



DREAMERS: AQUÍ Y ALLÁ

devised by THE ENSEMBLE

FEB 16 - FEB 25/CALREP.ORG

CSULB Studio Theatre

General Admission: \$20

Seniors, Military: \$17

Students, CSULB Faculty

and Staff: \$15

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Important Terminology

Below are some key terms you will encounter throughout this guide.



DACA - Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals

American immigration policy that allowed some individuals who entered the country as minors and had either entered or remained in the country illegally, to receive a renewable two-year period of deferred action from deportation and to be eligible for a work permit. DACA was enacted through executive order, not congressional legislation.

DREAM Act Bill - Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors

American legislative proposal for a multi-phase process for qualifying alien minors in the United States that would first grant conditional residency and upon meeting certain qualifications would grant permanent residency.

Dreamers

Those protected under the DREAM Act. To apply they must meet the following criteria:

- younger than 31 on June 15, 2012 which was when the program began
- arrived in the US before the age of 16 and lived there continuously since June 2007
- lack legal immigration status, “Undocumented”

Deferred Action

Immigration status granted to illegal immigrants that delays their deportation without granting them any legal status

USCIS - United States Citizenship and Immigration Services

A component of the United States Department of Homeland Security, charged with processing immigrant visa petitions, naturalization petitions, asylum applications, and refugee applications

Advanced Parole

A permit for a non-citizen, who does not have a valid immigrant visa to re-enter the United States after traveling abroad.

AB 540

Governor Gray Davis added a new section to the California Education 68130.5. It created a new exemption from the payment of non-resident tuition for certain non-resident students who have attended high school in California and received a high school diploma or its equivalent. Undocumented students could pay in-state tuition.

What is verbatim theatre?

Verbatim theatre is a form of documentary theatre which is based on the spoken words of real people. In its strictest form, verbatim theatre-makers use real people's words exclusively, and take this testimony from recorded interviews. However, this form is more malleable than this, and writers have frequently combined interview material with invented scenes, or used reported and remembered speech rather than recorded testimony.

Verbatim theatre and *Dreamers: Aquí y Allá*

Interview with Natalia Caraballo (Ensemble Cast Member)

The style of *Dreamers: Aquí y Allá* is a form of verbatim theatre. Some of the ensemble cast members went on a trip to Mexico with California-Mexico Studies Center (CMSC) and a group of DREAMers. CMSC is a non-profit organization that gave DREAMers the opportunity to visit their place of birth and study abroad through advanced parole. The ensemble from *Dreamers: Aquí y Allá* used recorded interviews with DREAMers, journal entries, and memories from their trip to Mexico. Much of what you will see on stage is a reflection of the actors' time spent with the Dreamers, dialogue from interviews with DACAmented students and their own experiences abroad. The following interview with Natalia Caraballo focuses on the experience of collecting stories and the challenges of representing these on stage.

What was your experience traveling to Mexico with Dreamers? Did it change your perspective on their situation and your own ability to travel across borders?

Natalia: The experience I had with them was unlike anything else. They allowed us [theatre students] to be with them at their most vulnerable state going through a milestone in their lives. It was very humbling to be a part of it and see their trust in us develop overtime. I got to really understand how difficult the dreamers have it, they are no different than us and they work their butts off for themselves and to benefit our country. The frustrating thing is that they are they are deemed invalid to our administration. We became very close to some of them and I want people to hear their stories; they're American. The trip definitely changed my perspective on my own privilege, I usually did not even think about the difficulties of traveling and visiting my family across the border because I was just given the luck of the draw by being born an American citizen.

When interviewing Dreamers, what was the one thing you focused on when transcribing their answers?

N: When interviewing the Dreamers I just wanted to hear their human stories about love and family, the struggles they went through in school, their successes and accomplishments, and to really understand the daily mindset of someone who is constantly under the radar. I want to make sure that people stop sweeping DACA, Dreamers and immigrants under the rug.

What was the most challenging part about the rehearsal process and making these stories come to life?

N: From my perspective, the most challenging thing is just trying to keep the integrity of the stories of the Dreamers and the last trip to Mexico. Having to acclimate as a cast and crew to the daily changing situations surrounding DACA and Dreamers and immigration is difficult because we want the show to be as current as possible corresponding to any new situations happening now to the day we open on February 16th.

What is the biggest takeaway from your experience in the process?

