

The Carolina Latinx Center  
Chapel Hill, NC

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## THE CAROLINA LATINX CENTER APPLAUDS SUPREME COURT RULING ON DACA

CHAPEL HILL, NC—The Carolina Latinx Center applauds the decision today by the Supreme Court of the United States in ruling against the Trump Administration’s efforts to end the Deferred Action against Childhood Arrivals or DACA thereby preserving the protection against deportation for undocumented people brought to the U.S. as children.

The 5-4 ruling is a stunning defeat against the Trump Administration that has sought to end President Obama’s executive order protecting these young immigrants brought to the U.S. by their parents. While the program does not provide a pathway to citizenship, it does protect against deportation, provides a social security number and a work permit. The ruling preserves DACA for the moment but does not guarantee the program from being ended again by the Trump Administration.

“The Carolina Latinx Center is heartened by the Supreme Court’s ruling today to preserve DACA and we are happy for our students and their families who are protected under the executive order,” said Paul Cuadros, faculty chair of the Center. “But this does not provide a permanent solution for our many students who do not have status or whose families are mixed status. We are encouraged that Congress will finally provide a pathway for these Dreamers and their families.”

There are approximately 700,000 recipients of the DACA who were brought to the U.S. as children. As of June 2019, there were 24,480 active DACA recipients in North Carolina, according to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

“I am so happy. I was preparing for the worse with this ruling and now hearing this news I feel like my life has so much less uncertainty now,” said Jatzryi Perez Garcia, 19, a rising sophomore at UNC-Chapel Hill.

While the ruling provides safety today for undocumented students at UNC-Chapel Hill and its system universities, it does not solve the many obstacles these students face in terms of access to higher education

“I do feel for undocumented students who are coming into college without DACA and those that are in high school applying to college,” Perez Garcia said. “I know how this has helped me.” The program is currently not accepting first-time new applicants.

In addition, North Carolina Dreamers like Perez Garcia are treated as out of state residents when it comes to tuition by the UNC system and must pay the higher out of state tuition in order to attend.

“We are happy that our students and their families continue to have protection against deportation under the DACA program,” said Cuadros. “The upholding of the program also is another opportunity for North Carolina to treat these Dreamers as in-state residents for tuition purposes and it should seize the moment to do so.”

At least 21 states and the District of Colombia have tuition equity laws that provide in-state tuition rates for undocumented students, according to the National Immigration Law Center.

The Supreme Court ruling opens the door for legislative action on providing a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers.

“In these uncertain times, the ruling by the Supreme Court provides some much needed relief,” said Josmell Perez, executive director of the Center. “More needs to be done but this is welcomed news.”

The ruling has opened the door for students like Perez Garcia to fulfill their dreams. “When I didn’t know if DACA was going to be terminated I was afraid my plans would fall through, but now I know I can get my degree and work and I am very optimistic and happy with the ruling,” she said. Perez Garcia is pre-med and is planning on becoming a doctor.

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