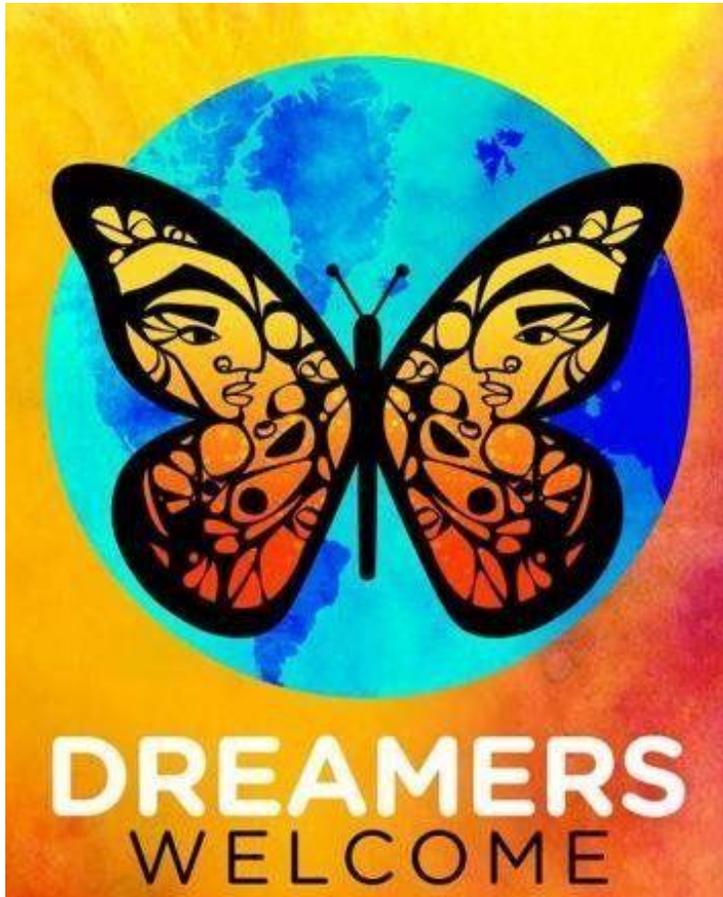


# The College Process for Undocumented Students

By: Andrea (Navarro) Keenan  
for MEFA

10/7/2020



Today's agenda:

Part 1 – 5 minutes  
Introduction

Part 2 – 35 min  
Presentation

Part 3 – 15 min  
Open Q&A

# Part 1

Introduction



## About me

Director Of College and Career  
Counseling at Excel Academy  
Charter HS in East Boston

9 years of counseling/advising  
experience

Mexican-American

Immigrant, first-generation

Ally and Advocate



- It is an important part of your life – it affects so much of our day-to-day lives. But **YOU ARE SO MUCH MORE THAN YOUR STATUS.**
- You are your goals. Your likes. Your dislikes. Your strengths, your passions, your people, your pride, your work, your stories, your beliefs, your fight, your voice... and so much more.
- As a counselor, I often tell students and families that a complex immigration status or no status... makes it so that we simply have to get **MORE CREATIVE** with the ways in which we work to achieve your goals.

You are not  
defined by your  
immigration  
status

## Many roads... Many destinations

There is no RIGHT PATHWAY to reach your goals. Find people you trust, and ask for help. Share this presentation with people you know that may Benefit from this information.

Get creative and learn about resources! You are not alone.



# Part 2

What you need to know about applying to College – some of the most common questions.



The image features a white background with two large teal geometric shapes. On the left, a teal triangle points towards the center. On the right, a teal trapezoid points towards the center. The text is centered between these shapes.

Can undocumented  
people apply to  
college?

Yes. Yes. YES! There is **no federal law** that prohibits the admission of undocumented immigrants to U.S. colleges.

Federal or state laws **do not require students to prove citizenship** in order to **enter private** U.S. institutions of higher education. Some public campuses have differing policies though...

The tricky thing often becomes... the question of how to pay for it...



The Larger Context:  
Important statuses and terms. Do you know your status?

Knowledge is power.

