Connecting Undocumented Students to College Access Opportunities

MEFA's Financial Aid Training for School Counselors and College Access Professionals

By: Jodi Then and Andrea Navarro
• Definitions and Status Descriptions
• Federal, State, and Institutional Policies
• Specific Strategies and Opportunities
• Resources
• Case Study
• Questions and comments
Differences in immigration status
What is a “Documented” Student?

- U.S. citizens or nationals
- U.S. permanent residents (I-551, I-151, or I-551c)
- Eligible non-citizens
I-94 (Arrival-Departure Record) Given out by DHS:

- Persons granted asylum
- Persons paroled into the U.S. for at least one year
- Refugees
- Battered immigrants, qualified aliens and their designated children
- Conditional entrants
- Cuban-Haitian entrants

T- Visa:

- Victims of human trafficking
Other “Documented” Statuses

- Family unity status
- Temporary residents
- Non-immigrant visas, such as work, students, tourists, and foreign government officials.
- **TPS** (Temporary Protective Status)
- **D.A.C.A** (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals)

But NOT eligible for Federal Financial Aid

For further detail, and information on specific status concerns, consult **Volume 1, Chapter 2** of the Federal Student Aid Handbook on [http://ifap.ed.gov/ifap/byAwardYear.jsp?type=fsa_handbook&awardyear=2015-2016](http://ifap.ed.gov/ifap/byAwardYear.jsp?type=fsa_handbook&awardyear=2015-2016)
Differences

Permanent Resident Card

Employment Authorization Card

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

By definition, an undocumented person is a foreign national who:

(1) entered the United States without inspection or with fraudulent documents;

or

(2) entered legally as a nonimmigrant but then violated the terms of his or her status and remained in the United States without authorization.

-National Immigration Law Center
The U.S., by the numbers

- 11.2 million Undocumented immigrants of all ages living in the United States
- 2.1 million Undocumented students in the United States potentially eligible for most recently proposed federal DREAM Act (S. 729 in the 111th Congress)
- 1.1 million Undocumented children under the age of 18 living in the United States
- 65,000 Undocumented students who have lived in the United States for five or more years graduating from high school each year
- 7,000 – 13,000 Undocumented students enrolled in college throughout the United States
The U.S., by the numbers (in millions)

- U. immigrants of all ages in the U.S.
- U. Students potentially eligible for most recently proposed federal Dream Act.
- U. Children under the age of 18
- U. Students who have lived in the U.S. for >5 ea. Year
- U. Students enrolled in College
The DREAM Act

- Development,
- Relief, and
- Education for
- Alien
- Minors

What is Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals?

http://www.uscis.gov/es/acciondiferida

Immigration policy as an Executive Action, that allows certain undocumented immigrants who entered the country before their 16th birthday and before June 2007 to receive a renewable two-year work permit and exemption from deportation.
What is Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals?

You may request DACA if you:

- **Were under the age of 31 as of June 15, 2012;**
- Came to the United States before reaching your 16th birthday;
- Have continuously resided in the United States since June 15, 2007, up to the present time;
- Were physically present in the United States on June 15, 2012, and at the time of making your request for consideration of deferred action with USCIS;
- Had no lawful status on June 15, 2012;
- Are currently in school, have graduated or obtained a certificate of completion from high school, have obtained a general education development (GED) certificate, or are an honorably discharged veteran of the Coast Guard or Armed Forces of the United States; and
- Have not been convicted of a felony, significant misdemeanor, or three or more other misdemeanors, and do not otherwise pose a threat to national security or public safety.

http://www.uscis.gov/es/acciondiferida
Some local organizations may offer FREE DACA clinics, just like similar citizenship application clinics. In addition, always refer students and families to the official USCIS website for the most up-to-date forms and information. **USCIS also warns against scams.**
Impact on Admissions
Admissions Policies

- **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 U.S. institutions of higher education (private.) Some public campuses have differing policies.
International vs. Undocumented

• International Students
  – J1 or F1 Visa required
  – Separate application process
  – Must show bank statement as proof of affordability

• Undocumented Students
  – No Visa required
  – Same application as domestic student
  – Not required to show income information
Institutional Policies

- Institutional Aid may be available. Policies vary from school to school, but some may give students merit awards.

- Be honest about immigration status. Colleges are prohibited from releasing information unless under court order.

- Connect with someone in the Admissions office who works with Multi-Cultural Students or International Students to ask about scholarship opportunities.

- The student might be considered “Domestic” for Admissions and “International” for Financial Aid.

Source: http://e4fc.org/images/GIN_NACAC_SENSITIVESUBJECTS.pdf
Impact on financial aid
Federal Policy – None for DACA/TPS and Financial Aid

FINANCIAL OPTIONS for UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS by STATE

- **no law granting in-state tuition**
- offer in-state tuition AND financial aid
- offer in-state tuition ONLY
- ban in-state tuition by statute or regulation
- ban enrollment

* Offered state tuition but rescinded in 2011

** Offers Dreamers Scholarship, but no financial aid

Current Policies vary by state
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.
How to get the in-state tuition benefit

• In order to benefit from In-State Tuition, show the Admissions Office:

1) Copy of the USCIS Letter received in the mail confirming their Status. “Notice of Action” Form I-797C

2) Copy of their new Social Security Card

3) Copy of their Work Authorization Card (looks similar to the Permanent Resident card)

This card also provides the holder with an A# though the legal status are different from a permanent resident.
What does this mean for the…

FAFSA?

