

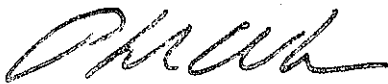
DARING TO DREAM
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Daring to DREAM

Introduction

Education is an important part of the American dream. Many immigrants come to the United States in search of a better life not only for themselves but for their families as well. Some immigrants come here with their children from a very young age. The DREAM (Development Relief and Education of Alien Minors) Act is legislation that was created in 2001 by two innovative political figures: Senator Richard Durbin from Illinois and Representative Howard Berman from Utah. The DREAM Act was created to help undocumented students who want to enroll into a university or enlist in the military. The DREAM Act would grant temporary residency to undocumented students if they have graduated from a high school, have been in the United States for five consecutive years before their sixteenth birthday, and have a clean criminal record. The DREAM Act has been a very controversial topic throughout the years because it involves so many undocumented people.

Many people are unaware of the DREAM Act and its benefits; however, many scholars agree that the DREAM Act at the federal level is potentially beneficial to those undocumented students and to the United States. These scholars have researched the various benefits of the DREAM Act, such as an increase in human capital, increase in education revenue, and increase in taxable income. The DREAM Act can potentially give students the opportunity to obtain a higher education and ultimately a job and a better life. Most likely, ignorance of the DREAM

Act has obscured the benefits it provides. People are more likely to dismiss something they do not understand, especially if it involves immigration. In defense of the students Juan Gomez explains that “it was not our decision to come here, and I find this an injustice of our society, and for that I will never forget where I came from” (Gomez, 12). I have researched the potential benefits the DREAM Act has on the United States and on the students.

Literature Review

It has been an endless battle against Congress in order to pass the DREAM Act since it was first introduced in 2001. Many people see the DREAM Act as a way of allowing all undocumented people into the United States; they describe how the DREAM Act is more costly than beneficial.

H. Pierce McNair Jr., Lisa G. Driscoll, and Mark m. D’Amico discuss some of the negative issues of the act, such as how the economy’s budget crises led to tighter budgets for state spending, which decreased the amount of money received for education, especially in states where the population rates of undocumented students were higher (Pierce et al 1). Despite Congress’ enactment of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 to prohibit schools from allowing undocumented students into school, it was repealed by Plyler vs. Doe, which granted undocumented students the right to an elementary and secondary education (Pierce et al 2). The authors argue that if the states decide to admit undocumented student into their colleges or universities, these students are taking opportunities from American born citizens from each state (Pierce et al 2). Pierce, Driscoll, and D’Amico explain the different laws that have been passed in states, similar to the DREAM Act and others such as in South Carolina, North Carolina, Alabama, Georgia, and Virginia which resemble the law passed in Arizona. South Carolina created the South Carolina Illegal Immigration Reform Act of 2008,

State Bill 1040, prohibiting undocumented students to enter into a higher education institution. Other states have also created similar laws to prohibit undocumented students to enter a college or university. Some laws give public schools and law enforcement the right to for immigration documentation.

Despite these state laws, the following authors are able to refute the negative aspects of the DREAM Act. Moses Palacios argues the advantages of passing the DREAM Act and what it would mean to thousands of undocumented students to have the ability to go to college (Palacios 2). Palacios talks about the creators of the DREAM Act, Senator Dick Durbin and Representative Howard Berman, and how the DREAM Act trailed to the Senate (Palacios 2). He explains the clauses that are behind the DREAM Act that the undocumented students must meet in order to help them apply for conditional permanent residency and attend school or enlist in the military (Palacios 2). The criteria necessary for undocumented children includes having entered the United States before the age of 16 and have lived in the United States for five continuous years before the enacting of the DREAM Act, and either have been admitted to a two or four year college or serve two years in the military and have obtained a diploma or GED. Applicants must have no prior criminal backgrounds (Palacios 2). The applicants must be able and willing to demonstrate their will to obtain an education or enter the military.

Cheryl Fields also supports the DREAM Act but demonstrates the benefits businesses and corporations could obtain from the undocumented students with the help of the DREAM Act. Fields explains that the DREAM Act gives United States companies the potential to hire students that have lived and been educated in the United States, instead of acquiring specialized employees from a foreign country (Fields 4). Fields argues that the DREAM Act helps keep the talent within the United States (Fields 4). She shows that the increase in student population can

cause revenue of schools to increase, which is a benefit that comes from the enactment of the Act regarding the students, the schools and the State education facilities (Fields 4, Flores 436). The author argues that having talented workers promotes taxable income into the economy from the students obtaining temporary residency through the DREAM Act.

