Pennsylvania Tuition Equity

Pennsylvania Immigration and Citizenship Coalition (PICC)
About PICC

- Diverse coalition of more than 50 member organizations and numerous individuals that represents the needs of immigrants, migrants, refugees and other new Americans living in Pennsylvania to policy makers, public officials, and the general public.

- PICC seeks to advance immigrants’ rights and promote their full integration into society by advocating for fair policies that welcome and sustain immigrants.

- PICC brings together community groups, social and legal service providers, mutual assistance associations, unions, faith communities, immigrant leaders, and concerned individuals.
PICC is committed to ensuring that immigrant and refugee students have access to safe and welcoming schools that address their unique needs. This includes supporting passage of tuition equity policies, welcoming schools policies, language access, and fair and adequate funding for schools.
About Presenter

- Maria Sotomayor-Giacomucci, PICC’s Civic Engagement & Youth Organizer
- 4.5 years at PICC
- Immigrant from Ecuador, DACA recipient
- Leads PICC’s Education Justice issues for Tuition Equity, Welcoming Schools, Fair Funding
- Statewide youth organizing project
  - Provides training and support for PICC’s youth committees and summer youth convening
Quick Introductions

- Name
- What part of Pennsylvania are you joining us from?
- Are you part of an organization or local group?

Due to limited time and attendance, please keep your introduction to 1 minute or less.
  - Thank you!

You can type up your questions in the comment box throughout the webinar.
Dream Act - federal legislation proposed in 2010 to grant undocumented students that came to the US before age 16 a pathway to citizenship if they attended college or joined the army. NEVER PASSED!

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) - 2012 executive order from President Obama to grant protection from deportation and provide work authorization to undocumented youth that came to the US before 16th birthday, before June 15, 2007, have lived in the US since that date and are currently attending or have graduated school in the US. NO PATHWAY TO CITIZENSHIP, Must be renewed every 2 years.

Passing Tuition Equity doesn’t mean FREE Tuition for students
No human being is Illegal! **Undocumented** which refers to lack of documentation in this country

**What makes a person Undocumented?**
- They are living in the country unauthorized and have no social security number
- Many entered without inspection, but many more have merely overstayed their visas
- There are 11 million undocumented immigrant in the US
- 3/5 have been in the US for more than a decade
- They account for roughly 1-in-20 workers
- About 1 million children are unauthorized themselves
- 7000-13,000 are currently enrolled in college throughout the US

"No human being is illegal, documented or undocumented everyone deserves the right to get a college education"

-Samuel Drexel Hill

(Pew Hispanic Center and Department of Homeland Security)
What is Tuition Equity?

- Policies allowing undocumented students to receive in-state tuition at institutions of higher education
- Some states allow eligible students to apply for state financial aid

Equal Opportunity for ALL!
-Gaby
Chester County
Education Equity Laws and Policies for Undocumented Students (with and without DACA) by State

- States with tuition equity law or policy.
- States with tuition equity laws and state financial aid.
- States with tuition equity laws and scholarship funding.
- States where some university systems have tuition equity policies.
- States where DACA grantees may be eligible to pay in-state tuition rates at some institutions.
- States where some institutions ban undocumented students to enroll.
- States that ban enrollment of undocumented students without DACA, but may enroll DACA recipients.
- States where some institutions ban undocumented students. Have tuition equity laws for DACA grantees in the institutions where undocumented students are able to enroll.
- States that do not have any known tuition equity law or policies. Undocumented students, with or without DACA, in these states may be able to enroll in higher education institutions; however, they may have to pay out of state or an international student tuition.

Updated: January 2017

Adapted from United We Dream’s Dream Educational Empowerment Program (DEEP)
Anthony, Upper Darby, PA

“I don't want to get discouraged but it’s often really hard to think about graduating when I can't continue to follow my dreams of going to college. I have been trying to figure out ways to attend, but it is more expensive for me because I can't apply for financial aid and I am forced to pay out-of-state tuition. I should be paying in-state tuition since I live here and soon will graduate from a Pennsylvania high school. Finding a way to attend college has not only been frustrating for me and my family, but for my counselors and teachers too. The Tuition Equity bill will help high school counselors, teachers, and students to work together without giving up. It will open doors for students like me to follow our dreams.”
Lack of Tuition Equity in PA: How Does it Affect Undocumented Students?

- Some colleges and universities view undocumented students as out-of-state or international students, and charge higher tuition rates than other residents of Pennsylvania.

- Many scholarships and types of financial aid are not open to undocumented students. For many students, this means putting a hold on or ending to dreams of attending college.

- Private scholarships- only type of financial aid available in PA

- Student’s have limited school options and programs they can attend and pay for on their own
Student’s may have to reveal too much about their family situation in order to get answers. May be scary in this political climate.

Seeking and filling out admissions applications can become very traumatic for many.

Lack of administration training in schools across the state can hurt the chances of an undocumented student applying and getting into school.
- Not enough information from institutions of higher education on policies regarding undocumented students
- Ineligible for specific degrees/professional licenses that require state certification (this varies from state to state)
- It's harder to travel abroad and domestically (limited access to state ID, driver's license, DACA)
- Not eligible for many paid internships (that are funded by or connected to state or federal funding)
- Many come from low-income communities
Impact of Tuition Equity in PA

- Great Investment in the future
- More high school graduation rates
- Less high school drop out rates
- Increase in college attendance
- Benefits to PA economy
- Encourages more young people to stay in Pennsylvania
- PA State Schools, administration and educators support this legislation
Impact of Tuition Equity: Undocumented Students and Families

Audrey, Lancaster:

“It is heart-breaking to me, to see young, bright, vibrant, and courageous undocumented youth now, in 2017, facing the same challenges I had to face 10 years ago when I graduated. It is astonishing to me that, we, as a state, limit the right to higher education to young kids who have been raised here – kids who call this home but due to a flawed legal system, are not recognized as part of this great state.

