El Elefante in the Room: Perspectives on Dreamers and DACA-mented Students

Creating Dream Friendly Spaces, Build Relationships, Learn About Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, and Utilize National and State Resources
The Presenters

Gaby Baca,
BCTC Latino Outreach Coordinator
Kentucky Dream Coalition, Core Team Member

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United We Dream
Dream Educational Empowerment Program Coordinator
Our Organizations

- Kentucky Dream Coalition (KDC)
- DEEP
- UWD
Quiz:
10 Questions Every Ally Educator Should Answer

1. Can you name an undocumented or DACA-mented student enrolled at your school?
2. Can you name an undocumented or DACA-mented student who has graduated from your institution?
3. Can you name 3 scholarships available to Dreamers or DACA-mented students (National, regional, state-wide or local)?
4. Do you know your institution’s admission policy/process for undocumented or DACA-mented students?
5. Do you know your institution’s financial aid / scholarship policy and process for undocumented students? Do you allow them to apply?
6. Do you know how to support a citizen/eligible non-citizen child of an undocumented immigrant parent through the financial aid process?
7. Can you name more than one staff/faculty member on campus who is the “go to” person for immigrant student support including undocumented or DACA-mented students?
8. Can undocumented immigrants access GED/Adult Basic Education programs at your agency / in your state?
9. Can you name the undocumented youth-led organization or immigrant rights organization in your community or state?
10. What is your immigrant student success rate? Is your institution measuring enrollment, retention and graduation rates of immigrant students / undocumented students?
Status 101: Definitions of common immigration status

Undocumented
Dreamer
DACA
DACA-mented
Mixed Status Family
U-Visa
T-Visa
International Student
Refugee
Asylee
LPR: Legal Permanent Resident
TPS
Intersectionality of Identities

"I don't want US to be interrupted by the U.S. So we will love past the borders that Amerika put in front of us."
-Sonia

"I cannot believe that we have to go through this struggle even though he has served this country and has put his life at risk for years. What keeps us strong is our love."
-Fanny

"I know we're brown girl lovers all the way but we're not white people haters (all the time)."
-One of Prema's favorite quote
No reliable estimation regarding the number of undocumented immigrant youth in Kentucky.

DACA Statistics as of August 2013 for KY:

- 2,118 applications have been accepted from KY
- 1,633 individuals have been approved for DACA

Approx. 2.5 million total undocumented youth

80,000 become 18 years of age each year

65,000 graduate from HS each year

5-10% enroll in college each year

1-3% graduate college
## Current Political Context for Immigrant Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DREAM under Senate Bill “S.744”</th>
<th>DREAM under House Proposal “Kids Act”</th>
<th>Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No age gap</td>
<td>Proposed to have an age gap</td>
<td>$465 filing fee (biometrics and application)</td>
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<td>Five years to citizenship</td>
<td>Only for students who meet the chosen qualifications</td>
<td>Protected from deportation for 2 years</td>
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<td>DACA streamlining</td>
<td>No pathway for citizenship for parents</td>
<td>Subject to renewal</td>
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<td>Allows some deported Dreamer’s to return to U.S. on RPI status</td>
<td>Longer pathway to citizenship for Dreamer’s</td>
<td>Provided with a work authorization permit. allows grantees to apply for SSN#</td>
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<tr>
<td>Access to loans and work study</td>
<td></td>
<td>Establishes lawful presence</td>
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<td>Dreamers not required to pay fines</td>
<td></td>
<td>In some states drivers licenses are granted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lenient expectation to higher Ed.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Residence</td>
<td>Entrance</td>
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<td>Came to U.S. before 16th birthday</td>
<td>Continuously resided in U.S. since June 15, 2007, up to the present time</td>
<td>Entered without inspection before June 15, 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Must also be at least 15 years or older unless you are currently in removal proceedings or have a final removal or voluntary departure order</td>
<td>Physically present in U.S. on June 15, 2012 &amp; when requesting consideration of deferred action w/ USCIS</td>
<td>-OR-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; age of 31 as of June 15, 2012</td>
<td>-OR-</td>
<td>Lawful immigration status expired as of June 15, 2012</td>
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**DACA 1 Year Anniversary**

