

DREAMING BIG:

What Community Colleges Can Do to Help Undocumented Immigrant Youth Achieve Their Potential



The Community College Consortium for Immigrant Education

The Community College Consortium for Immigrant Education (CCCIE) is a national network of 23 community colleges and other professional and research organizations that have joined forces to increase educational and workforce opportunities for immigrant students. CCCIE's mission is to 1) increase national awareness of the role of community colleges in immigrant education and 2) support the work of community colleges to strengthen and expand services for immigrant students including English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction, college readiness, college completion, career readiness, and employment and advancement. We believe that ensuring educational access and success for immigrants and children of immigrants is critical to increasing U.S. college completion and workforce readiness.

National in scope, CCCIE receives its major financial support from the J.M. Kaplan Fund and is supported and hosted by Westchester Community College in Valhalla, New York. CCCIE's work is guided by a Blue Ribbon Panel of community college leaders and experts in the field of immigrant education. Our key activities include: raising national visibility of immigrant education challenges and opportunities, sharing promising practices, and providing advocacy and outreach on critical education and career issues that impact immigrants at all skill levels.

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Contact us!

CCCIE is eager to expand its membership and share resources to strengthen and expand programs for immigrant students. We invite your comments and feedback to this report and encourage you to join our mailing list, connect with an expert, share your resources, or submit a promising practice for review. Visit our website at www.cccie.org or contact us directly at info@cccie.org. We can connect you with the people and programs that can help start or advance a community college initiative to increase opportunities for immigrant students.

2012-2013 Blue Ribbon Panel Members

Alamo Community College District, TX
American Association of Community Colleges, D.C.
Bluegrass Community and Technical College, KY
Bunker Hill Community College, MA
City College of San Francisco, CA
City University of New York, NY
Johnson County Community College, KS
LaGuardia Community College, NY
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Miami Dade College, FL
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Montgomery College, MD
National Community College Hispanic Council, CA
Northern Virginia Community College, VA
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Rio Hondo College, CA
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by Jill Casner-Lotto

Community College Consortium for Immigrant Education

September 2012

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The findings and recommendations expressed in this report are those of the Community College Consortium for Immigrant Education and do not necessarily reflect the views of the J.M. Kaplan Fund.

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Executive Summary

Community colleges have traditionally served as the gateway into higher education for the majority of undocumented students.ⁱ They play an increasingly pivotal role in ensuring access to post-secondary educational opportunities for these young people, and particularly those who may be encouraged to further their education under the new Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy, announced by the Obama administration this past June. DACA allows eligible undocumented immigrant youth temporary relief from deportation and the potential ability to work legally in the United States, provided they meet certain educational and other requirements. As such, the new deferred action program offers a powerful incentive for high school students to stay in school, and it also means that many will be able to access community colleges with less anxiety and increased optimism for their future. Additionally, those who receive employment authorization will have the ability to work openly to support their educational costs.

The administration's deferred action policy represents only a temporary solution. It does not provide the educational or military service to legal status that the DREAM Act would provide. However, it still represents a major breakthrough for undocumented youth who can, for the first time, obtain a reprieve from deportation *and* work legally. The Migration Policy Institute estimates that as many as 1.76 million unauthorized young immigrants could gain relief from deportation under the new policy.ⁱⁱ

At this critical juncture, community colleges must better understand the challenges of this growing student population and be prepared to assist them as they learn about college, enroll, and pursue their education. Several colleges that belong to the Community College Consortium for Immigrant Education (CCCIE) partner actively with K-12 schools, immigrant youth-led organizations and immigrant advocacy coalitions, community organizations, and four-year colleges to increase educational access and attainment for immigrant students regardless of their status. CCCIE plays a critical role in leveraging the strengths of community colleges by connecting them with one another and with other key stakeholders. As a national voice and advocate for immigrant education, the Consortium is committed to sharing the promising practices and recommendations in this report to assist community colleges and their partners as they respond to the new deferred action policy and improve their ability to serve their growing undocumented student population.

Overview of the Report

This report highlights the latest federal and state measures to increase postsecondary educational access for undocumented students, including in-state tuition and financial aid policies; describes the challenges facing undocumented students in accessing and completing higher education; illustrates the return on investment related to serving undocumented students; and offers community colleges recommendations and promising practices in five critical areas:

- 1) increasing college access
- 2) making college affordable through financial assistance
- 3) supporting college readiness and success
- 4) offering alternatives for adult learners
- 5) improving college retention and completion

ⁱ Flores, S.M. "State Dream Acts: The Effect of In-State Resident Tuition Policies and Undocumented Latino Students." *Review of Higher Education*, 33:239–83, 2010

ⁱⁱ Batalova, J. and Mittelstadt, M. *Relief from Deportation: Demographic Profile of the DREAMers Potentially Eligible under the Deferred Action Policy*. Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, August 2012.

Undocumented students have emerged as effective role models, mentors, and advocates for change on college campuses and in their communities. Colleges are collaborating with student organizations often led by undocumented immigrant youth to raise awareness, build trust, and increase resources for undocumented students. Student-led organizations are playing a key role in organizing information sessions and workshops to help individuals understand the new DACA policy, connect them with legal expertise, and assist eligible students apply for deferred action and work permits.

Key Recommendations to Support Undocumented Students:

1. Increase College Access

- Develop a coordinated outreach plan with immigrant youth-led organizations, immigrant advocacy coalitions, and other community-based organizations to build trust and help undocumented students learn about accessing the community college system
- Strengthen the K-12 pipeline to engage undocumented students, parents, teachers, and counselors and facilitate transition to community college
- Recruit undocumented students as community ambassadors and student role models
- Develop online sites that promote programs and resources for undocumented students
- Promote dual enrollment in high school and college courses as a cost-saving college preparation strategy

2. Make College Affordable Through Financial Assistance

- Assist in finding and applying for available scholarship resources
- Increase college and private fundraising for scholarship opportunities
- Adopt institutional funding for scholarship-based internships

3. Support College Readiness and Success

- Designate staff responsible for advising undocumented students
- Provide professional development to college personnel about unique challenges facing undocumented students and resources to help them
- Engage parents and keep them involved during the college experience

4. Offer Alternatives for Adult Learners

- Connect adult education and community college systems through partnerships and case management
- Adopt ABE-ESL bridge courses, career pathways, and online learning to support adult students

5. Improve College Retention and Completion

- Promote campus safe zones and empower immigrant students as leaders
- Provide a continuum of support services to promote the academic, social, and emotional well-being of undocumented students
- Organize campus-wide events to build institutional awareness and support for undocumented students
- Facilitate transfer to four-year colleges and the workplace

Community colleges cited in this report include:

Bluegrass Community and Technical College

Lexington, KY

City College of San Francisco

San Francisco, CA

Johnson County Community College

Overland Park, KS

Miami Dade College

Miami, FL

Palm Beach State College

Lake Worth, FL

Renton Technical College

Renton, WA

Rio Hondo College

Whittier, CA

South Texas College

McAllen, TX

Westchester Community College

Valhalla, NY

Wilbur Wright College

Chicago, IL

Conclusion

Community colleges have been at the forefront in promoting increased educational access and attainment for undocumented youth, through their own institutional policies and through their support of state and federal DREAM Act legislation. Though they face challenges in the current legal, fiscal, and political environment, community colleges are committed to serving undocumented immigrant youth and recognize their educational success contributes to economic growth and social vibrancy and is vital to reaching our national college completion goals. The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program represents a historic milestone that raises hopes for eventual passage of DREAM Act legislation and broader immigration reform. The policy may also encourage many more undocumented students to access and enroll in community colleges. Community colleges must be prepared.

This report represents a significant step in profiling the exemplary practices of community colleges that are improving the educational prospects of undocumented students. Through its efforts to disseminate these promising practices, post web resources, provide technical assistance, and forge critical relationships among key stakeholders, CCCIE will continue to build resources that support community colleges as they help undocumented immigrant youth achieve their potential.

Introduction

For Alexis Meza, who graduated from Bluegrass Community and Technical College and now attends the University of Kentucky, the Obama administration's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals policy means she is one step closer to her dream of pursuing a career in arts administration and building on her passion for music and art as a tool to empower youth in her community. The new policy allows eligible undocumented immigrant youth temporary relief from deportation and the ability to apply for work authorization in the United States. As the co-founder of the Kentucky Dream Coalition, a broad-based immigrant youth network that advocates for the DREAM Act and helps immigrant youth access higher education, Meza recognizes that the new policy, while not the DREAM Act, has the potential to help others like herself pursue their education and careers and actively contribute to greater society.

In several ways, Meza is representative of the many young so-called DREAMers who are overcoming the odds to finish high school and continue on to college. But, unfortunately, there are many, many more who are not. There are approximately 1 million undocumented children under the age of 18 residing in the U.S, according to the Pew Hispanic Center.¹ The Urban Institute estimates that one-fifth to one-sixth of undocumented students drop out of high school each year. As a result, only about 65,000 undocumented children who have lived in the U.S. for five years or longer graduate from high school annually, and only 5 to 10 percent go on to college.²

What does Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Mean for Community College Access?

Before June 15th, 2012, when the new deferred action policy was announced, many undocumented youth, despite their hard work and motivation, faced limited prospects for continuing their education and preparing for careers. Across the nation, the news that the government's new policy would, in effect, give them that chance, was met with excitement among numerous immigrant youth advocacy groups. For years, these young people in communities and on college campuses nationwide have pushed and demonstrated vigorously for relief from deportation and for much broader immigration reform and the DREAM Act. This latest win represents a testament to their exceptional organizational, advocacy, and social networking skills, and it has also renewed their commitment to push for the DREAM Act and federal immigration reform.

For many undocumented students and for the community colleges that serve them, the administration's directive represents only a temporary solution without the pathway to legal status and citizenship as the DREAM Act would provide. Nor does it address the financial barriers that many still face in the majority of states that have not adopted laws or policies allowing certain undocumented students to qualify for in-state tuition and state financial aid. Nonetheless, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) represents a major breakthrough for eligible undocumented youth who can, for the first time, obtain a reprieve from deportation *and* work legally. Additionally, the new policy, with its educational requirements, offers a powerful incentive for high school students to stay in school and pursue further educational opportunities. It also means that many will be able to access community colleges with less anxiety and increased optimism for their future. Those who receive employment authorization will have the ability to work openly to support their educational costs.

Community colleges serve as the initial entry point into higher education for the majority of undocumented students.³ They play an increasingly pivotal role in ensuring access to postsecondary educational opportunities for these young people, and particularly those who may be encouraged to continue their education under the DACA policy. The Migration Policy Institute estimates that as many as 1.76 million unauthorized immigrants could gain relief from deportation as a result of DACA. Of that number, about 800,000 are currently in school (K-12); 390,000 have earned a high school diploma or GED as their terminal degree; 80,000 have a college degree (2-year or higher); and 140,000 are enrolled in college. Another 350,000 unauthorized young adult immigrants without a high school degree or GED could also potentially be eligible for relief from deportation if they meet the enrollment criteria.⁴

Learning from Experience

At this critical juncture, community colleges must better understand the challenges of this growing student population and be prepared to assist them as they learn about college, enroll, and pursue their education. Several colleges that belong to the Community College Consortium for Immigrant Education partner actively with schools, immigrant youth-led organizations and immigrant advocacy coalitions, community groups, faith-based organizations, and four-year colleges to increase higher educational access and attainment for immigrant students regardless of their status. Colleges are collaborating with these community partners to help undocumented youth prepare for college, connect to scholarship and internship opportunities, enroll in programs to advance their language and academic skills, facilitate their transfer to further education and, in a growing number of cases, prepare them for the workplace. CCCIE plays a critical role in leveraging the strengths of community colleges by connecting them with one another and with other key stakeholders. As a national voice and advocate for immigrant education, the Consortium is committed to sharing the promising practices and recommendations in this report to assist community colleges and their partners as they respond to the new deferred action policy and improve their ability to serve their growing undocumented student population.