Similarly, in Noe Ortega's "The Role of Higher Education Associations In Shaping Policy That Connects Immigration to Educational Opportunity: A Social Capital Frame Work," he argues that the community can enhance the ability to influence the DREAM Act. A collective agency is a group of people that are brought together by a common goal or common set of goals, which in this case would be the supporters of the DREAM Act (Ortega 43). The author argues that the more people there are to support and demand the legislation, the better possibilities the DREAM Act has to be enacted because of the demand and persistence from the supporters. The author also analyzes how postsecondary institutions have responded to the growing concerns of a higher education through his studies of surveying undocumented individuals (Ortega 57). The author describes how the United States, as a nation, has not successfully arranged legislation for undocumented students to receive a postsecondary education; however, it has been found by the courts unconstitutional to deny undocumented students the ability to obtain an elementary and secondary education. Some states alone have passed the legislation to provide higher education to their state residents by giving them the opportunity to pay in-state tuition and acquire financial aid despite their legal status (Ortega 59).

In addition, Eduardo Padron argues about the positive effects the DREAM Act creates in letting students that can and want to continue a higher education (Padron, 49). The author answers the concerns of introducing the DREAM Act into the United States. Padron argues that even though many people see the DREAM Act as very costly, they "ignore the economic

benefits of having a well-educated populace and more qualified military recruits in the system, and the number of students involved in this program is still quite small” (Padron 50). Padron added that “the National Immigration Law Center estimates that each year 65,000 high school graduates qualify for the DREAM Act’s benefits” (Padron 50). However, the students that take advantage of the program are less than 25% of the population. He states that colleges and universities as well as states should find a way for undocumented students to pursue a higher education without fear of deportation, pay in-state tuition with proof of residency, and help in pursuit of citizenship (Padron 52).

Sara Radoff demonstrates how the education policy and immigration law in the United States cross paths in her article “Crossing the Borders of *Plyler vs. Doe*: Students without Documentation and their Right to Rights.” Radoff introduces the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, which gives any person equal protection (Radoff 437). She elaborates on how the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment was used in the *Plyler v. Doe* case of 1982 in order to permit undocumented students to receive an elementary and secondary education without fear of deportation or prejudice. The author argues that the greater benefit for undocumented students of having a higher education would be the increase of specialized and legal workers. Radoff argues about the “tension between universal human rights and nation-state sovereignty” (Radoff 438). She talks about how it could help students to receive an education. Upon legalizing their residency, they would be able to stimulate the economy. *Plyler vs. Doe* denied funding for education to the children of illegal immigrants and would charge them \$1,000 annually to compensate for the loss of state funding.

H. Pierce McNair Jr., Lisa G. Driscoll, and Mark M. D’Amico also explain the positive effects the different state acts that have been put into place to expand the access of a higher

education can have on the United States (Pierce et al 1). They also address the potential results and implications within the states if the DREAM Act is passed. Undocumented students have already been admitted into postsecondary institutions in certain states; however, the issue of obtaining a job after graduation is improbable because of their legal status (Pierce et al 3). Certain states such as California, Illinois, Kansas, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York, Oklahoma, Texas, Utah, and Washington, have created and adopted legislations similar to the DREAM Act in order to allow undocumented students to enter a college or university (Pierce et al 4). The state policies mainly involve the decision of charging undocumented students with in-state tuition. Because the DREAM Act is on a federal level, undocumented students could obtain a higher education and have the possibility of securing a job because of the adjustment of their legal status through the DREAM Act.

