



THE POWER OF DACA

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Purpose of the presentation

- Overview of what we know about DACA and its impact

Background on DACA

- Initiative adopted by Obama administration in 2012 that provides temporary relief from deportation and work authorization to eligible unauthorized immigrants who entered the country at a young age.
- Since the initiative was announced, USCIS has approved:
 - over 770,000 initial applications
 - over 690,000 applications for renewal

Research- 3 phases

- Demographics/ Characteristics of the DACA applicant pool
 - Where applications were filed, where DACA eligible population live
 - Barriers to access
 - Role of Consulates, NGOs, legal service providers
 - DACA screening and other forms of relief
 - Local contexts
- Impact of the program
 - How it changed recipients' lives (jobs, earnings, education, etc.)
- Barriers to full socioeconomic integration

IMPACT

- DACA recipients experienced a marked increase in opportunities for economic and social incorporation
- According to NURP survey:
 - Many have obtained new jobs and internships and have increased their earnings.
 - Some have also opened bank accounts and obtained credit cards.
 - All states now permit DACA beneficiaries to obtain driver's licenses, and many beneficiaries have done so.

IMPACT (cont.)

- Tom Wong: Most recent survey, fielded in 2016 (n=1,308).
- Employment
 - 87 percent of respondents are currently employed, with an additional 8 percent not working but in school.
 - 21 percent of respondents work in educational and health services,
 - 11 percent in the nonprofit sector,
 - 9 percent in wholesale and retail trades, and
 - 8 percent work in professional and business services.

IMPACT (cont)

- **Mobility:** After receiving DACA,
 - 63 percent of respondents reported moving to a job with better pay;
 - 49 percent moved to a job that “better fits my education and training”; and
 - 48 percent moved to a job with better working conditions. I.
 - 6 percent of respondents started their own business
- **Earnings**
 - The average hourly wages of respondents increased by 42 percent since receiving DACA, rising from \$9.83 per hour to \$13.96 per hour.

IMPACT ON EDUCATION

- Overall, 46 percent of respondents are currently in school
 - 4 percent are pursuing a high school or GED diploma.
 - 20 percent are pursuing an associate degree.
 - 4 percent are pursuing a trade, technical, or vocational certificate.
 - 70 percent are pursuing a bachelor's degree or higher.

Alternatives to 4-year college

- Job-training programs in the trades at community colleges and even at local community-based organizations.
 - lower tuition costs
 - flexible class schedules (allowed students to work while pursuing their degrees).
 - non-residential programs also allowed them to live at home and to save money for tuition

Barriers

- **Financial aid and in-state tuition**
- Where one resides within the United States dramatically shapes a multitude of experiences based on local impediments and opportunities.
- Lack of access to financial aid and in-state tuition in many states:
 - block many DACA beneficiaries from enrolling in college and completing their degrees.
 - work long hours
 - decrease ability to attend school continuously or full-time
 - affect ability to perform well in school

Barriers (cont.)

Licensing

- Many obtained training for specialized vocations that require a professional license in order to gain employment.
- Today, nearly 30 percent of all jobs require a license.
- License requirements vary from state to state
- At least 190 occupations require state licenses in some states, and 93 occupations are licensed in all states.
- In some states, state-issued licenses are restricted to citizens and legal permanent residents.
- Many DACA beneficiaries are prevented from working in the occupations for which they are educated.

Barriers (cont.)

- **Access to information**
- Many teachers and counselors did not fully understand the legal landscape their students were required to navigate
- This state-level variation makes it extremely important that school counselors, teachers, and other academic advisors are aware of the opportunities and restrictions available to DACAmented youth in their state.

Most important barrier

- Uncertainty about the future
- Lack of minimum standards of predictability, difficult to make plans.