CSS Profile?

Only students with a SSN may apply. (DACA and TPS) 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. For Institutional aid/SAR for Private scholarships.

All Students may apply. Encourage your students to be honest about their status in the “Explanation/Special Circumstances Section.” For Institutional aid only.
Strategies
Strategy #1 - The Case for a Certificate

Earnings of U.S. Workforce by Education

- Graduate degree: $76,000
- Bachelor's degree: $54,300
- Associate's degree: $42,088
- Certificate: $34,946
- Some college, no degree: $34,624
- High school graduate: $29,202
- High school dropout: $20,480

Source: Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP)
Strategy #2

• Complete a degree as quickly and cheaply as possible
Most Transfer Students Enroll in Public Institutions

- Public 4-Year, Less Selective: 56%
- Public 4-Year, Highly Selective: 16%
- Private Nonprofit: 20%
- Private For-Profit: 8%

Community College Research Center, January 2015, What We Know About Transfer By: Davis Jenkins & John Fink
Challenges

“The inability to transfer credits across two to four-year sectors is the primary impediment to the timely graduation of community college transfer students.

The more credits a student loses…the less likely they are to graduate with a bachelor’s degree.”

(Creating a Unified System of Transfer, Commonwealth of MA)
What losing 13 credits costs*

- Community College
  - Cost of Tuition and Fees = $146/credit
  - $146 x 13 credits = $1,898

Flagship State University
Cost of Tuition and Fees = $415/credit*

$415 x 13 credits = $5,395

Total = $7,293
Cost of extra semester: $7,293

Cost of being out of the job market for 6 months: $17,00

Total Cost: $24,293
Strategy #3

- Dual Enrollment
- Graduate Early
- CLEP
- AP

ASA College Planning Center
The cost of college varies depending on the type of school.

- 1 Community College Class = $555*
- 1 Public 4-year College Class = $1680*
- 1 Private 4-year College Class = $4890*

*Figures based on MA 2015-16 tuition and fees
Cost of A Semester

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- $-\ $5,000.00
- $10,000.00
- $15,000.00
- $20,000.00
- $25,000.00

ASA College Planning Center
**Dual and Concurrent Enrollment**

**Concurrent Enrollment**
- At the student’s high school
- Cost-effective

**Dual Enrollment**
- On a Campus
- Accuplacer
- Limited space
- College Policies

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**Per Student Savings by Concurrent Enrollment Credits Earned (Bachelor Degrees)**

- Average Semesters taken to complete college
- Semesters Saved

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WWW.HIGHEREDUTAH.ORG
Scholarships

MALDEF  http://www.maldef.org/leadership/scholarships/index.html
Latino College Dollars  www.latinocollegedollars.org
College Green Light  http://blog.collegegreenlight.com/blog/category/undocumented-students
Scholarships for Hispanics  www.scholarshipsforhispanics.org
Genesco Migrant Center  www.migrant.net
Mexican Scholarship Fund  http://mexicanscholarshipfund.org/
Sociedad Amigos de Colombia (Indiana)  http://sadco.org/sadco-scholarship-program
Salvadoran Scholarship Fund  www.salef.org
Educators for Fair Consideration  http://www.e4fc.org/resources/scholarshiplists.html
Act on a Dream at Harvard College  http://www.actonadream.org/resources/scholarships/
1000Degrees  http://www.10000degrees.org/students/scholarships/undocumented-students/
The College Board has a good section in their “For Professionals” page geared toward K-12 Counselors at: http://professionals.collegeboard.com/guidance/financial-aid/undocumented-students

Search for the closest Immigrant and Refugee Coalition. In the Boston Area: MIRA Coalition. They may offer FREE legal aid and immigration clinics!

The National Immigration Law Center tracks activities related to state funding of higher education for undocumented students.
U.S. Dept. of Education: Supporting Undocumented Youth Resource Guide

http://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/focus/supporting-undocumented-youth.pdf

Educators for Fair Consideration: www.e4fc.org
Contact Information

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Christina moved to the United States with her family when she was fifteen and a half years old and is not documented. She is graduating from a Massachusetts public high school in 2016 with a 3.4 GPA. Though her English is still not at the highest level of proficiency; she excels in Math. She was told that if she were to be accepted at XYZ University, she would receive a scholarship from the institution that is given to accepted graduates of her high school. Christina applied and was accepted at XYZ, but when she received her financial aid package, she did not receive the scholarship.

She was the only student from her high school who was accepted at XYZ (a private institution) who did not receive the scholarship. She is certain that she submitted all financial aid and scholarship applications at the same time as her classmates. Her family is considered low-income and she was hoping she would receive this scholarship.

How would you best advise the student? What LOCAL resources would you point this student to?
Thank you.

Any Questions?
Sources

http://www.iacac.org/undocumented/


http://www.bls.gov/


http://www.doleta.gov/wioa/

http://e4fc.org/images/GIN_NACAC_SENSITIVESUBJECTS.pdf


http://www.nacacnet.org/research/KnowledgeCenter/Documents/UndocumentedStudentUniversityResources.pdf

http://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/focus/supporting-undocumented-youth.pdf


http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/special-reports/two-years-and-counting-assessing-growing-power-daca