

# PRESIDENTS' ALLIANCE | ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND IMMIGRATION

## 165 UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES FILE AMICUS BRIEF URGING SUPREME COURT TO PROTECT DACA

*Institutions argue end of DACA would hurt students, campuses, and the country*

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Washington, D.C.**—On Friday, 165 public and private universities and colleges from 32 states and the District of Columbia came together to join an *amicus* brief for the forthcoming Supreme Court case regarding Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). Amici include large public universities and private research universities, liberal arts colleges and community colleges, science, math, engineering institutions and faith-based institutions, located in urban centers, suburban communities, and rural farm areas throughout the country. On November 12, 2019, the Court will hear oral arguments on a series of consolidated cases and determine whether the administration's [rescission of DACA](#) was lawful.

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The brief argues that DACA enabled tens of thousands of undocumented students to pursue and thrive at the colleges and universities listed both in the brief and at higher education institutions across the country. Drawing from the direct experiences of the students and their institutions, the brief shows how DACA recipients contributed immeasurably to their campuses, through academic achievements and co-curricular activities.

In defense of DACA's continued existence, the brief argues that the rescission of DACA will severely harm the life prospects of these students and alumni, adversely affect our nation's higher education institutions, undermine the many years of investments that colleges and universities made to support DACA recipients, and sap our higher education communities of needed talent, diversity, and leadership.

To illustrate the consequences of ending DACA, the brief also highlights narratives of directly impacted DACA recipients, including [TheDream.US](#) scholars and alumni.

The [Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration](#) coordinated the brief and the *amici* are represented by [Perkins Coie](#). The Presidents' Alliance extends its deep

thanks to Bruce Spiva, Rebecca Mears, Amanda Callais, Jon Winovich, Michelle DePass, and the team at Perkins Coie for their excellent work, and thorough and thoughtful brief.

**Nancy Cantor, Chancellor of Rutgers University-Newark, stated:** “As co-chair of the Presidents’ Alliance Steering Committee and leader of a signatory to the *amicus* brief, I want to underline the remarkable and irreplaceable contributions of our Dreamer students, who stand for core principles of our democracy. They are a central part of the diversity, the many roads traveled, and the multiple identities, cultures, and languages that make our nation smart, make us strong, make us safe, and make us ready to thrive in the complex 21st century knowledge economy.”

**Alan Cramb, President of Illinois Institute of Technology, stated:** “Since 2012, DACA has allowed us to welcome not only DACA recipients onto our campuses, but their dreams and aspirations as well. These individuals profoundly contribute to our university’s success as a vibrant and diverse community of students, scholars and innovators. DACA students and scholars are leaders on our campuses, excel in extracurricular activities, and enrich our nation immeasurably.”

**Jane K. Fernandes, President of Guilford College, stated:** “For these students, many who are the first in their families to attend college, DACA represents an unprecedented opportunity to secure a higher education and build the academic foundation to enter their desired career field. For our students—whether aspiring nurses, doctors, attorneys, engineers, or more—DACA unlocked educational and career fields long thought unobtainable. Our country cannot and must not slam shut the door of opportunity on these aspiring Americans.”

**Dr. Kent Ingle, President of Southeastern University, stated:** “The rescinding of DACA would mean a great loss for our educational institutions and overall mission as a nation. I’ve had the opportunity to get to know several of these Dreamers personally, and they are some of the brightest, most patriotic students that enter our campus. A decision to end DACA would make countless students eligible for deportation, many who are currently working towards degrees at colleges and universities. Choosing who we allow and don’t allow to live in freedom should not be a power we abuse. These DACA recipients are everything ‘Americans’ were intended to represent. The future they desire should be in their hands.”

**Dr. Elsa Nuñez, President of Eastern Connecticut State University, stated:** “In 2016, Eastern Connecticut State University was one of the first two universities in the country to accept DACA students as Opportunity Scholars funded by TheDream.US foundation. Today, we have more than 200 DACA students; they are some of our top scholars—in fields ranging from biology to business to social work. They are also campus leaders and engaged in our local community. America needs these young people in the professional workforce, contributing to society as they enhance their own economic and social mobility. Protecting DACA students is a smart decision that will

benefit everyone in our country. And for a nation founded on principle, it is the right thing to do.”

The nonpartisan **Presidents’ Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration** brings together college and university leaders dedicated to increasing public understanding of how immigration policies and practices impact our students, campuses and communities, and supporting policies that create a welcoming environment for undocumented, immigrant, and international students. The Alliance is comprised of over 430 presidents and chancellors of public and private colleges and universities, representing over four million students in 41 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

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