



SERVING & ADVOCATING FOR UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS

**NM Educational Assistance Foundation
FAFSA Training
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**EL CENTRO
DE LA RAZA**



TERMINOLOGY

Undocumented - People who are not U.S. citizens or Permanent Residents of the United States, who do not hold a current visa to reside in the U.S. and who have not been approved for legal residency in the U.S.

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) – A program that protects successful applicants from deportation and gives them work authorization for a renewal period of 2 years it provides lawful presence but it not lawful status.

Mixed Status Family - A family whose members include people with different immigration statuses.

Legal Permanent Resident (LPR or Green Card) – A person who has been granted the right to reside permanently in and to work without restrictions in the United States.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) & U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) – Federal agencies responsible for enforcing immigration laws and processing immigrant paperwork. Collectively known as “La Migra.”

New Mexico Senate Bill 582 (2005) – The bill that granted in-state tuition and state financial aid to students regardless of immigration status.

Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) - 9-digit number the IRS issues to people filing a tax return who are not U.S. citizens and who do not have or are not eligible for a Social Security number. An ITIN can be used for tax reporting purposes and to run background checks but does not serve for employment authorization.



WHO ARE UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS?

- Illegal Aliens vs. Undocumented
- High school graduates, not criminals! An estimated 120,000 students receive their high school diploma every year (fwd.us, 2023)
- 408,000 students are enrolled in US colleges and universities (Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration, 2024)
- Regular citizens trying to get an education
- Some didn't have a choice to be undocumented
- Community composed of diverse nationalities, races and ethnicities
- Part of the campus community
- Federally guaranteed an American K-12 education but not higher education



IT'S THE LAW

New Mexico Senate Bill 582 (2005)

- A public post-secondary educational institution shall not deny admission to a student on account of the student's immigration status.
- Any tuition rate or state-funded financial aid that is granted to residents of New Mexico shall also be granted on the same terms to all persons, regardless of immigration status.

Qualifying Criteria for State Aid

- Attended a secondary educational institution in New Mexico for at least one year,
AND
- Have either graduated from a New Mexico high school or received a general educational development certificate in New Mexico.



FAFSA vs STATE AID

FAFSA

- U.S. Citizens, Legal Permanent Residents & some “eligible non-citizens”
- Pell Grant, Loans, Work-study
- UNM Priority Date

UNM State Aid

- SB582 Eligible Undocumented Students /DACA Recipients
- State Grants, NM Work-study (Employment Authorization)
- UNM Priority Date



GATEKEEPING

Bad Gatekeepers

- Has information and keep others out or doesn't want to gain the information

Good Gatekeepers

- Has information and helps on an individual level - Follows the rules

Allies

- Has information & shares it openly as well as advocating for policy changes within & outside institutions



WHAT CAN WE DO?

- Educate yourself of resources that are available for undocumented immigrants and share with students and colleagues
 - For many students, warm hand-offs are important
- Make yourself visible as an ally
 - Use artwork, posters, stickers that showcase your values
- If an undocumented immigrant comes out to you, respect & acknowledge their experiences even if you don't agree with them
 - Advocate for inclusivity with a student-centered mindset – your response is key!



WHAT CAN WE DO?

- Work to remove systemic barriers
 - Examine policies that are exclusive without a purpose
- Create funding opportunities for undocumented students with institutional, state and allowable grant opportunities
 - Create institutionally funded scholarships and private partnerships
- Create and offer similar programming experiences that do not require a social security number
 - Identify or create internships, fellowships and externships
- Understand limitations set for undocumented students
 - Student's ability to travel and/or apply to various opportunities including school trips



Contact Info.

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Understanding Financial Aid Award Letters

UNM Financial Aid

<https://www.collegeprice.org/samples>