One of the hardest trials undocumented youth face is to work towards something their whole life and find out that it is unreachable. When I told my guidance counselor of my undocumented status and my dreams of going to college, she looked at me and cried. She was also at a standstill. How could someone like me overcome my undocumented status, my lack of income and resources, in order to go to college? I thought it would be impossible, and I am sure she thought the same.

We need to make progress. We need Tuition Equity so that next year when Christian (student I mentor) goes to his guidance counselor asking about college options, he is met with answers – not roadblocks, but solutions. Pennsylvania has the potential to make higher education a reality and not just a “dream” for the thousands of undocumented youth who will be graduating in the future.”
Pop Quiz!

True or false:

- Undocumented students can apply for federal grants and financial aid
- The Federal Dream Act passed in 2010
- DACA is the Dream Act
Legislation in Pennsylvania
State Rep. Tony Payton Jr. introduced **HB 1695** in 2011 which it would have provided in-state tuition to undocumented students. The bill was referred to Committee of Education June 10, 2011.

**SB 713** would provide undocumented immigrants with in-state tuition. The bill was referred to and remains in the Education Committee since March 20, 2013.

**SB 760** was introduced by Senator Lloyd Smucker would provide access to in-state tuition for students who meet certain criteria, regardless of their immigration status. The bill was referred to Education since April 23, 2015.

**SB 697** was introduced by State Rep. Daylin Leach in 2015. The bill would have provided undocumented students with in-state tuition and have allowed them to receive driver’s licenses. The bill was referred to State Government since June 25, 2007.

**SB 1886** was introduced by State Rep. Peter G. Schweyer in 2015. The bill would have provided undocumented students with in state tuition and financial aid if they meet requirements.

**HB 1042**, also known as the "Pennsylvania Higher Education Tuition Fairness Act" was introduced in 2017. If passed, it would grant undocumented students eligibility for in state tuition if they meet certain requirements.
“Pennsylvania Higher Education Tuition Fairness Act“

- Providing for in-State tuition rates and access to financial aid for certain students.

- **Partisan support:** 9 Democrats
- **Introduced** by Rep. Peter Schweyer
- **Co- sponsored by:**
  - Rep. D. McNeill (Lehigh)
  - Rep. M. Schlossberg (Lehigh)
  - Rep. J. Solomon (Philadelphia)
  - Rep. V. Brown (Philadelphia)
  - Rep. J. McClinton (Delco/Philadelphia)
  - Rep. D. Costa (Allegheny)
To qualify for in-state tuition and state aid under the Act, students must have:

Attended high school in Pennsylvania for two or more years; and

Earned a Pennsylvania high school degree or equivalent.
Benefits of Tuition Equity?

In-state tuition rates = FAIR tuition rates

No more out of state or international rates

State financial aid available

Welcoming environment for immigrant students at all universities in PA
NOT A CRIME TO WANT A BETTER LIFE
**Messaging**

**DO**
- Listen to the community
- Talk about the impact it will have in the lives of students
- Increase of high school graduations

**DON’T**
- Good vs. Bad immigrant
- Good student vs. bad student
- Blame parents
- Criminalize other immigrant communities
- Don’t use student’s as “token undocumented student”
- Use people’s stories or personal information without their approval
How to Support and Get Involved
3 easy ways
Legislative Visits
Write Letters to the Editor and Op Ed’s
Social Media
Contact Information

Maria Sotomayor
Civic Engagement & Youth Organizer
215-832-3482
mariasotomayor@paimmigrant.org

www.paimmigrant.org
facebook.com/PAImmigrant
Twitter: @paimmigrant
Students

- Use your experience to help bring ideas and concerns to the attention of the administration
- Draft a policy change and work with the school to find out how this can be implemented
- Share information and assist others
- Connect, join or start your own immigrant youth student group.
  - Many immigrant rights organizations have youth leadership and support programs. Look up on in your state!
  - Don’t be afraid to reach out to out-of-state groups
  - Connect with youth in other states through social media, attending national, regional conferences
Create Safe and Welcoming Spaces

Students and administration can work together to create safe spaces (before or after school programs)

Put together toolkits for students and parents

DON’T use the “I” word “Illegal”

Remember not all undocumented students are Latinos

Be supportive and encouraging

Patient and understanding
PICC Immigrant Youth Leaders

Join our 2016 Summer Youth Convening!
August 19-21
PA immigrant youth leading the fight for immigrant rights.

From Philly to Pittsburgh immigrant youth fight back against immigration raids

Unfair tuition rates

Fight for unmarked drivers licenses

Build and pass pro-immigrant policies at local institutions of higher education

Create youth led spaces

Join our movement! Join our youth call today @ 6pm
CALL NUMBER: 641-715-3640 CODE: 780006
Disclaimer

The Pennsylvania Immigration & Citizenship Coalition is a diverse coalition of over 50 member organizations across the state. PICC is committed to educating and engaging allies to be more effective advocates for pro-immigrant legislation. Our biweekly #StoptheHate Conference calls are the main platform for allies to learn how they can take action to advance immigrant rights. All presentations produced by PICC and its partners are intended for informational purposes only and do not constitute legal advice.
Questions?

Carlos Adolfo Gonzalez,  
Statewide Capacity Building Coordinator  
carlosgonzalez@paimmigrant.org  
215-832-0615