



Undocumented No More

A Nationwide Analysis of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA

Tom K. Wong, Angela S. García, Marisa Abrajano,
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Center for American Progress



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Introduction and summary

Immigration status has an enormous impact on the lives of millions of undocumented young people across the United States. Being undocumented can stop people's dreams, curtail their ambitions, and can mean that daily life is fraught with risks and the fear of deportation.²

In an effort to address some of the challenges that undocumented youth face, President Barack Obama announced the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, program on June 15, 2012. As an exercise in administrative discretion—unlike a legislative effort—DACA does not give undocumented youth lawful permanent resident status such as a green card or provide a path to permanent residency and citizenship. Rather, it gives temporary relief from deportation to undocumented youth and work authorization that can be renewed every two years to eligible applicants.³ Nevertheless, the DACA announcement represented a victory for undocumented youth and their allies; more than half a million young people to date have applied for deferred action.

In the first year since U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, or USCIS, began accepting DACA applications on August 15, 2012, more than 573,000 people have applied and more than 430,000 people have received deferred action⁴—a remarkable feat given the short timespan to get the program up and running. More than half of people who were immediately eligible for DACA have applied for the program in less than a year.⁵

But even with these positive statistics, a number of questions remain: How is DACA being implemented across the country? Which states have been most successful with DACA outreach and implementation, and which states have lagged behind? Which national origins groups have had the most success with DACA? Have any groups been left behind? And what role do community-based organizations, new and traditional media, and the political context of individual states play in DACA implementation and outreach?

“Deferred action changed my life. It brought me back to my high school days and college days when I had goals in my mind and I had inspiration and I wanted to be a role model and contribute to the community.”¹

— DACA recipient

The primary objective of this one-year program evaluation and collaborative report is to begin to answer some of these questions. To supplement the USCIS’s publicly available data on DACA, we draw from data obtained from the Department of Homeland Security, or DHS, via two Freedom of Information Act, or FOIA, requests totaling 465,509 applications. Our purpose is to evaluate DACA using these new data and to examine the factors that shape how DACA unfolds, with a focus on analyzing the factors that help or hinder young people in applying for deferred action. We pay particular attention to the role of immigrant-serving organizations and media as potential facilitating factors, and anti-immigrant policy contexts at the state level as a potential inhibiting factor.

It is critical to evaluate and understand how DACA worked during its first year. First—and perhaps most practically—this can help identify how to make DACA as accessible as possible for eligible youth. While the benefits of transitioning from being undocumented to “DACAdmented” are clear, and while a significant number of people have benefited from DACA already, the data also show that DACA is not reaching its entire target population.⁶

Requirements to receive DACA

Eligible applicants must:

- Be under age 31 as of June 15, 2012, and have arrived in the United States before age 16
- Have been physically present in the United States on June 15, 2012, and have continuously resided in the United States since June 15, 2007
- Be at least 15 years old at time of application, unless the applicant is in removal proceedings or has been ordered to depart; people under age 15 can apply when they reach 15
- Be currently enrolled in school, or have graduated from high school, obtained a GED, or been honorably discharged from the military or Coast Guard
- Have not committed a felony, a serious misdemeanor, three or more misdemeanors, or otherwise threaten national security

Application requirements include:

- Proof of identity
- Proof of arrival to the United States before age 16 and proof of immigration status, if applicable
- Proof of presence in the United States on June 15, 2012, and proof of continuous residency since June 15, 2007
- Proof of education or military service
- A \$465 filing fee, including a \$380 application fee and an \$85 biometric services fee⁷

Since DACA represents a trial run for a larger-scale legalization program—such as the one proposed in the Senate-passed immigration reform bill, S. 744—it is important to examine how the directive is operating and how it could be improved. For example, data from this report can be used to better pinpoint geographic regions and particular racial and ethnic groups that may need more outreach.

Second, undocumented youth are an increasingly vocal part of the contemporary immigration debate. By pushing for measures that help the broader undocumented immigrant population, these youths have played an instrumental role in building momentum for broad, common-sense, and permanent immigration policy solutions. It is essential to understand a program like DACA since it is directed toward this new, increasingly influential force in America’s immigration debate.

Finally, in this critical period of the debate over immigration reform, our report helps identify the institutions and infrastructure that, to the extent that they enhance the implementation of DACA, can help chart how future immigration policies—in particular, a path to citizenship for the 11 million undocumented immigrants—should be supported, maximizing their reach and efficacy.

Below is a summary of what this report examines.

National and state demographics

- Overall, 32.5 percent of all possible applicants—including those who are currently eligible and those who are not yet eligible—have applied.
- Of those immediately eligible for DACA, a full 61.2 percent have applied—a remarkable feat in just one year.
- The DACA implementation rate among the states varies significantly, from a low of 22 percent of eligible people in Florida to a high of 48.6 percent in Indiana. Note that because a portion of the DACA population will not be immediately eligible to apply, individual state implementation rates should not necessarily be viewed as low. Nationally, 53.1 percent of the DACA population is immediately eligible.

“Since DACA represents a trial run for a larger-scale legalization program—such as the one proposed in the Senate-passed immigration reform bill, S. 744—it is important to examine how the directive is operating and how it could be improved.”

“Men are 1.4 times more likely than women to have their applications denied.”

- Thirteen states and the District of Columbia—including some with the largest DACA-eligible populations in the country—have implementation rates that are statistically lower than expected. While it is possible that these states lag behind in DACA implementation because of an over-count in the eligible population, it is clear that more outreach is necessary in these states.

Applications by country of origin

- DACA applicants in the FOIA sample were born in 205 different countries, from the Democratic Republic of the Congo to Luxembourg and Norway to North Korea.
- Mexicans make up 74.9 percent of the FOIA sample; Central Americans, 11.7 percent; and South Americans, 6.9 percent. Altogether, applicants from Latin America comprise 93.5 percent of the total.
- Asians make up 4.2 percent of the FOIA sample; Europeans, 1 percent; and Africans, 1 percent.
- Compared to estimates of the DACA-eligible population, Mexicans are over-represented in the FOIA sample (+3.8 percent), while groups from North and Central America excluding Mexico (-1.8 percent), Europeans (-0.8 percent), and Asians (-1.9 percent) are underrepresented.

Gender and age

- Women represent 51.2 percent of the FOIA sample; men represent 48.7 percent.
- Men are 1.4 times more likely than women to have their applications denied.
- The average age of a DACA applicant in the FOIA sample is 20 years old, and older applicants are more likely than younger applicants to be denied.
- A male at the top end of the spectrum—just under 31—is 4.3 times more likely to be denied than a 23-year-old male applicant in the FOIA sample. A woman at the top end of the spectrum is 3.7 times more likely to be denied than a 23-year-old female. While it is too early to tell why this may be the case, the difficulties in establishing eligibility for people who are out of school may be a factor.

Denials

- Mexican applicants are half as likely to be denied DACA as other groups.
- All other applicants are 1.8 times more likely to be denied than applicants born in Mexico.
- Africans, Asians, Europeans, and Central Americans experience disproportionately higher denial rates than Mexicans.

The role of immigrant-serving organizations

- Through an analysis of the density of immigrant-serving organizations in each state, it is clear that more organizations means more applications. In fact, for every additional immigrant-serving organization, there is an increase of 70 DACA applications.
- But critically, the presence of more organizations does not correlate with the ultimate implementation or acceptance rate. Put another way, more organizations does not mean that more people—relative to the overall number eligible in a given state—have applied, or that their applications are any more accepted than those in states with fewer organizations.
- These inconclusive results are most likely the product of various factors, including how much focus each individual organization gives to DACA, differences in how long organizations have been around, institutional memories in terms of whether or not institutions took part in past legalization programs, resources available, and language-specific outreach strategies.
- Further research on immigrant-serving organizations must look at factors such as capacity to serve DACA applicants, experience, and language-oriented outreach.

Explaining the differences in DACA rates

- While it is too early to tell why discrepancies in denials exist, factors such as the active role of the Mexican consulate and broader exposure among Spanish-language press than Asian media could play a role in the differences among national origins groups and their ultimate application and denial rates. The high cost of applications may also hinder applicants, particularly those in families with multiple DACA-eligible youth. More research is needed to understand these differences.
- Both new and traditional media have played a significant role, though the paucity of information about DACA among some ethnic media sources—particularly those targeting Asian immigrants—could play a role in lower rates of applications. Social media is being utilized not just for the purposes of disseminating information, but also for proving eligibility, by proving residency and fulfilling continuous presence requirements.
- While restrictive state-level immigration policies may be designed to discourage undocumented immigrants from engaging with society, the data make it clear that this is not the case when it comes to DACA, as implementation rates are not statistically significantly lower in states with hostile policy climates.

DACA's political background

DACA has unfolded in the context of a complicated political background. Both Democrats and Republicans agree that our nation's immigration system is broken, though substantial disagreement exists in terms of how to fix it. Despite bipartisan immigration reform efforts—in 2006 and 2007, for example, and most recently in the Senate's passage of comprehensive immigration reform legislation in June 2013—our broken system remains in place.

As the debate over legalizing the 11 million undocumented immigrants currently living in the country has unfolded over the past decade, two parallel efforts have also been in play. Beginning in 2001, legislators led by Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Rep. Luis Gutierrez (D-IL) focused on providing legal status and a path to citizenship for DREAMers—young immigrants without status, Americans in all but papers. These efforts were enshrined in the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act, or DREAM Act. The DREAM Act has been included in all of the recent attempts at comprehensive immigration reform and came within a few votes of becoming law in 2010, when the House passed a version of the Act; the Senate total was five votes short of overcoming a Republican filibuster.⁸

In addition to legislative efforts for DREAMers, the Obama administration has also explored using executive authority to protect segments of the unauthorized population over the past few years. In June 2011, John Morton, director of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE, put out a memo calling for the department to prioritize its resources to focus on serious criminals, rather than family members, DREAMers, and other low-priority immigrants.⁹ Theoretically and publicly, prosecutorial discretion gave ICE officers and attorneys the ability to “close” the cases of low-priority unauthorized immigrants, but only a small number of people actually received that discretion.¹⁰

“Both Democrats and Republicans agree that our nation's immigration system is broken, though substantial disagreement exists in terms of how to fix it.”

“Unlike the DREAM Act, which would provide a legislative solution with an independent and permanent path to citizenship for unauthorized youth, deferred action is temporary, granting only a two-year reprieve from deportation and a work permit.”

With the November presidential election looming large in the summer of 2012, immigration and administrative relief re-emerged as significant electoral issues. When Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL) began talking about unveiling a Republican version of the DREAM Act, which was intended to bridge the gap between his party and immigrant voters, the Obama administration took the initiative to announce the DACA program, giving undocumented youth eligibility for relief from deportation and two-year work permits.

DACA eligibility

To be eligible for DACA, an applicant must have come to the United States before the age of 16; be between the ages of 15 and 31 as of June 15, 2012 (though people who are younger than 15 may apply once they reach that age); have continuously lived in the United States since June 15, 2007, and were physically present in the United States on June 15, 2012; have no serious criminal history; and have either completed high school or obtained a GED, are currently in school, or have been honorably discharged from a branch of the armed services. Immigrants younger than 15 are eligible to apply for DACA if they are in removal proceedings, have been ordered removal, or have a voluntary departure order. Applying for DACA requires immigrants to pay a \$465 application fee and provide proof to establish identity, age at entry, continuous presence since 2007, and other eligibility documentation.¹¹

Unlike the DREAM Act, which would provide a legislative solution with an independent and permanent path to citizenship for unauthorized youth, deferred action is temporary, granting only a two-year reprieve from deportation and a work permit. Most importantly, as the DHS memo describing DACA notes, “This memorandum confers no substantive right, immigration status, or pathway to citizenship.”¹²

And because it is an exercise of administrative relief, the DACA directive is revocable. Indeed, DACA has already faced opposition from some House Republicans. A June 2013 amendment to the DHS Appropriations Act introduced by Rep. Steve King (R-IA) prohibits the administration from using federal funds to implement DACA. Although this amendment passed 224 to 201, it is unlikely to become law.¹³ Given the similarities between DACA and the DREAM Act, we provide a side-by-side comparison in Appendix A.

