

in-depth

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DACA: community responds

Aug. 2001
DREAM Act is first proposed by President Bill Clinton

June 2012
DACA is established by Obama Administration

Nov. 2016
DAPA is announced by Obama as an executive action

June 2017
DAPA is rescinded by the Supreme Court

Sept. 5, 2017
Trump Admin announces intention to rescind DACA

March 5, 2018
Congress's deadline to replace DACA before its rescission

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The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals policy, DACA, has protected nearly 800,000 undocumented immigrants, sometimes referred to as Dreamers, since it was established by the Obama Administration in 2012. Nearly 200,000 Dreamers live in California, an estimated one-third of whom are high school students.

"They were promised that as long as they were following the path to being a good citizen, they can stay here. Now it's like the rug was pulled out from under them."

- Vice Principal Carmen Gomez

About DACA

DACA allows undocumented immigrants who entered the US as minors to apply for and renew a two-year period of safety from deportation and the ability to apply for a work permit. The permit is valid as long as they are currently enrolled in school, have a high school diploma, and either have no criminal record or only a minor misdemeanor.

President Donald Trump's decision to revoke DACA comes in response to Republican state officials threatening to sue the government on the grounds that DACA is an unconstitutional abuse of executive power by former President Obama. This came after rescinding DAPA, Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents, for the same reason in June 2017.

Without DACA protecting them, those who were previously protected now live in fear of deportation, unemployment, and lack of access to higher education.

Senator Chuck Schumer of New York and Minority Leader of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi met with Trump on Sept. 13 to discuss having Congress enact protections similar to DACA in exchange for increased border security.

The two Democrats released a joint statement saying "We agreed to enshrine the protections of DACA into law quickly, and to work out a package of border security, excluding the wall, that's acceptable to both sides."

The White House then released several statements through Twitter denying the existence of a DACA deal. No legislation has yet been introduced in Congress to codify the DACA protections.

The following article will include student and staff reactions

and stories, and actions being taken by various groups on campus, including ASB, the Latino Student Union, and MVHS administration.

Students share stories

Several of the 200,000 Dreamers residing in California attend and have graduated from MVHS. Alumna Paula Garcia, MVHS class of 2017, has been protect-

"What happened to the promise of the past? We are a country made up of immigrants. We have immigrants who are very important and strong contributors to the community."

- ELD Coordinator Judie Lee

ed under DACA since she was 14 years old after being brought to the U.S. by her parents at the age of three.

"My parents brought me over from Mexico with \$500 in their pocket. We were escaping a violent past. My mother was sexually assaulted multiple times in Mexico on public transportation," Garcia said. "They knew that they wanted a different life for me and different opportunities, so they brought me over."

Lupe Vasquez, MVHS junior, came to the US when she was four years old and has been under DACA since August 2015.

"My dad first came here, and then a year later my mom decided to also come," Vasquez said. "We came for the same reason that many thousands of families have come to the US: for better opportunities, for a better life."

Prior to becoming a part of DACA, Garcia was afraid to speak out about her status as an undocu-

mented immigrant.

"With DACA, the temporary protection for two years really helped a lot. It helped me come out to my friends," Garcia said. "I'd never really told them about my undocumented status, but it gave me that protection and helped me a lot knowing that there were people behind me and supporting me."

The protection that DACA offered to students extended beyond protection from deportation and al-

"It's up to us to be there for our family members and our close friends and lend a helping hand."

- LSU Vice President Erik Alvarado

say 'put your social security' ... and I was like, 'wait, I don't have that.'"

However, DACA recipients like Garcia who have financial stability and can continue to pay for college regardless of the status of the DACA program will still be at risk for deportation.

"That security that you have knowing that you did nothing wrong, coming to this country when you're so young. All we're trying to do is get an education, and knowing that you can be deported no matter what ... you have no sense of protection anymore," Garcia said.

Community faces impact

Although the majority of MVHS students aren't directly impacted by the rescinding, several have expressed concern for their friends and family.

"I know a person who is in college, senior year, at UCSC. She is

that they work so hard to achieve something. They have done literally nothing wrong except for being children who were brought here." Junior Marco Torres has several family members on DACA and has seen the fear that people who relied on DACA are now experiencing.

"A lot of our undocumented students are going to be living in fear now, because it's easier for them to be deported. I feel like it's going to affect our student body because instead of focusing on the more important things in life they're going to be in fear all the time," Torres said. "It's a really sad thing because we don't want to be in fear we want to be living our best life we can be. If you can't do that as a student in high school there's really no point."

Similarly to students, staff members have expressed their concerns for the students and community. "These students, through no fault of their own, are in this country and see this country as their country. They see themselves as part of the American way of life. Most of these students don't know any other country but this one," said Assistant Principal Carmen Gomez. "For them, the thought of going back to a country where they might have been born in, but where they have no connection to, is devastating. To them having to think about possibly not being able to attend school is devastating. I know that because I lived through that."