This report:

- Highlights the latest federal and state measures to increase postsecondary educational access
- Describes the challenges facing undocumented students in accessing and completing higher education
- Illustrates the return on investment related to serving undocumented students
- Offers community colleges recommendations and promising practices in five critical areas:
 1. Increasing College Access—High school and community outreach
 2. Making College Affordable—Financial aid and scholarship assistance
 3. Supporting College Readiness and Success—Admissions, professional development for faculty and staff, and parental engagement
 4. Offering Alternatives for Adult Learners—Adult Basic Education (ABE)-English as a Second Language (ESL) bridge courses, career pathways, and online learning
 5. Improving College Retention and Completion—Supportive institutional cultures, comprehensive student services, and transition to four-year colleges and the workplace

Federal and State Measures to Increase Postsecondary Educational Access for Undocumented Students

At the Federal Level

Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act

First introduced in Congress in 2001, the DREAM Act, while drawing some bipartisan support in the past, has been the subject of intense debate over the past decade. The DREAM Act would provide eligible undocumented youth and young adults a pathway to citizenship through two years of college or a full term of service in the military. In December 2010 the DREAM Act passed in the House but did not have enough votes to overcome a filibuster in the Senate. Bills were reintroduced in May 2011 in the Senate (S. 952) and the House (H.R. 1842), and a Senate hearing was conducted in June 2011. Undocumented students, immigrant advocacy groups, educational associations, and college presidents testified before the Senate subcommittee in support of DREAM, but since that time the legislation has stalled.

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals

On June 15th the Department of Homeland Security announced the administration's decision to grant deferred action to eligible young immigrants who came to the U.S. as children. Under the new policy of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, undocumented youth and young adults are eligible to request temporary relief from deportation if they came to this country before they turned 16 and are younger than 31; were present in the U.S. on June 15th and continuously resided in the U.S. for at least five years prior; are currently in school, graduated from a U.S. high school, earned a GED, or have been honorably discharged from the military; have no criminal history; and entered the country without inspection or overstayed their visa prior to June 15, 2012. The policy allows qualified undocumented students to apply for a two-year tentatively renewable grant of "deferred action," meaning they will not be deported as long they meet the eligibility requirements.

Over the summer the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services provided more detail on the definition of "currently in school" to include enrollment in one of the following categories: public or private K-12 school; education, literacy, or career training program (including vocational training) that leads to placement in postsecondary education, job training, or employment; GED or GED preparation program. USCIS further specified that the "education, literacy, or career training programs include, but are not limited to, programs funded, in whole or in part, by federal or state grants. Programs funded by other sources may qualify if they are administered by providers of demonstrated effectiveness, such as institutions of higher education, including community colleges, and certain community-based organizations."⁵

Although the new policy does not grant lawful immigration status, eligible recipients may be able to obtain work permits, also tentatively renewable every two years. DACA does not apply to the parents or siblings of eligible youth. Students will still not have access to federal financial aid and their eligibility for in-state tuition, state financial aid, and driver's licenses will have to be determined on a state-by-state basis.

Administration officials and others have urged students to be aware of fraudulent immigration practitioners who want to take advantage of potential DACA beneficiaries. Another concern is GED fraud. While the new policy has created a surge of interest among those seeking to enroll in GED programs, it also has generated a wave of phony offers of quick online GEDs in exchange for an upfront payment—sometimes as much as \$4,000.

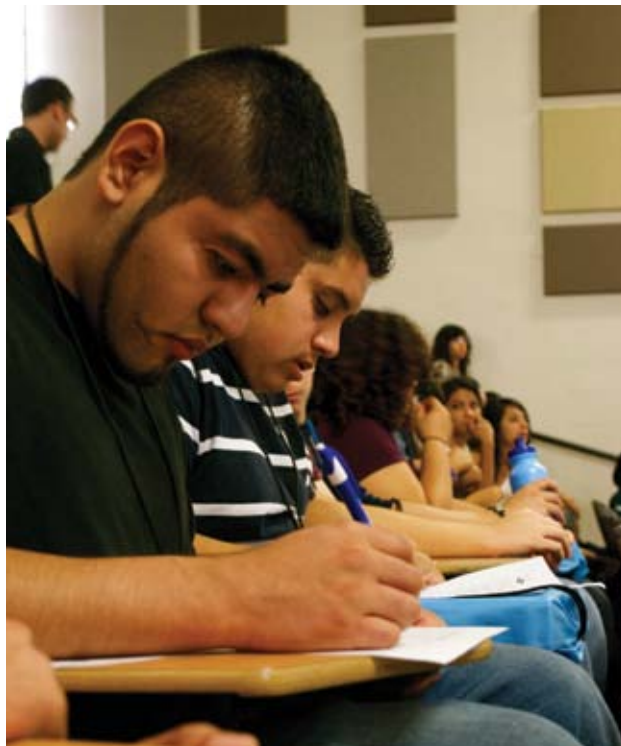
At the State Level

In-State Tuition and Financial Aid

All children, including undocumented, are entitled to attend public elementary and high schools in the United States. As such, many actively participate in the K-12 system. While there is no federal law preventing undocumented students from entering colleges and universities, many do not pursue higher education for several reasons. The biggest barrier is often financial, since undocumented students do not qualify for federal financial aid and, in most states, state aid. Many do attend community colleges, but even at these institutions, unless in-state tuition rates are granted and further financial assistance is available through private scholarships, higher education may remain an elusive goal.

Currently, undocumented students have access to in-state tuition in 15 states—13 which have passed legislation and two (Kentucky and Rhode Island) which have amended their postsecondary educational policies. While specific requirements vary from state to state, in general, students are eligible if they have attended high school for a specified number of years, graduated from a public high school in the particular state, and show proof they are seeking to legalize their immigration status. The National Immigration Law Center maintains an updated table listing state bills that address access to education for immigrant students at www.nilc.org/highered.html.

Only four states—California, Texas, New Mexico and Illinois—provide access to state financial aid. California's 2011 bill, known as DREAM Act II (AB 131), provides certain kinds of state-financed aid and will go into effect in 2013. California also offers state-administered private scholarships, while Illinois provides state aid consisting of scholarships funded entirely by private contributions. (See Appendix for the table summarizing the state laws and policies that increase educational opportunities for undocumented students.)



Challenges Undocumented Students Face in Accessing and Completing Higher Education

The lack of legal status prevents undocumented students from accessing many educational services and programs that are accessible to their U.S. born and documented immigrant peers. Undocumented students also face steep financial barriers. Since they do not have Social Security numbers, they are ineligible for all federal financial aid—grants, loans, and work study—and other federally funded programs intended to increase college access and retention among students from disadvantaged backgrounds. There are only a limited number of private scholarships available to students who lack legal status, thus making it extremely competitive for those who are academically qualified. And scholarships that are strictly merit-based make it nearly impossible for undocumented students with limited English language skills to compete effectively. Undocumented students have not been able to obtain driver’s licenses. Commuting to school can be problematic, particularly at college campuses located in rural communities where public transportation is sparse. Undocumented students also live in fear where there is heavy presence of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement personnel and when immigration raids occur in residential areas.

The inability to work legally or openly with decent wage and employment conditions has been a major barrier to accessing and completing higher education. Most undocumented students, even with college degrees, are forced to work without authorization in the labor market working in the services, agriculture, construction or manufacturing industries—often for very low pay and without any labor protections or benefits. When they do work and attempt to stay in school, many work excessively long hours to help support their families and struggle to keep up with their studies.

The 2010 Migration Policy Institute analysis of the potential beneficiaries of the DREAM Act indicated that only 38 percent—or 825,000—of the 2.1 million potentially eligible DREAM Act beneficiaries would likely gain permanent legal status. The study noted that many would face difficulties in meeting the legislation’s higher education or military service requirements because of hardship paying for college tuition, competing work and family demands, and low educational attainment and English proficiency. Among those with a high school or GED degree, the population that would be most ready to take the next step toward higher education, almost half (47 percent), were in low-income families.⁶

The fear of deportation and uncertainty about the future has characterized the lives of undocumented youth and their families. Many are not aware of their status—and the limitations it brings—until they graduate from high school or earlier when they apply for a part-time job or driver’s license. Those who pursue college may find out they are undocumented during the college application process. In any case, the recognition often comes as a shock, according to University of Chicago sociologist Roberto G. Gonzales, who studied in depth the experiences of 150 undocumented young adults. His research describes a period of significant disorientation for many undocumented youth, who must retool and reorient themselves for new adult lives... “a turbulent transition” with “profound implications for identity formation, friendship patterns, aspirations and expectations, and social and economic mobility.”⁷

The discovery of illegal status can be life changing, Gonzales notes, leading to “reactions of confusion, anger, frustration, and despair” and often causing students to reduce their interactions with teachers and peers for fear of being found out. These frustrations and fears and severing of support systems have caused many to withdraw, with detrimental effects on their progress during the last half of high school.⁸ A variety of factors, including depressed motivation, limited family finances, lack of information of how to move forward on an educational path, and lack of guidance when applying to college, can contribute to undocumented youth dropping out of school. Out of the 150 immigrants studied, only 31 had obtained four-year college or advanced degrees, yet most were under-employed, working in low-wage jobs like their parents. None had entered their dream careers that matched their educational training or skills.⁹

Many undocumented students point to their parents’ support and guidance as critical factors in their motivation to pursue educational opportunities.¹⁰ However, while many parents of undocumented students are supportive of their child’s pursuit of higher education, others may not be for a variety of reasons. Many parents lack the cultural, institutional and language-based knowledge to understand and guide their children through the education system. In addition, families often face significant financial challenges in order to get through day to day. Because of these challenges and conditions, parents may not know how or have the capacity to help their students move forward with their education. Students often take on a significant role in providing financial support for the family or taking care of siblings. These additional responsibilities may present a significant challenge if they were to leave home or focus on their education. In addition, there may be challenges when students want to leave home for school because the main duty of the parent has always been to protect their children, in particular, from immigration enforcement. Thus, in order to protect their children from the unknown, parents can sometimes act as barriers.

Keys to Success: Resilience and Supportive Relationships

Despite these challenges, Gonzales’ research on the undocumented students who were successful college goers illustrates the key factors that made a difference in their experiences: trusting relationships with teachers or other adults who provided valuable assistance and resources, access to information about postsecondary options, financial support for college, and lower levels of family responsibility.¹¹ Even though the college-educated youth ended up in the same kind of low-wage jobs as those with little education, it is important to understand these success factors—and how community college educators can make a difference—particularly now that DACA could significantly improve the educational and work opportunities for this population.