DACA by the numbers

According to data that USCIS released to the public, as of August 15, 2013 (the one-year anniversary of the program), 573,404 people submitted applications for deferred action. Final decisions have been made for 437,686 applications; 430,236 applications have been approved and 7,450 have been denied. Put another way, of the applications with a final decision, 98.3 percent have been approved and just 1.7 percent have been denied. It is important to note that it is possible that the higher approval rate is equally a product of the easiest cases being adjudicated first, with more difficult cases still pending; in fact, July and August 2013 saw a significant rise in denials, from only 5,383 to 7,450.¹⁴ It is therefore possible that a greater number of people could be denied in the future.

Using data obtained from our FOIA requests, the following analysis represents the most detailed evaluation of DACA to date. We begin by comparing the number of DACA applications submitted to USCIS with estimates of DACA-eligible youth, both nationally and on a state-by-state basis. What is the current overall rate of DACA implementation? In which states have DACA outreach and implementation been most successful? In which states have outreach and implementation lagged behind? We then leverage the FOIA data to evaluate similar questions, but with respect to particular national origins groups. Which national origins groups have had the most success with DACA? Have any groups been left behind?

As the DACA-eligible population represents a subset of the broader undocumented population, “getting DACA right” means putting policies and practices in place that can effectively serve all immigrants should broader legalization occur. However, this requires more fine-grained data than what USCIS makes publicly available. While the data released periodically by USCIS are informative—especially when it comes to painting general portraits about DACA such as the one above—these data are insufficient to gain a deeper sense of how effective the program has been, existing shortcomings, and whether any particular groups are being systematically left out of the process. The answers to these questions are vital from a policy perspective and for immigrant-serving organizations that are on the front lines of DACA outreach and implementation.

DACA implementation

The hundreds of thousands of applications submitted to USCIS and the large percentage of approvals make it clear that DACA is profoundly affecting the lives of eligible youth and their families. Despite this positive impact, the data also show that successful DACA implementation is not uniform across states, and not all national origins groups are benefiting equally.

The geography of DACA implementation: A state-by-state examination

While the 573,404 people who have submitted applications for deferred action are clearly a large number, they represent just 32.5 percent of the estimated total

Definitions:

DACA-eligible youth: The number of eligible DACA recipients comes from estimates from the Immigration Policy Center, or IPC, using methodology from demographers Rob Paral and Associates. The data show that there are 1,764,542 potential applicants. Note that this number does not take into account people who might be ineligible because of residency issues or criminal convictions.

Currently DACA-eligible youth: The number of people who meet the age requirements for DACA—those currently between the ages of 15 and 30—is 936,933 potential applicants.

Implementation rate: The number of applications submitted to date (e.g., in a state) divided by the total estimated number of all DACA-eligible youth, including those who are not yet eligible.

Observed rate: The number of applications submitted to date divided by the total number of applications submitted across the entire country.

Expected rate: Total estimated number of DACA-eligible youth, including those who are not yet eligible, divided by total number of DACA-eligible youth across the entire country.

For example, in California, the implementation rate is 29.1 percent. This means that 157,182 of the estimated 539,774 DACA-eligible youth in California have applied. The implementation rate gives us a window into how far we have come and how far we have left to go.

California's observed rate is 27.4 percent and its expected rate is 30.5 percent. This means that while over a quarter of all DACA applications submitted thus far have come from California, it is still lower than we expect.

number of DACA-eligible youth. It is important to note that since there are some potential DACA applicants who are not immediately eligible to apply due to their age or not completing the requisite schooling, only 53.1 percent of the total DACA population can apply immediately. So while 32.5 percent might seem like a low percentage, it covers more than half of those immediately eligible.¹⁵ Let us refer to this percentage—the number of applications divided by the estimated number of DACA-eligible youth—as the DACA implementation rate.

This national portrait, however, misses the substantial variation in DACA implementation rates across states. Having calculated the overall implementation rate, we can examine relative state-level implementation rates. Before proceeding, it is important to note that this analysis is based on estimates of the DACA-eligible population, a subset of an unauthorized population that is notoriously difficult to count.¹⁶ Therefore, these are rough estimates.

Data made available by USCIS in its August 2013 DACA report allow us to evaluate the DACA implementation rate for each state. First, we calculate the implementation rate for all states.¹⁸ We then run a series of 51 chi-squared tests—all states plus the District of Columbia—to identify where the number of DACA applications is statistically significantly lower than what is expected based on state-level estimates of the DACAmented population.¹⁹ Put simply, this helps us to identify which states should be seeing more DACA applications than have been submitted to date.

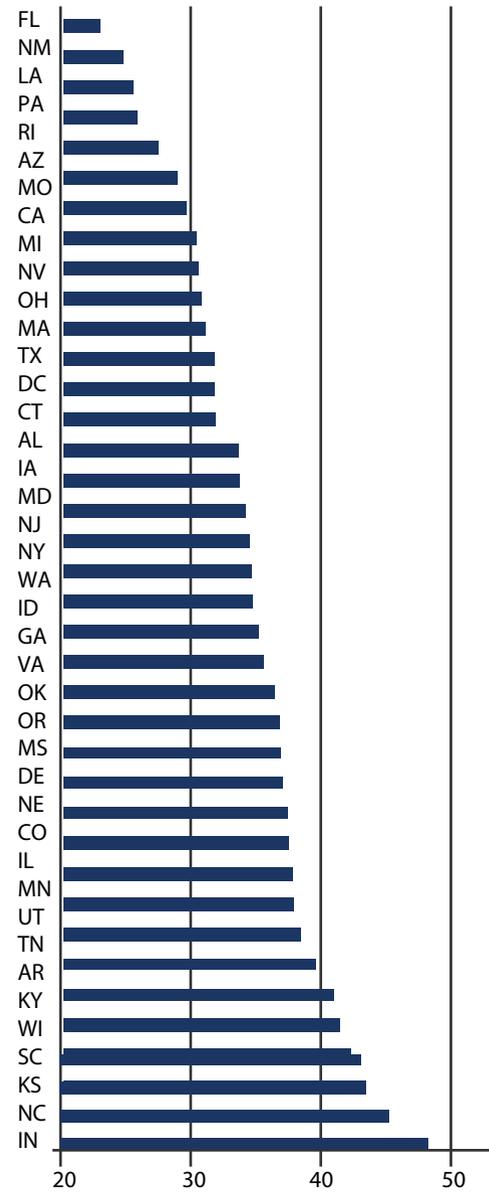
Comparing DACA implementation rates across states

A state-by-state look at DACA implementation shows that implementation rates vary widely, ranging from a low of 5.4 percent in Maine to a high of 48.6 percent in Indiana. Again, because not all people meet the immediate requirements of DACA, individual state implementation rates should not necessarily be viewed as low. Nationally, the immediately eligible population is just 53.1 percent of the total DACA population.²⁰

Comparing the minimum and maximum, though, also includes states with only a small number of DACA-eligible youth, distorting the analysis. If we only examine states that are home to 500 DACA applicants or more, we see that the range in the DACA implementation rate varies from a low of 22 percent to a high of 48.6 percent.²¹ As Figure 1 shows, Florida represents the low end of the range, with 23,456

FIGURE 1

DACA implementation rate by state



DACA implementation rate by state (%)

Note: DACA implementation rates of immediately eligible population for all states with 500 or more DACA applicants as of August 2013. The implementation rate of those immediately eligible is equal to the number of applications to date divided by the estimated total number of immediately eligible youth, 936,933 people. Source: Citizenship and Immigration Services, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2013), available at <http://www.uscis.gov/USCIS/Resources/Reports%20and%20Studies/Immigration%20Forms%20Data/All%20Form%20Types/DACA/daca-13-8-15.pdf>; Immigration Policy Center, "Who and Where the DREAMers Are, Revised Estimates," October 16, 2012, available at <http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/just-facts/who-and-where-dreamers-are-revised-estimates>.

DACA applications to date out of an estimated 106,481 DACA-eligible youth. Indiana represents the high end of the range, with 6,926 applications to date out of an estimated 14,255 DACA-eligible youth.

A closer look at Figure 1 shows that the implementation rate is generally higher for states that are new immigrant destinations, meaning states that are newly experiencing increased immigration, or have small immigrant populations. We can accept this at face value—or, in what seems to be a more realistic interpretation, estimates of the DACA-eligible population are likely underestimated for states with small immigrant populations, leading to artificially high implementation rates, and are overestimated for states with large ones, leading to artificially low implementation rates.²²

Nevertheless, these estimates provide an important heuristic for evaluating DACA. It is clear that DACA is not being implemented as uniformly as it could be.²³ For example, as the implementation rate for California, the state with the largest estimated number of DACA-eligible youth, is currently 29.1 percent, this means that almost 400,000 young people who are eligible for DACA or who will become eligible in the future have yet to be served. In Texas, the state with the second-largest estimated number of DACA-eligible youth, the 30.5 percent implementation rate means that more than 200,000 have yet to be served.

In which states is DACA implementation lower than expected?

The DACA implementation rate gives us a window into how far we have come and how far we have to go when it comes to DACA. But when comparing DACA implementation across states, another important question to ask is whether the number of DACA applications that we currently see—the observed rate—is higher or lower than is expected based on state-level estimates of the DACA-eligible population. If the

answer is lower and there is a statistically significant difference between what we currently see and what we expect to see, it shows us where new or bolstered DACA outreach is necessary.

To conduct such tests, we first take the aforementioned observed rate of 27.4 percent for California. Of the 1.76 million DACA-eligible youth, however, 30.6 percent are estimated to live in California. The key question is whether the difference between the observed 27.4 percent and the expected 30.6 percent is statistically significant.

To answer this question, we ran tests that showed the number of DACA applications that we currently see is statistically significantly lower than what is expected based on state-level estimates of the DACAmented population, including the three states with the largest number of estimated DACA-eligible youth: California, Texas, and Florida. They also included states that may not be on the national radar. (See Table 1 below; full results for all states can be found in Appendix C)²⁴

TABLE 1
States in which DACA applications are statistically significantly lower than expected.

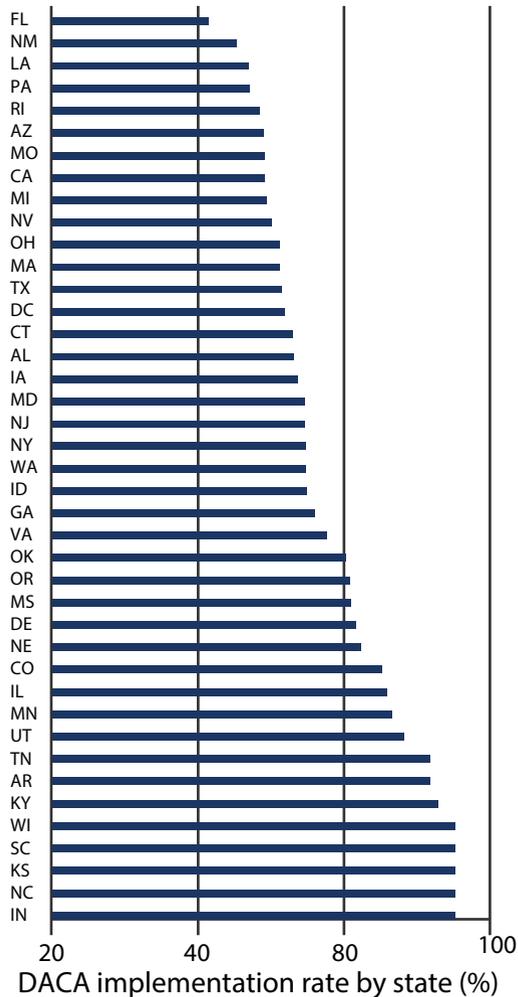
| State | # Applications as of August 2013 | Total # Estimated Eligible | Observed % as of August 2013 | Total Expected % | Difference – Observed % v. Expected % | Statistically Significant |
|-------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| CA | 157,182 | 539,774 | 27.41% | 30.57% | -3.16% | Yes |
| TX | 90,900 | 298,133 | 15.85% | 16.89% | -1.04% | Yes |
| FL | 23,456 | 106,481 | 4.09% | 6.03% | -1.94% | Yes |
| AZ | 19,702 | 71,046 | 3.44% | 4.02% | -0.58% | Yes |
| NV | 9,026 | 30,574 | 1.57% | 1.73% | -0.16% | Yes |
| MA | 5,946 | 19,525 | 1.04% | 1.11% | -0.07% | Yes |
| MN | 4,375 | 14,903 | 0.76% | 0.84% | -0.08% | Yes |
| NM | 4,036 | 16,988 | 0.70% | 0.96% | -0.26% | Yes |
| PA | 3,930 | 15,855 | 0.69% | 0.90% | -0.21% | Yes |
| OH | 2,950 | 9,893 | 0.51% | 0.56% | -0.05% | Yes |
| MO | 2,377 | 8,361 | 0.41% | 0.47% | -0.06% | Yes |
| LA | 1,383 | 5,646 | 0.24% | 0.32% | -0.08% | Yes |
| RI | 885 | 3,364 | 0.15% | 0.19% | -0.04% | Yes |
| DC | 522 | 1,711 | 0.09% | 0.10% | -0.01% | Yes |

Note: State-by-state summary of DACA for all states with 500 or more DACA applicants. Difference in applications to date versus applications expected can be calculated as follows: If number of applications as of August 2013 equals "a" and total number of DACA-eligible youth equals "b," then difference is equal to $\frac{a}{573,404} - \frac{b}{1,764,452}$. Yes = statistically significant at $p < .000$.