- US National
- Naturalized citizen
- Statuses that grant I-94s
- Asylum granted
- Asylum pending
- Refugee
- TPS
- Permanent resident
- Conditional permanent resident
- T Visa
- U Visa
- J and F visas
- Other temporary Visas
- DACA
- Family sponsored visas
- VAWA Self petitioner
- Special Immigrant Juvenile Status
- Undocumented

The larger  
Context –

*highlighted  
statuses are  
eligible for  
Federal Aid*

- US National
- Naturalized citizen
- I-94 statuses
- Asylum granted
- Asylum pending
- Refugee status granted
- TPS
- Permanent resident
- Conditional permanent resident
- T Visa
- U Visa
- J and F visas
- Other temporary Visas
- DACA
- Family sponsored visas
- VAWA Self petitioner
- Special Immigrant Juvenile Status
- Undocumented

# Differences between cards

Both these statuses give the holder a **USCIS #** (Formerly called the **A#**, which is still used on the FAFSA.)

Permanent Resident Card



Can receive Federal financial aid!

Employment Authorization Card

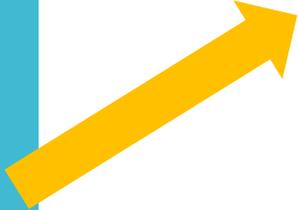


Does not qualify for federal or state aid BUT may be eligible for in-state tuition. Check your campuses's policies!

What does this mean for applying for financial aid ...

FAFSA?

CSS Profile?



**Only students with a SSN may apply.** If a student filling out FAFSA has one or two undocumented parents, the parent(s) can insert 000-00-0000 in lieu of a SSN.  
(DACA and TPS: For Institutional aid only/ save SAR for some private scholarships)



**All Students may apply.** This application is a good opportunity for you to share your status - "Explanation/Special Circumstances Section." For Institutional aid only.



## What's your status?

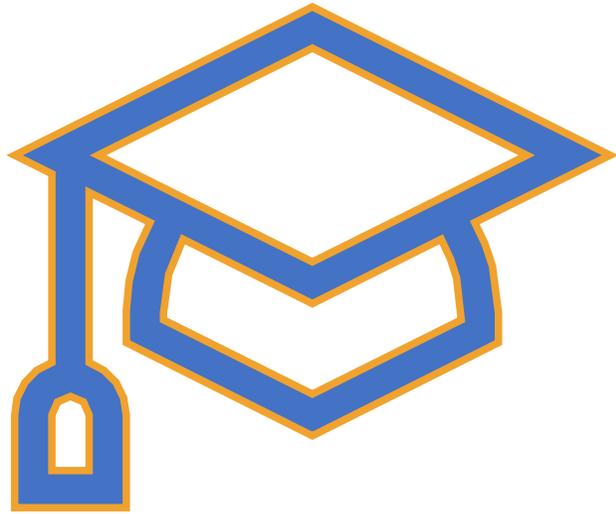
**Nobody** should EVER ASK YOU what your immigration status is. Especially in High School.

But... there are certain moments where it could benefit you to self-disclose. It's scary, but if you know how to do it, you will stay safe AND get the help and resources you need. (like application help, scholarships, legal resources)

Who can you self-disclose to? Why should you self-disclose?

# Self-disclosing

- To colleges. Yes! It's safe! More on this later...
- If you feel comfortable, you can self-disclose to your school counselor. Your counselor can be a good resource for you, especially if you need help applying to college. Don't do it alone!
- A trusted immigration attorney.



So now that I know some basics, what else should I know about applying to college?

# Tactical information for students

---

Institutional Aid (financial aid from the colleges) may be available. Policies vary from school to school, but some may give students merit awards.

---

**Be honest about your immigration status.** Colleges are prohibited from releasing information unless under court order. Your information is protected by FERPA (A Federal Act)

---

Connect with someone in the Admissions office/scholarship offices who works with Multi-Cultural Students. Don't get discouraged if someone at a college doesn't know the answer... keep trying and ask your high school counseling office for help.

---

You might be considered "Domestic" for Admissions and "International" for Financial Aid at colleges. Very confusing!!

In Massachusetts...