College-eligible undocumented students exhibit academic achievement, leadership participation, and civic engagement patterns that often exceed that of their U.S. citizen counterparts, according to William Perez, Richard D. Cortes and other researchers who cite the emotional and academic support of parents, instructors, counselors, and peers as critical to their success.¹² More than 90 percent of undocumented students report volunteering and 95 percent participated in extracurricular activities, often holding a leadership position such as club president. They show various aspects of psychological resilience, perseverance, and optimism. Their home responsibilities included taking care of younger siblings, working various jobs an average of 13 hours per week during high school and 30 hours per week during college. Even with these responsibilities, they participated in extracurricular and volunteer activities and earned high grades in academically demanding courses.¹³

Deferred Action as the Game Changer

The new Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals policy could be a definite game changer for undocumented immigrants who meet the criteria: it removes the cloud of deportation and enables eventual work authorization to those who have their requests accepted. The new policy will encourage many to access colleges with less anxiety, and community colleges could experience a significant increase in enrollment. In addition, it will motivate these young people, whether in high school or college, to stay in school and get their diplomas and degrees, now that their future prospects for pursuing education and work are greatly improved. The Migration Policy Institute estimates that 58 percent of the 1.26 million prospective beneficiaries ages 15 and older are currently in the labor force.¹⁴ For those students entering community colleges, work authorization could have a major impact on their ability to earn more to help pay for college. It could also greatly improve the job prospects for those who have already obtained higher education degrees, enabling them to put their skills to work, earn higher wages, and contribute to the nation's economy. MPI notes that about 80,000 of the potentially eligible beneficiaries already have an associate's degree or higher; of that group, 48 percent earned an associate's degree; 44 percent a bachelor's degree, and another 8 percent hold an advanced degree.¹⁵

The DACA initiative has also energized the immigrant advocacy movement to build support for the DREAM Act and broader immigration reform and could bring renewed hope among immigrant youth that a better educational and career future lies ahead. Nonetheless, DACA's limitations—its temporary nature, the lack of a pathway to legal status and citizenship, and the fact that it does not automatically extend to the parents or siblings of undocumented students—poses certain dilemmas and risks for the policy's potential beneficiaries. Even though some undocumented youth may qualify for DACA, they may still fear that submitting their personal records to the government could affect their families. In addition, as noted, questions about obtaining driver's licenses and in-state tuition will have to be resolved on a state-by-state basis. Then, of course, is the uncertainty of the November presidential election's impact on DACA. The policy could be overturned if the Republican candidate Mitt Romney wins the election.

Factors Affecting Educational Success of Undocumented Students

Challenges to High School and College Success

- Legal and financial barriers
- Family poverty/work and family demands
- Uncertainty about future
- Lack of college information/guidance
- Lack of family understanding/support
- Psychological and emotional stresses
- Limited English proficiency/low educational attainment

Keys to High School and College Success

- Financial support for college
- Parental support
- Trusting relationships with instructors and counselors
- Peer mentors
- Access to information about postsecondary options
- Lower levels of family responsibility
- Psychological resilience, perseverance, optimism

Supporting Undocumented Students: Good for Students, States, and the Nation

Numerous studies demonstrate that improving educational opportunities for undocumented students brings a substantial return on investment, translating into increased equity and access for these individuals, as well as greater economic and social benefits for states and the nation as a whole. Highlights from some of the available research, including the impact of existing in-state tuition laws and projections of proposed state legislation to improve educational access, are presented below:

Increased access to college and reduced high school drop out rates

- A 2011 review of studies found that in-state tuition policies in the 10 states that had enacted such policies or laws correlated with a **31% increase in college enrollments** among undocumented students and a **14% decrease in high school dropouts** among non-citizen Latinos.¹⁶
- Foreign-born noncitizen Latinos living in states with an in-state tuition policy were **1.54 times more likely to have enrolled in college** after the policy's implementation than similar students in states without such legislation.¹⁷

Increased economic and social benefits of college

- A college graduate's lifetime earnings are more than **60% greater** than the earnings of a high school graduate, while workers with advanced degrees earn two to three times as much as high school graduates. Additionally, a more educated workforce leads to lower crime and poverty rates and fewer demands on public assistance programs.¹⁸
- In Massachusetts, which is considering in-state tuition, immigrant college graduates earn about \$40,000 a year on average—**nearly 3 times more** than an immigrant high school dropout. A college-educated immigrant worker pays the state an average \$1,500 more in yearly taxes than an uneducated counterpart.¹⁹

Thus, children of unauthorized immigrants would “repay” the tuition discount within a few years by paying taxes on a higher income. Postsecondary educational attainment is also associated with **lower crime levels, stronger civic engagement, and higher citizenship rates** among foreign-born.²⁰

- A preliminary cost-benefit analysis of the proposed New York State DREAM Act, which would open the state’s financial aid program to qualifying undocumented students, shows that for a student earning a two-year degree, the state would invest a maximum of \$8,000 in state aid. The median earned income of a two-year college graduate is **\$10,000 per year higher** in New York State than for a high school graduate, while state and local taxes paid each year are about **\$1,000 higher**.²¹
- While a four-year degree would mean a maximum of \$20,000 state investment in aid, the median earned income of a state worker with a bachelor’s degree is **\$25,000 higher per year** than a worker with just a high school degree. Additional state and local taxes paid by a four-year college graduate are **\$3,900 higher**.²²

Increased revenues for states

- States that have passed in-state tuition bills, including California and Texas with the largest numbers of undocumented students, have not shown a large influx of new immigrants displacing citizens or added financial burdens to their educational systems. In fact, these measures tended to **increase school revenues** due to the tuition paid by students who would otherwise not be in college.²³
- In FY2010 the state of Texas paid out \$21.63 million to public institutions to support instruction and financial aid awards distributed to undocumented students who qualified for in-state tuition and state financial aid. However, undocumented students paid approximately \$32.7 million in tuition and fees in FY2010, resulting in a **net financial gain of \$11.07 million**.²⁴
- A proposed in-state tuition measure in Massachusetts could **increase the state’s revenues by up to \$7.4 million** by the fourth year, according to the Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation.²⁵

Better match between labor market supply and demand for educated workers

- **Immigrants and their children**—both documented and undocumented—are estimated to **account for the entire growth of the U.S. labor force between 2010 and 2030**, as baby boomers retire and the population ages.²⁶
- Increasing educational opportunities for undocumented students can have a significant impact on filling critical job needs, since occupations that will be most in demand in coming years will rely on educated workers. Researchers from Georgetown University note that by 2018, **almost two-thirds of all jobs will require at least some postsecondary education**.²⁷

What Community Colleges Can Do: Recommendations and Promising Practices

While there have been significant gains in several states to increase educational access for undocumented students in 2011, the legal environment is in a state of flux. The overall results from 2011 have been mixed, according to the National Immigration Law Center, “with both inclusive and restrictive bills becoming law. Challenges to these new laws, through litigation and pending voter referendums, have begun.”²⁸ (See Appendix for information on 2011 bills that restrict access to higher education.)

Supporting undocumented students in the current legal, fiscal and political environment can be challenging for community colleges. Many are facing severe budgetary restraints as states drastically cut back on their aid to colleges, threatening programs, and, in some cases, resulting in tuition increases and increased class sizes. Public perceptions that scarce resources are being diverted to undocumented youth can generate opposition. Some colleges that offer assistance to undocumented students face criticism from the community that can deter them from publicizing their efforts, as one college official noted: “At our community college, the challenge is how to make information public and accessible. We have people and programs who are willing and able to assist undocumented students but making a program or event public draws criticism and backlash from anti-immigrant people and organizations in this area.” In such cases, colleges often continue to serve students but find they can be more effective by staying “under the radar.”

Yet, despite these challenges, community colleges remain committed to serving their immigrant students—both documented and undocumented. Indeed, even in the absence of definitive state legislation in various states, many community colleges have acted independently to increase access by admitting undocumented students and, in some cases, offering financial support.²⁹ The key recommendations in this report address concrete strategies for creating supportive and resourceful college cultures to assist undocumented students. Additional exemplary practices, which are referenced throughout the report, can be found at <http://www.cccie.org/community-college-immigration-promising-practices>.



1

Increase College Access

Undocumented students and their parents may lack knowledge about college options or believe there are few opportunities available. A 2011 survey by the National Immigration Law Center found that even in states where undocumented immigrant youth have access to in-state tuition, state-level financial aid, and scholarships, few were aware of available opportunities or able to navigate the college enrollment process.³⁰ Fears of deportation have discouraged students from initiating contacts with high school and college counselors to seek assistance. While DACA reduces the threat of deportation for eligible undocumented youth, since the policy does not automatically extend to their parents and siblings, the fear of exposing family members is still a reality for many. Yet, students need to be able to access information and counseling early on, well before their senior year when they start filling out college applications. Colleges need to work in close collaboration with middle schools, high schools, and community organizations to build a network of resources that inform undocumented students and their families about the opportunities available at their institutions and provide assistance in navigating the educational system.

Recommendations:

- **Develop a coordinated outreach plan with immigrant youth-led organizations, immigrant advocacy coalitions, and other community-based organizations to build trust and help undocumented students learn about accessing the community college system**
- **Strengthen the K-12 pipeline to engage undocumented students, parents, teachers, and counselors and facilitate transition to community college**
- **Recruit undocumented students as community ambassadors and student role models**
- **Develop online sites that promote programs and resources for undocumented students**
- **Promote dual enrollment in high school and college courses as a cost-saving college preparation strategy**

Develop a coordinated outreach plan with immigrant youth-led organizations, immigrant advocacy coalitions, and other community-based organizations to build trust and help undocumented students learn about accessing the community college system

Colleges most successful in their outreach initiatives are those with multi-sector partnerships already in place that serve the broader immigrant population. The challenges of undocumented students and services available to help may be addressed in deliberate and intentional ways, either at events specifically targeted to undocumented youth or as part of more general outreach events, including high school visits, summer camp programs, college fairs, or community information sessions. Key stakeholders include the k-12 school systems, immigrant youth-led organizations, immigrant advocacy coalitions, adult education providers, community and religious organizations, and businesses and employer groups. It is important to consider how information will

be communicated, taking into account the importance of messaging to address students' and parents' fears of disclosure and financial concerns, their lack of familiarity with the higher education system, and the language barriers. Information and marketing materials should be available in English, Spanish and other languages as needed in order to reach the targeted groups. The DACA policy heightens the need for effective and coordinated outreach campaigns so that people receive accurate information on eligibility requirements, required documentation, educational options, and how to avoid fraudulent immigration practitioners.

Over the years, **Miami Dade College** has cultivated viable partnerships with a variety of community organizations in serving its immigrant student population. Even though Florida does not currently have in-state tuition rates for undocumented students, MDC has a strong track record in serving immigrant and undocumented students. Over 174,000 students attend Miami Dade, and more than a third, about 35,000, are immigrant students. The college estimates that nearly 500 of those students are undocumented. Miami Dade College has waged a strategic awareness campaign to educate its entire student body, faculty and staff about DACA. MDC is collaborating with its student organizations such as Students Working for Equal Rights (SWER) and other external partners such as the Americans for Immigrant Justice organization (formerly Florida Immigration Advocacy Center) and the organizations' immigration attorneys to conduct DACA information sessions and clinics. These events help students and their families understand the new DACA policy and to provide assistance to eligible students in applying for deferred action and work permits.

“The Presidential Order of deferred action allows these young people not only to remain in the U.S. without fear of deportation, but more importantly, it allows them the invaluable chance to further their education. This is a chance for each of these young people to become contributors to their families, communities and the nation.”

—Eduardo Padrón, President, Miami Dade College.

The college's continued articulation with its local school district ensures that administrators, counselors, teachers, and students are aware that MDC welcomes undocumented students and is committed to availing them of the opportunity of a higher education. While college officials expect an increase in enrollments as a result of the new deferred action policy, the out-of-state tuition remains a major barrier for many undocumented students, notes Malou Harrison, Dean of Students at Miami Dade's North Campus. At MDC, the in-state rate per term for 12 credits is \$1,346 compared to the out-of-state rate of \$4,758. College officials and immigrant student advocacy groups have pushed for in-state tuition rates for several years, but the bill has repeatedly failed to pass in the Florida legislature. Harrison believes the DACA initiative will strengthen the campaign for resident tuition rates for undocumented students.