Source: Citizenship and Immigration Services, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2013), available at <http://www.uscis.gov/USCIS/Resources/Reports%20and%20Studies/Immigration%20Forms%20Data/All%20Form%20Types/DACA/daca-13-8-15.pdf>; UCSD FOIA data.

FIGURE 2

**DACA implementation rate by state,
immediately eligible population**



Note: DACA implementation rates of immediately eligible population for all states with 500 or more DACA applicants as of August 2013. The implementation rate of those immediately eligible is equal to the number of applications to date divided by the estimated total number of immediately eligible youth, 936,933 people. Source: Citizenship and Immigration Services, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2013), available at <http://www.uscis.gov/USCIS/Resources/Reports%20and%20Studies/Immigration%20Forms%20Data/All%20Form%20Types/DACA/daca-13-8-15.pdf>; Immigration Policy Center, "Who and Where the DREAMers Are, Revised Estimates," October 16, 2012, available at <http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/just-facts/who-and-where-dreamers-are-revised-estimates>.

Though there is clearly much to be done, DACA's success is evident in the immediately eligible population.²⁵ As Figure 2 shows, nearly all states that are home to more than 500 DACA applicants have implementation rates of the immediately eligible population. Some states even have rates close to 100 percent. We note here that low estimates of the immediately eligible population—particularly in states with small numbers of potentially eligible recipients—can artificially inflate implementation rates.

Having identified states with gaps in DACA implementation, we leverage the FOIA data to identify whether any particular national origins groups are underrepresented in DACA. Combining this analysis with the preceding one illuminates not just where DACA outreach can be bolstered, but also identifies groups to target. We begin by describing the national origins diversity of the DACAmented population before moving to the analysis.

Where are the DACA applicants from?

A first look at the raw data about DACA applicants' birthplaces shows that 205 different countries and territories are represented.²⁶ From some of the poorest countries, such as Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo; to many of the richest, such as Luxembourg and Norway; from some of the most autocratic countries, such as North Korea and Saudi Arabia; to many of the most democratic countries, such as Norway and Sweden, nearly every geographic, economic, and political circumstance is captured.

These data also demonstrate the political “push” factors that go into decisions to emigrate, and America’s magnetic “pull.” Of the 192 U.N. member states, 92 percent are represented in the sample of DACA applications. DACA applications also include a number of countries that no longer exist, putting into stark relief the fact that for DACA-eligible youth, the United States is the only home they have left. For example, the USSR and Yugoslavia, both of which no longer exist, are included on the list. While West and East Germany were reunified in 1990, “Germany, West” is also included. And although North and South Vietnam became one country in 1976, “North Vietnam” also appears. Though the 855 people whose birthplaces are listed as “unknown” may only have roots in the United States and may no longer have surviving relatives who know where they were born, the preceding examples show that for some, memories of their birthplaces no longer align with the realities of the 21st century, which further proves the point that America is home to DACA-eligible youth.

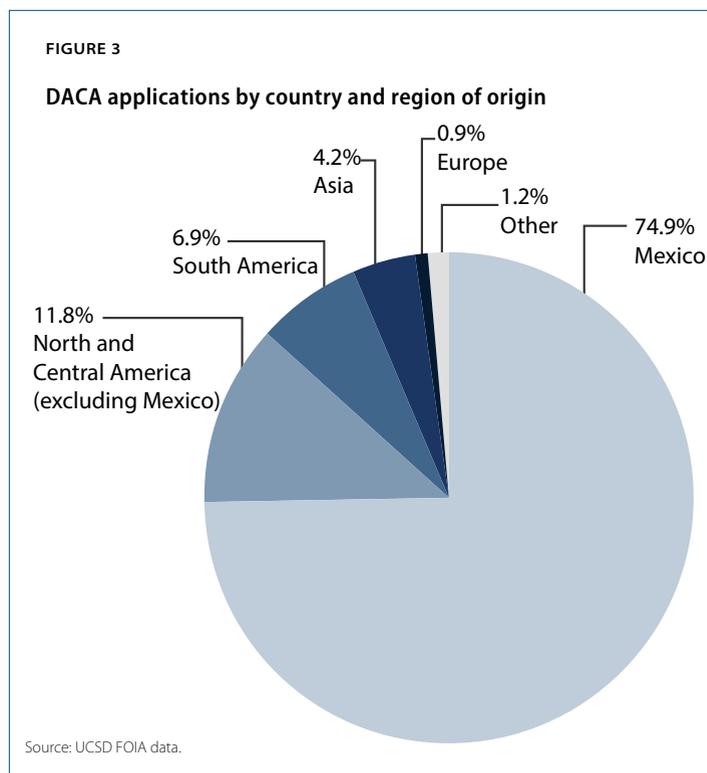
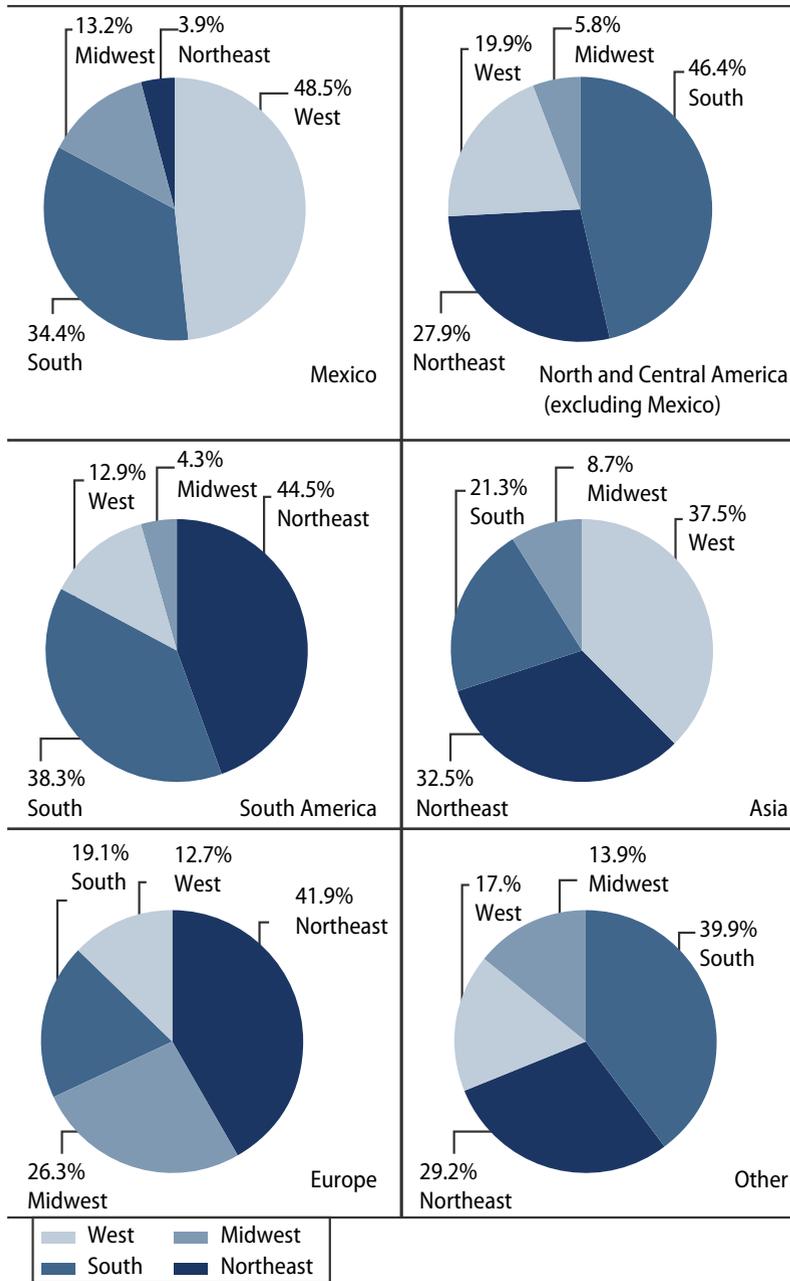


FIGURE 4

DACA applicants by country/region of origin and geographic location in the United States



Source: UCSD FOIA data.

DACA applicants by group and state

As Figure 4 shows, nearly half of all applicants from Mexico live in western states (particularly in California and Texas), and more than one-third live in the South.

However, the distribution of DACA applicants from other parts of Central America is different; nearly half live in the South and just more than one-quarter live in northeastern states. Texas and Florida in the South, and New York and New Jersey in the Northeast, account for the geographic distribution of DACA applicants from Central America.

South America represents a third distinct pattern. Nearly half of DACA applicants from South America live in the Northeast and about one-third live in the South. While New York and New Jersey are again the main Northeastern states, Florida is by far the largest southern state that South American DACA applicants call home.

The geographic distribution is somewhat more uniform for DACA applicants from Asia, with about one-third living in western states,

another third living in the Northeast, and the remaining third living in the South and Midwest. More than half of all Asian-origin DACA applicants live in California and New York.

For European DACA applicants, a little more than 40 percent live in the Northeast and over one-quarter live in the Midwest. Illinois is the second-largest state that European DACA applicants call home after New York—and half of these DACA-eligible youth are Polish.

Lastly, just more than 40 percent of African DACA applicants live in the South and about one-third live in the Northeast. While the big immigrant-receiving states of New York and Texas are home to the many African DACA applicants, California barely tops the list. In fact, Maryland is the second-largest state that African DACA applicants call home ²⁸

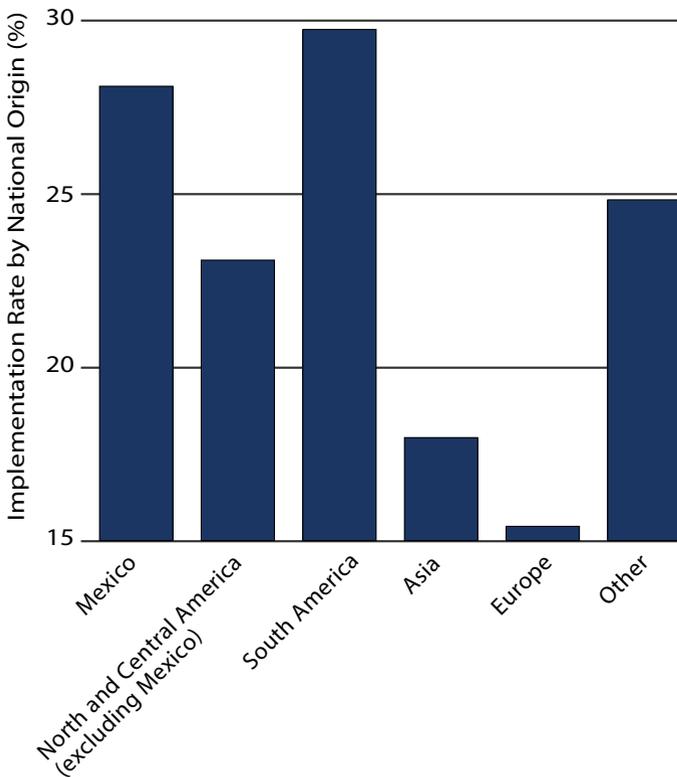
DACA applicants by country and region of origin

Moving from the unexpected to the expected, we can look at the number of DACA applications by country and region of origin. The FOIA data gives us the leverage to move far beyond the aggregate statistics released by USCIS.

The individual-level FOIA data makes it possible to aggregate the birth countries of DACA applicants into their respective regions of origin. Since applications from those born in Mexico forms the bulk of the applications, we can create a separate category for that country. As Figure 3 shows, 74.9 percent of the applicants in the sample were born in Mexico, 11.7 percent are from Central America, and 6.9 percent are from South America. This means that 93.5 percent, or 435,312 out of the 465,509 applicants in the sample, are from Latin America. Of the remaining applicants, 4.2 percent are from Asia, about 1 percent is from Europe, and about 1 percent is from Africa.