Miksch argues that it should be the decision of each state to grant or deny students a higher education (Miksch 60). The author explains how the DREAM Act can make a positive impact on the immigrant community by giving them a path to residency. Miksch discussed how states would interpret the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Responsibility Act differently in such a way that their in-state tuition policies did not violate the law (Miksch 60). This would let undocumented student attend a college or university. Miksch stated that according to “the Urban Institute approximately 65,000 students who lack immigration documentation graduate every year from U.S. high schools” (Miksch 59). She believes that every student should be free to obtain an education. She explains that with the passing of the DREAM Act, the increase in students on a route to residency can give the United States an economic benefit of having more legal employees and more human capital. Miksch also argues that students should be able to receive and use financial aid. Because these students are

undocumented, they are unable to receive federal or state aid without the help of the DREAM Act. The majority of these undocumented students are unable to have a good paying job because of their legal status, and therefore, the students should be allowed to be awarded financial aid. Miksch is a supporter of the DREAM Act because she is able to see that it was created “to encourage undocumented students to go to college...since many undocumented minors drop out of high school when they realize that they will not be able to attend college” (Miksch 63). The DREAM Act is a driving force for many students in their endeavor to obtain a higher education.

Rachel Groseclose explains why and how the DREAM Act is important to all potential undocumented students in the United States in “Pursuit of the American Dream.” The author explains how the mixture of different cultures has shaped and formed America. She shows that some students were willing and eager to give their point of views on the topic of immigration, while many are discouraged from the topic because they live in fear of deportation (Groseclose 2). “Countless [of] undocumented students, full of potential and drive, are faced with these roadblocks” of not being able to attend or pay for college (Groseclose 1). She argues that ignorance of the DREAM Act and the ever changing laws within each state is the reason many people disagree with it and many students do not know of the opportunities they are presented with.

Amanda Morales, Socorro Herrera, and Kevin Murray, investigate the psychological and sociological impacts the DREAM Act and other laws enacted have on undocumented students. The authors “would argue that by denying opportunity for the sons and daughters of undocumented immigrants, we limit not only what these children can be but also what they can give back to this country as a result of their status” (Morales et al 267). The authors explain how the DREAM Act and the Student Adjustment Act would and could help the United States, as

well as the undocumented students that seek out degrees (Morales et al 267). The Student Adjustment Act focuses its attention of giving each state the right to decide the “residency, admission, and scholarship criteria” (Morales et al 269). The DREAM Act “offers an avenue for undocumented immigrant children to access higher education and ultimately permanent residency in the United States,” which can lead to legal employees (Morales et al 269). Despite the continuous defeat of the DREAM Act, undocumented students will continue to fight for their rights to a postsecondary education, in an effort to help their families and the only country they have ever known, the United States.

Arely Zimmerman discusses effects undocumented students would have from the DREAM Act in her article, “A Dream Detained: Undocumented Latino Youth and the DREAM Movement.” She explains how the undocumented population is simply growing from the undocumented children that came to the United States rather than from adults migrating into the United States. “In a 2009 report, the Pew Hispanic Center estimated that in 2008 there were seven million undocumented youth between the ages of 18 and 24 living in the United States, and that Latinos represented 78% of this population” (Zimmerman, 15). Zimmerman also explains that some supporters interpret the revision of adding military into the DREAM Act as a recruitment tool. Only a limited number of students apply and are able to obtain a higher education, therefore, students must choose between an education or serving in the military (Zimmerman 15-17). Zimmerman argues that through the understanding of the DREAM Act, people can be aware of the benefits it can bring to many undocumented students and to the United States. Informing the general public is the number one goal for people to understand that undocumented students should not be punished for actions beyond their control (Zimmerman

16). Through rallies, sit-ins, hunger strikes and mock graduation, undocumented students are able to bring awareness to their cause and send a message to the United States (Zimmerman 16).

Beleza Chan wants to bring awareness from other ethnic perspectives in her article, “Not Just A Latino Issue.” She wanted to show how undocumented students from other countries feel about the current immigration issues (Chan 29). “Many undocumented immigrants also come from the Philippines, China and Korea” (Chan 29). She argues that the DREAM Act is beneficial to more than just Hispanic students, even though the DREAM Act has been associated with Hispanic or Latino students. The association many people make with undocumented people is of them being Hispanic, not Asian or any other race (Chan 31). The author includes many different personal accounts of undocumented students that are not Hispanic or Latino. Chan supports her argument by incorporating different cultural stories and information of the emotions these students and their families go through every day.