⇒ *See also how Westchester Community College has launched collaborative DACA outreach and legal assistance events with community partners.*

Alexis was born in Veracruz, Mexico and came to the United States with her family at the age of nine. Life was difficult in Mexico, and at times her family struggled to put food on the table. But her parents were determined to provide a better future for their children. The family eventually settled in Lancaster, Kentucky, where Alexis attended high school and made many friends. She graduated from Bluegrass Community and Technical College and is now a journalism major at University of Kentucky. Eventually, she would like to attend an art school and one day own an art gallery. An active student leader, Alexis is the co-founder and former president of the Kentucky Dream Coalition, which is affiliated with United We Dream, the largest network of immigrant youth-led organizations around the country. She loves to make art and empower people with her creations, and has volunteered at different after school programs with middle and high school immigrant students.



“Being involved with the United We Dream Network has changed my life, and I feel blessed and thankful for all the opportunities it has brought me. I want to help and empower other undocumented youth like myself to fulfill and reach their dreams.”

Bluegrass Community and Technical College (BCTC) in Lexington, Kentucky has developed partnerships both on and off campus to provide a continuum of educational resources and services that have increased undocumented students’ knowledge of and access to college services. BCTC’s Latino/Hispanic Outreach and Support Services Office works closely with the college’s Adult Basic Education department to reach older, nontraditional students, and it collaborates with a variety of community partners including K-12 schools, the Migrant Network Coalition, Lexington Public Library, and Kentucky Dream Coalition (a United We Dream affiliate) to engage undocumented high school youth and their parents and help them access community colleges. The Latino Leadership and College Experience Camp (LLCEC) is a summer program that exposes high school students to all aspects and processes of college life from application to orientation to testing for classes. The camp experience also includes parent orientation, college literacy and educational planning for the entire family. Since 2006, the LLCEC has served over 200 students and boasts a 69% college going rate. Following the camp, each student receives a personal invitation to attend the Latino/Multicultural Student College Fair that highlights specific opportunities for Latino and other multicultural students including workshops on college admissions, scholarships, self-esteem, leadership, and more. The college fair also provides workshops to teachers and community leaders on a variety of higher education themes including how to make college a reality for undocumented youth.

Strengthen the K-12 pipeline to engage undocumented students, parents, teachers, and counselors and facilitate transition to community college

Strengthening relationships with the K-12 feeder schools is essential, since high school drop-out rates are especially high among undocumented youth. Community colleges should reach out to both middle schools and high schools and establish relationships at the district and site level. It is also critical that outreach efforts extend not only to guidance counselors (whose advisee loads are often high), but to teachers as well, since students often get information directly from teachers. Colleges can keep school counselors and teachers informed of state and college policies and promote alternative programs as cost saving strategies that can increase college readiness and access for undocumented students.

City College of San Francisco is able to successfully channel eligible undocumented students to its alternative high school diploma program, largely as a result of its positive and regular high school outreach efforts. Faculty and counselors from CCSF and several local high schools meet regularly to discuss a variety of student access, enrollment, and completion issues. This K-12 partnership initiative, called Bridge to Success, is funded by the Gates Foundation. Several meetings and joint professional development activities have focused specifically on the needs of so-called AB 540 students, undocumented youth eligible for in-state tuition under California’s 2001 Assembly Bill 540.

Regular communications between college and high school personnel uncovered a problem: several undocumented students were “falling through the cracks” by graduating from high school, but only attending for one or two years—not enough to meet the state’s three-year high school attendance requirement for in-state tuition. Paying out-of-state tuition was impossible for most students. Now high school counselors know there is a viable alternative: the CCSF Transitional Studies/High School diploma program, which offers a variety of free courses leading to a California high school diploma. ESL students who take English courses through the program frequently place much higher on the credit ESL test than those who don’t have this preparation, which can result in savings of time and money in credit classes.

⇒ *See also how South Texas College, Bluegrass Community and Technical College and Rio Hondo College facilitate community college transitions.*

Recruit undocumented students in outreach as community ambassadors and student role models

The most effective way to promote college programs and encourage immigrant youth to apply is to encourage current undocumented students to share their personal stories, show how they overcame barriers, and emphasize the importance of staying in school. Research studies have illustrated that undocumented students serve as powerful role models and mentors for other students.³¹ Educators and community organizations that work with undocumented youth agree and have also found that these youth can both educate and inspire the broader community about the importance of increasing college access for undocumented students.

The International and Immigrant Student Services staff at **Johnson County Community College** in Overland Park, Kansas supports and works closely with Latinos United Now and Always (LUNA), a student club actively involved in outreach initiatives. LUNA's main goal is to encourage students, especially first generation college students and immigrant students to go to college, regardless of their citizenship status. Most of the LUNA members are immigrants themselves, and many are undocumented. LUNA trains and organizes teams of students to go into high schools, middle schools, and even elementary schools to help students understand the challenges of attending college and to encourage them to start planning. In addition, the LUNA members who present are gaining valuable experience in public speaking and are often referred by the college to community groups seeking people to speak to the immigrant community they serve.

“Many undocumented school students do not know that they are indeed able to attend college or that there is financial assistance and programs available for them. Sometimes students just need someone to look up to, or see someone like them who has gone through the college process.”

—Satwinder Kaur, Coordinator for Immigrant Student Regulatory Advising and Support Services, Johnson County Community College

The Mi Hermana Mayor (My Older Sister) mentoring and community service program is a partnership between El Centro Hispano, **Westchester Community College**, Manhattanville College, and the White Plains Public School District in Westchester County, New York. In the 2011-12 school year, the program, which is supported primarily by the Lanza Family Foundation, paired 20 female Latina White Plains middle school students in grades 7 and 8 with Latina bilingual and bicultural “sisters” or mentors currently attending college. The “sisters” provided academic tutoring and served as successful role models for the younger girls, and encouraged and motivated them to continue with their own education at the postsecondary level. Many of the mentors and mentees are undocumented students, and the program illustrates how the experience of pairing older, academically successful students with younger students makes a significant difference. The grades of these young women, their attitude towards school and their future education, and their work habits improved dramatically because they were provided with a thorough, concentrated, and intensive tutoring program; one-on-one mentoring; academic support; and weekly motivational sessions with successful professionals. At the same time, the experience was equally valuable for the mentors, who learned the value of helping others succeed, gained tutoring skills, and earned stipends for their community service.

➡ See also how the Kathryn W. Davis Global Education Center at Palm Beach State College, FL and Bluegrass Community and Technology involve undocumented students as peer mentors.

Develop online sites that promote programs and resources for undocumented students

College websites are often a student's first encounter with the colleges' programs and services and can be an important tool for raising awareness and access to college services. Yet, information about immigrant services is not always easy to find. In some cases, "immigrant" services may be subsumed by "international student" services, even though the issues and services required are very different for these two populations. While ESL classes are often publicized, information on support services and community resources to assist immigrant students—documented and undocumented—are rarely highlighted. Some colleges do, however, take special steps to focus attention on immigrant students, including specific issues pertaining to those who are undocumented.

City College of San Francisco has developed extensive outreach and services for undocumented students, and it has created an online resource to let people know about it. The college's AB 540 web page includes detailed information on programs and resources for undocumented students, such as counseling services, FAQs on the California Dream Act and AB 540, scholarship resources, and student clubs and centers including Students Advocating for Equity (SAFE), the first student club on campus focusing on AB540 students, and Voices of Immigrants Demonstrating Achievement (VIDA), an AB 540 resource center that provides drop-in counseling, computers, and a student meeting space. <http://www.ccsf.edu/NEW/en/educational-programs/class-schedule/ab540.html>.

CUNY Citizenship Now! is a comprehensive network of resource centers providing free citizenship and immigration law services for students throughout the City University of New York system of four-year and two-year colleges, as well as to the wider community. Extensive online resources are available, including information specifically pertaining to undocumented students. For example, students can learn how to prepare for DACA and are invited to join a mailing list to receive further information and find out how to get free legal assistance provided by the centers' immigration lawyers. They can also access information on New York State's in-state tuition policy, the federal DREAM Act, available scholarships, and other legal and ESL services provided in the resource centers. <http://www.cuny.edu/about/resources/citizenship/info4noncitizens/info4undocumented/DeferredAction/CUNYStudents.html>

Promote dual enrollment in high school and college courses as a cost-saving college preparation strategy

Dual enrollment partnerships between high schools and community colleges are overcoming barriers to high school completion in disadvantaged communities. Dual enrollment programs are particularly important for undocumented high school students as both college preparation and cost-saving measures. These types of enrichment programs allow students to begin college-credit courses for free or at discounted prices while still in high school. Students complete high school with a diploma, an accelerated start in college, and, in some cases, short-term career training. Programs introduce high school students to college life, offer coursework to boost language and academic skills, reduce the time spent in college, and teach students how to make plans for

college. For ESL students, addressing language proficiency issues before students enter the assessment phase of the college admissions process can reduce the time spent in costly developmental and credit ESL classes and enable students to move into college level work more quickly.

Dual credit/dual enrollment partnerships between the Humboldt Vocational Education Center at **Wilbur Wright College** and three ASPIRA charter high schools in Chicago are overcoming barriers to high school completion in disadvantaged communities. Students take college-level, transferable courses such as English composition and college algebra and earn high school and college credit simultaneously. The three high schools operated by ASPIRA, Inc. of Illinois serve a diverse student body. The Mirta Ramirez Computer Science Charter School offers a rigorous computer science curriculum; students graduate prepared to succeed in postsecondary education or meaningful professions. The Early College High School provides a high quality secondary education to Puerto Rican, Latino, and other at-risk youth who have faced difficulties in traditional high school settings. Antonia Pantoja High School is a state-certified school that serves youth ages 16-21 who have been officially dropped from the public school. The school incorporates a curriculum based on improving basic skills and developing social, personal and career goals (www.aspirail.org).

Between fall 2008 and spring 2011, 85 percent of the 126 ASPIRA students who participated in the program successfully completed college-level courses. Additional funding in 2011 provided for career programs in computer certification training and computer refurbishing for over 30 students. The articulation pathway between the high schools and Wilbur Wright/HPVEC has expanded to include the University of Illinois at Chicago. The major public high school in the area served is planning a complete community campus to include dual credit/dual enrollment in college credit for high school students, as well as adult and continuing education classes for their parents.³²

⇒ See also the dual enrollment programs at South Texas College and Miami Dade College.



2 Make College Affordable

In-state tuition helps enormously in making college affordable, but in cases where in-state tuition is not enough, additional financial resources are necessary in order to make college a reality. Understanding the financial assistance options that are available is critical for families of undocumented students—without that knowledge the assumption may be that college is not possible and students may not even try to apply. While undocumented students are not eligible for federal and most forms of state financial aid, they can, however, take advantage of certain private and college scholarships that don't require Social Security numbers and U.S. citizenship status. Financial aid officers need to be aware of the various options; and they need to keep abreast of how changing policies at the federal and state levels impact the financial aid opportunities for undocumented students.

There are also steps community colleges can take to increase private- and college-funded financial opportunities for all underserved students, including the undocumented. Clearly, in an environment of budget cutbacks at all levels, this is not an easy task. However, as the examples cited illustrate, community colleges have created scholarship and scholarship-based internship opportunities that help make college affordable for undocumented youth.