N: The biggest takeaway for me is the fight is bigger than myself, I did not realize how big of an issue this was until I went on this trip and found out how many people it affected and how it affected them. I had no idea my best friend had DACA, and so many other people I hold close to my heart are living in this quiet fear that the 45th has ignited so strongly and continues to do so on a daily basis. I know that I need to continue to fight for the Dreamers because they give everything they have and know to America. They are American. For most of them, it's all they know.

Interview with a DREAMer

The interview shows some of the questions asked by members of the ensemble. All Dreamers were asked the same questions and their recorded answers were used to create the script for *Dreamers: Aquí y Allá*. Joanna* is a 25-year old mother of a six year old boy. She is a part-time student and works a full time job.

Q: For what in your life are you the most grateful?

Joanna: My family. I would like to have the certainty that my family and I will always be together.

Q: Is there something you've dreamed of doing for a long time? Why haven't you done it?

J: I would like to finish college and obtain my degree. It's been difficult to make this dream come true because I am a full time working mom trying to provide for my 6 year old son and give him a better life and home to grow up in. Unfortunately in this economy, you can't do both.

Q: What is your current education/profession? Why did you choose that?

J: I am enrolled in community college and aspiring to get my AA in Psychology and Spanish. Spanish is my first language and psychology is something I became interested in after my brother began to suffer from a chemical imbalance.

Q: When and how did you find out you were undocumented?

J: In high school when I was applying for financial aid for college, FAFSA.

Q: How did it change your life once you got it?

J: It changed my life completely! I got my driver's license and I was able to apply for a better paying job to provide for my son. I was able to afford and give my son a better style of living. Most importantly, the constant fear of not knowing what tomorrow will bring ceased.

Q: How has your daily life changed from before to after DACA rescission?

J: Now, I must think a step ahead. My main goal right now is to save up money and make sure I can still provide for my son in the event my that permits are revoked. Before that, I had plans to buy a house and save for my son's education.

Q: What do you struggle with on a day-to-day basis being undocumented (that we wouldn't expect)?

J: The pain of knowing that my future and my son's future is uncertain in this country. I can't make long-term plans or establish any roots for us. I'm always on a two-year deadline.

Q: If you were forced to leave, what would you leave behind?

J: My hopes, dreams and loved ones.

Q: Given your perspective, if you were in the shoes of your parents, would you have done the same thing?

J: Yes. I don't blame them for wanting a better lifestyle and more opportunities for us. As a mother, I understand the deep desire of wanting to provide and give your child the best in life. Coming from a low-income household it was not always easy but I know my parents always did their best to provide food and the basic necessities for us. If they felt we were better off coming to this country, I trust their judgment and I am grateful for their bravery and courage.

Q: Are you an American?

J: Absolutely!

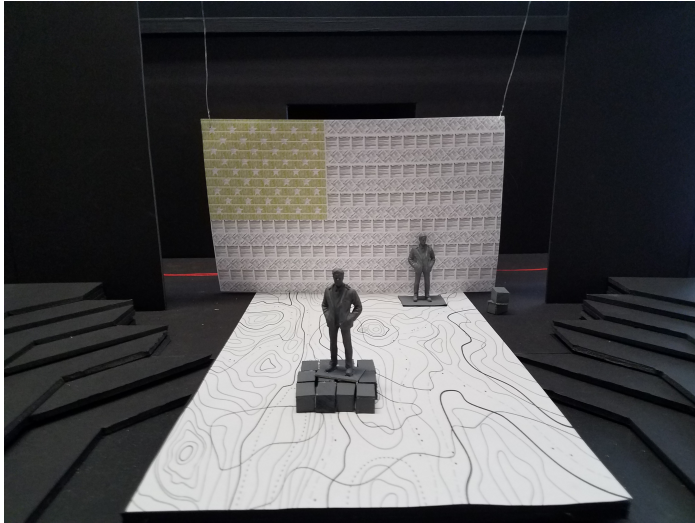
Q: What do you want the world to know about DACA recipients?

J: We are tough and brave souls who are merely fighting for our dreams. It is not easy being the outcast especially when we've done nothing wrong. We are good people trying to do good things in this lifetime, in this country and for this country. We should not be condemned to live in fear.

*Interviewee's name has been changed for privacy.

Verbatim Theatre and Scenic Design

Paige Bossier is the scenic designer on *Dreamers: Aquí y Allá*. She takes some of the experiences gathered from interviews with DACAmented students and used these to create the scenic elements you will see in the production.



Q: What inspired your design?

Paige: This play has forced me to take a long hard look at what it means to be an American. When I thought about it, I realized that my only qualification for being an American was by being born here. I also realized that where you were born is directly tied to documentation and that's something that humans can't control. For better or worse, being an American and being in this country is completely about

paperwork. Our laws, our work permits, our green cards, our birth certificates are tied to our birthplace.