- **537,662 applications** were accepted for review between August 2012 and June 30, 2013
  - Nearly 75 percent (400,562) were approved
  - 1 percent (5,383) were denied

- Of the **1.9 million DACA-eligible population**
  - 57% (1.09 million) currently meet DACA’s age and education criteria
  - 22% (423,000) meets the age requirements, but not education requirements
  - 21% (392,000) are children who could be eligible once they turn 15

**Ally practitioners have the potential of serving and ensuring that 815,000 (43%) of the 1.9 million undocumented immigrants who would benefit from DACA, benefit!**
DACA’s 1 Year Anniversary

- Reasons why youth have not have applied to DACA
  - Lack of information or misinformation about the program
  - Accessing adult education and other qualifying education programs;
  - Lack of educational enrollment
  - Rural communities-transportation
  - Lack of funds for the $465 application fee
  - Proof of continuous presence-school records
Resources for DACA

- Text "OWNIT" to 877877
- www.weownthedream.org (online screening tool)
- (855) DREAM-31
- DACA Fee “Scholarships” http://www.dreamactivist.org/deferred-action/daca-scholarship/
### DACA/Worker Rights: A process of transition

**Before DACA**
- Some worked with fake SSN#
- Some were afraid of standing up to workplace discrimination etc. due to fear of deportation/job loss
- No real job security
- Limited job opportunities
- Some couldn’t obtain a state ID or drivers license
- Filed taxes with ITIN
- Could have been using a different name

**DACAmented**
- Alignment of name, SSN#, and no fear of deportation (self)
- Questions on how to fill out:
  - W-9, W-4, I-9 forms
- What is included/does it mean to have health/benefits?
- Starting or transferring credit history to new SSN#
- Applying for a Credit Card (s)
- What are my worker’s rights?
- Applying for: driver’s license, insurance, private loans
Comparison of Benefits and Rights based on immigration status:

  Health Care for DACA grantees-NILC (PDF) [http://www.nilc.org/acadacafaq.html](http://www.nilc.org/acadacafaq.html)
- [Got DACA, now what?](http://www.e4fc.org/images/E4FC_GOTTDACA.pdf)
- [DACA and Workplace Rights:](http://www.nilc.org/dacaworkplacerights.html)
• DACA is not the DREAM Act.
• It is not a law.
• DACA recipients cannot get federal or state financial aid.
• DACA is temporary (2 years) and may be renewed so long as the program is not eliminated.
• In KY, DACA recipients can get a driver’s license*
• Ineligible for Medicaid, CHIP, and ACA benefits.

CAUTION! Understanding DACA
Per CPE policy KRS 13:0245 Section 8:

An undocumented student who graduates from a Kentucky high school can enroll at Kentucky colleges/universities as in-state residents for tuition purposes.

Undocumented students and DACA-mented students are not eligible for KEES, CAP or any other state financial aid.

They may be eligible for institutional scholarships.
Ally Network Collective Goals:
1) Educational Equality
2) Legislative Reform
3) Raise Consciousness & Awareness
4) Develop Resources

Role of Community Partners
- Leverage community resources not under institutional guidelines
- Provide direct services and advising

Role of Practitioner Allies
- Leverage their social and professional roles to advocate educational resources for undocumented students
- Counsel/encourage student goals

Role of Undocumented Students
- Hold institutions accountable
- Counter narratives & student representation
- Student activism and organizing

Source: Chuan-Ru Chen, A., Doctoral Candidate, UCLA
Department of Education
The Atmosphere

Safe Spaces must be welcoming environments that undocumented youth and their families can easily recognize even if they have never met the staff or volunteers working in the office.