Recommendations:

- **Assist in finding and applying for available scholarship resources**
- **Increase college and private fundraising for scholarship opportunities**
- **Adopt institutional funding for scholarship-based internships**

Assist in finding and applying for available scholarship resources

Financial aid departments should disseminate up-to-date financial aid information and available scholarship resources at college fairs, information sessions, and on college websites; and staff should be able to assist undocumented students in the application process. Several colleges offer financial aid information and workshops as a regular part of their support services for immigrant students and their parents and make available lists of scholarship resources that don't require U.S. citizenship status.

The International and Immigrant Student Services Department at **Johnson County Community College** (IISSD) works proactively to incorporate the college's other departments, including financial aid and career services, into its workshops for immigrant students. In that way, financial aid and career services staff are kept abreast of the latest financial aid, scholarship, and internship opportunities that don't require Social Security numbers or citizenship status. IISSD has also been instrumental in collaborating with community organizations, employer groups, and student clubs on campus in an effort to raise funds and assist undocumented youth in finding scholarships. As a result, all 250 undocumented students at the college receive some kind of scholarship assistance. The department plans to expand scholarship opportunities through partnerships with the local Hispanic and Asian Chambers of Commerce.

Online Scholarship Resources for Undocumented Students

Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (www.maldef.org)

Educators for Fair Consideration (www.e4fc.org)

Scholarships A-Z (www.scholarshipsaz.org)

National Council of LaRaza (www.nclr.org)

Hispanic Association of College and Universities (www.hacu.net)

Hispanic College Fund (www.hispanicfund.org)

Increase college and private fundraising for scholarship opportunities

Community colleges can open up new scholarship opportunities through their college foundations, partnerships with community organizations and employer groups, and support of student-led coalitions and clubs. In some cases, students must maintain a minimum GPA to be eligible and meet other requirements as well.

The Dr. Kathryn W. Davis Global Education Center at **Palm Beach State College** in southern Florida, is a one-stop education and resource information center for immigrants in the county. Its mission is to empower immigrants by providing them with scholarship funds to attend college, help them navigate the college's ESL and other academic programs, learn about the U.S. through acculturation workshops, and provide community service referrals. The center actively reaches out to undocumented students in the public school system and collaborates with the Palm Beach School District's Title I Migrant Education program to facilitate the recruitment of prospective students. Part-time scholarships are based mainly on financial need, but students must maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA, meet with an advisor each term, and follow an improvement plan if they fall short in their performance. The Center's scholarship fund and other activities to assist immigrants are supported through a private donation from the philanthropist Dr. Kathryn W. Davis.

Rio Hondo College in Whittier, CA, near Los Angeles, has worked hard to provide scholarship monies to students who would not otherwise qualify for financial aid. First, through the efforts of a key staff member, Dr. Mike Munoz, a scholarship was created specifically for undocumented students. College faculty and staff are able to donate part of their monthly paychecks to this scholarship fund. Additionally, the college was able to secure \$50,000 in funding from the California Community Foundation to be directed towards students participating in Rio Hondo's El Monte Pledge Compact, a partnership that provides eligible high school students priority registration at Rio Hondo and guaranteed transfer to certain four-year universities. Several El Monte Pledge Compact students are undocumented. In addition to these institutional measures, undocumented students will be eligible for certain kinds of state financial aid beginning January 2013, when the California Dream Act II (AB 131) goes into effect.

⇒ *See also how Wilbur Wright College and Bluegrass Community and Technical College are making funds available to increase access for undocumented students.*

Adopt institutional funding for scholarship-based internships

Scholarship-based internships can be especially important for undocumented students since they are ineligible for federal financial aid, including work-study positions, and most forms of state aid that are available to their U.S.-born and documented immigrant peers. Internships that encourage civic engagement are particularly meaningful for undocumented students, who in interviews say they seek “to become civically engaged not just by their commitment to certain political and social ideals, but...as an antidote to the political and social marginalization they faced as undocumented students. Civic engagement allowed them the opportunity to affirm themselves as good people and model citizens.”³³

At the **City College of San Francisco**, Students Advocating for Equity (SAFE), the AB 540 student club and the AB 540 Task Force advocated for the opportunity to develop their civic engagement skills through a scholarship-based civic engagement training program that included 15-hour per week internships in the community. They wanted the funds to be available for *all* students, a strategy that helped win campus-wide support for the measure. AB 540 students and faculty allies spoke out in favor of institutional funding for civic engagement training and internships at student government and Board of Trustee meetings, and in 2011 the trustees allocated \$200,000 from unrestricted, non-state funds that are used to pay student workers. The training and internships are offered through the Office of Mentoring and Student Learning. Immigrant students regardless of status are eligible to apply, and several undocumented students have been awarded these scholarships and placed in internships, often with organizations that advocate for the rights of undocumented students. Students must maintain a certain GPA, work a certain number of hours per week at a community agency, and show financial need. Internships increase undocumented students’ civic engagement, help pay for college, and allow students to gain valuable work experience and skills.

“The Civic Engagement Initiative is a fabulous program. The main message to undocumented students is, ‘You’re valued, you can apply.’ The psychological impact is huge, and the program has taken off due to word of mouth.”

—Lindy McKnight, Dean, Student Support Services, City College of San Francisco



Civic Engagement Makes A Difference

The City College of San Francisco has recently established a Civic Engagement Initiative for students who have demonstrated civic leadership on campus and in the community. Several undocumented students are participating in this innovative program. Selected students receive a scholarship which allows them to undertake a civic engagement training curriculum on campus, one portion of which is a service learning component in a community-based organization.

One student, working with the Asian Law Caucus, organized other undocumented Asian students, who have been very reluctant to acknowledge their status. He established a safe place for students to meet, share their experiences, and develop resources. Another student, working with the nonprofit Seven Tepees Youth Program, returned to her high school, where no visible initiatives existed for undocumented students. She started an AB 540 student club, worked with the principal and teachers to develop Undocumented Student Awareness Week, and helped teachers incorporate AB540 issues into their lesson plans.

3 Support College Readiness and Success

College administrators, counseling staff, and faculty can play a crucial role in facilitating the admissions process and enhancing the educational experience of undocumented students. But they need to understand the unique challenges faced by undocumented students, the legal policies, and the resources available at their college to help. Student advocacy groups have noted that undocumented students have received misinformation or have been subject to insensitive comments by staff who have not been trained to work with this population. Thus, colleges should provide special training for administrators, counselors, faculty, and front-line staff in admissions, academic advising, financial aid, and support services.

The recent Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals policy opens up new possibilities for those undocumented youth who will qualify, and it also means new challenges for community colleges. Many undocumented youth—including both current and prospective students—will turn to community colleges for assistance.

College officials must mobilize their various offices to be ready to support individuals by responding to requests for required transcripts and other relevant records; making referrals to community services, including legal resources; providing clarification of DACA as it relates to the college's policies, including eligibility for in-state tuition and state financial aid if available; and offering guidance on educational programs and services best suited to their needs. College staff need to be aware of available educational resources offered by the college and/or other community partners, such as GED programs, GED preparation programs, ESL and other literacy and career training programs, since any one of these program categories meet the USCIS "currently in school" requirement.

Parental support and involvement can be key to undocumented students' success at college, yet many parents often lack general college knowledge, face significant language barriers, and may discourage their children from revealing their status or filling out any forms requiring personal information. Many of these families are living in poverty and once their children have graduated from high school, the importance of working to help support the family conflicts with pursuing a college education. In order to overcome these barriers, educational planning and college awareness sessions for families should be incorporated into college preparation and orientation workshops.

Recommendations:

- **Designate staff responsible for advising undocumented students**
- **Provide professional development to college personnel about unique challenges facing undocumented students and resources to help them**
- **Engage parents and keep them involved during the college experience**

Designate staff responsible for advising undocumented students

The department or staff on campus trained to work with various types of students, including undocumented students, should be clearly identified. In some cases, community colleges have created an office dedicated to immigrant services or colleges designate admissions officers or multicultural counselors who work with undocumented students. The needs of undocumented students are very different than those of international students, so if international student advisors also counsel undocumented students they require special training or should be able to make referrals to others on campus who are equipped to address the needs of undocumented students. Counselors who are trained in immigrant services can be especially encouraging and can serve as advocates for undocumented students by helping to start a student club; getting students connected to supportive networks on campus, in the community, and online; and by training other faculty and staff at the college.

The International and Immigrant Student Services Department at **Johnson County Community College** has become the “go-to” office for handling all issues relating to undocumented students. IISSD keeps the college faculty and staff up to date on changing policies and provides on-going training to student support services, counseling, financial aid, and other departments. IISSD staff members serve as advisors to student clubs and advocacy groups that work with undocumented students and offer collaborative outreach to high school students and counselors. IISSD staff also help in-coming high school students stay in touch with their former counselors and teachers so the high school staff becomes familiar with campus resources, including the student clubs that support undocumented students.

Provide professional development to college personnel about unique challenges facing undocumented students and resources to help them

Faculty and staff professional development workshops should incorporate sessions on working with undocumented students. College administrators, faculty and staff should be kept abreast of the relevant policies and legislation in their states and how they impact undocumented students. They should be aware of the college's admission and enrollment procedures for undocumented students and understand their rights, as well as the obstacles they face and opportunities that can help. College admissions offices can take simple steps such as ensuring that the application process does not require a Social Security number. Ensuring that some staff are bilingual or multilingual, as needed, enhances the quality of services.

The Office of Admissions and Records at **South Texas College**, located in the Rio Grande Valley on the Texas-Mexico border, provides training workshops to help its outreach and admissions counselors deal with the various questions and situations related to the status of the students. They learn how to assist students, who may be at various stages in their status adjustment process and unaware of the next steps to take. While counselors do not offer legal advice, they guide the students, increase their awareness of the legalization process, and refer them to immigration lawyers. This is particularly true in the case of assisting students with the complex DACA application process. Admissions officers are instructed to provide a private setting for students to talk about their situation, offer web resources, and encourage students to seek legal advice from immigration experts since each situation is unique. The college has increased the number of counselors equipped to assist undocumented students through a train-the-trainer approach. The college's outreach specialists attend the Texas Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers annual conference, which includes sessions on undocumented students.

“On many occasions, we are able to make that human connection. Students need to know that we care about their situation and that they do not need to feel afraid or embarrassed to ask about anything, including the new deferred action program. They are able to talk freely and openly to staff in our offices and leave encouraged that they are supported in their desire to earn a college degree.”

—**Matthew S. Hebbard**, Director of Admission and Registrar, South Texas College

The AB 540 Task Force at **City College of San Francisco**, which is comprised of administrators, faculty, counselors and students, organizes professional development sessions to inform faculty and staff of the nature of the law and benefits for AB 540 students. Faculty who attend these sessions receive stickers to put on their doors that read: “I am an advocate/ally of AB540/Immigrant Students.” Now a student walking by knows there is someone to talk with. Identifying faculty as allies and advocates in this way has helped build institutional-wide awareness and support for undocumented students, going beyond one department or division.

Engage parents and keep them involved during the college experience

Colleges should engage parents in the college preparation process and keep them involved once their children are enrolled through organized events and one-on-one counseling. They can also connect parents to community resources and encourage them to connect with one another by forming parent support groups.³⁴ In order to address language barriers and overcome parents' reluctance to connect with counselors, colleges should provide bilingual or multilingual services, depending on the target audience, include issues of documentation in general information sessions, and offer follow-up individual counseling to address each family's unique circumstances.