## Massachusetts Department of Higher Education

One Ashburton Place, Room 1401  
Boston, MA 02108-1696

TEL (617) 994-6950  
FAX (617) 727-0955  
WEB [www.mass.edu](http://www.mass.edu)

Richard M. Freeland, *Commissioner*  
Charles F. Desmond, *Chairman*  
*Massachusetts Board of Higher Education*

### **FACT SHEET: IN-STATE TUITION FOR DACA BENEFICIARIES**

- Earlier this year, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) made a change in federal immigration policy regarding deportation enforcement for young immigrants that meet certain criteria, known as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). This policy states that the federal government will "defer action" or not prosecute deportation cases for qualifying individuals for a period of two years from the time their application for "deferred action" is approved. If approved, DACA beneficiaries will receive work permits in addition to deferred action status.
- In accordance with this change in federal policy, the Administration has determined that under the existing Board of Higher Education policy, DACA beneficiaries are eligible for in-state tuition at our 29 public campuses as long as they meet the Board's other residency requirements for those institutions.
- These students are already allowed to attend public campuses; the only issue is whether they pay in-state rates or out-of-state rates. In any scenario, students must be accepted based on their academic record.

Other statuses  
who may  
qualify for in-  
state tuition

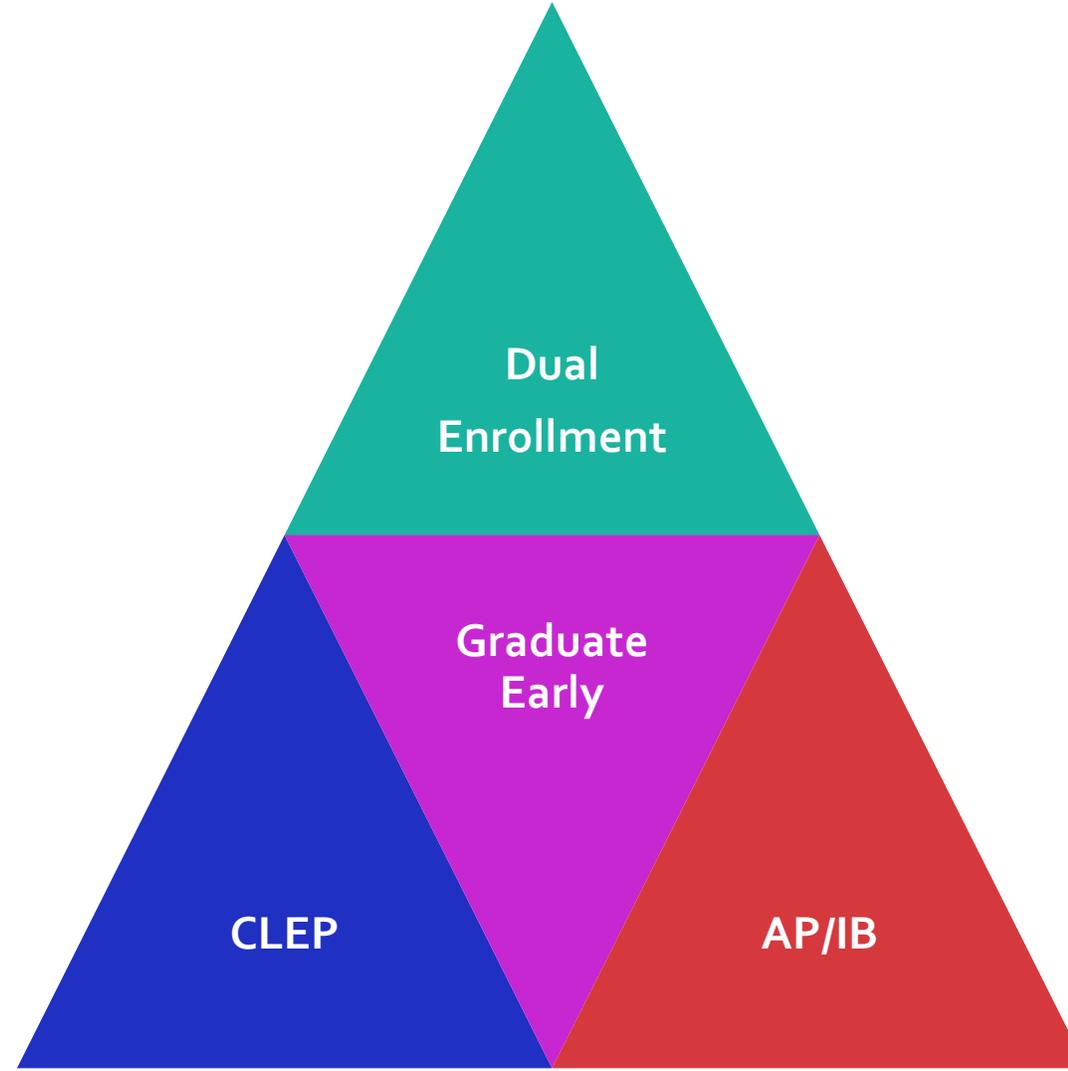


Temporary Protective Status (TPS)



If in doubt, always ask a public college's Admissions office if a student qualifies for in-state tuition.

Tips while in  
High School...  
Did you know  
you could get  
college credit  
in High  
School?



How do I figure out  
where to apply to?





What are my interests? What makes me happy?



Have I thought about my future career? Is there a college program or other program that will help me prepare?



Does my ideal career path need a work permit? Do I have one? If not, have I considered going to a legal screening to see if there are any options for me? Are there ways for me to become self-employed person for my chosen career?



What about financial support? Have I been working and saving? Will I have support from others? If not – there may be **private scholarships** you can apply for!

Ask yourself these 4 questions

## Scholarship tips for undocumented students

(or students with  
complex  
immigration  
statuses)