Only a few states have passed legislations that are similar to the main purpose of the DREAM Act: to give undocumented students the opportunity to have a college degree. Stella Flores discusses Texas being the first state to allow in-state eligibility to undocumented students (Flores, 436). Stella Flores talks about the benefits of undocumented students and the recent in-state tuition policy for undocumented students in Texas in “The First State Dream Act: In-State Resident Tuition and Immigration in Texas.” The author also explores college enrollment rates of undocumented Latino students since the bill passed. She asks: “Did the introduction of an in-state resident tuition policy in Texas increase the college participation rate of students likely to be undocumented in the period examined and did the introduction of an in-state resident tuition policy have differential effects, if any, by year after initial policy implementation?” (Flores, 467) Following the example of Texas, California, New York, Illinois, Washington, New Mexico,

Kansas, Utah, Nebraska, Wisconsin, and Maryland have a similar law that enables undocumented students to attend a postsecondary institution (Flores, 436). Flores finds that the drop-out rate of undocumented students, 49%, compared to citizen-born students, 11%, and legal students, 21%, is much higher (Flores, 437). The information she uses comes from the Census as well as the background and criteria of the House Bill (Flores, 440). The criteria for the House Bill 1403 is similar to the DREAM Act in that the student must have graduated from a high school within the state, lived within the state at least three years prior to graduation, registered to a postsecondary institution as of the fall of 2001, and signed a promise to apply for permanent residency (Flores, 437-7). She argues that the option of a price reduction for college tuition may cause an increase in attendance. She found that there was an increase in undocumented student enrollment after the bill passed; however, the results were better for older high school graduates.

Flores also explored “the recent research on in-state resident tuition policies, and justifies the current study as a next step in research analysis on this topic” (Flores, 240-241) She analyzes “the estimated effect of the various in-state resident tuition policies on the college-enrollment odds of Latino foreign-born noncitizen” (Flores, 241).

Education is a key issue for Latinos as Jason P. Casellas and Joanne D. Ibarra discovered. The DREAM Act is a way for undocumented students to obtain a higher education as they analyzed the population in different states, the DREAM Act, and Latinos’ political standings in “Latinos support the DREAM Act and other measures aimed at increasing educational equity” (Casellas and Ibarra 254). The Latino/Hispanic community has begun to have an increase in influence and be recognized in the decisions in the United States. The Latino/Hispanic community has remained quiet until the escalation of the DREAM Act (Casellas and Ibarra, 236). According to the 2010 Census, there are 50.5 million Latinos in the United States, and is

projected to reach 102.6 million by 2050 (Casellas and Ibarra, 237). They have discovered that there is a correlation between states that have a higher undocumented population, California and Texas, with the enactments of state acts (Casellas and Ibarra, 240). The higher population causes a higher demand in education and more supporters in favor of the DREAM Act.

Kevin J. Dougherty, H. Kenny Nienhusser and Blanca E. Vega discuss education policies from Texas and Arizona, in their article entitled “Undocumented Immigrants and State Higher Education Policy: The Politics Of In-State Tuition Eligibility In Texas and Arizona.” They discuss the in-state tuition policy within these two states, one opposed and one in favor, and the benefits the state would have from it (Dougherty et al, 124). The authors explain how politics affects Texas and Arizona in the discussion of in-state tuition of undocumented students. It explains the different policies between the two states: “Texas was the first to extend the eligibility and Arizona strictly prohibits” the eligibility (Dougherty et al, 125). Some of the differences include the population growth rate of undocumented immigrants: the timing of the introduction of the legislation (before 9/11 in Texas, afterward in Arizona), and the racial political cultures of the two states (more accepting in Texas than Arizona). The main point of the article is to explain that the major obstacle for many students in their pursuit for a college education is not being eligible for in-state tuition and not being able to afford it (Dougherty et al, 163).

Juan Garcia discusses the differences between in-state tuition and out-of-state tuition charged to undocumented students in his article “In-State Tuition for Undocumented Students and the DREAM Act: Implication for Higher Education.” The author explains some of the different ways that students could be able to afford tuition (Garcia 35). He argues that undocumented students should be eligible for in-state tuition and be able to obtain a higher

education. He explains that “after spending most of their lives here, it’s hard for them [undocumented students] to think of themselves as anything other than American and pursuing the educational dream of higher education” (Garcia, 35). The article references two different acts that repeal immigration laws and gives each state the liberty of deciding the course of action between in-state and out-of-state tuition. The DREAM Act and the Student Adjustment Act have been created to help undocumented students obtain a higher education and an adjustment of their resident status; however, they differ in their criteria for financing their education. The Student Adjustment Act gives the states the authority in deciding to allow undocumented students (Garcia, 35). The DREAM Act and the Student Adjustment Act would be able to amend their legal status in order to be eligible for federal aid and work study (Garcia, 36).