Bluegrass Community and Technical College provides college orientation, college literacy, and educational planning for the entire family at its Latino Leadership and College Experience Camp (LLCEC), an intensive college preparation summer program for Latino/a, immigrant, refugee and ESL high school students. Parents attend orientation workshops which help to increase college awareness by first asking parents a series of questions: how involved are they in their children's schools, do they know their children's hopes and dreams, do they know that their children want to go to college? This conversation is particularly critical for parents of undocumented students, who may discourage their children from pursuing college if they're unaware of available resources, notes Erin Howard, the BCTC Latino/Hispanic Outreach and Support Services Director. "We find that parents may squash their dreams because they are fearful that their children will not have the opportunity to attend college, so they take away that vision to protect them from disappointment," she said. For that reason, counselors are very upfront with families about the availability of scholarships for those without Social Security numbers, and they coach undocumented students on how to speak with their parents about college opportunities. Each student is mentored by a college student and a professional through the *Road to College/Mi Camino a la Universidad* guide, which is published in English and Spanish, and includes lesson plans, study guides, and exercises to promote leadership skills. Parents receive their own at-home curriculum they can follow while their children are at camp.



4 Offer Alternatives for Adult Learners

Academic advisors and student services counselors must be aware of the unique instructional and support needs of the older, nontraditional students, since many may lack a high school diploma or GED, and have been absent from the educational system for an extended period of time. Undocumented immigrants who fall into this category will require significant educational preparation and assistance with support services, as well as orientation to familiarize them with the language of admissions and expectations for college readiness. Alternative instructional approaches, including ABE-ESL bridge courses, career pathways, and online learning, can be instrumental in helping adult students succeed at community colleges. Colleges should work collaboratively with adult education providers and community-based organizations in serving these students. In many cases, community organizations provide the initial outreach; orient students to the college process; offer college preparation courses, including ESL; provide critical support services, such as financial and legal assistance, transportation, and childcare; and, increasingly, offer job placement services.

Recommendations:

- **Connect adult education and community college systems through partnerships and case management**
- **Adopt ABE-ESL bridge courses, career pathways, and online learning to support adult students**

Connect adult education and community college systems through partnerships and case management

Since most late entry, nontraditional students enter community college from the adult education system, any barriers or gaps in service must be reduced between these two systems. This can pose a particular challenge in states where these systems are not all under the same roof. Colleges should establish and expand partnerships with community-based organizations and schools that offer ABE and ESL classes and collaboratively plan and provide comprehensive case management services.

At **Renton Technical College** in Renton, Washington, the entry point for most immigrant students, both documented and undocumented, is through adult basic education (ABE). In Washington State ABE is part of the community and technical college system, with a small number of community-based organizations successfully competing for federal ABE funding. Most Renton Technical College ESL students are also parents of local K-12 students. The college's ABE department has partnered with the Renton School District to increase parents' ESL, civics, and technology skills and help them become effective advocates for their children. ABE and ESL classes combined with family literacy and civics education have been offered at various schools in the district for the past two decades. Spanish GED classes have also

been offered. Parents in all Renton Technical College ESL classes learn to set up an email account to communicate with their child’s school, access student records and for other purposes. “Our school district partners have helped to inform our curriculum in this way,” notes Jodi Novotny, RTC’s Dean of Basic Studies. Novotny’s staff is connected with the district’s English Language Learner coordinators who also work closely with the families of school children.

Mayra recently graduated high school and has entered Bellevue College in Washington. She is a graduate of the Skills to College program, an “on-ramp” to I-BEST, which is a partnership among Renton Technical College, Neighborhood House, and the Workforce Development Council of Seattle King County. She hopes to transfer to Washington State University or the University of Washington to earn a bachelor’s in psychology, and eventually get her doctorate in child psychology. “This would allow me to be able to help kids that have been through the same things that I have gone through,” she says. She is the only one in her family to graduate from high school. She managed to graduate on time though she attended five different high schools. At one school she received college credits for passing an AP Spanish test and ended up with the highest score in class. “My graduation made my mother very proud because I was able to graduate regardless of the struggles that we were going through.” Mayra and her family had to leave their home and live in a shelter before eventually moving into transitional housing. During this time she became depressed and because she was not receiving help of any kind, it was harder to accomplish her goal of becoming a high school graduate. “I eventually got help for my depression and I can now say that I am recovered.” She is involved in many different ways in her community, volunteering at her little sister’s school and at a children’s art group. “This group is designed to help children who, like me, are survivors of domestic violence and can express their feelings in a creative way.”



“Graduating from high school has served as an example that my siblings can follow. I will also be the first person in my family to attend college. This will give my siblings the opportunity to set higher educational goals. I want to prove statistics wrong and be an educated minority woman.”

⇒ See also how Renton Technological College collaborates with community partners to offer on-ramps to I-BEST (Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training) programs.

Adopt ABE-ESL bridge courses, career pathways and online learning to support adult students

Undocumented youth who arrived in this country at an early age and who attended U.S. high schools often speak English fluently and enter community colleges with strong language and academic skills. Indeed, the research shows that in a supportive environment undocumented youth overcome obstacles and excel in high school, both in academics and extracurricular activities.³⁵ On the other hand, undocumented students who attend under-resourced high schools in low-income communities face similar challenges as other low-income minority students on top of the legal and other barriers they encounter. Additionally, non-traditional, late entry adult students, who may lack a high school diploma or GED and have been absent from the educational system for many years, do not have the level of English language skills, general academic preparation or orientation needed to succeed at the community college level.

Community colleges should establish and expand instructional approaches that can benefit low educated and Limited English Proficient adult learners. For example, contextualized- or content-based ABE and ESL curriculum that is integrated with academic programs or career pathways can greatly accelerate transitions to further education or careers. In order to accommodate the range of skills and learning needs, colleges need to adopt alternative approaches to assessment and instruction that address students' unique needs and build on their strengths, whether the goal is to gain a high school diploma or GED, increase computer skills, obtain a college degree or certificate, or move directly to a job.

The Humboldt Vocational Educational Center at **Wilbur Wright College** partners with a variety of community-based organizations to provide bridge programs and career pathways for Limited English Proficient students. A program that has increased undocumented students' access to Wright College is Association House's El Cuarto Año, an alternative high school that offers small class sizes, high teacher-to-student ratio, and individual learning plans with an emphasis on technology. El Cuarto Año is an ideal opportunity for re-enrolled students who have left the traditional school setting. The program offers tutoring and mentoring programs along with competitive academic studies. (www.associationhouse.org/services/eca).

The Adult Education/English Language Civics Programs at **Miami Dade College** provide ESL and literacy skills to help adult immigrants, including undocumented students, integrate into society by understanding how democracy works, participating in the civic life of the community, and enrolling in postsecondary training leading to economic self-sufficiency. The communities served by this project, including Hispanic, Haitian, and Russian immigrants, are characterized by high unemployment and underemployment and are home to the poorest immigrant communities in Miami-Dade County, with most at an average income level below the poverty line. The Adult Education and EL Civics programs combine academics (ESL, Citizenship, and GED Preparation classes) with a variety of support services, including workshops in financial and health literacy; volunteer service learning opportunities, and family literacy activities. The program has achieved significant gains in enrollment, retention, English language fluency, and transition to college-level and GED Preparation programs.

The Broadband Technology Opportunity program at **South Texas College**, known as “Big Top,” is bridging the digital divide by increasing computer literacy among low-income and out-of-school adults, including a growing population of adults from immigrant and language-minority communities. STC is one of 63 organizations in six national sites participating in the online Learner Web Partnership. The program is funded by a U.S. Department of Commerce grant. At STC, the program operates through the Continuing Education Department and is open to all immigrants regardless of their status. To date, about 1,300 participants have been trained in computer and Internet skills; the goal is to reach 450 more by August 2012. The Learner Web system (<http://www.learnerweb.org/btop>) is a blended model, combining online learning with the face-to-face support of trained tutors and computer assistants. While ESL instruction is not the objective, participants acquire English language skills through the program’s Learning Plans. The college works with the school districts in the two-county service area to attract parents to the program and reaches other community members by partnering with the local Workforce Development Board, a literacy center, libraries, churches, Bingo halls and adult day care centers. A key advantage of the program, notes Juan Carlos Aguirre, STC’s Director of Continuing Education: it has attracted people to the college who otherwise might not have ventured onto the campus, and they are enrolling in ESL or GED programs.

“The community college is the ideal location for offering the Broadband Technology Opportunity program, because we are able to open doors for people by showing them the variety of options available. We show them various career pathway flowcharts to indicate ‘you are here’ and programs they can aspire to. They can see the pathway to an associate’s or even a bachelor’s degree.”

—Juan Carlos Aguirre, Continuing Education Director, South Texas College

Dream University is a new partnership that will be launched in 2013 by the UCLA Center for Labor Research and Education and the National Labor College. Dream University will offer access to inexpensive, high quality university courses via on-line learning and individualized on-line coaching and instruction. The intent is to reach hundreds and eventually thousands of undocumented and other low-income students who are currently excluded from higher education. Students will be able to access live streams and podcasts of UCLA undergraduate classes and enroll in courses focusing on civic engagement, contemporary social issues, research and analysis, and leadership development. The college credits earned can be applied to two-year and four-year degrees. Students will also be able to apply for internship and service learning opportunities and explore future career paths.

5 Improve College Retention and Completion

A common trait among many CCCIE member colleges is their emphasis on building a cadre of supporters for immigrant students, regardless of their status, both on campus and in the community. Creating a culture of support is critical to college completion, particularly in the case of undocumented students, who have lived with the fear of being deported and who may feel isolated on campus if they lack access to a supportive community. Community colleges can take a variety of steps to build a culture of support on campus and in their communities.

Recommendations:

- **Promote campus safe zones and empower immigrant students as leaders**
- **Provide a continuum of support services to promote the academic, social, and emotional well-being of undocumented students**
- **Organize campus-wide events to build institutional awareness and support for undocumented students**
- **Facilitate transfer to four-year college and the workplace**

Promote campus safe zones and empower immigrant students as leaders

Colleges can support undocumented students by providing a physical space where students can meet and by partnering with student leaders to build resources for undocumented students. In addition, now more than ever, colleges can collaborate with student advocacy initiatives for DREAMers, whether it's pushing for legislation for in-state tuition and financial aid, leading DACA community outreach and information sessions, and continuing to support the federal DREAM Act. These kinds of collaborations are raising awareness and making a significant difference on campuses and in local communities.

Rio Hondo College has created safe zones on campus where students can meet and where they can obtain legal, financial, and instructional assistance. Students Without Borders is a critical partner in the college's *Achieving the Dream* initiative, a broad-based effort to promote the educational success of undocumented students by building coalitions, conducting community outreach, increasing educational access and scholarship opportunities, and advocating for the federal DREAM Act. The administration at Rio Hondo works closely with Students Without Borders in organizing events for undocumented youth, including campus-wide conferences and college fairs that help undocumented high school students launch educational plans and connect to community and educational resources.



Miami Dade College and **Palm Beach State College** support student advocacy by partnering with the local chapters of Students Working for Equal Rights (SWER), a national student-led organization founded by undocumented immigrant youth that is raising awareness about social justice and equal access to education in local communities. The Kathryn W. Davis Global Education Center, located at Palm Beach State College, collaborates with SWER and the Florida Immigrant Coalition to sponsor community awareness events, dispel myths about the lives of undocumented students, push for Florida in-state tuition legislation and the federal DREAM Act, and, most recently, organize outreach and offer assistance to students eligible for DACA. Similarly, SWER’s work at Miami Dade College has moved into high gear in light of DACA. Student leaders are actively organizing on campus and throughout the community to get as many eligible individuals possible to complete the DACA application. Another student-led initiative at Miami Dade, entitled *High School Community Outreach*, was launched this past summer. The project, funded by Mobilize.org and the Knight Foundation, aims to increase the number of local immigrant students pursuing a college education by creatively using social media and community organizing mechanisms to educate students about options and help them develop college-going plans.