ELD Coordinator has observed several changes in the moods of her students during the past year.

"One of my students said to me, 'I try not to turn on the news because everytime Trump opens his mouth it just makes me feel worse,'" said Lee.

Lee expressed disappointment with the Trump administration for going back on their promise to the

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- Junior Marco Torres

since the 1930s has been used in a variety of legal documents, including proof of citizenship.

"The biggest reason why my family wanted me on [DACA] was to get a work permit and a social security number," Vasquez said. "I saw in applications that it would

Senior Andrea Halsted describes a similar experience.

"It was really heartbreaking. One of my friends was going to be on DACA who came here when she was three. She found out it was removed right on her birthday," Halsted said. "It just kind of sucks to see

DACA recipients.

"I feel it is very bad to pull back on a promise, killing a whole population of dreams. They are here, working hard, and striving toward a goal and it's almost, it's whimsical, how that particular ball came down," Lee said. "I just feel it is

wrong... you can't cut people off like that. People are here and they feel secure, they trusted the words of the government... and now they are changing their mind. What happened to the promise of the past?"

community. "The students here are like, 'What is DACA?' and I find that somewhat sad — that people don't know what it actually is," LSU Vice President Erik Alvarado said. "I think

it's important that we educate our students [on] what DACA really is."

The club is planning to have an information booth about DACA at lunch in the main quad on Sept. 22 to educate students.

In addition to this,

ber. Both Yapabandara and Halsted hope to expand the protest to other Bay Area schools.

Halsted explained that she was motivated to take action by the effect of the rescinding on her friends and family. "I was really sad, but also really mad, and I wanted to take that and channel it into something positive," Halsted said. Alvarado echoed her sentiment.

"It struck really hard... I have a lot of friends that are [on DACA]... It's really hard seeing how sad they are," Alvarado said. "A lot of them have come up to me saying, 'What am I going to do now? I don't know what I can do.'"

in a position to defy Washington," Superintendent Jeff Harding said. "We can show compassion to our students, but the level of support is somewhat minor compared to the impact of the legislation."

Harding, however, released a statement showing his support for the students. "The MVLA High School District enrolls all eligible students regardless of citizenship or immigration status. We stand with our DACA students and their families. You are safe on our campuses and we will continue to support your dreams and dignity," Harding said.

Students and staff offer support to DACA recipients

Support for students under DACA is echoed around campus.

"I'm pretty sure a lot of people at this school are in support of DACA... It's important for us to let them know that they aren't alone and that they still have options. It's our job to help them find those options," Alvarado said.

Support also comes from the classroom, as students are being taught how to be understood and support the lives of undocumented students.

"It think this DACA organization is really great," Huan said. "In the American Literature class

District and ASB respond to slated repeal

In contrast, to the district and ASB say they have limited jurisdiction over specify. According to ASB members, they took a vote to decide whether or not to take political action, such as hosting a peaceful protest.

"We will definitely take preemptive measures to make sure ASB does something in response to DACA, but we are limited in our actions... If it is repealed... we are stuck in a position where we

"We are still here behind you, supporting you, and working toward keeping that promise part of your lives, as you leave campus and go out into the world."

- SDAIE teacher Paige Price

can't do much," Yapabandara said. However, not all members of ASB agree.

"A lot of people in ASB don't think we should be taking political action even though it's not really taking political action because it's not a matter of being conservative or liberal, it's a matter of being human," Torres, the multicultural commissioner, said. Similarly, the district feels as if they're limited in the actions they can take. "We are not

we're now learning about american dreams, and I think for those undocumented students being American, staying in America, and being educated in America is also a part of the American dream."

While the rescinding of DACA saddens many, hope for the future still remains.

"[I'm] shocked and saddened that we would go to this place, but also really hopeful that we will see some bipartisan action from Congress," Rietveld said. "It's such a sympathy-gaming group that it seems like everyone feels like... these people should be allowed to stay and work toward a pathway to citizenship."

Although her future is at risk, Garcia tries to remain hopeful, encouraging others in her situation to do the same.

"Keep working hard. There is power in education," Garcia said. "We are all out there fighting for you. Just keep working hard, because people have done it before."



Administration and LSU respond

In response to the rescinding of DACA, administration and student groups are working to educate students and their families.

The MVHS administration is planning on creating an E-LIST and website with information for students and their parents.

"That's the purpose of the E-LIST: to provide as best as we can the latest information, resources, and where to seek help," Assistant Principal Carmen Gomez said. "Obviously, some of our Dreamers are sharing that they are scared and uncertain about their future. We don't know who our Dreamers are necessarily, but I want to make sure that if they subscribe to that E-LIST, they can get some of that information."

Furthermore, student groups such as the Latino Student Union (LSU) are undertaking several projects to educate the student body on what the program is and how its rescinding will affect the MVHS com-