Q: How is this idea of paperwork and birthplace reflected on your design?

P: I took an image of an American flag and collided it with the idea of paperwork to create a new truth: being American is about paperwork. The flag is made up of DACA applications that Dreamers submit to USCIS. In terms of place of birth, the floor is a topographical map of the border. There is a "game" the audience has to go through which is sort of a border crossing made up of red tape lines and it leads directly to the border.

Q: What is the message with the "game?"

P: It is to give the audience a small glimpse of the frustration immigrants feel when crossing the border. It sets them up to understand what the play is about and have them question their own privileges as citizens.

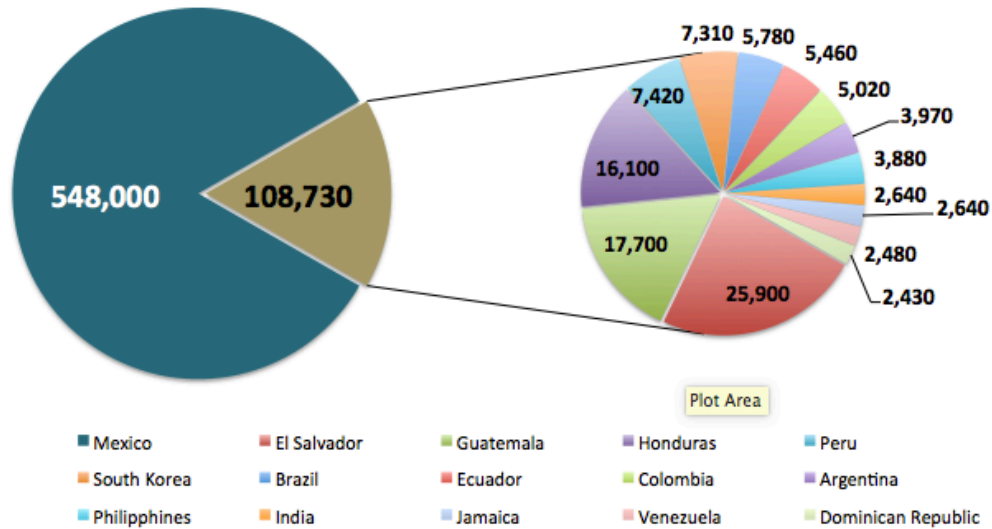
Q: What do you want the audience to takeaway from the scenic design and the play itself?

P: I hope that they feel responsibility for the gift of voting. I want them to take a stand on what they feel passionate about. Having a voice in this country is a privilege and we can give voice to those who don't have that opportunity.

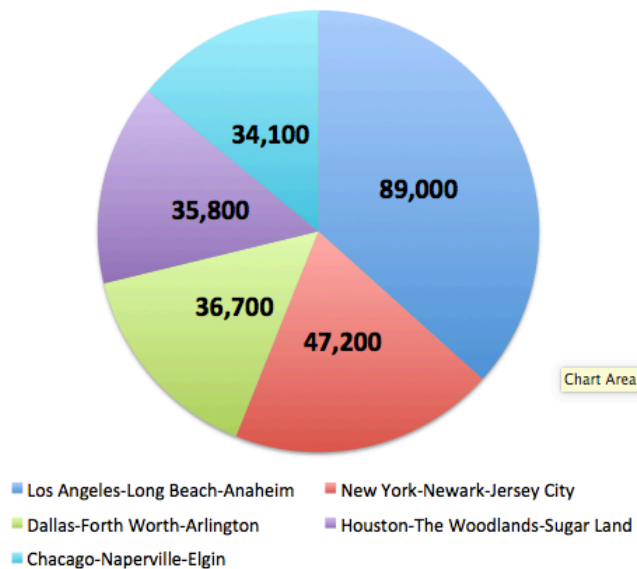
DREAMers By The Numbers

The numbers below reflect active DACA recipients as of September 4, 2017.

Top Countries of Origin for DACA Recipients:



Where do DREAMers live? About 242,800 of them live in large metropolitan cities in the United States.