FIGURE 5

DACA implementation rates by national origin



Source: UCSD FOIA data.

DACA implementation:
A national origins view

By aggregating the countries of birth of all DACA applicants into regions, we can evaluate the overall effectiveness of DACA outreach and implementation as it relates to particular national origins groups. Specifically, we can compare the national origins numbers that we see in the FOIA data of applications with the estimated total number of DACA-eligible youth by national origins, including both those immediately eligible and those not yet eligible.²⁹ This, in effect, is the implementation rate by national origins. To do this, we use the estimates of the number of potential DACA beneficiaries by region that are provided by the Immigration Policy Center. The regions that the IPC uses in its estimates are Mexico, other North and Central America countries, South America, Asia, and other, which is primarily composed of African countries. We aggregate the countries of birth into regions using the same definitions as the IPC to ensure comparability.

A look at the implementation rate by national origin provides a window into the work that remains to be done when it comes to DACA. For example, the FOIA data shows that 348,579 applicants were born in Mexico. This is certainly a large number, but given that the IPC estimates that there are 1,254,083 DACA-eligible youth from Mexico, it translates into a 27.8 percent implementation rate.

As Figure 5 highlights, the implementation rate for Mexico is actually at the higher end of the spectrum, as it ranges from a low of 15.4 percent in Europe to a high of 29.4 percent in South America. For North and Central America, the implementation rate is 22.9 percent. At the low end of the range, the 15.4 percent implementation rate for Europe means that just more than 25,000 European DACA-eligible youth have yet to be served. Asia's 17.9 percent implementation rate means that nearly 90,000 youth have yet to be served.³⁰

Are any national origins groups being left out?

The FOIA data makes clear that DACA is not reaching all national origins groups equally. As we identified the states where DACA outreach is most needed, we now do the same for national origins groups.

The IPC estimates that undocumented youth born in Mexico comprise 71.1 percent—1,254,083 out of 1,765,452—of all DACA-eligible persons. Those from Mexico are slightly overrepresented in DACA, as they comprise 74.9 percent of the sample.

On the other hand, there are statistically significant differences in representation for those from North and Central America (excluding Mexico), Asia, and Europe. The IPC estimates that those from North and Central America (excluding Mexico) comprise 13.6 percent of all DACA-eligible persons but comprise just 11.8 percent of the sample. The gap for Asians is even more pronounced; they comprise 6.1 percent of all DACA-eligible youth and 4.2 percent of the sample. Lastly, while Europeans are estimated to comprise 1.7 percent of all DACA-eligible youth, they comprise just 0.9 percent of the sample.³¹

“The FOIA data makes clear that DACA is not reaching all national origins groups equally.”

The gendered dimensions of DACA

“males—despite representing a smaller proportion of the sample of DACA applicants—are 1.4 times more likely than females to have their applications denied.”

What are the gendered dimensions of DACA? Our FOIA data provide a first-of-its-kind window into this question. There are more female applicants in the sample than male ones. More specifically, there are 238,402 female applicants, representing 51.2 percent of the sample, and 226,826 male applicants, representing 48.7 percent of the sample. A small fraction—281 applicants, or 0.1 percent—did not indicate their gender.

While the distribution of DACA applicants by gender is fairly uniform across most states, a state-by-state look reveals some gendered patterns. A series of 51 chi-squared tests comparing the gender distribution of DACA applicants within each state—as well as the District of Columbia—to the rest of the sample shows that nearly all the states along the West Coast have larger percentages of female applicants, while the East Coast and southern states tend to have larger percentages of male applicants.³² Significant differences also emerge across regions of origin. Whereas applicants from Asia and Europe are more likely to be male, applicants from Latin America are more likely to be female.

It may be easy to discount or even overlook these differences because they mirror larger trends in immigration. Indeed, 51.1 percent of the foreign-born U.S. population is female and 48.9 percent is male.³³ However, it would be unwise to do so. First, a closer look at U.S. Census data shows that the balance between females and males is tilted in the opposite direction—fewer females, more males—when looking specifically at the foreign-born noncitizen population, with 48.5 percent being female and 51.5 percent being male.

Second, and more importantly, males—despite representing a smaller proportion of the sample of DACA applicants—are 1.4 times more likely than females to have their applications denied. Moreover, the difference between females and males in the ratio of denied applications to approved ones is highly statistically significant ($p < .000$).³⁴

The FOIA data do not provide a clear sense of why males are denied at a disproportionately higher rate than females. Males are no more likely to be under age 15 or over age 31. They are also not more likely to list “N/A,” “UNKNOWN,” or “USA” under country of birth.³⁵

The age structure of DACA applicants

To be eligible for DACA, an applicant must be between the ages of 15 and 30. In the sample, the average age of all DACA applicants is 20 years old, toward the younger range of the eligible population.³⁶

Of the more than 450,000 applications in the FOIA data, there were 2,906 applicants under the age of 15. As USCIS created two different age requirements based on particular immigration circumstances, their age does not necessarily mean that these applicants are not eligible for DACA. More specifically, in addition to the age 15 to 30 requirement, those who are under 15 but are in removal proceedings, have a final deportation order, a voluntary departure (deportation) order, and are not in immigration detention are also eligible for DACA.³⁷

There are two main ways to interpret these data. It may be the case that those who are younger than 15 but applied for DACA were misinformed or misinterpreted their eligibility. Alternatively, it may be that these applicants faced the immediate threat of deportation. A combination of both is a realistic middle ground. In the absence of more detailed data from DHS, a look at the case-review status of these applications provides some insight.

If these applicants were misinformed or misinterpreted their eligibility, we would expect USCIS to deny the bulk of these applications. Among these 2,906 applications, however, only one has been denied. Granted that bulk of these applications is still pending—2,452 or 84.3 percent—that only one application has been denied is still telling. Moreover, among these applications, 453 have been approved. We can thus infer from these approvals that at least 453 young people who faced immediate deportation were able to remain in the country via DACA. This includes an infant born in 2012, 136 elementary school children, and 316 middle school-aged kids.³⁸

Age and denials

“A 31-year-old male is 4.3 times more likely to be denied than a 23-year-old male. Moreover, a 31-year-old female is 3.7 times more likely to be denied than a 23-year-old female.”

Having identified significant differences in denials across national origins groups and gender, we can take the additional step of using multivariate regression analysis to confirm that these differences remain when taking other factors into account. Table 2 shows the results of the multivariate analysis.³⁹

TABLE 2
Statistical modeling of age, gender, and national origin of DACA applicants

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Age | 1.172*** (.007) | | 1.178*** (.008) | 1.178*** (.008) |
| Gender (Male = 1) | | 1.376*** (.076) | 1.560*** (.086) | 1.537*** (.085) |
| National Origin | | | | |
| Mexico | | | | |
| Central America (excluding Mexico) | | | | 2.013*** (.156) |
| South America | | | | 1.054 (.116) |
| Asia | | | | 1.472*** (.159) |
| Europe | | | | 1.952*** (.407) |
| Other | | | | 6.017*** (.719) |
| Observations | 265872 | 265872 | 265872 | 265872 |

*** sig. at .01 level.

Note: Multivariate logistic regression. Odds ratios reported. Standard errors in parentheses. Logit and probit results substantively the same.

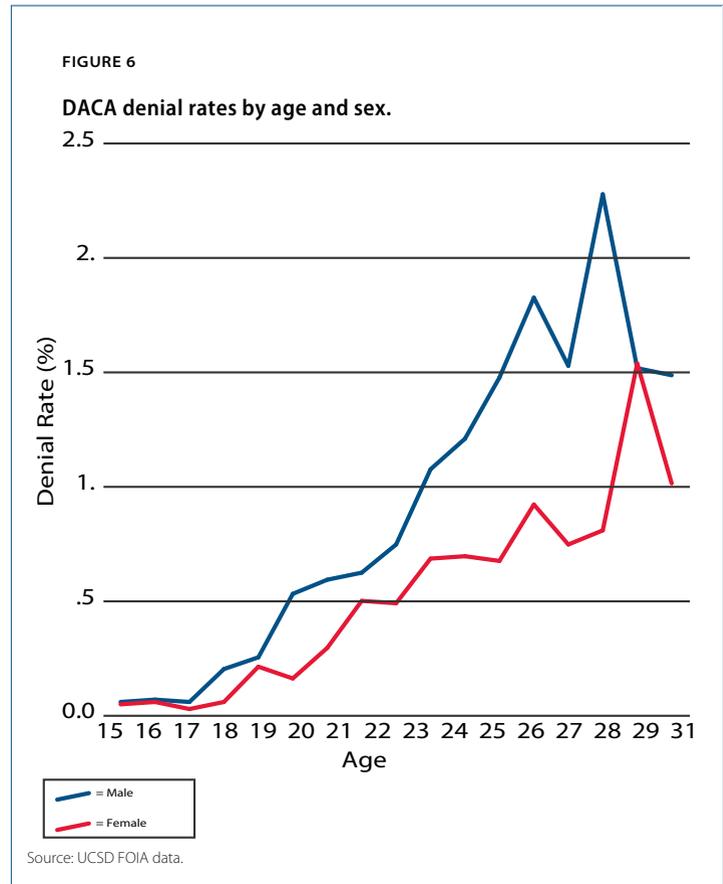
It is clear that older applicants are more likely to be denied than younger ones. The finding for gender is also confirmed. Across all model specifications, males are significantly more likely to be denied than females. Combining these results leads to some striking interpretations. The average age of a denied applicant is 23 years old. The multivariate analysis shows that a 31-year-old male is 4.3 times more likely to be denied than a 23-year-old male. Moreover, a 31-year-old female is 3.7 times more likely to be denied than a 23-year-old female.

Denials by national origins group

We can also leverage the FOIA data to identify whether any particular national origins groups are being disproportionately denied. To evaluate denial rates by national origins, we first distinguish between applications that have been denied, approved, and pending in the FOIA data. We exclude pending applications and look at the ratio of denials to approvals, which we refer to as the denial rate. Through a series of chi-squared tests, we then identify whether the denial rate for any one country or region is statistically significantly *higher* than it is for the rest of the sample. If this rate is higher than it is for the rest of the sample, and if this difference is statistically significant, we can confidently say that applicants born in a particular country or region are disproportionately denied compared to other applicants.

Despite the fact that Mexican-born applicants comprise the biggest bulk of applications, the data show that they are less likely to be denied than other applicants. Of all Mexican-born DACA applicants in the FOIA sample, a total of 844 have been denied. This translates into a denial rate of 0.4 percent of all applications with final decisions, which is not a statistically significantly higher rate as compared to the rest of the sample. Thus, despite their high volume of applications, applicants born in Mexico are less likely—about half as likely, to be precise—to be denied than other DACA applicants.

On the other hand, Central Americans, Asians, Europeans, and Africans are statistically significantly more likely to be denied than other applicants. (see Appendix B) Given that Mexican-born applicants make up the bulk of the sample, we compare denials for each national origins group to the denial rate for Mexicans:



“Thus, despite their high volume of applications, applicants born in Mexico are less likely—about half as likely, to be precise—to be denied than other DACA applicants. On the other hand, Central Americans, Asians, Europeans, and Africans are statistically significantly more likely to be denied than other applicants.”

- Applicants from North and Central America (excluding Mexico) are 1.8 times more likely to be denied than Mexican-born DACA applicants ($p < .000$).
- Applicants from Asia are also 1.8 times more likely to be denied than Mexican-born applicants ($p < .000$).
- European applicants are 1.7 times more likely to be denied than Mexican-born applicants ($p = .005$).
- The most pronounced difference relates to the “Other” category. These applicants, the majority of whom are African, are 6.9 times more likely to be denied than Mexican-born applicants ($p < .000$).⁴⁰

Referring back to the multivariate analysis and controlling for age and gender, we confirm that these findings hold. Model 4 compares denials for each national origins group against applicants from Mexico. What Model 4 shows is that all national origins groups, with the exception of those from South America, are statistically significantly more likely to be denied than those from Mexico.

