

On October 14, 2022, statewide community college organizations released a joint statement following the Fifth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals' decision that DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) was unlawful, that current DACA recipients could renew their enrollment but leaves pending applications hanging in the balance. It is also unclear whether a recent effort by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to preserve and fortify the measure against future legal challenges will have any standing.

The joint statement represents the unified opinion of the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), the Washington Association of Community and Technical Colleges (WACTC) and the Association of College Trustees (ACT) against this ruling and urges the continued support of equitable access to higher education for all, including DACA recipients and Dreamers.

"Since our community and technical college system was founded 55 years ago, we have welcomed students from all backgrounds and held firmly to our belief that education be open, equitable and accessible to all students who enter our doors. This will not change. Despite the continued legal rulings around DACA, our colleges remain resolute in support of DACA students. Undocumented and DACA students can continue to enroll, stay enrolled, graduate, and achieve the dreams that brought them through our doors," the statement reads and is signed by SBCTC Chair Phyllis Gutierrez Kenney, WACTC President Chris Bailey and ACT President Greg Dietzel.

[Read the complete joint statement here.](#)

Shoreline Community College (Shoreline), in alignment with SBCTC, WACTC and ACT, is deeply disappointed by this ruling. The ongoing uncertainty the Fifth Circuit Court's reversal creates for DACA recipients, their families, and our communities across Washington state is discouraging. We stand with our statewide partners against this decision and its ramifications for our undocumented students and communities.

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We were cautiously hopeful that we could finally offer long-term clarity for our Dreamers and DACA recipients following the DHS' decision last month to "preserve and fortify" DACA. Our institution has long welcomed and supported DACA recipients, Dreamers and all undocumented people living, working and attending school in our communities.

Now, more than ever, it is evident that we need a truly bipartisan legislative solution for DACA recipients and Dreamers to end this constant turmoil and lack of security our DACA and Dreamer recipients face.

"Dreamers are a part of our diverse community, which we are committed to serving," said Shoreline President Dr. Jack Kahn. "The mission, values and goals of Shoreline Community College and our continuing commitment to integrating diversity, equity and inclusion into all of our policies and practices call upon us to not only welcome but to ensure Dreamers, like all community members, know they belong here and can achieve all of their educational goals."

Dreamers represent that which America has long symbolized: the freedom of a brighter future for those who wish to work hard and contribute to their communities. Many Dreamers are contributing to the economic health of their communities thanks to DACA, signed into law in 2012 by President Barack Obama. DACA lifted restrictions on undocumented youth, allowing them to secure work permits and become productive members of society – nearly 800,000 people are DACA recipients. It is widely considered one of the most successful immigration initiatives ever implemented in our nation's history.

"DACA-supported persons are fantastic students in the midst of and finishing their education. The programs that Shoreline offers have provided DACA-supported students with careers in education, business, and many non-profit sectors as well," said Vice President for Student Learning, Equity, and Success at Shoreline Dr. Phillip King. "Our education has supported these students to successfully contribute to our local and regional communities."

Sadly, this reversal highlights why many DACA recipients and Dreamers face persecution and are forced to live in the shadows of American life. Many of them arrive as children, attend school and only learn of their undocumented status when they apply to college or a job and realize they do not have a social security number.

“Shoreline’s ESL department and Transitional Studies unit has long been committed to serving and supporting the educational goals of all students regardless of immigration status,” said ESL Faculty Program Coordinator Karen Bretz. “The decision to codify DACA is an important step in ensuring that undocumented students have access to the resources they need to access and succeed in their college education.”

Historically, many undocumented people find the pathway to their dreams through community college, aspiring for a brighter future for themselves and their families. Like many other community and technical colleges across the country, Shoreline proudly serves these exceptionally hardworking and successful students in their academic pursuits. [According to a 2017 national study](#), 45% of DACA respondents are currently in school, and 72% are pursuing a bachelor’s degree or higher.

Despite the 5th Court of Appeals’ reversal, Shoreline will continue to support our Dreamers and DACA recipients in their pursuit of higher education. We see you, recognize you and thank you for all of the ways you and your families contribute to our communities. Now, more than ever, Congress must act to present a bipartisan approach to solidifying the future of Dreamers here in the country they have long called home.