



STEWARDS OF OUR EARTH All of God's Creation

Social Justice Committee, Holy Cross Parish, Mt. Airy, June 30, 2024

DACA Recipients Living on the Edge

June 15th marked 12 years since immigrant youth organized and won DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), a steppingstone in the fight for permanent protections! Now, hundreds of thousands of DACA recipients, DACA-eligible youth, and their families who call the U.S. home await a critical decision on the fate of the program.

A brief review: DACA is a deferred action policy aimed at protecting qualifying young undocumented immigrants who came to the U.S. as children, temporarily shielding them from deportation and providing them work authorization with possible renewal every two years. DACA protections can be revoked by DHS, and DACA recipients continue to lack legal status and a pathway to citizenship. The average DACA recipient arrived in the United States at age 7 and has lived here for more than 20 years. (Laurence Benenson, *National Immigration Forum*, 5/21/24)

“Without DACA, countless children and families would face the imminent threat of forced separation. If we ended DACA renewals today, 1,000 recipients would be forced out of their jobs every business week for the next two years, stripping our communities of our doctors, nurses, teachers, civil servants, and infrastructure and care workers. Rescinding DACA would also result in an estimated loss of \$12.3 billion in taxes to Social Security and Medicare over the next decade.

Ending DACA would be devastating for millions of our neighbors, friends, colleagues, and loved ones—Americans in every way but on paper—who deserve better.” (Karen Tumlin, *Justice Action Center*, 6/10/24)

A significant policy measure recently announced by the White House “would ease the process for DACA beneficiaries and potentially other Dreamers to access **high-skilled employment visas**. This will allow employers to keep their critical employees while providing DACA recipients an opportunity to continue to invest in their communities.” (Jeremy Robbins, Executive Director, *American Immigration Council*, 6/18/24)

But DACA is not enough. “In 2023, over 500 DACA recipients were surveyed about the effect of DACA on their lives.... Over 65% shared that DACA has allowed them to pursue higher education and 81.9% of respondents say the program has given them financial independence. We know DACA has been a lifeline to hundreds of thousands of families ..., but it was only intended to be a temporary solution.” (Mari, *United We Dream*, 4/30/24) [Our immigrant communities need Congress to take action NOW to enact a clear pathway to citizenship!](#)

Every human being is a child of God. He or she bears the image of Christ! We ourselves need to see, and then to enable others to see, that migrants and refugees do not only represent a problem to be solved, but are brothers and sisters to be welcomed, respected and loved. —Pope Francis, Message for the 2014 World Day of Migrants and Refugees

Comments on this column may be directed to the Social Justice Committee at socialjustice@holycrossphl.org.