What accounts for differences in denial rates by country and region of origin? These data do not definitively reveal the causes. But this finding is consistent with the experience of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act, or IRCA, where three-quarters of those who became legal via IRCA were Mexican, even though they only represented about 50 percent of the total undocumented population at the time.⁴¹

One possible explanation for the differences in denial rates that we observe is that Spanish-language media may be publicizing DACA and its requirements more effectively than other ethnic media. However, this would not explain why those born in Central America are more likely to be denied than Mexican-born applicants. Perhaps the most likely explanation is that community-based organizations that primarily serve the Mexican immigrant population may have a broader reach than others—due, in part, to the large size of the Mexican population in the United States—and are thus more effective at helping Mexican-born DACA applicants to navigate through the process. We analyze the role of immigrant-serving organizations and ethnic media in more detail below.

Another factor that may explain why Mexican-born applicants are less likely to be denied than other applicants is the strong role that the Mexican consulate has played in facilitating DACA applications. A particularly important part of the application process is the establishment of foreign identity, which leads many to turn to consulates in order to obtain birth certificates or apply for passports and consular identification cards. In response to this demand, Mexican consulates across the country have extended their hours to help DACA-eligible youth gather the necessary documentation in order to apply. Moreover, after the Mexican consulate in Los Angeles saw a 63 percent increase in requests for passports and consular identification cards in August 2012, the first month that USCIS began accepting DACA applications—which it attributed almost entirely to DACA—it hired new employees and extended hours at its headquarters and satellite offices.⁴² Beyond facilitating applications by providing important identity documents, Mexican consulates have also helped support DACA clinics across the country and have made a significant amount of public outreach to raise awareness of the program.⁴³

“all national origins groups, with the exception of those from South America, are statistically significantly more likely to be denied than those from Mexico.”

The determinants of DACA applications and implementation

Having described DACA through the lens of the available data, we turn now to an analysis of the factors that may explain the numbers that we see. What facilitates and inhibits individuals from applying for DACA? Understanding these dynamics is critical to making sense of the mismatch between the estimated total number of DACA-eligible youth and the comparatively smaller number of applications that have been submitted thus far. The insights gained from this analysis can also help chart how future immigration and legalization policies should be supported in order to maximize their reach and efficacy. In this section we analyze the role of immigrant-serving organizations, traditional and new media, and the political context for DACA applicants in their states of residence.

The role of immigrant-serving organizations

How do immigrant-serving organizations facilitate DACA applications? As the nationwide, coordinated immigration protests that took place in 2006 against the harsh, enforcement-only House-passed immigration bill, H.R. 4437 demonstrated, these groups can play a pivotal role in mobilizing individuals to participate in collective action. The considerable size and scale of the demonstrations can be traced to a history of collaborations, organizational network ties, and existing relations between immigrant-serving organizations.⁵¹ Not surprisingly, many of these same organizations have been at the forefront of the DACA process, working to raise awareness about the program, organize DACA clinics and workshops, provide legal services and assistance, and even offer financial assistance to help pay the \$465 application fee.

We evaluate the relationship between immigrant-serving organizations and DACA by first compiling a list of all immigrant-serving nonprofit organizations that use GuideStar's classification, "P84: Ethnic/Immigrant Services."⁵² We then identify the number of these organizations in each state. In addition to the total number of organizations, we also create two measures of density: The ratio of the

Reviewing the literature on integration

Social scientists have long contended that the context of reception for immigrants “matters” for socioeconomic mobility, societal incorporation, and how immigrants’ everyday lives and long-term trajectories take shape.⁴⁴ When it comes to civic engagement and political incorporation, scholars have also pointed to the importance of political institutions and civic organizations in helping immigrants become more involved.⁴⁵ For example, places with dense, well-resourced community organizations make it more likely for immigrants to become involved than places without such a civic infrastructure.

In the same vein, we anticipate that the contexts in which immigrants live significantly affect how DACA unfolds on the ground. Indeed, prior studies of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act indicate that local climates helped shape the ways in which undocumented immigrants responded to that legislation’s legalization measure.⁴⁶ Therefore, we look at both facilitating and inhibiting factors within immigrants’ locales, with a focus on immigrant-serving organizations and media as potential facilitating factors and restrictive state-level immigration policies as potential inhibiting factors.

It is reasonable to suspect that, *ceteris paribus*, DACA-eligible youth who have access to nearby immigrant-serving organizations are more likely to also have access to the information, resources, and support that can help them and their families navigate the DACA process. This is reinforced by research that shows that lack of exposure to civic, labor, and advocacy organizations within immigrant-receiving communities decreases overall levels of immigrant incorporation.⁴⁷ Indeed, we would expect access to immigrant-serving organizations to be particularly important in states with hostile immigration policies, as they can help attenuate fears about divulging information

in the DACA application and the uncertainty of what happens after the initial two years of deferred action. This expectation is based on prior scholarship, which indicates that the social and physical isolation of Latino immigrants is negatively related to their participatory behavior.⁴⁸ Extending the logic of these studies, we hypothesize that immigrants without access to community organizations or who live in restrictive destinations are not only less likely to have exposure to DACA-related information and services, but are also likely to experience more segregation and have fewer opportunities for participatory membership, thus decreasing their incentive to move forward with the DACA process.

There is, however, another logic to consider. The literature also offers compelling examples of political and civic incorporation that occurs during or after polarizing exposure to anti-immigrant legislation. That is to say, threatening contexts might actually spur greater civic activism among immigrants. For example, California’s Proposition 187 in 1994, which denied public benefits such as education to undocumented immigrants, activated first- and second-generation immigrants to become much more politically engaged.⁴⁹ Studies focusing on more recent events link the mobilization against the 2005 House-passed H.R. 4437—an immigration enforcement bill that sought, among other things, to make felons out of undocumented immigrants—to an increase in ethnic solidarity amongst the Latino population.⁵⁰ Thus, despite the disadvantages of living in hostile contexts, this strand of work indicates that immigrant participation may flourish in contexts of restrictionist policy. In this sense, the difficulties of living in hostile contexts may catalyze DACA-eligible youth to seek legal status via DACA as a way to contest their “illegality.”

“For every one additional immigrant-serving organization, we see an increase of 70 DACA applications.”

total population in a state to the number of organizations in the state and the ratio of the total foreign-born population in a state to the number of organizations in the state.⁵³ Note that this analysis does not account for the work of state and local governments, outreach in public schools, or even outreach in churches—just nonprofit organizations serving immigrants.

Our analysis shows that a higher concentration of immigrant-serving organizations in a state is related to higher numbers of DACA applications in that state. As Table 1 shows, there are vast disparities in the number of DACA applications by state. By excluding the states at the bottom 10th percentile in terms of applications to date, as well as states at the 90th percentile, we can normalize the distribution a bit. Doing this shows that for every one additional immigrant-serving organization, we see an increase of 70 DACA applications. This result is highly statistically significant ($p = .001$).⁵⁴

However, this finding should be interpreted with caution. First, it is based on an analysis of the bivariate relationship between immigrant-serving organizations and DACA applications, meaning it looks only at the relationship between these two factors. Second, and more importantly, the relationship between these two factors suffers from a sort of chicken-and-egg conundrum; in other words, while it may be the case that more organizations are leading to more DACA applications, it may also be the case that the presence of more immigrants leads to a greater number of immigrant-serving organizations.

One way to analyze this issue is to examine the years that the organizations in our sample were founded. If these organizations were founded before DACA began, this would add confidence to our ability to attribute the effect that we see to the outreach and services that these organizations provide, instead of organizations popping up specifically to handle more DACA applicants. The results are encouraging in that many of the organizations have deep roots: Of the more than 2,000 organizations in our sample, 91.4 percent were founded before 2012. Moreover, more than 50 percent of the immigrant-serving organizations in our sample have been around for at least 10 years; the median year of founding being 2003.

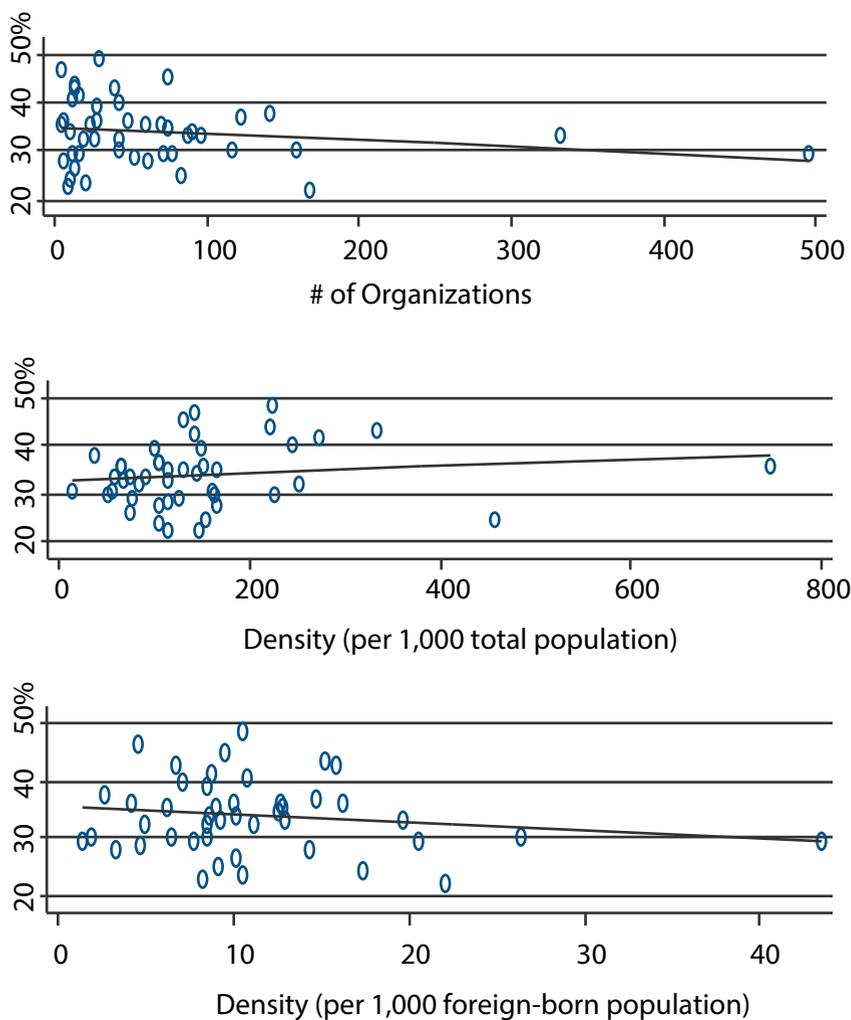
Do more immigrant-serving organizations translate into higher DACA implementation rates? More organizations clearly equates with more applications, but does the presence of more organizations mean that a greater number of people compared to what we would expect based on the implementation rate?

The results are more inconclusive. As Figure 7 shows, there is no clear relationship between the number of organizations in a state and the DACA implementation rate. This is true when looking at the total number and density of organizations. As described above, if the estimates of the DACA-eligible population underestimate the totals for new immigrant destinations and for states with small immigrant populations while overestimating for states with large immigrant populations, the results here could be inverted. One way to imagine this effect would be to pinch down the dots on the left sides of the graphs while pinching up the dots on the right sides of the graphs.

Another real possibility is that the sheer volume of existing demand that exists may mean that organizations' resources and capacity are stretched increasingly thin. Another possibility is that states with more immigrant-serving nonprofits may not conduct outreach and provide DACA-related services, while organizations in states with fewer nonprofits may work to fulfill a greater need for DACA assistance. In order to adjudicate these claims, test for other possibilities, and identify best practices, we need more intense, qualitative, and organizational survey research to evaluate and compare the outreach strategies of organizations.

FIGURE 7

Immigrant-serving organizations and DACA implementation



Note: Bivariate relationships between immigrant-serving organizations and the DACA implementation rate, distinguishing between the total number of organizations, the density of organizations relative to the total population in a state, and the density of organizations relative to the total foreign-born population in a state. Results substantively similar (i.e., not statistically significant) when excluding California and New York as outliers.

“If hostile policy contexts—such as “self-deportation”—are designed to make conditions of living so harsh for undocumented immigrants that they feel dispossessed, unwanted, and disconnected from American institutions, DACA shows that they are ineffective.”

News media

Another factor to explore is the role of media. How has the media influenced the DACA process? While a systematic analysis of all the print and social media coverage of DACA similar to our analysis of DACA applications is beyond the scope of this study, we look at the some of the key ways that media has affected DACA thus far.