**On your door:** Display UWD Safe Space Symbol

**On your walls:** Display posters from movement or post news articles in support of DREAM efforts

**On your bookshelves:** Include titles like
- *We Are Americans* (Perez, 2011),
- *Americans at Heart* (Perez, 2012),
- publications from UCLA IDEAS like *Underground Undergrads* and *Undocumented and Unafraid*

**On your face:** Meet each student and their family with a smile. Never assume anything about their status. If they open up to you, be sensitive and understanding. Listen before you speak.
# The Language

## Talking to Undocumented Students about Sensitive Subjects

*by Katharine Gin*  
*(biography on page 20)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What NOT to Say</th>
<th>What to Say</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Going to college isn't really an option for you.</td>
<td>Going to college is going to be difficult for you, but it is possible. Thousands of other talented, hard-working undocumented students have already graduated from college.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You're not going to be able to get any money for college.</td>
<td>You're not eligible for most forms of government financial aid. However, you might be eligible for in-state tuition, and there are some private scholarships you can apply for.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why don't you just legalize?</td>
<td>Have you talked to an immigration attorney to find out if you can legalize? There may be immigration remedies that you and your family don't know about already.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Even if you get a college degree, you're never going to be able to work legally.</td>
<td>Getting a college degree isn't going to change your immigration status, but it will open up many opportunities for you once you're able to legalize. The DREAM Act is a proposed federal bill that will give many undocumented students a path towards citizenship if they graduate from high school and go on to college. Because of strong bipartisan support in Congress and support from President Obama, the DREAM Act is very likely to pass in the near future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why don't you go back home and get a degree?</td>
<td>If you have family and connections in another country outside the United States, it might make sense for you to consider pursuing educational opportunities elsewhere. Remember, however, that you would be separated from your family in the U.S., and you could be barred from returning for 10 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In order to apply to college, you're going to have to reveal everything.</td>
<td>In order to apply to college, you're going to have to be honest about your immigration status. At first this may seem scary to you and your family. Remember that federal law (specifically FERPA) will protect your privacy and prevent colleges from releasing your information unless under court order.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Key Actions

- Educate yourself and build your DREAM knowledge.

- Educate your colleagues and your administration.

- Be careful to not make assumptions about a student’s identity. Do not pry information or details from student. Let them open up to you in their own time.

- Form a network with other allies to share resources, ideas and resolve difficult conflicts/situations. Maintain an updated list of supportive contacts who are willing to supports students as educational or professional mentors.

- Be trustworthy. A student’s story is not yours to share unless you get permission. If you do share a student’s story be respectful.

- Have courage. Address those that spread misinformation and question policies and process that limit students.

- Integrate DREAM friendly information, resources and speakers in your events, programming and services.

- Maintain consistent office hours and create a system for youth and their families to be able to contact you in case of a crisis.

- Connect to the local immigrant youth led or immigrant rights organization in your area.

- Display art, posters, news articles, books, etc. in your office space.
 Identify at least one staff member who will be the “go-to” counselor for immigrant students
 Whenever possible, provide direct, authentic language access to parents
 Consistency and trust
 Frame educational pursuits as investments that provide opportunity for the student, family and their community
 Make no assumptions about ethnicity, race, status, etc.
 Be prepared to answer tough questions
 Inform other high school educators of financial aid /higher education access opportunities
 Raise awareness on campus.

The Immigrant Friendly College Counselor
UndocuHealth: Serving the mental health needs of undocumented immigrants

- Overcoming feelings of hopelessness
- Anxiety over deportation/family separation
- Financial stress and burden
- Societal impact/internalized stereotypes
- Fear of sharing status
- Pressure of hiding (could be dependent of culture)
- Depression and thought of suicide is far more common among undocumented youth than we think
- Self hate self blame for status
- Anger at the privileges that other people have
- Placing limitations on self based on those of society
Join New Futuro!

www.newfuturo.com

This site has student and parent resources for college in English and Spanish! Check it out!
Scholarships

Other options to consider:

• Explore payment plan options

• Alternative fundraising ideas:
  • ChipIn
  • Support Letters
  • Fun stuff!

• Be creative!
Living Out Loud is an anthology of writing from the Latino Outreach Leaders (LOL) of Lexington, Kentucky. These texts reflect the LOL students’ viewpoints of growing up Latino in the U.S. Southeast, a relatively new receiving area for Latin American immigrants. Their writings illustrate the complexities of voices writing from their lived experiences as los nuevos Kentuckianos. Proceeds from sales fund scholarships for youth who cannot access financial aid.


Organizations & Agencies

- Best practices
- Data
- Resource guides
- Tips
Knowledge is the first step for us all...
Gracias!

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