to work every day and I see these people I work with helping other people," Engbretson said. "There was no question if I was going to volunteer, it was just finding a place. It was instinctual."

Seated at the shelter's medical command center in the church gymnasium, the students typed away on laptops to update information as, just feet away, evacuees laid on mattresses and donated bedding in their temporary home. A wall of medical supplies behind them, the team gradually transitioned into other duties: overseeing signups for volunteer staffing, raising money through a GoFundMe, and working with state and other agencies to orchestrate tents and other imperative supplies.



Like many of her peers, Hannah Weiglein described her desire to serve her community as instinctual and brushed off expressions of gratitude for her efforts.

"It just felt like a duty. You have to be able to offer your skills in a time like this," Griffin said. "I couldn't leave. I wanted to be there."

Her parents, faculty members Michael and Amy Griffin, felt the same, as did her boyfriend, Andrew Cobourn (Exercise Physiology, '17), who drove over from Nevada. While waiting to get into medical school, he works his winters with Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue, and when not helping with searches for human remains in the Paradise area, he too joined the East Avenue Church efforts.



Kallie Griffin surveys the dozens of tents where evacuees are staying behind East Avenue Church. She has volunteered at the shelter nearly every day since the fire began November 8.

"Once I saw how many people were there, I could not step away from it," he said. "They needed us."

A lot of the team's interactions in the initial days were checking people's vitals while asking the simple questions of "How are you doing?" and "What can I do for you?" Many evacuees, they said, wanted simply to share their stories.

"Some of my patients said they barely made it out. They saw their houses starting to burn as they drove away. Some of them were wearing pajamas because that's what they were wearing when they saw the flames," Cobourn said. "I don't think I have ever been in a situation before where people needed help so badly."

Cobourn, who interned at the Shalom Free Clinic while studying at Chico State, said helping vulnerable populations, especially those who struggle to access health care under normal conditions, is what drives his career aspirations, and this experience only affirmed that.

"These people are the poorest patients, they are the elderly, they are often the sickest patients, they have chronic conditions that need medication or care around the clock," he said. "These people need your help and no one else is going to give it to them, so you have to step up and be that person."

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ASHLEY GEBB

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## ONE RESPONSE



Susan Machin

November 29, 2018

This is wonderful! I stumbled on this great article while looking for help with finding housing of some kind for a friend who's home was destroyed. The elderly couple that she works for moved to Oroville. She could continue that job if she finds a place close enough. I thought there might be some rooms for rent in the campus area that wouldn't mind renting to someone other than a student. Do you know how I can help her find something?