Turning again to the example of the 2006 protests against the Sensenbrenner immigration bill, H.R. 4437, it is clear that ethnic media can serve as a mobilization tool around the immigration issue. In particular, Spanish-language radio served as a mobilization vehicle that encouraged individuals to rally and speak out against H.R. 4437.⁵⁵ It also played an important role in providing immigrant communities with critical information about the details of H.R. 4437 and the legislative process.⁵⁶

Similarly, we find that Spanish-language news media has worked to disseminate information about DACA. Beyond increasing awareness in a general sense, Spanish-language news media has also provided resources to facilitate the application process. In October 2012, Telemundo, a Spanish-language television station, sponsored an educational forum on DACA that included a general discussion of the program and smaller breakout conversations with immigration attorneys who answered questions about the application process.⁵⁷

We also find that these efforts are not confined to Spanish-language news. Local and regional English-language newspapers such as *The Monitor* in McAllen, Texas, and *The Orange County Register* in Southern California have published news stories covering free DACA clinics and workshops.⁵⁸ Many local newspapers have also advertised DACA information hotlines and pro bono legal services.

While news-media coverage has been steady in both Spanish and English-language news outlets since the Obama administration announced DACA in June 2012, substantial variations do exist, particularly when it comes to the volume of DACA-related coverage. Our examination of DACA-related news stories using the online news database LexisNexis reveals stark contrasts in the volume of coverage in Spanish and English-language newspapers.⁵⁹ We searched for articles in *La Opinión*, the most widely circulated Spanish-language newspaper in the United States and *The New York Times* for any mention of DACA from June 2012 to the present. During the first year of DACA, *La Opinión* published 168 DACA-related articles; *The New York Times* published 10.

Asian ethnic media provide an additional wrinkle to consider. Asian immigrant-serving organizations have identified a gap in the content and cohesiveness of coverage among Asian ethnic media when it comes to DACA. Whereas Korean ethnic media have worked to raise awareness about DACA with an eye toward providing the information and resources necessary to facilitate the application process, Chinese ethnic media have not done so to a similar extent. This is beginning to change; Asian advocacy organizations are encouraging Chinese ethnic media to not only provide more coverage of DACA, but also to feature the stories of Chinese DACAmented youth in order to cut through some of the apprehensions that the Chinese community may have about the program. While these are the anecdotal observations of a few Asian advocacy organizations, they reflect the complex reality of outreaching to a DACA-eligible population that, as we have shown above, comes from nearly every country and region in the world.⁶⁰

Social media

Various forms of social media have also played an important role in DACA. Given the age requirements of DACA, social media is an especially popular and age-appropriate way for DACAmented youth to seek out information about the program. Organizations at the national and local levels have used social media as an effective way to reach out to DACA-eligible youth. This includes the extensive use of Facebook and Twitter to pose and answer questions about the eligibility requirements for DACA, announce DACA clinics and workshops, and post DACA success stories as a way to inspire other eligible youth to apply.⁶¹

This last point is particularly important. DACAmented youth are the best spokespersons for other DACA-eligible youth who have not yet applied, and social media gives these young people a broader forum to discuss their experiences with the DACA process. From the first confirmation letter from USCIS to complaints about the DMV when it comes time to get a driver's license—in states where this is possible—each successful step that one takes along the way can provide encouragement for others. Since there is no recent precedent for DACA, the presence of these social media spaces is vital, since knowing that other DACA applicants are going through the same process and being able to interact with them provides critical support in what is a life-changing experience for many.

“While news-media coverage has been steady in both Spanish and English-language news outlets since the Obama administration announced DACA in June 2012, substantial variations do exist.”

On a more practical level, social media has been essential in documenting the residency status of applicants. One of the eligibility requirements for DACA is that applicants must have been physically present in the United States on June 15, 2012. Some people who lack other ways to prove their physical presence have used Facebook check-ins or geo-tagged tweets as proof.⁶² Therefore, social media has not only been instrumental in providing a forum and community for

DACAmented youth, but has also been a way to legitimize their physical presence to USCIS officials.

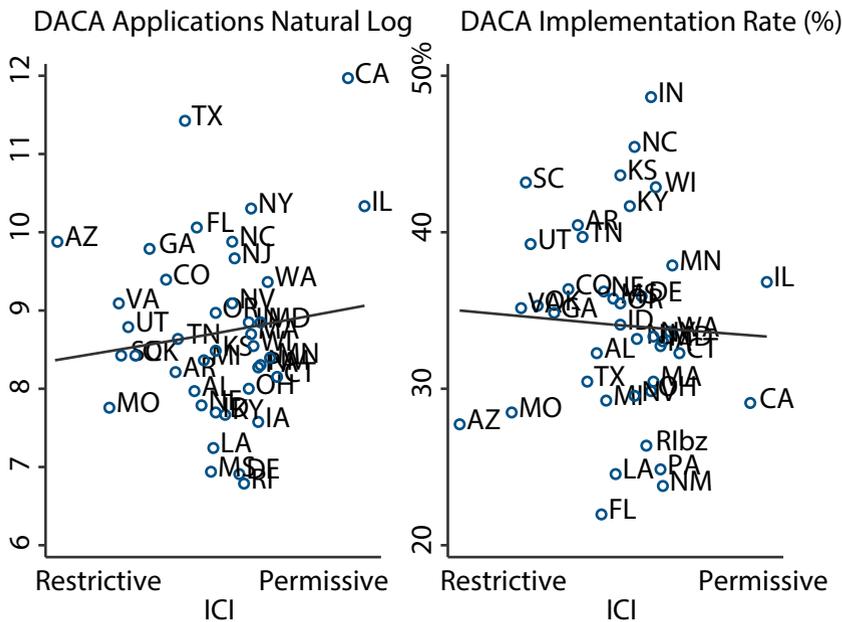
Anti-immigrant political context

What effects, if any, do anti-immigrant political contexts have on applications? To put it another way, do harsh anti-immigrant laws such as Arizona's S.B. 1070 affect the number of people who apply for DACA? To empirically examine the relationship between anti-immigrant political context and DACA, we use the Immigrants' Climate Index, or ICI, developed by Huyen Pham and Pham Hoang Van in 2013.⁶³ The ICI aggregates sub-national immigration policy

data from 2005 to 2012 on a state-by-state basis. By assigning either positive or negative values to all policies that are enacted then weighting these values, the ICI provides a score for each state that captures how subnational immigration policies impact the everyday lives of immigrants. The score ranges from -60, which reflects Arizona's restrictive policy climate, to +38, which reflects more permissive policies in Illinois; California is second with a score of +33.

FIGURE 8

Hostile political contexts and DACA applications



Source: Left panel: bivariate relationship between hostile political context and DACA applications (natural log). Right panel: bivariate relationship between hostile political context and DACA implementation rate. The Immigrants' Climate Index developed by Huyen Pham and Pham Hoang Van in Huyen Pham and Pham Hoang Van, "Measuring State-Created Immigration Climate," Migration and Citizenship Newsletter of the American Political Science Association 1 (2) (2013): 22-27. The slopes are not statistically significant.

If hostile policy contexts—such as “self-deportation”—are designed to make conditions of living so harsh for undocumented immigrants that they feel dispossessed, unwanted, and disconnected from American institutions, DACA shows that they are ineffective. As Figure 8 shows, not only are state-level anti-immigrant policy contexts not significantly related to fewer overall DACA applications, but also they are not significantly related to lower implementation rates. The left panel of Figure 8 shows the relationship between a state’s ICI score and the logged number of total applications. Here, we see that the logged number of total applications for the state with the most hostile policy context, Arizona, is about the same as the state with the most permissive policy context, Illinois. We note here that while the slope is positive, it is not statistically significant. The left panel of Figure 8 looks at the implementation rate. Again, we see that hostile policy contexts do not lead to lower implementation rates.

Our finding that restrictive policy contexts are not related to lower DACA implementation rates may seem counterintuitive. As described above, it is reasonable to expect that hostile receiving locations push immigrants into the shadows, disconnecting them from the institutions and organizations that help facilitate the DACA process. Our finding, however, is similar to the conclusions of other recent studies. For example, the work of Jacqueline Hagan, Nestor Rodriguez, and Brianna Castro documents pervasive fear in exclusionary destinations, yet their analysis suggests that while some immigrants withdraw from their receiving locales, others become more deeply engaged.⁶⁴ Recent scholarship also suggests that “attrition through enforcement” policies do not necessarily push the undocumented out of unwelcoming locales.⁶⁵ Indeed, it may be that facing a difficult and threatening environment serves as an important impetus to getting DACA.

Other potential determinants

The factors that influence DACA go beyond immigrant-serving organizations, media, and state-level immigration policies. Indeed, some of the factors that are likely to push DACA-eligible youth away from applying are some of the most challenging to capture in terms of “big data.” For example, the cost of applying for DACA is a clear deterrent. However, the number of eligible youth who are deterred by the \$465 application fee and their distribution across national origins groups, gender, age, and geography—as well as whether any of these differences are statistically significant—is unclear.⁶⁶

Confidentiality is another issue of concern. Since undocumented youth must reveal their immigration status, names, and addresses to federal agencies, there are likely to be concerns about disclosing personal information. These concerns are not necessarily confined to the applicant. Children may fear that applying for DACA will somehow lead to negative repercussions for their parents. Applicants may also be concerned about identifying employers who have hired them in violation of the law, which becomes particularly salient when applicants use work history to establish ongoing presence in the United States. To address confidentiality issues, USCIS has made it clear that information submitted via the DACA application will not be used for immigration enforcement purposes (with the exception of cases of fraud, criminal offenses, or threats to national security and public safety).⁶⁷ Despite these somewhat limited assurances, it is likely that some young people who are eligible for DACA are deterred from applying because of concerns about confidentiality. We note here that our FOIA filing requested information related to the number of people who have been denied for DACA and subsequently been placed in deportation proceedings. The DHS did not supply this information. Thus, while the number of those placed in deportation proceedings following a denied or rejected DACA application may very well be zero, this information is not publicly available.

Conclusion

More than half a million undocumented youth to date have become or are on their way to becoming DACAmented. Moreover, in one year of all of the applications with a final decision, 98.3 percent have been approved and just 1.7 percent have been denied. Despite these strong numbers, our analyses show that the geography of success when it comes to DACA implementation is not uniform across states and not all national origins groups are benefiting equally.

In this report, we identify where and to whom DACA outreach is needed. In terms of where, we find that the DACA implementation rate varies from a low of 22 percent to a high of 48.6 percent, with new immigrant destinations and states with comparatively small immigrant populations at the high end of the range. Moreover, we find that in 13 states plus the District of Columbia, the number of DACA applications to date is statistically significantly lower than expected based on state-level estimates of the DACA-eligible population. In terms of whom, we find that people from Central America, Asia, and Europe are currently underrepresented in the DACA process. Perhaps more importantly, we find that some groups are being disproportionately denied relative to other groups. Central Americans, Asians, Europeans, and Africans are statistically significantly more likely to be denied than other applicants.

Despite accounting for a smaller share of DACA applications, we also uncover the gendered dimensions of DACA, wherein males are disproportionately denied relative to females.

This report also reinforces the important role that immigrant-serving organizations play in legalization programs. However, our analyses also make clear that more research is needed to compare organizational outreach strategies and identify best practices for serving immigrant communities. By partnering with traditional news media, leveraging social media and technologies, and promoting civic engagement even in the context of anti-immigrant hostility, immigrant-serving organizations can position themselves to maximize their reach and effectiveness should a broader legalization occur. While outside the scope of this report, the “how” of outreach to immigrant communities forms the basis of a future collaborative project.

During his second inaugural address, President Obama said that “Our journey is not complete until we find a better way to welcome the striving, hopeful immigrants who still see America as a land of opportunity.” There are currently 11 million of these aspiring Americans, but the United States does not see them that way. By providing temporary relief from deportation and two-year renewable work permits, DACA takes one step forward in acknowledging the contributions of these aspiring Americans. DACA is a far cry from permanent residency, but as the push for just, humane, and comprehensive immigration reform continues, it does provide real and tangible benefits for undocumented youth. Many have become DACAmented, which is a great first step; we hope this report can be a guide for the steps that remain.

About the authors

Tom K. Wong is an assistant professor of political science at the University of California, San Diego. His research focuses on the politics of immigration, citizenship, and migrant illegality. As these issues have far-reaching implications, his work also explores the links between immigration, race and ethnicity, and the politics of identity. He is the creator of UCSD's Center for Comparative Immigration Studies' CIR 2013 blog (<http://ccis.ucsd.edu/category/cir2013>), which predicts support and opposition to comprehensive immigration reform among all 535 current members of Congress. He is also currently completing a book manuscript, which analyzes the determinants of immigration control policy across 25 western immigrant-receiving democracies, among other projects. His work has been published as a book chapter with Stanford University Press and in the *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*.

