

Opinion: LTCC denounces DACA decision

By Jeff DeFranco

Lake Tahoe Community College joins the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office and Chancellor Eloy Ortiz Oakley in denouncing the White House's action on Tuesday to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program.



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The program protects 800,000 immigrant youth who were brought to the United States by their parents from deportation, and gives them the freedom to work, learn, and live their lives. These young people attend high schools and colleges, hold jobs, and in some cases serve in the United States Armed Forces. This is the only country, and sometimes the only language and culture, many of them know.

On Tuesday, Oakley described ending DACA as a “senseless decision that goes against American ideals and basic human decency. In California, we don’t put dreams – or Dreamers – on hold.”

Lake Tahoe Community College remains committed to serving all students, regardless of their backgrounds or immigration status. We are committed to providing them with a safe learning environment. And, we will continue to protect the private information that all of our students provide in the

college application and registration process.

I have met many of our DACA students, and I know they are contributing members of our college and our community. I want our DACA students to know that we stand with them and remain fully committed to helping them achieve their educational goals.

The decision to “unwind” DACA does not impact LTCC students’ ability to attend college, qualify for an exemption from non-resident tuition fees under AB540, or to apply for financial aid under the provisions of the California Dream Act. These are state programs that are entirely separate and distinct from DACA and the federal enforcement of immigration laws.

Current DACA students should know that the action taken by the White House does not mean that the DACA program has been terminated. Instead, a six-month window was created by the Trump administration for Congress to put the program into legislation. For now, current DACA students should know that:

- Anyone with a current DACA status can continue to enjoy the benefits of the program, including deferred action and work authorization.
- The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) does not intend to terminate an individual’s DACA status prior to its stated expiration date.
- An individual whose DACA status is set to expire between now and March 5, 2018, may still apply for a renewal of their DACA status. However, the application for renewal must be accepted by Oct. 5, 2017.

This information comes from a DHS memorandum released on Sept. 5. A link to the entire memorandum is **here**.

For more information about the California Dream Act and Tuesday’s DACA announcement, please go **online**.

Jeff DeFranco is president of Lake Tahoe Community College.