



Americans by Heart: Undocumented Latino Students and the Promise of Higher Education

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Undocumented Students

- 3.2 million undocumented children and young adults under the age of 24
 - 1.5 million enrolled in K-12
 - 65,000 high school graduates per year
- Among 18-24 year olds:
 - 26% have some college
 - 40% don't have a H.S. diploma



Historical & Legal context

- In Plyler v. Doe (1982) the Supreme Court held that undocumented children must be provided with a public education.



Uncertain Outlook

- Extreme challenges After high school:
 - Do not qualify for any type of federal financial aid
 - They can not legally work
 - They may be deported at any time



American Identity

- Arrived in the U.S. before schooling age
- Bilingual, but English Language Dominant



Economic Hardship

- Parents have low levels of education
 - Work in low-wage jobs
- Students work long hours in after school jobs



Exemplary Achievement

- Identified as gifted
- AP and Honors courses
- High GPA
- Academic awards
- Student leaders
- High educational aspirations
- Aspire to be doctors, lawyers, educators, civil service professions



Talent Loss

- Among those prevented from working legally or continuing on to higher education are:
 - valedictorians
 - honors students
 - academic and athletic award winners
 - other student leaders



Civic Engagement

- Despite marginalization, undocumented students demonstrate a strong commitment to civic participation
 - They channel their feelings of exclusion into political mobilization, activism, advocacy and service



Emotional Concerns

- Undocumented students express:
 - Fear of deportation
 - Loneliness
 - Depression
 - Frustration
 - Helplessness
 - Shame
 - Sense of isolation



Family and Teacher Support

- Relationships with educators are particularly important sources of information and guidance
- Parental support is also very important



Optimism and perseverance

- Although they recognize obstacles related to their status, undocumented students still express a high level of optimism and perseverance



Lack of Institutional Support

- Resources are often obtained through undocumented peers and not from institutional agents.
- Undocumented students piece together available resources to meet their educational goals.
 - The haphazard and uneven process structures the tenuous possibility of successfully patching together the necessary emotional, financial, and informational resources
 - This process results in only a select group of undocumented students who manage to find a path to college.



College Choice Driven by Financial Concerns

- Financial challenges are the most frequently cited obstacles
- Community colleges are an important gateway to higher education due to their affordable tuition



Policy Change Arenas

- Federal policy
- State policy
- Institutional policy
 - Scholarship/financial assistance
 - Student outreach and education



The Dream Act

- Would provide conditional permanent residence to students who are long term residents, and pursue a college or enlist in the military
- Eligibility criteria include:
 - Came to the U.S. before the age of 15 years
 - Reside in the U.S. at least five years



Support for DREAM Act

- National Association for College Admissions Counseling (NACAC)
- American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU)
- National PTA
- California Federation of Teachers AFL-CIO
- National Education Association
- Microsoft Corporation
- The College Board
- Harvard University
- Stanford University
- Brown University
- UC University System



State Legislation

- Since 2001, 12 states have passed in-state tuition legislation:
 - The states are Texas, California, Utah, Washington, New York, Oklahoma, Illinois, Kansas, New Mexico, Nebraska, Connecticut, and Rhode Island.
 - Pending legislation in Oregon and Pennsylvania.



State Financial Aid

- Texas, New Mexico, Illinois, and California have passed legislation that allows undocumented students to receive state funding for college tuition.
- Pending legislation in New York





Funding at Private Colleges

- Harvard University
- Stanford University
- Pomona College
- Occidental College
- Pitzer College
- Loyola Marymount
- Chapman University
- Santa Clara University
- George Fox University
- Brown University
- Yale University
- Columbia University
- Princeton University
- Dartmouth College
- Lafayette College
- Franklin and Marshall College
- George Mason University
- Mount Holyoke College
- Northwestern University
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- Claremont McKenna College
- California Institute of Technology
- Washington University, St. Louis
- University of Puget Sound
- Haverford University
- Wesleyan University
- Swarthmore College
- Harvey Mudd College
- University of Pennsylvania
- Bryn Mawr College
- Kenyon College
- Vassar College
- Mills College
- Reed College
- Williams College
- Whitman College
- Grinnell College
- Carleton College
- Oberlin College
- Amherst College
- Bard College
- Bates College
- Bowdoin College
- Cornell University