In Noe Ortega’s article, “The Role of Higher Education Associations In Shaping Policy That Connects Immigration to Educational Opportunity: A Social Capital Frame Work,” he argues that the community can enhance their ability to influence the DREAM Act. A collective agency is a group of people that are brought together by a common goal or common set of goals, which in this case would be the supporters of the DREAM Act (Ortega 43). The author argues that the higher the support and demand for the legislation about the DREAM Act, the better possibilities it has to be enacted because of the demand and persistence. The author also analyzes how postsecondary institutions have responded to the growing concerns of undocumented individuals by implementing policies in order to give them access to a higher education, and even offer financial support. The author describes how the United States, as a nation, has not successfully arranged legislation for undocumented students to receive a postsecondary education, except an elementary and secondary education. The states must take the initiative to help by providing a higher education to their state residents.

Michael Olivas explores the issue of financing the college education of an undocumented student in his article, “Undocumented College Students, Taxation, and Financial Aid: A Technical Note.” The author explains the DREAM Act and gives examples of the oppositions made to the legislative policies. The author argues that financing the education for an undocumented student is beneficial to the economy in the future. He explains the qualifications that students must meet in order to receive federal and state financial aid through the DREAM Act. These qualifications include graduating from a high school, entering the United States before the age of 16, having a clean criminal background, and living five continuous years before applying (Olivas, 410). Olivas discusses some tax information for undocumented people. Undocumented people can file taxes for their citizen children by using their ITIN, individual taxpayer identification number which can be used for the student’s FAFSA, free application for federal student aid (Olivas, 412). The DREAM Act does not allow federal aid to be used for undocumented students; however, they are able to apply for loans and private scholarships, in certain states. Most families are in the low to middle income level, and therefore, it is harder for a student to start a college career without financial help (Olivas, 411). The difference between in-state and out-of-state tuition varies greatly, and weighs even more on the student who wants to have a better opportunity. Even though the DREAM Act would be somewhat costly because of the financial aid, the outcome of hiring these students after the DREAM Act passes can be even greater.

With the DREAM Act, any child who was brought to the United States, before the age of sixteen and graduated from a public high school could be able to obtain a higher education or enlist in the military. The DREAM Act was made for any undocumented student; even though

Latino students have been more associated with it, they are not the only ones who can benefit from it. Through the DREAM Act, students are able to become eligible to apply for legal residency and become a part of the legal working force in the United States.

Methods

Subjects, Coastal students and faculty/staff members, will be presented with a survey about the DREAM Act. The project involves human subjects answering yes or no and scaling questions as well as opinion questions. The question will help me find out what people actually know about the DREAM Act as well as what their personal feeling are about it. The survey poses no harm to the human subject. Subjects will be presented with the informed consent form and no personal information will be acquired on the survey to protect subjects' anonymity.

The purpose of this survey is to help the researcher measure the awareness and knowledge of the DREAM Act.

Findings

Many authors have examined the DREAM Act and its effects, the majority of the authors discuss the positive effects or focus on the effects of just one state or area. A few authors focus their attention on states such as Texas, which was the first state to adopt a legislation to let undocumented students attend a postsecondary institution, or Arizona, which has demonstrated a strong anti-immigration stand against both parents and students. They do not examine the effects of the other states as they examine Texas. Many of the authors do not focus on the DREAM Act's effects on a national level. However, several authors have supported my thesis. Because of the ignorance of the DREAM Act and its benefits, people oppose it and many students have missed out on a great opportunity.

State Studies

California

California passed Assembly Bill 540 in 2001. The AB 540 allowed undocumented students to become eligible for in-state tuition at public community colleges or universities. California's AB 540 does not allow students to be eligible for federal financial aid but certain public universities are able to offer scholarships or other forms of financial aid. The requirements to apply include, having attended a state high school for more than three years and graduated or received a GED, and have signed an affidavit to apply for legal residency when eligible. According to the center of American progress, California has 550,000 undocumented students that are eligible for the DREAM Act. If the DREAM Act were to pass, by 2030 California would add \$97.7 billion to the United States economy.