Provide a continuum of support services to promote the academic, social, and emotional well-being of undocumented students

Colleges most successful in serving undocumented students are ones that are working across departmental “silos” and partnering with community organizations to provide a continuum of support services that address the “whole student,” in recognition of the academic, social, and emotional supports needed for a successful college experience. In its work with students and colleges in the California Bay Area, Educators for Fair Consideration (E4FC), a nonprofit organization that helps undocumented students achieve their academic and career goals and

actively contribute to society, notes that one of the biggest gaps in college services is psychological counseling. “In addition to political and institutional barriers, being undocumented carries with it significant emotional, psychological and spiritual challenges. Since there is still little visibility or support for students’ mental well-being, often these traumas can drastically affect academic performance of undocumented students as well as general wellness,” says José Arreola, E4FC community outreach manager. The research supports this observation. Studies have shown how the stresses of excessive work schedules and family responsibilities, coupled with experiences of discrimination, anti-immigrant sentiment, fear of deportation, and financial barriers, have taken its toll on the emotional health and academic performance of undocumented students. In fact, those who persist to college rather than stopping after high school are more likely to experience greater socio-emotional distress and challenges since their postsecondary education will come at a significant cost and will not necessarily guarantee them an entry-level job.³⁶

The DACA policy will hopefully address some of these concerns by encouraging undocumented youth to seek counseling and assistance when pursuing educational opportunities. More and more undocumented students are stepping out of the shadows, by publicly revealing their status at immigrant youth organizing events and sharing their stories on social networking sites in the hopes of inspiring other undocumented youth. While students do not have to reveal their undocumented status—either publicly or privately—in order to take advantage of resources that can help them, the more they confide in trusted teachers and counselors, the more access they will have to needed resources. And the more college counselors understand the emotional and academic struggles of undocumented college students, the better equipped they will be to serve as trusted advisors and advocates and develop efficient strategies to enhance students’ college experiences.³⁷ Colleges that recognize this are building a network of resources on campus and in the community to support undocumented students.



Bluegrass Community and Technical College offers comprehensive support services offered through its Office of Multiculturalism and Inclusion. “We are at the intersection of student support services and academic administration,” notes Erin Howard, the office’s Latino/Hispanic Outreach and Support Services Director. The office assists multicultural students in all processes (admissions, academic advising, college coaching and mentoring, connecting to community services, etc.) during their enrollment at BCTC and facilitates their transfer to a four-year university or to the workforce. “There is a cohesive team at BCTC—faculty and staff have worked together over the past seven years, and we’re a very dedicated group. It started as an informal network, but has become formalized through training and building competencies to support student success. The root of the issue: We have an office that advocates for underrepresented students, including Dreamers,” Howard emphasizes. In addition to her BCTC position, Howard is a volunteer of United We Dream serving on the board of directors and is active nationally and locally in developing educational, financial, and legal resources for undocumented students.

“Our programs serve all students, but we do not shy away from addressing needs of undocumented students. In all programs, we integrate one on one mentoring so we can create individual student/family educational plans. Our goal is to break down the barriers DREAMers face by providing opportunities they can enjoy alongside their documented or US born peers. For both youth groups—documented and undocumented—this is an empowering and enlightening experience.”

—**Erin Howard**, Latino/Hispanic Outreach and Support Services Director at Bluegrass Community and Technical College.

The Multicultural Retention Services Department at **City College of San Francisco**, while open to all students, has developed four distinct programs addressing the diverse academic and social needs of Latino, African-American, Philipino American, and Asian American students. In addition, staff are well-trained to help undocumented students cope with emotional stresses. The programs emphasize one-on-one advising to create individual student educational plans and provide counselors in classroom for specially linked courses.

⇒ *See also how the Davis Global Education Center at Palm Beach State College integrates its activities with other college departments and community partners to provide a full range of support services.*

Organize campus-wide events to build institutional awareness and support for undocumented students

Building support on campus for undocumented students goes beyond one department or division—it depends on a network of students, faculty, staff, and administrators working collaboratively to increase awareness and resources for undocumented students.

The Diversity Committee at **Westchester Community College** organized a campus-wide all-day Diversity Teach-In, consisting of multiple sessions on a variety of social justice themes. One of the panel discussions focused on undocumented students. Held in one of the college’s auditoriums, this standing-room only session attracted over 200 participants. College administrators and faculty provided background information on the challenges faced by undocumented students. A student advocate and member of the Westchester Dream Team Coalition shared her personal experiences and gave an update on New Yorks State’s DREAM

Act legislation to expand financial aid for undocumented students. During the question-and-answer period, varying viewpoints were discussed in an open, candid forum. The event helped to dispel some of the common myths held about undocumented students and galvanized faculty and student supporters of undocumented students. It also increased awareness of services provided by WCC's Gateway Center which houses the college's English Language Institute, a welcoming center to help new students navigate the campus, international and immigrant student services, and other activities that promote increased cultural understanding among immigrant and native-born students.

⇒ *See also how Miami Dade College is raising college and community awareness of the Deferred Action for New Arrivals policy.*

Facilitate transfer to four-year college and the workplace

Colleges can facilitate undocumented students' transitions to four-year institutions and the workplace by providing educational planning and transfer assistance services and by partnering with employers, business groups, and professional organizations to offer internship and career opportunities. For those youth who qualify, DACA opens new possibilities for securing jobs that match their skills and education.

Counselors can encourage students to complete Transfer Admission Guarantee (TAG) agreements if available. These agreements guarantee university admission to well-qualified community college transfer students who meet the requirements and complete all TAG-related procedures.³⁸ Effective facilitation relies also on having accurate data on the experiences of undocumented students once they make the transfer—an area where colleges need to focus more attention. Community colleges have traditionally gathered very little data on the performance or degree/certificate attainment of their immigrant student populations, particularly those who are undocumented. Clearly, collecting data on undocumented students is inherently problematic, given students' sense of risk or fear associated with disclosing their status. Some colleges have developed ways to count the numbers of their enrolled undocumented students, while others arrive at estimates based on students who do not report Social Security numbers. But even if colleges count their undocumented student populations, the lack of data tracking their experiences and outcomes limits colleges' ability to respond with effective programs and services.

The Transfer Center at **Bluegrass Community and Technical College** assists all students with the application process for any one of Kentucky's state colleges and universities. Transfer advisers from Kentucky's universities maintain offices at the Transfer Center. In partnership with the University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University and Eastern Kentucky University, BCTC offers unique transfer transition programs which allow all students who have completed 24 credit hours and maintained a 2.0 GPA the opportunity to take four classes at the university to which they plan to transfer paying BCTC tuition rates. To better track the transfer and completion rates of all students including undocumented students participating in transfer transition programs and the Latino Leadership and College Experience Camp, the BCTC Latino/Hispanic Outreach Office will be utilizing the National Student Clearinghouse beginning in Fall 2012. In March 2013, the office will host the Leadership Conference for Latino college students, which will provide workshops in career counseling and networking skills for all students especially those benefiting from DACA.

Vanessa, originally from Caracas, Venezuela, arrived in this country when she was 13 years old. She graduated from high school as a Summa Cum Laude, and from Miami-Dade's Honors College with a 3.83 GPA and Highest Honors and Distinction. Her major is in Mechanical Engineering and she is also interested in Environmental Engineering, with plans to design and manufacture the world's first sustainable roller coaster. While at Honors College, she was President of the Youth for Environmental Sustainability Club (Y.E.S) and worked with the GreenWay Campaign. Vanessa has faced numerous challenges. She was in a political asylum case that was denied several times and subsequently put in removal proceedings. Ever since she came to the U.S., she has not seen one of her sisters, who still lives in Venezuela. Though she was accepted to all six universities to which she applied, she could not afford any of them even with scholarships and had to stop going to school for a year. She is currently taking courses at Miami Dade College, North Campus and expects to transfer to the University of Florida next spring.



Vanessa is now an active member of Students Working for Equal Rights, after stepping back for a year for fear that her involvement might attract immigration officials. She volunteers at the group's weekly clinics to help students apply for the new deferred action program, and she is hopeful that her own application for deferred action will soon be approved.

"Deferred Action means the first step to a calmer and free life. I no longer would have to fear immigration, I would be able to get a job and pay for my school...My dreams are for all undocumented youth to have a fair shot in this country that has already invested so much in us; for us to be finally able to give back to the community, to the economy, and to our families."

Miami Dade College has been a leader in engaging its students in formal education planning that not only guides students' course succession as it relates to their area of study and career aspirations, but also takes into full consideration the course requirements and prerequisites of the transfer institution. While transfer advisement services are open to all students, undocumented students in particular benefit from the informal and formal liaisons the college has formed to facilitate the smooth transfer of its associate's degree graduates to universities. With some 80 articulation agreements with colleges and universities all over the nation, in addition to Florida's State Universities, MDC's undocumented students have the advantage of knowing first hand with direct intervention by transfer advisors, the pertinent admission requirements and opportunities that are particular to undocumented students at transfer institutions. Annual college fairs hosted at MDC's eight campuses provide the benefit of face-to-face interactions among students and transfer institution admission officials.

Rio Hondo College participates in the El Monte Pledge Compact, a partnership with the El Monte Union High School District (EMUHSD) and four-year universities that develops seamless pipeline from high school to college to university. Rio Hondo and EMUHSD have signed Memorandums of Understanding with two four-year institutions, University of California, Irvine and California State University, Los Angeles. This partnership provides official guarantees for eligible EMUHSD students to gain one-time priority registration at Rio Hondo College and/or admission to and/or guaranteed transfer to UC Irvine and Cal State Los Angeles. High school seniors in 2010-2011 were the first beneficiaries of this program. Rio Hondo counselors ensure that eligible undocumented students take advantage of these transfer guarantees and, as a result, have facilitated the successful transfer of many undocumented students.

Dream Summer Internships

In 2011, the UCLA Labor Center's Dream Resource Center in partnership with the United We Dream Network developed Dream Summer (www.dreamresourcecenter.org/2012), the first national internship and scholarship program for DREAM Act student leaders across the country. Over 100 leaders were placed full-time for ten weeks with social justice and labor organizations where they gained invaluable experience, leadership skills, and organizing knowledge. Internships were created across the nation, in California, Texas, Nevada, New Mexico, Wisconsin, Connecticut, Georgia, Alabama, and in New York City, Boston, Denver. Interns attended an opening and closing retreat to participate in training workshops and meet with community and legislative leaders. Dream Summer interns also get help in applying for a \$5,000 scholarship to continue their educations at the end of the internship program. The initiative continued in 2012 and plans are underway for Dream Summer 2013.

Conclusion

The Obama administration has set a national goal for increasing the proportion of college graduates by 50 percent over the next decade. Clearly, this will only be achieved if all students are given the opportunity to enroll and the support to succeed in college—including the tens of thousands of undocumented students nationwide who aspire to a college education. The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program represents a historic milestone that raises hopes for eventual passage of DREAM Act legislation and broader immigration reform. The deferred action initiative may also encourage many more undocumented students to access and enroll in community colleges in an open environment, and it represents an opportunity for community colleges to be more proactive in addressing their needs.

Community colleges currently play a key role in promoting increased educational access and attainment for undocumented students. Though they face challenges in the current legal, fiscal, and political environment, community colleges are committed to serving undocumented immigrant youth and recognize their educational success is vital to reaching our national college completion goals and contributes to both economic growth and social vibrancy.