Beyond the Legal Status Binary

- 5.5 million children and adolescents are growing up with undocumented parents
 - 1 million are themselves unauthorized
 - Often forgotten are the remaining 4.5 million who are citizens, having been born in the United States



Mixed Status Families

- An estimated 14.6 million are living in a mixed-status home where at least one family member is undocumented
 - 41 percent have one documented parent with the other parent undocumented
 - 39 percent have two undocumented parents
 - 20 percent live in households headed by a single undocumented parent
 - One in ten children living in the United States is growing up in such a household



Deportations

- Well over one hundred thousand citizen children have experienced their parents' deportation in the last decade.
- A recent survey of Latino parents found that among those that are undocumented:
 - 58 percent had a plan for the care of their children in case they were detained
 - 40 percent reported that they had discussed that plan with their children



Hostility toward Latinos

- Attitudes toward undocumented immigrants have become increasingly harsh in recent years, as reflected in the flurry of state and local laws aimed at unauthorized immigration.
- Bias crimes against Latinos have risen in recent years, even in the midst of overall decreases in violent crime.
 - According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, the number of anti-Latino hate crimes has grown steadily since 2003



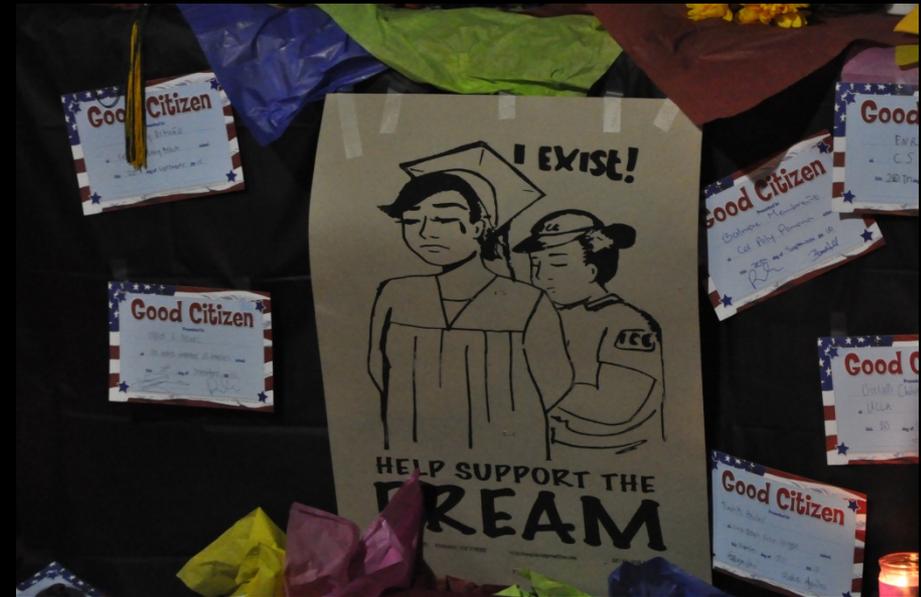
Implications for development

- The threat of deportation results in lower levels of enrollment of citizen-children in programs they are eligible for such as:
 - child-care subsidies
 - public preschool
 - and food stamps
- These conditions contribute substantially to lower cognitive skills in children, whether they are citizens or not.
 - Second-generation Latino children with undocumented parents fare worse on reading and math skills assessments at school entry
 - Such disparities are evident as early as twenty-four months of age.



Implications for educational attainment

- A recent study found that children of undocumented immigrants averaged 11 years of education, compared with about 13 years for those whose parents were legal residents.
 - Once undocumented immigrants found ways to legalize their status, their children's educational levels rose substantially
- Undocumented immigrants who cannot legalize remain mired in disadvantage, as do their children
 - The negative influence of undocumented status will persist into later generations