## LATEST



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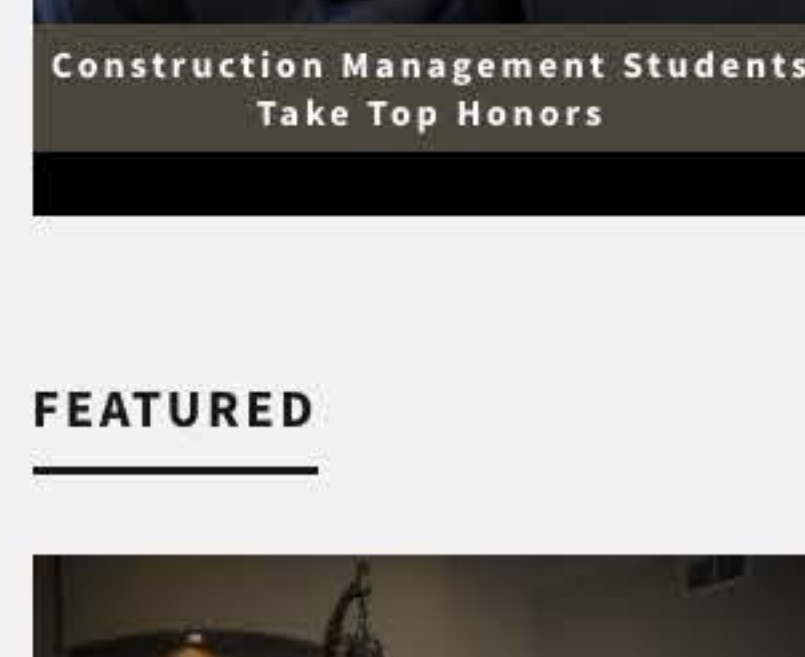
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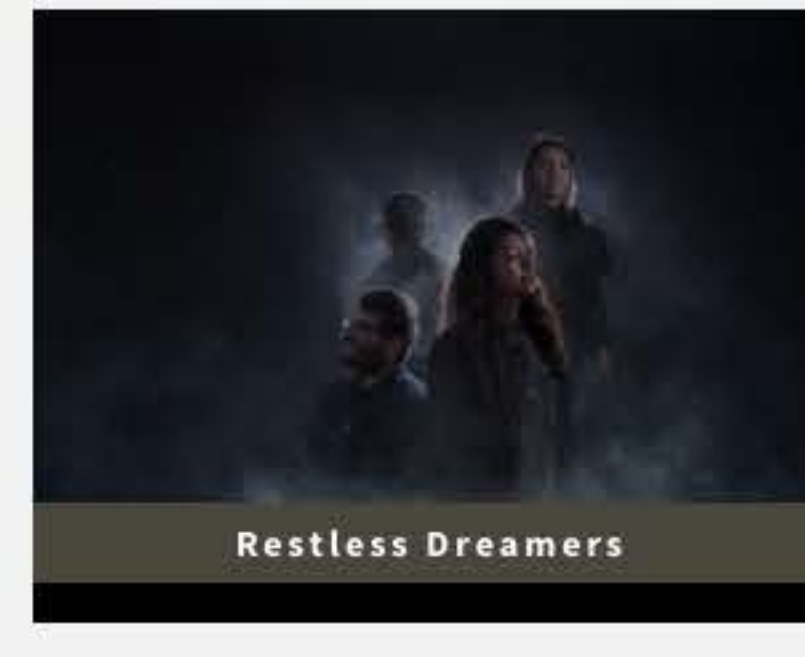


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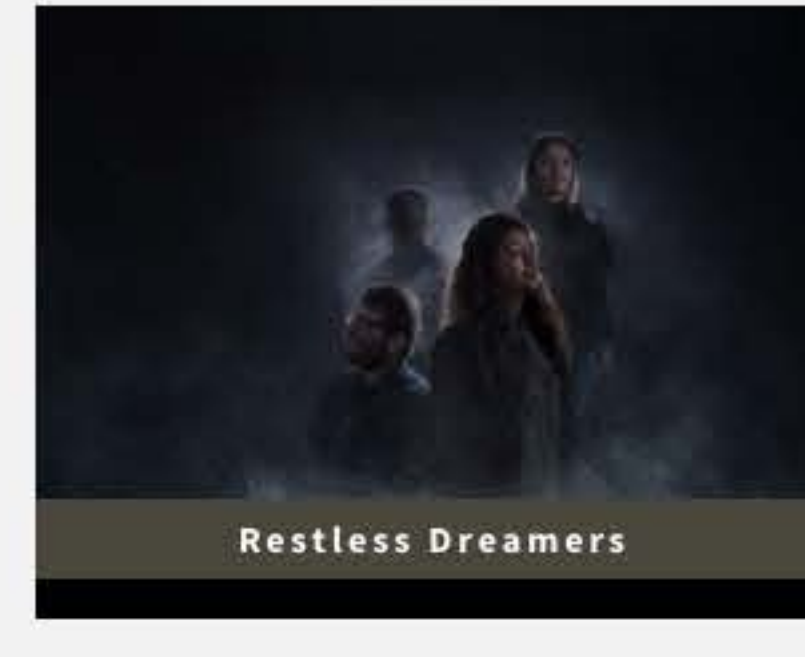


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