Connecticut

In 2011, Connecticut passed a law to allow undocumented students to pay in-state tuition. The requirements for Connecticut include having attended four years of a state high school, and signed an affidavit promising that they will apply for legal residency when eligible. In 2011, Connecticut expected about 50 undocumented students to apply to a college or university and expected the number of enrollment to increase in future years.

Illinois

Illinois enacted the House Bill 60 in 2003, which allowed undocumented students living in Illinois, to pay in-state tuition only at public colleges and universities. The requirements to apply include, lived with parents or guardians in the state while attending high school, attended a state high school for more than three years and graduated or received a GED, and have signed an affidavit to apply for legal residency when eligible. Under the HB 60, Undocumented students

are eligible for state college savings programs. The undocumented students are able to apply for scholarships from the University of their Choice.

Kansas

As of May 2004, Kansas has enacted their House Bill 2145. The HB 2145 requires the undocumented student to have attended a state high school for more than three years and graduated or received a GED, and having signed an affidavit to apply for legal residency when eligible. The HB 2145 was created to help graduates from Kansas. Undocumented students are not able to qualify for scholarships from the state or federal financial aid.

Nebraska

Nebraska allows students who have resided in the state to pay in-state tuition at public colleges and universities, enacted by Legislative Bill 239. Enacted in 2006, the Legislative Bill 239 requires that the undocumented students live in Nebraska at least three years with a parent or guardian before graduating, graduate from a public or private high school or obtain a GED, registered to enroll into a college or university, and have signed an affidavit to apply for legal residency when eligible.

New Mexico

In 2005, New Mexico allowed undocumented students to be eligible to pay in-state tuition under the SB 582. New Mexico only requires that students must have attended a state high school for at least a year and graduated or obtained a GED. Under this law, an undocumented student is not required to sign an affidavit. SB 582 allows undocumented students to become eligible for state financial aid.

New York

In 2002, New York passed S. 7784/Bill No. A 9612-A allowing undocumented students to pay in-state tuition at New York colleges and universities. New York requires that undocumented student attend a New York high school for two or more years, graduated and applied within five years to attend a college or university, and sign an affidavit to promise to apply for residency when eligible.

Oklahoma

Oklahoma passed a bill that allowed undocumented students to pay in-state tuition at public colleges or universities. It was however, revoked in 2008 by House Bill 1804, which revoked the ability for undocumented students to pay in-state tuition. Undocumented students in Oklahoma are able to attend a college or university at a higher rate and are not eligible for financial aid.

Texas

Texas was among the first of many states to enact legislation similar to the DREAM Act on a state base level in 2001 (Flores, 435). The undocumented students must have graduated from a state high school in order to receive in-state tuition. Under the Texas House Bill 1403, undocumented students are eligible to apply for financial aid. In order to be eligible, undocumented students must have graduated from a Texas high school, lived three years before graduation within the state, show proof of enrolling into a higher education institution, and sign an affidavit to promise to apply for residency when eligible.

Utah

Utah passed their in-state tuition legislation, House Bill 144 in 2002. It allows undocumented students to apply for in-state tuition, as long as they meet the following requirements: attended a state high school for three consecutive years or more and graduated,

registered to a college or university of choice, and sign an affidavit to apply for permanent residency when eligible. Utah does give undocumented students the opportunity to apply for various state scholarships but they are not allowed to apply for FAFSA and their application information will be kept confidential.

Washington

As of 2003, Washington passed legislation similar to the DREAM Act, in which undocumented students are allowed to pay in-state tuition to a college or university, provided that they meet the requirements. Washington requires that undocumented students live in the state at least three years and have graduated from a state high school or obtained a GED, must continue to live in Washington after graduating or obtaining a GED, and sign an affidavit to apply for permanent residency when eligible.

Wisconsin

In 2009, Wisconsin enacted a law that allowed undocumented students to pay in-state tuition rates. Wisconsin required that the undocumented students be a graduate of a Wisconsin high school or earn a GED, live in the state for at least three years and sign an affidavit to apply for permanent residency when eligible. However, the in-state provision was revoked in 2011 which now forces undocumented students to pay out-of-state tuition.

Arizona

Arizona was one of the few states that have a clear stand against immigration. In 2007, undocumented students were not allowed to enroll into a college or university or have access to any financial aid either federal or private (Olivas, 408).

Georgia

For a period of time Georgia allowed undocumented students into a college or university. However, the enactment of SB 529, in July 2007, prohibited undocumented students to enroll or reside within the state.