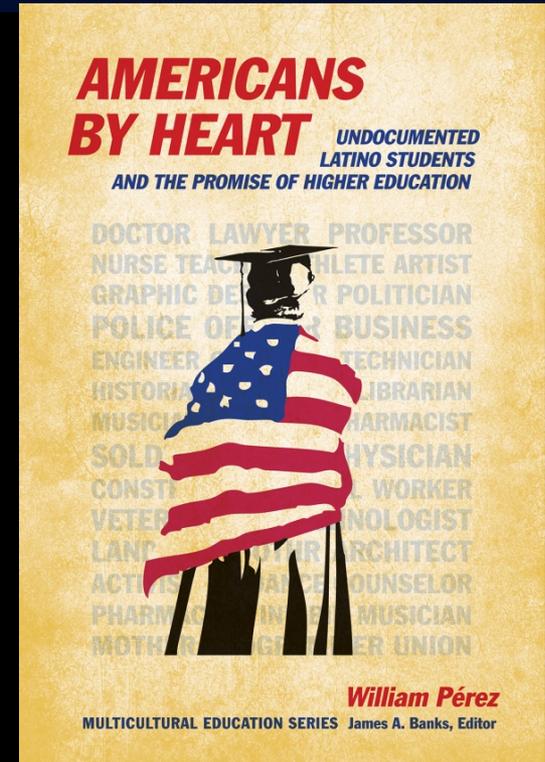
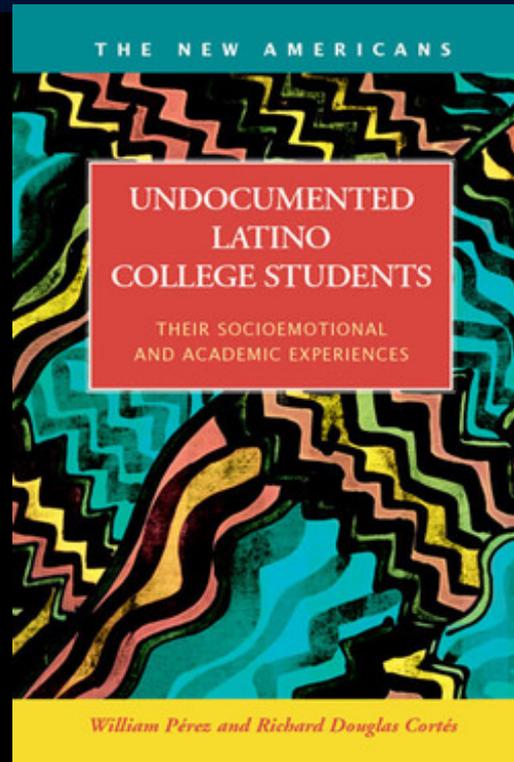
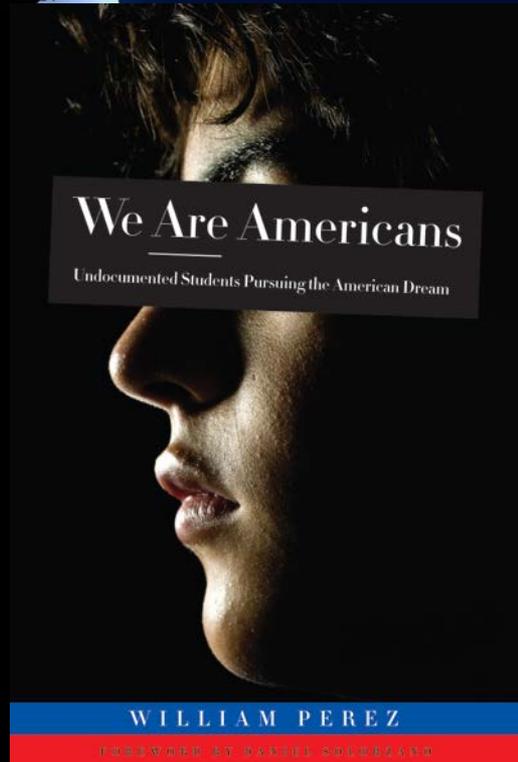




Formerly Undocumented

Name	Highest Degree	Current Professional Status
1. Ramon	Ph.D.	College Professor
2. Nicole	Ph.D.	Educator
3. Jessica	J.D.	Civil Rights lawyer
4. Ignacio	M.A.	Elementary school teacher/Ph.D. student in education
5. Isidro	M.A.	High school counselor/Ph.D. student in education
6. Jocelyn	M.A.	Ph.D. student in Spanish & Cultural Studies
7. Luz	MA.	Elementary school teacher/Ph.D. student in education
8. Monica	M.S.W.	Social Worker
9. Mabel	M.A.	Research Associate
10. Nadia	M.A.	Teacher
11. Julia	B.A.	Ph.D. student in Engineering
12. Silvia	B.A.	Ph.D. student in clinical psychology
13. Miriam	B.A.	Ph.D. student
14. Raquel	B.A.	Ph.D. student
15. Moises	B.A.	Law School Student
16. Natalia	B.A.	Training Specialist

For More Information



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