Angela S. García is a Ph.D. candidate in sociology at the University of California, San Diego. She conducts research on state and local immigration-orientated policies in the United States and Spain. Her work investigates how unauthorized immigrant actors experience the application of these legal norms on the ground. To that end, she studies the effects of local legal contexts on civic incorporation. Her current research includes a comparative project of unauthorized immigrants' incorporation in U.S. destinations with restrictive and accommodating policies. García's work has been published in *Ethnic and Racial Studies* and as book chapters with Harvard University Press and Lynne Rienner Publishers.

David FitzGerald is an associate professor of sociology at the University of California, San Diego, where he is also the co-director of the Center for Comparative Immigration Studies and holds the Theodore E. Gildred Chair in U.S.-Mexico Relations. FitzGerald's research program aims to understand the laws and policies regulating international migration as a total system of interactions among actors in countries of origin and destination. He seeks to explain how and why legal norms are diffused, the social origins of policy variation across time and place, and how the application of policy is experienced by actors in daily life. His areas of expertise include international migration, nationalism, transnationalism, and comparative immigration and nationality law. He is the author of *A Nation of Emigrants: How Mexico Manages its Migration* (University of California Press) and *Culling the Masses: The Democratic Origins of Racist Immigration Policy in the Americas* (Harvard University Press).

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Sally Le recently graduated from the University of California, San Diego. She graduated cum laude with a bachelor's degree in political science and international relations in 2013. During her years at UCSD, Sally pursued studies related to immigrant experiences shaped by federal and statewide immigration policies. She assisted in research directly under Professor Tom Wong, assistant professor of political science, and Yen Espiritu, professor of ethnic studies. Although she enjoys research, she hopes to pursue a J.D. in immigration law. To that end, Sally is currently working at Fragomen, Del Rey, Bernsen and Loewy, LLP, where she is working to gain some experience in immigration law. Ultimately, she hopes to work with refugees and asylum seekers.

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Appendix A

Comparing DACA and the DREAM Act

| DACA | DREAM Act |
|---|---|
| What is it? | |
| DACA is a kind of administrative relief that will defer the removal of eligible undocumented youth and allow them to apply for work authorization for two years. It is temporary and does not provide a path to lawful permanent residency or citizenship. | The DREAM Act is a proposed federal law that would legalize eligible undocumented youth, allowing them to apply for conditional legal status and to eventually obtain permanent legal status and become eligible for citizenship. |
| Who is eligible? | |
| <p>Individuals may apply if they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Came to the United States before age 16 • Were under age 31 and had no valid immigration status on June 15, 2012 • Have continuously resided in the United States between June 15, 2007, and the present • Are enrolled in school on the date of application submission, graduated from high school, obtained a GED, or were honorably discharged from the Armed Forces • Have not been convicted of a felony, a significant misdemeanor, or three or more other misdemeanors, and do not pose a threat to national security or public safety • Are age 15 or over, unless they are currently in removal proceedings or have a final order of removal or voluntary departure | <p>Requirements have changed with each introduction of the bill, but basic eligibility for conditional legal status includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entered the United States at age 15 or younger (as of the Senate-passed S.744 in 2013); and are not older than 30 (as of the House-passed version of the DREAM Act in 2010) • Present in the United States for five years • Graduated from high school or obtained a GED <p>To gain permanent resident status, applicants would need to complete at least two years of college or military service within six years of receiving conditional permanent resident status.</p> |
| What are the benefits? | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection from deportation for two years • Work authorization document for two years • Social Security number • Eligibility for driver's license, depending on policies and requirements of state of residence | <p>Proposed benefits have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lawful conditional residency • Lawful permanent residency • Citizenship eligibility |
| What are the risks? | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary, and may be terminated at any time | No known risks |

Appendix B

Group-by-Group Comparison of Denials

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|----------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Mexico compared to: | North and Central America (excl. Mexico) | South America | Asia | Europe | Other |
| | -0.0034*** | -0.0005 | -0.0034*** | -0.0046*** | -0.0246*** |
| North and Central America (excl. Mexico) compared to: | Mexico | South America | Asia | Europe | Other |
| | +0.0034*** | +0.0029*** | +0.0000 | -0.0012 | -0.0212*** |
| South America compared to: | Mexico | North and Central America (excl. Mexico) | Asia | Europe | Other |
| | +0.0005 | -0.0029*** | -0.0029*** | -0.0041*** | -0.0241*** |
| Asia compared to: | Mexico | North and Central America (excl. Mexico) | South America | Europe | Other |
| | +0.0034*** | -0.0000 | +0.0029*** | -0.0012 | -0.0212*** |
| Europe compared to: | Mexico | North and Central America (excl. Mexico) | South America | Asia | Other |
| | +0.0046*** | +0.0012 | +0.0041*** | +0.0012 | -0.0199*** |
| Other compared to: | Mexico | North and Central America (excl. Mexico) | South America | Asia | Europe |
| | +0.0246*** | +0.0212*** | +0.0241*** | +0.0212*** | +0.0199*** |

+/- Difference in denial rate; - equals lower denial rate; + equals higher denial rate. *** sig. at .01 level; ** sig. at .05 level; * sig. at .10 level.

Appendix C

Table 1 with Full Results for All States

| State | # Applications as of August 2013 | Total # Eligible | Estimated Observed % August 2013 | % as of Total Expected % | Difference – Observed % v. Expected % | Statistically Significant and below expected? |
|-------|----------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| CA | 157,182 | 539,774 | 27.41% | 30.57% | -3.16% | Yes |
| TX | 90,900 | 298,133 | 15.85% | 16.89% | -1.04% | Yes |
| IL | 30,544 | 83,088 | 5.33% | 4.71% | 0.62% | |
| NY | 29,575 | 88,889 | 5.16% | 5.03% | 0.13% | |
| FL | 23,456 | 106,481 | 4.09% | 6.03% | -1.94% | Yes |
| AZ | 19,702 | 71,046 | 3.44% | 4.02% | -0.58% | Yes |
| NC | 19,419 | 42,702 | 3.39% | 2.42% | 0.97% | |
| GA | 17,964 | 51,457 | 3.13% | 2.91% | 0.22% | |
| NJ | 16,055 | 48,327 | 2.80% | 2.74% | 0.06% | |
| CO | 12,147 | 33,448 | 2.12% | 1.89% | 0.23% | |
| WA | 11,803 | 35,059 | 2.06% | 1.99% | 0.07% | |
| NV | 9,026 | 30,574 | 1.57% | 1.73% | -0.16% | Yes |
| VA | 8,834 | 25,086 | 1.54% | 1.42% | 0.12% | |
| OR | 7,861 | 22,148 | 1.37% | 1.25% | 0.12% | |
| MD | 7,063 | 21,371 | 1.23% | 1.21% | 0.02% | |
| IN | 6,926 | 14,255 | 1.21% | 0.81% | 0.40% | |
| UT | 6,574 | 16,744 | 1.15% | 0.95% | 0.20% | |
| MA | 5,946 | 19,525 | 1.04% | 1.11% | -0.07% | Yes |
| TN | 5,623 | 14,184 | 0.98% | 0.80% | 0.18% | |
| WI | 5,110 | 11,922 | 0.89% | 0.68% | 0.21% | |
| KS | 4,844 | 11,086 | 0.84% | 0.63% | 0.21% | |
| OK | 4,610 | 13,038 | 0.80% | 0.74% | 0.06% | |
| SC | 4,556 | 10,530 | 0.79% | 0.60% | 0.19% | |
| MN | 4,375 | 14,903 | 0.76% | 0.84% | -0.08% | Yes |
| MI | 4,360 | 11,530 | 0.76% | 0.65% | 0.11% | |
| NM | 4,036 | 16,988 | 0.70% | 0.96% | -0.26% | Yes |
| PA | 3,930 | 15,855 | 0.69% | 0.90% | -0.21% | Yes |
| AR | 3,714 | 9,165 | 0.65% | 0.52% | 0.13% | |
| CT | 3,520 | 10,928 | 0.61% | 0.62% | -0.01% | |
| OH | 2,950 | 9,893 | 0.51% | 0.56% | -0.05% | Yes |
| AL | 2,889 | 8,947 | 0.50% | 0.51% | -0.01% | |
| NE | 2,392 | 6,611 | 0.42% | 0.37% | 0.05% | |
| MO | 2,377 | 8,361 | 0.41% | 0.47% | -0.06% | Yes |
| ID | 2,204 | 6,472 | 0.38% | 0.37% | 0.01% | |
| KY | 2,118 | 5,090 | 0.37% | 0.29% | 0.08% | |
| IA | 1,972 | 6,021 | 0.34% | 0.34% | 0.00% | |
| LA | 1,383 | 5,646 | 0.24% | 0.32% | -0.08% | Yes |
| MS | 1,033 | 2,885 | 0.18% | 0.16% | 0.02% | |
| DE | 997 | 2,779 | 0.17% | 0.16% | 0.01% | |
| RI | 885 | 3,364 | 0.15% | 0.19% | -0.04% | Yes |

Table 1 with Full Results for All States

| State | # Applications as of August 2013 | Total # Estimated Eligible | Observed % as of August 2013 | % as of Total Expected % | Difference – Observed % v. Expected % | Statistically Significant and below expected? |
|-------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| DC | 522 | 1,711 | 0.09% | 0.10% | -0.01% | Yes |
| MO | 2,377 | 8,361 | 0.41% | 0.47% | -0.06% | Yes |
| ID | 2,204 | 6,472 | 0.38% | 0.37% | 0.01% | |
| KY | 2,118 | 5,090 | 0.37% | 0.29% | 0.08% | |
| IA | 1,972 | 6,021 | 0.34% | 0.34% | 0.00% | |
| LA | 1,383 | 5,646 | 0.24% | 0.32% | -0.08% | Yes |
| MS | 1,033 | 2,885 | 0.18% | 0.16% | 0.02% | |
| DE | 997 | 2,779 | 0.17% | 0.16% | 0.01% | |
| RI | 885 | 3,364 | 0.15% | 0.19% | -0.04% | Yes |
| DC | 522 | 1,711 | 0.09% | 0.10% | -0.01% | Yes |

Table 1. State-by-state summary of DACA for all states with 500 or more DACA applicants. Difference in applications to date versus applications expected can be calculated as follows: if # of applications as of August 2013 equals "a" and total # eligible equals "b," then difference is equal to $[a/(573,404)] - [b/(1,764,452)]$. Yes = statistically significant at $p < .000$. Source: USCIS.