- Check the “eligibility criteria for a Scholarship.” AND THE FINE PRINT. Does it mention that you must be a citizen or a permanent resident? If not, then it MAY be open to students with other immigration statuses. Always double check and ask your counselor for help checking if you’re unsure.
- Always meet the deadlines.
- Check for both NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS and LOCAL Scholarships. Do you know the difference?

## National scholarships

- Will be open to students in all or many states
- More students apply
- Often times, larger sums of money, but more competitive

## Local scholarships

- Accepts applications from applicants who are residents of specific towns near you
- Less students apply
- Often, smaller amounts of money (still great! Every little bit helps!)

Some  
scholarship  
resources (not  
exhaustive)

1. MALDEF's Scholarship Resource Guide:

<https://www.maldef.org/resources/scholarship-resource-guide/>

A great, inclusive list of scholarships that do not require citizenship status to apply.

2. Harvard College's Act on a Dream Scholarship

Database: <https://www.actonadream.org/scholarship-database>

3. Different states have their own resource guides via community based organizations- [check out this guide as an example of the La Plaza organization in Indiana](#)

4. Immigrants rising's scholarship resource guide PDF for undergraduates:

<https://immigrantsrising.org/resource/undergraduate-scholarships/>

and

<https://immigrantsrising.org/2020scholarships/>



3.8-4.0 = Great job! This is a great GPA! Your Essay, demonstrated interest, and interview becomes VERY important. Is your application telling your story of who you are? (including and NOT including your immigration status\*\*\*)



4.0+ - the biggest hurdle here is making sure that you and your families ASK questions! Being first-generation AND an immigrant is hard. People will be helping you, and also make sure YOUR voice is Heard. What is important to you? BUT ALSO, take RISKS! 😊



Read lists and ask your counselor for recent “undocfriendly colleges”

I have a GPA of  
3.8 or higher -  
what are my  
options?

# My GPA is between 3.0 and 3.7, what are my options?

- Think about “strategic undermatching” and colleges that give “merit aid” scholarships
- Can you live at home? If so, saving \$ on Room and Board can be the difference-maker
- Do you have relatives in other parts of the state or the country?
  - Ex. California, smaller private colleges who give good merit aid
- Spend time getting feedback on your college applications and your essay 😊



**YOU CAN STILL  
MAKE YOUR  
GOALS A  
REALITY!**



**College is GREAT!**  
And also, there are  
so many types of  
colleges –  
certificates, 2-year  
programs, 4-year  
programs! Ready  
for a variety of  
GPAs.