South Carolina

In 2008, South Carolina followed the example of Georgia and Arizona, in creating the Illegal Immigration Reform Act, in order to prohibit undocumented students to enroll in state colleges or universities.

According to ImmigrationPolicy.org, Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Missouri, and Oregon, have been considering adopting similar in-state tuition legislations. In 2011, Rhode Island has allowed undocumented student to attend a college or university at in-state rates, if they graduated from a state high school. Even though, Maryland previously enacted a similar law in 2011 for in-state tuition only for community college. Maryland has been one of the states that has recently added an in-state policy for undocumented students in 2012.

Conclusion

“Imagine three different students. First, there’s Giovanni, a student from Salt Lake who just graduated with top grades from West High School. Next, there’s Nancy, who learned English, stayed in school, stayed away from drugs, did everything she was told, and graduated as her high school’s valedictorian. And lastly, there’s Gabriela. She studied hard got good grades and ranked first in her class of ROTC Cadets” (Garcia, 35). All three students have one thing in common: they are undocumented students. These stories are similar to millions of other students in the nation whose only wish is to receive a college degree and give back to their country and their families. Ignorance about the DREAM Act has bred opposition to it, obscuring its potential

benefits. People are more likely to dismiss information that does not pertain to them. Through my surveys, I was able to quantify the misunderstanding or unawareness of the DREAM Act and its benefits. My studies have shown that people oppose the DREAM Act because they do not know what it is and how it works. Through the help of my research, I plan to increase awareness and to help educate about the DREAM Act in my area and where ever I may go. Garcia better describes how “these students are paying a high price for the decision their parents made to bring them to the United States at an early age. After spending most of their lives here, it’s hard for them to think of themselves as anything other than American and pursuing the educational dream of higher education” (Garcia, 35).

The Center for American Progress has published a compelling report, created by Juan Carlos Guzman and Raul C. Jara, entitled, “The Economic Benefits of Passing the DREAM Act.” They have reported that in passing the DREAM Act by 2030 it would have contributed \$329 billion into the economy. The DREAM Act would grant residency and eligibility in to a postsecondary institution, it is able to create more educated legal workers in the United States. They have concluded that the 2.1 million students are able to induce \$148 billion to education and eventually add \$181 billion into the economy.

The decision of the DREAM Act is always changing and new information surfaces. During my research, Maryland was added to the list of granting undocumented students the ability to enroll in a postsecondary institution. I distributed surveys to Coastal Carolina University students and faculty via a link online; therefore, my findings are limited to the Coastal Campus. I have used Microsoft Excel to organize and help display my information in pie charts. Even though, my surveys were distributed via the school’s email, I was able to obtain 42 responses. Through my collection of data, from my surveys, I have found that 52% of the 42 of

people surveyed did not know what the DREAM Act is; however, 60% of the people surveyed had heard about it previously. I analyzed that 78% of students agreed with the concept of everyone being able to obtain a higher education. I was able to survey 31% of men and 69% of women, of whom 69% were students and 31% were faculty. The surveys concluded that 38% of people surveyed completely agreed with the DREAM Act and 5% completely disagreed, while 10% of people were neutral.

The authors are able to clarify all the potential benefits the DREAM Act can have on students, families, and the economy. Sadly, not many people are aware of it. Through my research, surveys, and presentations, I am able to aid in the endeavor of bringing awareness about the DREAM Act to the public. I would like to be able to easily find information about the DREAM Act. During my research I was hindered with the limited amount of research that has been done and that has been published by a scholarly source other than the public media.

Survey

Age _____ Student Faculty/Staff

Do you think that anyone should be able to go to college? _____(Y/N)

Have you heard of the DREAM Act? _____(Y/N)

Do you know what the DREAM Act is? _____(Y/N)

- The DREAM Act is a legislation that allows undocumented students, that have graduated high school, been in the country before the age of 16, and a clean criminal record, to enroll and obtain a college education or enlist in the military. Financial aid will not be available, only private scholarships may be available in certain states.

Rate on a scale of 0 to 7, where 0 is I don't know, 1 is completely disagree and 7 is strongly agree.

Do you agree with the DREAM Act? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Please explain: _____

Do you believe that the DREAM Act will benefit the U.S.? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Please explain: _____

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