Endnotes

- 1 Griselda Nevarez, "One Year After Deferred Action Announcement, Dreamer Lands 'Dream Job,'" VOXII, June 13, 2013, available at <http://www.voxxi.com/deferred-action-anniversary-dreamer-job/#ixzz2W8AwWm7Z>.
- 2 See, for example, Roberto G. Gonzales, "Learning to Be Illegal: Undocumented Youth and Shifting Legal Contexts in the Transition to Adulthood," *American Sociological Review* 76 (4) (2011); Angela S. García and David G. Keyes, "Life as an Undocumented Immigrant" (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2012), available at <http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/report/2012/03/26/11210/life-as-an-undocumented-immigrant/>; Cecilia Menjivar and Leisy Abrego, "Legal Violence in the Lives of Immigrants: How Immigration Enforcement Affects Families, Schools, and Workplaces" (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2012), available at <http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/report/2012/12/11/47533/legal-violence-in-the-lives-of-immigrants/>; Joanna Dreby, "How Today's Immigration Enforcement Policies Impact Children, Families, and Communities: A View from the Ground" (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2012), available at <http://www.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/DrebyImmigrationFamiliesFINAL.pdf>.
- 3 U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, "Consideration of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Process," available at <http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.eb1d4c2a3e5b9ac89243c6a7543f6d1a/?vgnextoid=f2ef2f19470f7310VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD&vgnnextchannel=f2ef2f19470f7310VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD> (last accessed September 2013).
- 4 This paper is framed around an analysis of the first year of the DACA program. Data on applications spans from August 15, 2012, to August 15, 2013. On the total number of approvals, see Citizenship and Immigration Services, *Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals* (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2013), available at <http://www.uscis.gov/USCIS/Resources/Reports%20and%20Studies/Immigration%20Forms%20Data/All%20Form%20Types/DACA/daca-13-8-15.pdf>.
- 5 Immigration Policy Center, "Who and Where the DREAMers Are, Revised Estimates," October 16, 2012, available at <http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/just-facts/who-and-where-dreamers-are-revised-estimates>.
- 6 This is true whether looking through the lens of those who are immediately eligible or the total DACA-eligible population.
- 7 U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, "Consideration of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Process."
- 8 Immigration Policy Center, "The DREAM Act," May 18, 2011, available at <http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/just-facts/dream-act/>; Lisa Mascaro and Michael Muskal, "Dream Act fails to advance in Senate," *Los Angeles Times*, December 18, 2010, available at <http://articles.latimes.com/2010/dec/18/news/la-pn-senate-dream-20101219>.
- 9 Letter from John Morton to all field office directors, all special agents in charge, and all chief counsel, June 17, 2011, available at <http://www.ice.gov/doclib/secure-communities/pdf/prosecutorial-discretion-memo.pdf>.
- 10 Immigration Policy Center, "Prosecutorial Discretion: A Statistical Analysis," June 11, 2012, available at <http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/just-facts/prosecutorial-discretion-statistical-analysis>.
- 11 U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, "Consideration of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Process."
- 12 See Letter from Janet Napolitano to David V. Aguilar, Alejandro Mayorkas, and John Morton, June 15, 2012, available at <http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/s1-exercising-prosecutorial-discretion-individuals-who-came-to-us-as-children.pdf>.
- 13 A lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the deferred-action directive, brought by Kansas Secretary of State—and noted anti-immigrant activist—Kris Kobach and ICE officers, Crane v. Napolitano, was thrown out by a judge on July 31. Julia Preston, "Judge Dismisses Suit to End Deportation Deferrals," *The New York Times*, July 31, 2013, available at <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/01/us/politics/judge-dismisses-suit-to-end-deportation-deferrals.html?smid=li-share&r=2&>.
- 14 See Citizenship and Immigration Services, *Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals* (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2012), available at <http://www.uscis.gov/USCIS/Resources/Reports%20and%20Studies/Immigration%20Forms%20Data/All%20Form%20Types/DACA/daca-13-7-12.pdf>; Citizenship and Immigration Services, *Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals* (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2013), available at <http://www.uscis.gov/USCIS/Resources/Reports%20and%20Studies/Immigration%20Forms%20Data/All%20Form%20Types/DACA/daca-13-8-15.pdf>.
- 15 Because of age requirements, it is important to distinguish between those who are immediately eligible for DACA and all DACA-eligible beneficiaries; the former is a subset of the latter. We focus our analytical lens on all DACA-eligible beneficiaries because, as one representative of an immigrant-serving organization put it, "Since immigration reform is not guaranteed we have to view DACA as a long-term commitment." The Immigration Policy Center, Migration Policy Institute, and Pew Hispanic Center have released detailed estimates of the DACA-eligible population. Given similar estimates across studies, we rely on the IPC estimates. Immigration Policy Center, "Who and Where the DREAMers Are, Revised Estimates."
- 16 See, for example, Pew Research Center, "Unauthorized Immigrants: How Pew Research Counts Them and What We Know About Them," April 17, 2013, available at <http://www.pewresearch.org/2013/04/17/unauthorized-immigrants-how-pew-research-counts-them-and-what-we-know-about-them/>.

- 17 Immigration Policy Center, "Who and Where the DREAMers Are."
- 18 We use the state-by-state totals of applications "accepted to date" from the July 2013 USCIS Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals report. There is some slippage here, as accepted applications are a subset of submitted applications. See Citizenship and Immigration Services, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals.
- 19 It is useful to think of a statistically significant relationship as one that is systematic and nonrandom, meaning there is enough data to suggest that the pattern that we are observing is not due to chance.
- 20 See Immigration Policy Center, "Who and Where the DREAMers Are, Revised Estimates."
- 21 The commensurate range when looking at the estimated number of immediately eligible persons is 24.2 percent (Pennsylvania) to 112.9 percent (Indiana). These numbers further reinforce the decision to focus on the estimated number of all DACA-eligible beneficiaries rather than the immediate eligible population.
- 22 The fact that the implementation rate when looking at the immediately eligible population is more than 100 percent for Indiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Dakota, and Wyoming—all new immigrant destinations or states with relatively small immigration populations—further reinforces this point. Moreover, "counting the uncountable" is a notoriously difficult task that is plagued with uncertainty. As there is no immediate remedy for the error inherent in existing estimates, we reiterate here that estimates—especially of the undocumented population—should be viewed heuristically.
- 23 See, for example: Pew Research Center, "Unauthorized Immigrants: How Pew Research Counts Them."
- 24 Fifty-one one-sample binomial proportions tests, which examine whether the observed rates that we see per state are statistically significantly different from .325 (573,404/1,765,452), identify the exact same states where the differences between the observed and expected rates are negative and statistically significant.
- 25 In general, those who are currently between the ages of 15 and 31 and meet other requirements are immediately eligible. However, those who are currently younger than 15 or those who are not in school and still need to complete high school or an equivalent degree will become eligible in the future.
- 26 This analysis is based on individual-level records for 465,509 DACA applications obtained via a Freedom of Information Act request.
- 27 We use the U.S. Census Bureau definitions to divide states into the Northeast, South, Midwest, and West.
- 28 Authors' analysis of FOIA data.
- 29 Note that the IPC data does not break down the immediately eligible DACA population by region of origin.
- 30 Authors' analysis of FOIA data.
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 States with statistically significantly larger female populations—for states with more than 500 DACA applicants—are: Arizona, California, Colorado, Illinois, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wisconsin. States with statistically significantly larger male populations are: Alabama, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Texas, and Virginia.
- 33 Based on the most recent American Community Survey 2011 one-year estimates. The IPC also estimates that there are more males than females among the total number of DACA-eligible youth. Immigration Policy Center, "Who and Where the DREAMers Are, Revised Estimates."
- 34 We note here that while those who declined to state their sex are 1.5 times more likely to be denied, there is not enough data to determine statistical significance.
- 35 One possibility is that males tend to experience higher rates of criminality, which affects DACA eligibility. Males also tend to have higher high school dropout rates, which can also affect eligibility. Assuming that these issues affect the male DACA-eligible population in the same ways that they affect the broader U.S.-born male population, this may account for the higher denial rate for males. While this explanation is likely, the gender disparity in DACA denials is an area that is ripe for future research. Another possibility is that the estimates themselves over-count male potential applicants, and thus under-counts in DACA applicants are skewed here. Patricia Warren, Ted Chiricos, and William Bales, "The Imprisonment Penalty for Young Black and Hispanic Males: A Crime-Specific Analysis" *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 49 (1) (2012): 56–80; E. An Carson and Daniela Golinelli, "Prisoners in 2012—Advance Counts" (Washington: U.S. Department of Justice, 2013), available at <http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/p12ac.pdf>; Federal Bureau of Prisons, "Quick Facts About the Bureau of Prisons," available at <http://www.bop.gov/news/quick.jsp#2> (last accessed August 2013).
- 36 Interestingly, the range of the age distribution includes a low of a newborn applicant and a high of 35. (As a reminder, eligibility for deferred action requires that one be under 31 years old as of June 15, 2012. However, only one applicant listed his year of birth on the higher side of the eligibility range.) 3,207 applicants listed their year of birth as 1981. While those born before June 15, 1981 would be 31 years old, and thus not be eligible for DACA, the absence of data on specific birth dates do not permit us to make this distinction. We thus assume that these applicants were born after June 15, 1981, which makes them 30 years old as of June 15, 2012. Model 1 looks only at age. Model 2 looks only at gender. Model 3 combines age and gender. Models 4 and 5 include age, gender, and national origin. The dependent variable is dichotomous, wherein a value of 1 indicates a denied application and a value of 0 indicates an approved application. The sample is restricted to only those applications that have been denied or approved. We also restrict the sample to applicants who are between the ages of 15 and 31.
- 37 We note here that information about whether an applicant was in removal proceedings was also included in our FOIA request. This information, however, was not provided by DHS.
- 38 UCSD FOIA data.
- 39 This normalizes the distribution, but it also serves to compare youth that fall under the broadest criteria for eligibility under DACA. For example, those under the age of 15 can apply, but only if they are in deportation proceedings. Moreover, those over the age of 31 can apply, but their applications are sure to be denied because they do not meet the age requirements.
- 40 The analyses above compare each national origins group to the rest of the sample as a whole (e.g., denials of Mexican-born applicants versus all other applicants). However, to ensure that no particular national origins group is skewing the results, we also compare denials on a stepwise basis, comparing all groups to one another (e.g., Mexican-born applicants versus Asian applicants, Mexican-born applicants versus European applicants, etc.). The results are substantively similar to the results above and are reported in Appendix B.

- 41 Susan González Baker found that the immigration authorities' implementation of legalization actually favored Latinos by hiring more Spanish-speaking and Latino employees in a way that was not done for other ethnic groups. SG Baker, "The 'Amnesty' Aftermath: Current Policy Issues Stemming from the Legalization Programs of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act," *International Migration Review* 31 (1) (1997): 5–27.
- 42 Dianne Solis, "Extended hours for Mexican Consulate for young immigrants seeking deferred deportations and work permits from U.S.," *Dallas Morning News*, August 17 2012, available at <http://thescoopblog.dallasnews.com/2012/08/extended-hours-for-mexican-consulate-for-young-immigrants-seeking-deferred-deportations-and-work-permits-from-u-s.html/>; Elliot Spagat, "Immigrants flood consulates and schools with documentation requests," *NBC Latino*, September 25, 2012, available at <http://nbc-latino.com/2012/09/25/immigrants-flood-consulates-and-schools-with-documentation-requests/>.
- 43 For example, in Phoenix, Arizona, see Uriel J. Garcia, "Phoenix Mexican Consulate Helps DREAMers Prepare for Deferred Action," *Phoenix NewTimes* blog, August 9, 2012, available at http://blogs.phoenixnewtimes.com/bastard/2012/08/phoenix_mexican_consulate_assi.php.
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- 51 Hector Cordero-Guzmán and others, "Voting With Their Feet: Nonprofit Organizations and Immigrant Mobilization," *American Behavioral Scientist* 52 (4) (2008): 598–617; Kim Voss and Irene Bloemraad, *Rallying for Immigrant Rights: The Fight for Inclusion in 21st Century America* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2011).
- 52 To identify immigrant-serving organizations, we used GuideStar, an online nonprofit database. We queried on category "P84" for "Ethnic and Immigrant Centers, Services." This category includes organizations that serve the needs of specific ethnic and/or immigrant groups. Our approach follows methods established by the Center for the Study of Immigrant Integration. See Manuel Pastor and others, "California Immigrant Integration Scorecard" (Los Angeles: Center for the Study of Immigrant Integration, 2012), available at <http://csii.usc.edu/CAimmSCORECARD.html>.
- 53 We note here that relying on registered nonprofits does not capture the full extent of organizations that provide services and support to immigrants. This approach, however, has two main advantages. First, formal nonprofits are much more likely than informal associations to have the staff capacity and minimal legal expertise necessary to assist individuals with the DACA process. S. Karthick Ramakrishnan and Celia Viramontes, "Civic Inequalities: Immigrant Volunteerism and Community Organizations in California" (San Francisco: Public Policy Institute of California, 2006). Including measures of nonprofits also provides a level of standardization and comprehensiveness that is difficult to achieve when considering informal associations. Thus, we consider our measure of nonprofit density to be the most systematic and standard way to evaluate the role that immigrant-serving organizations might play in DACA in a nationwide analysis.
- 54 Including all states—such as California, which has the largest number of immigrant-serving organizations and the largest number of DACA applicants—skews the results significantly upward.
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- 60 Based on author's interviews with the leader of a California-based Asian advocacy organization.
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- 65 Angela S. García, "Return to Sender? A Comparative Analysis of Immigrant Communities in 'Attrition Through Enforcement' Destinations," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 35 (6) (2012): 1102–1103; Juan Pedroza, "Mass Exodus From Oklahoma? Immigrants and Latinos Stay and Weather A State of Capture," *Journal of Latino-Latin American Studies* 4 (1) (2011): 1–15.
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- 67 USCIS does, however, note that its confidentiality policy may be "modified, superseded, or rescinded at any time without notice." See U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, "Frequently Asked Questions," available at <http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.eyJ1d4c2a3e5b9ac89243c6a7543f6d1a/?vgnextoid=3a4dbc4b04499310VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD&vgnextchannel=3a4dbc4b04499310VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD> (last accessed September 2013).

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