**This is true  
regardless of GPA:  
but always think  
about this  
question:**

**WHAT ARE MY  
CAREER  
ASPIRATIONS?  
What are my  
skills? What are  
my interests?**



**2-4 year program  
in MA: DUET,  
Endicott Boston,  
BFIT, Quincy  
College, UMASS  
Online**



**If you have a *work  
permit: Think  
about vocational  
programs, career  
and technical  
apprenticeships.*  
Example: Year up**



***If you're thinking  
about career  
education, did you  
know that if you  
don't have a work  
permit, you can  
still work as an  
"independent  
contractor"?***

**What if my GPA isn't "very high"... what are my options?**

The background is a complex, colorful graphic. It features a map of Europe in a dark blue-green hue. To the left, a large white dove is shown in flight against a red background. Below the dove is a white peace symbol. The text 'PEACE MIGRATES' is written in large, bold, white capital letters at the bottom. The overall style is reminiscent of mid-20th-century political posters. There are also various geometric patterns and symbols scattered throughout the design.

# Part 3

Q&A and resources

# What else?



**1. Advocate:** If want to join other immigrant student advoates, join your local advocacy organization. In Massachusetts – it's SIM! Draw strength from owning and telling your story.



**2. Organize** other undocumented/immigrant youth in your school to watch this presentation or read more about resources. Help each other and spread the information! 😊



**3. Seek out legal resources** for you and your family. There may be options for you!

MIRA Coalition has a registry of legal agencies in Massachusetts.

The City of Boston has immigration clinics for free legal screenings.

Stay Up to date  
and know YOUR  
RIGHTS.

<https://www.ilrc.org/red-cards>

## KNOW YOUR RIGHTS: WHAT TO DO IF IMMIGRATION OR THE POLICE COME TO YOUR DOOR



### STOP AND THINK TWICE WHEN SOMEONE COMES TO YOUR DOOR

You're not normally required to open the door to anyone. Immigration and the police can't come into your home without a warrant signed by a judge.



### REMAIN SILENT

You have the right to remain silent. Immigration can use anything you say against you.



### STAY CALM AND DO NOT RUN

Use your phone to take photos and notes about the raid, but stay calm and do not run.



### ASK TO SPEAK TO YOUR ATTORNEY AND THINK TWICE BEFORE SIGNING ANYTHING

Do not sign forms you don't understand or don't want to sign. A lawyer who knows deportation defense may be able to help you fight your case.

\*This information is not intended as legal advice.



iAmerica has a list of legal services if you need a lawyer.  
Visit iAmerica at: [iAmerica.org/LegalHelp](https://www.iamerica.org/LegalHelp)

## Q&A resources

- John and Abigail Adams Scholarship in MA:  
<https://www.masslegalhelp.org/immigration/higher-education-rights>
  - Undocumented students unfortunately, are not eligible 😞
  - Keep searching for other types of private scholarships
- This is the program that came up, for students in Massachusetts!  
<https://duet.org/>
  - Very undocu-friendly!

# Sources

- <http://www.iacac.org/undocumented/>
- <http://www.mass.edu/aboutus/documents/2012-11%20DACA%20In-state%20Tuition%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>
- <http://www.bls.gov/>
- <http://professionals.collegeboard.com/profdownload/young-lives-on-hold-college-board.pdf>
- <http://www.doleta.gov/wioa/>
- [http://e4fc.org/images/GIN\\_NACAC\\_SENSITIVESUBJECTS.pdf](http://e4fc.org/images/GIN_NACAC_SENSITIVESUBJECTS.pdf)
- <http://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/consideration-deferred-action-childhood-arrivals-daca>
- <http://www.nacacnet.org/research/KnowledgeCenter/Documents/UndocumentedStudentUniversityResources.pdf>
- <http://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/focus/supporting-undocumented-youth.pdf>
- <http://ecs.force.com/mbdata/mbprofallRT?Rep=DE14A>
- <http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/special-reports/two-years-and-counting-assessing-growing-power-daca>
- United We Dream's DEEP curriculum
- MIRA coalition