Timeline of the DREAM Act



2003 - numerous *DREAM Act* bills were in Senate and House of Representative committees to review

2006 - *Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2006* incorporated provisions of the *DREAM Act of 2006*, passed the Senate

2007 - *Security Through Regularized Immigration and a Vibrant Economy (STRIVE) Act of 2007* also incorporated provisions of the *Dream Act of 2007*, stuck in committee to review

2010 - *DREAM Act of 2010*, failed to pass Senate

2011 - *DREAM Act of 2011*, stuck in committee to review

2012 - Under the Obama Administration, Department of Homeland Security implements *Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)*, temporary relief to DREAMers but not a permanent fix

2013 - *Border, Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act* incorporated provisions of the *DREAM Act of 2013*, stuck in committee review

2016 - Trump warns that DACA may be eliminated as president-elect

2017 - Trump administration rescinds DACA

2018 - Judge orders Trump to resume DACA renewals

Applying for DACA

Collect documents as evidence you meet the guidelines



- Proof of identity
- Proof you came to US before your 16th birthday
- Proof of immigration status
- Proof of presence in US on June 15, 2012
- Proof you continuously resided in US since June 15, 2007
- Proof of your student status at the time of requesting DACA
- Proof you are an honorably discharged veteran of the Coast Guard or Armed Forces of the US

Complete Required Forms



Forms have a filing fee of **\$495** (includes biometric fee), cannot be waived

- I-821D: Consideration of DACA
- I-765: Application for Employment Authorization
- I-765WS: Worksheet (Financial information or economic need)

Mail forms to appropriate USCIS Lockbox



- Instructions in instruction page of Form I-821D

Biometric Services



- USCIS will send a scheduling notice after receiving complete request with fees
- USCIS can deny your request if you fail to attend appointment

Check the status of your request online



- Create a USCIS online account for DACA requests
- Receive notifications and case updates and manage your contact information

Frequently Asked Questions



Q: Why can't Dreamers just apply for citizenship?

A: USCIS has a lengthy process. In order for Dreamers to become citizens they need to be permanent residents for 5 years. There are three ways to obtain permanent resident status: a person can be admitted as a refugee or apply for asylum, an eligible employer can sponsor a person, and a close family member can petition to bring someone into the country. Depending on how close the family member is this can take from a year to 25 years.

Q: Can Dreamers go to college?

A: Yes! There is no federal or state law that prohibits illegal immigrants from attending college. However, the biggest concern is cost. Some colleges charge out-of-state tuition and do not offer any Financial Aid. California created AB 540 and is one of the states that gives Financial Aid to undocumented students giving them a higher opportunity to attend college. Other state benefits are available like California DREAM Act and California DREAM loan program that will remain in place even if DACA expires.

Q: Can Dreamers continue to work when DACA expires?

A: When the DACA work permit expires, they will be out of status and start accruing unlawful presence. There may be legal options to allow them to continue working and legally residing in the US.

Q: Can Dreamers travel to other states?

A: Traveling within 100 miles of the US border is dangerous, and exposes people to detection, arrest, and detention by Customs and Border Patrol (CBP). Undocumented travelers should fully understand and evaluate the risk of doing so under a new political Administration.

Q: What would a *clean* DREAM Act be?

A: It would create a pathway to US citizenship.

Join us for a clean DREAM Act: <https://www.aclu.org/issues/immigrants-rights/join-us-fight-clean-dream-act-now>

For the Classroom

Before the show:

- 1) If you had to leave the country and could only take one thing, what would it be?
- 2) For what in your life are you most grateful?
- 3) What are your dreams for your life?
- 4) What are some things you wish you could do but can't? Who/What prevents you from doing these things? What can you do to overcome these obstacles?
- 5) What opportunities do you have that others might not?
- 6) How do you feel about people not having the same opportunities as you?

After the show:

- 1) Which Dreamer did you identify with the most? If you don't identify with any, why not?
- 2) What did you learn about Dreamers from watching the show that you didn't know before?
- 3) What do you wish you could do to change their story?
- 4) In the interview with Paige Bossier (scenic designer) she mentioned the playing of a "game." Describe that experience and how did you feel while playing it? Did the designer effectively convey her message? Why or why not?
- 5) Think back to your answer in question 4 from the "Before the show" section, were there similarities in the systems that prevent you from doing what you want?

Classroom Activity: Verbatim Theatre

Students should find a partner and share a short story about a childhood event that changed their life. Each partner will share the story of the other person in one of the following ways: tell the story in three minutes, tell the story without words or tell the story in three motions. As a class, answer the questions below.

- 1) How can we share and re-tell our stories in a way that feels safe and respected?
- 2) Whose stories in our society get told? Whose stories do not get told?

Resources:

For more classroom resources to learn more about Dreamers and how campuses can become a sanctuary visit: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1o-zD9Yy-oJboGOtWkBD3E8bz3DhEPPikOBBzYOOXSdU/edit>