CCCIE, as a national voice and advocate for immigrant education, is committed to sharing the promising practices in this report so colleges can be effective in their response to DACA and in promoting the educational success of their growing undocumented student population. This report represents a significant step in profiling the exemplary practices of community colleges that are improving the educational prospects of undocumented students. But, with the college completion agenda as a national imperative, there is more work to be done. CCCIE plays a critical role in leveraging the strengths of community colleges and connecting them with one another and with other key stakeholders. Through its efforts to disseminate promising practices, post web resources, provide technical assistance, and forge critical relationships among key stakeholders, CCCIE will continue to build resources that support community colleges as they help undocumented immigrant youth achieve their potential.

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In-State Tuition Laws and Policies for DREAM Youth

State	Year of Passage	Law or Policy	Access to in-state tuition	Access to State Fin. Aid	Years of HS Required	Comments
California	2001	Law	YES	NO	3 YEARS	Provisions allow students that meet the in-state tuition requirements (spelled out in AB 540 passed in 2001) to apply for and receive specified state financial aid administered by California's public colleges and universities. The types of aid these students would be eligible for include: Board of Governors (BOG) Fee Waiver and Institutional Student Aid. Student aid program administered by the attending college or university (i.e. State University Grant, UC Grant). Students that meet the in-state tuition requirements can also apply for and receive Cal Grants by California's public colleges and universities.
Connecticut	2011	Law	YES	NO	4 YEARS	Requires undocumented students to sign an affidavit stating they are seeking citizenship before receiving in-state tuition.
Illinois	2003; revised 2011	Law	YES	YES, 2011 bill established scholarship fund	3 YEARS	SB 2185, signed into law in August 2012, creates a DREAM Fund Commission, that is funded by private contributions. The fund provides scholarships to students, including children of immigrants; makes College Savings Pool and pre-paid tuition available to ITIN filers, requires that professional development for school counselors address needs of and opportunities for children of immigrants. (National Immigration Law Center)
Kansas	2004	Law	YES	NO	3 YEARS	
Kentucky	2003	Policy, see comments	YES	NO	1 YEAR	KY's Council for Postsecondary Education (CPE) amended the states regulations governing college admissions and residency to allow undocumented immigrants who graduate from KY High Schools access to in-state tuition. Because it is a policy, institutions may decide not to follow it because there is no penalty for not following it. Nonetheless, all 8 of KY's public universities and a majority of the state's 16 public colleges follow the policy. Policy is found in CPE 13 KARS 2:045. Students can apply for institutional scholarships.
Maryland	2011	Law	YES, see comments	NO	3 YEARS	The Maryland DREAM Act passed both the State Senate (SB 167) and the House (HB 470); however, its implementation is pending, subject to vote results on a public referendum scheduled for November 2012. The Maryland DREAM Act would authorize in-state tuition benefits at local community colleges to undocumented students who have graduated from public high school in that county and whose parents can prove they have paid Maryland taxes for at least 3 years. After two years, they would have the option of transferring to a state university at in-state tuition rates.
Minnesota	2007	Law	NO, see comments	NO	NONE	Minnesota eliminated non-resident rates in a number of public colleges in 2007, allowing anyone to qualify for flat-rate tuition.
Nebraska	2006	Law	YES	NO	3 YEARS	
New Mexico	2005	Law	YES	YES	1 YEAR	
New York	2002	Law	YES	NO	2 YEARS	
Oklahoma	2003	Law	YES	NO	2 YEARS	In 2007, Oklahoma ended its in-state tuition benefit and state financial assistance for unauthorized immigrants. But was again passed with HB 1804 allowing students access to in-state tuition but not financial aid.
Rhode Island	2011	Policy, see comments	YES	NO	3 YEARS	Measure approved by the Governor's Commission on Higher Education allows DREAMers who attended high school in Rhode Island for at least three years and who have graduated high school or received an equivalent degree to pay in-state tuition.
Texas	2001	Law	YES	YES	3 YEARS	
Utah	2002	Law	YES	NO	3 YEARS	
Washington	2003	Law	YES	NO	3 YEARS	

Source: United We Dream, Dream Educational Empowerment Project, 2012.

Notes on 2011 laws/policies that restrict access to higher education: A bill in Indiana denying in-state tuition, scholarships, grants, and financial aid to undocumented youth became law in 2011. Wisconsin had extended in-state tuition in 2009 to Dream youth via the 2009 budget bill. However, this was revoked in the 2011 state legislative session and was not included in the new budget. Colorado considered a bill for in-state tuition but it was defeated by the Senate in 2011. Prior to 2011, only South Carolina had enacted a law banning undocumented students from enrolling in higher education. In 2011, a bill in Alabama that restricts undocumented youth from enrolling in higher education was enacted but is currently enjoined. Georgia's Board of Regents voted to deny enrollment to undocumented students who are accepted by the top five institutions in the state's university system.



Supporting Educational Access for Undocumented Youth Through Deferred Action: 10 Things Community College Educators Can Do

Community colleges must be prepared to help their current and prospective immigrant students who may qualify for the Deferred Action policy. The new policy stops deportation and grants temporary relief to certain undocumented young immigrants who came to the US as children and have since been pursuing educational opportunities. Individuals who qualify under the new program will be allowed to remain in the US and to apply for work authorization.

Call to Action: CCCIE has prepared this one-page toolkit of resources and recommendations to help educators launch effective outreach campaigns and prepare staff to provide clear and comprehensive information to assist students. We hope the following strategies will be helpful to educators and community partners in their efforts to support immigrant youth.

1. **Educate yourself about Deferred Action.** See U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services' updated **FAQs, guidelines, and resources** at www.uscis.gov/childhoodarrivals. See also updated **FAQs** at **National Immigration Law Center** (www.nilc.org) and **United We Dream** (www.unitedwedream.org).
2. **Train all key front line staff** (admissions, registrar, financial aid, counseling, etc.) so that they understand Deferred Action and can support students in their requests for transcripts and other relevant records.
3. **Offer accurate and unbiased information** about undocumented individuals to the campus community to dispel myths and build support for access to higher education. View [Guides for College Counselors](#) created by Educators for Fair Consideration. (www.e4fc.org)
4. **Designate key staff as Deferred Action "specialists"** so that eligible youth know who to go to for accurate information and guidance.
5. **Facilitate connections** between student clubs and local immigrant advocacy organizations to create additional support for enrolled and college bound youth. (See www.unitedwedream.org for a list of student led advocacy groups in several states.)
6. **Reach out to area immigrant serving community based organizations** (CBOs) and lawyers to offer support in the planning and coordination of information forums and deferred action clinics that promote reputable legal assistance. (Visit www.uscis.gov/avoidscams for tools to help avoid immigration services scams and to find accredited [legal services](#) in your community.) Invite high school students, parents, counselors and college students as well as the community.
7. **Convene or participate in meetings** with key personnel from immigrant serving CBOs, K-12 school systems & others to create a cohesive plan of information sharing and dissemination about the Deferred Action policy and implementation.
8. **Include undocumented students** as part of these forums, to share their stories, and encourage other students to seek assistance for Deferred Action. Showcase their stories in any media outreach campaigns and press releases.
9. **Create a webpage on the college's website** for updates on Deferred Action policies and information resources. Post FAQs and links to federal, state, and community resources on these pages and other college social media outlets. Include information on GED programs in your community.
10. **Keep connected with CCCIE** (www.cccie.org) for [resources and updates on Deferred Action](#) as it pertains to educational attainment and access to community colleges and adult basic education.

Selected Resources

- Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (<http://aaldef.org>) provides Fact Sheets on Deferred Action on Early Childhood Arrivals (DACA) in Chinese, Korean, Bengali, Urdu, and English; free legal clinics to individuals who qualify under DACA, and information on Emerging Voices, a new group for undocumented Asian American youth. See also AALDEF's Educational Equity program.
- College Board (www.collegeboard.org) has released A Repository of Resources for Undocumented Students by Alejandra Rincón, which compiles currently available resources for students and educators in states that have passed in-state tuition laws.
- Dream Resource Center (<http://www.dreamresourcecenter.org>), a project of the UCLA Labor Center, promotes equal access to education by developing educational resources, leadership tools, and support mechanisms for immigrant and undocumented students and educates the public about national and local policies.
- Educators for Fair Consideration (www.e4fc.org) develops educational, scholarship, and legal resources specifically for undocumented students, their parents, and educators and counselors that work with college-bound and current undocumented college students. See the Step-By-Step Guide for DREAMers applying for DACA and Beyond Deferred Action: Long-Term Immigration Remedies Every Dreamer Should Know About.
- Immigration Policy Center (www.immigrationpolicy.org), the research and policy arm of American Immigration Council, reports on the Economic Benefits of Granting Deferred Action to Unauthorized Immigrants Brought to US as Youth and Who and Where the DREAMers Are, a demographic analysis of DREAMers who might benefit from the DACA initiative, broken down by nationality and age at the national, state, and congressional district levels.
- Mexican American Legal Defense Education Fund's (www.maldef.org) annually updated Scholarship Resource Guide includes scholarships that may not require Social Security number or inquire about immigration status. MALDEF now offers DREAM Act Student Activist scholarships of up to \$5,000 each for college and graduate students.
- National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy (<http://www.migrationinformation.org/integration/>) of the Migration Policy Institute has developed a Fact Sheet on Relief from Deportation: Demographic Profile of the DREAMers Potentially Eligible under the Deferred Action Policy, which offers estimates on the age, educational attainment, state of residence, country and region of birth, workforce participation, and gender of prospective beneficiaries. See also the 2010 report <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/DREAM-Insight-July2010.pdf>
- National Forum on Higher Education for the Public Good (<http://thenationalforum.org/>) has released *Reconciling Federal, State, and Institutional Policies Determining Educational Access for Undocumented Students: Implications for Professional Practice*, available at National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (www.nasfaa.org), along with other fact sheets and an interactive state map: <http://bit.ly/reconcilingpolicies>.
- National Immigration Law Center's (www.nilc.org) provides updated FAQs on DACA (developed in collaboration with United We Dream) and numerous resources and updates on in-state tuition and state financial aid (including state-by-state tables and maps on state bills), and the DREAM Act. Available at <http://www.nilc.org/highered.html>.

- Pew Hispanic Center (www.pewhispanic.org) provides detailed estimates of potential DACA beneficiaries in the report [Up to 1.7 Million Unauthorized Immigrant Youth May Benefit from New Deportation Rules](#). See also various reports on unauthorized immigration, including national and state trends at <http://www.pewhispanic.org/topics/unauthorized-immigration>.
- Scholarships A-Z (www.scholarshipsaz.org) provides scholarships and other resources for students, parents and educators through online and community interactions, in order to make higher education accessible to all regardless of immigration status. The site also offers [tutorials](#) on writing scholarship applications and resumes and [tips](#) on writing scholarship essays. Staff will also assist students in making revisions.
- United We Dream (<http://unitedwedream.org>) provides a [Deferred Action Guide](#) and interactive tools to locate [UWD deferred action clinics](#) and [immigrant student advocacy groups](#). See also information on the [Dream Educational Empowerment Project](#) which features educational materials and webinars for students and teachers, including information on GED enrollment for DREAMers who dropped out of high school.
- Urban Institute (<http://www.urban.org>) conducts policy research and analysis on social and economic issues. Immigration demographics and trends, policy, economic and social impacts, and information on undocumented immigrants available at <http://www.urban.org/immigrants/index.cfm> and <http://www.urban.org/publications/900898.html>.
- We Own the Dream (www.weownthedream.org) a national campaign of 24 organizations to help DREAMers take advantage of applying for DACA and work permits, provides numerous resources, including an online screening tool that helps individuals understand their eligibility for deferred action, an interactive guide for [finding legal help](#) organized by state and county, and information on [DACA workshops](#) being held around the country.



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