Transfer Among Rural Learners
TheRPGroup

ACTIONS FOR

UNIVERSITY PARTNERS

Expanding University Reach Into Rural Deserts

The RP Group's research on *Transfer Among Rural Learners* shows how four-year institutions can build intentional, cross-segment partnerships to bridge distance gaps and boost rural enrollment.

The research is clear: **Rural community college students are a vital talent pool limited by geographic isolation.**

3 Key Research Findings

Distance Multiplies Transfer Barriers

Living hours from the nearest public university creates severe logistical, financial, and informational hurdles that limit rural student transfer without direct outreach from universities.

Partnerships Drive Success

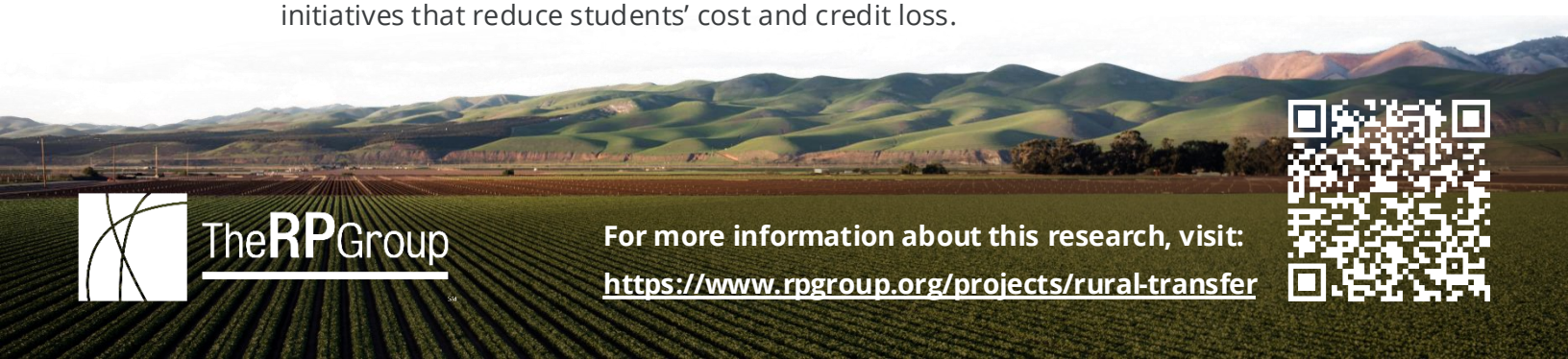
Strong transfer outcomes rely on formal institutional alliances—including tuition compacts, shared advising, and aligned major pathways—rather than student effort alone.

Rural Colleges Face Capacity Limits

State budget rules restrict operational spending and counseling hiring at rural colleges. These campuses depend on responsive, accessible university contacts to bridge advising gaps.

4 Steps University Partners Can Take Right Now

1. **Show Up Locally & Digitally:** Send admissions representatives directly to rural campuses whenever possible. Where travel isn't feasible, connect virtually using online campus tours, targeted transfer workshops, and remote advising sessions.
2. **Design Rural-Specific Onboarding Supports:** Create dedicated welcome resources, orientation sessions, and housing tools designed specifically to help rural transfer students navigate the geographic transition when moving away from home.
3. **Build Direct, Reliable Points of Contact:** Establish dedicated liaison roles and direct contact channels that rural community college counselors can easily reach to quickly resolve questions about articulation, financial aid, and transfer advising.
4. **Expand Regional Alliances & Pathway Guarantees:** Partner with rural colleges to establish major-to-major transfer pathways, regional tuition compacts, and joint advising initiatives that reduce students' cost and credit loss.



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For more information about this research, visit:
https://www.rpgroup.org/projects/rural-transfer