Undocumented Student Action Week

Education and Career UndocuDreams Made Possible

California Community Colleges

Unlocking Financial Aid Opportunities:
Maximizing State Financial Aid Programs

Housekeeping

- At any time during the webinar, you'll have the opportunity to submit your questions to today's presenters.

- To do so, please type your question using the Q & A feature.

- As time allows, the presenters will address as many questions as they can.

- Please note that you will be unable to unmute yourself or utilize your camera.

- Closed captioning is available by clicking on the "CC" and "Live transcript" button found in the settings bar at the bottom of your Zoom screen.

- We will be recording this webinar. The recording and PowerPoint presentation will be available on the Vision Resource Center after the event.

- Tech Support is available. Please message the staff members with Tech Support in their name in the attendee list or email conferences@foundationccc.org.

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Financial Aid Landscape, Opportunities, and Updates for California's Undocumented Students
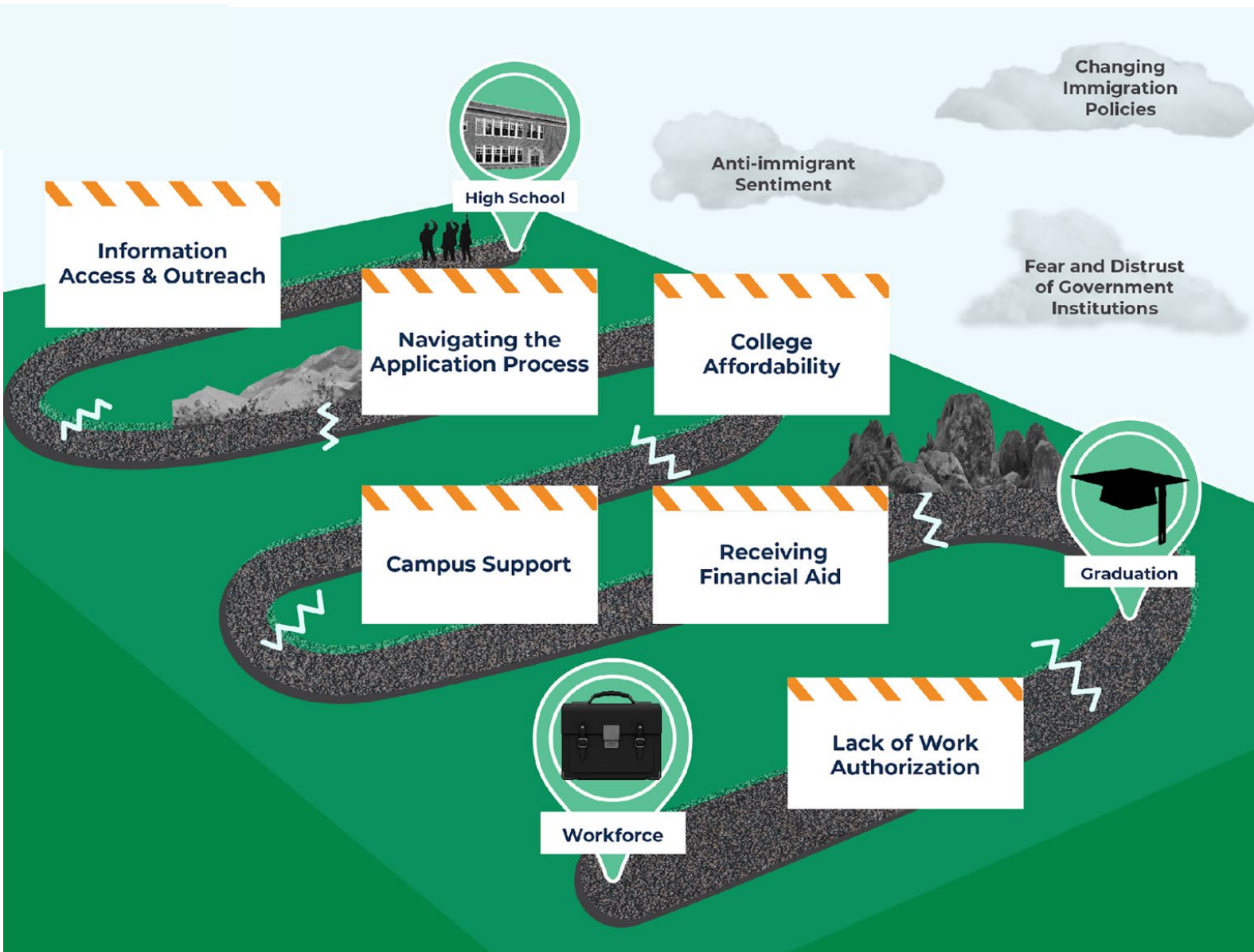
California Student Aid Commission

Daniela Rodriguez – Policy & Strategic Initiative Coordinator
Javier Argüello – Customer Relations Branch Manager

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CALIFORNIA DREAM ACT APPLICATION (CADAA)

CA's financial aid application (administered by CSAC) to determine *state* and *institutional* financial aid eligibility for students who cannot submit a FAFSA

	UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS		
	without AB 540 status ineligible to file a CADAA	with AB 540 status who have not filed a CADAA	with AB 540 status who have filed a CADAA
FAFSA	X	X	X
In-State Tuition	X	✓	✓
Cal Grants	X	X	✓
Chafee Grant	X	X	✓
Middle Class Scholarship (UC/CSU)	X	X	✓

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Growing non-DACA population of undocumented students unsure about their place in higher education
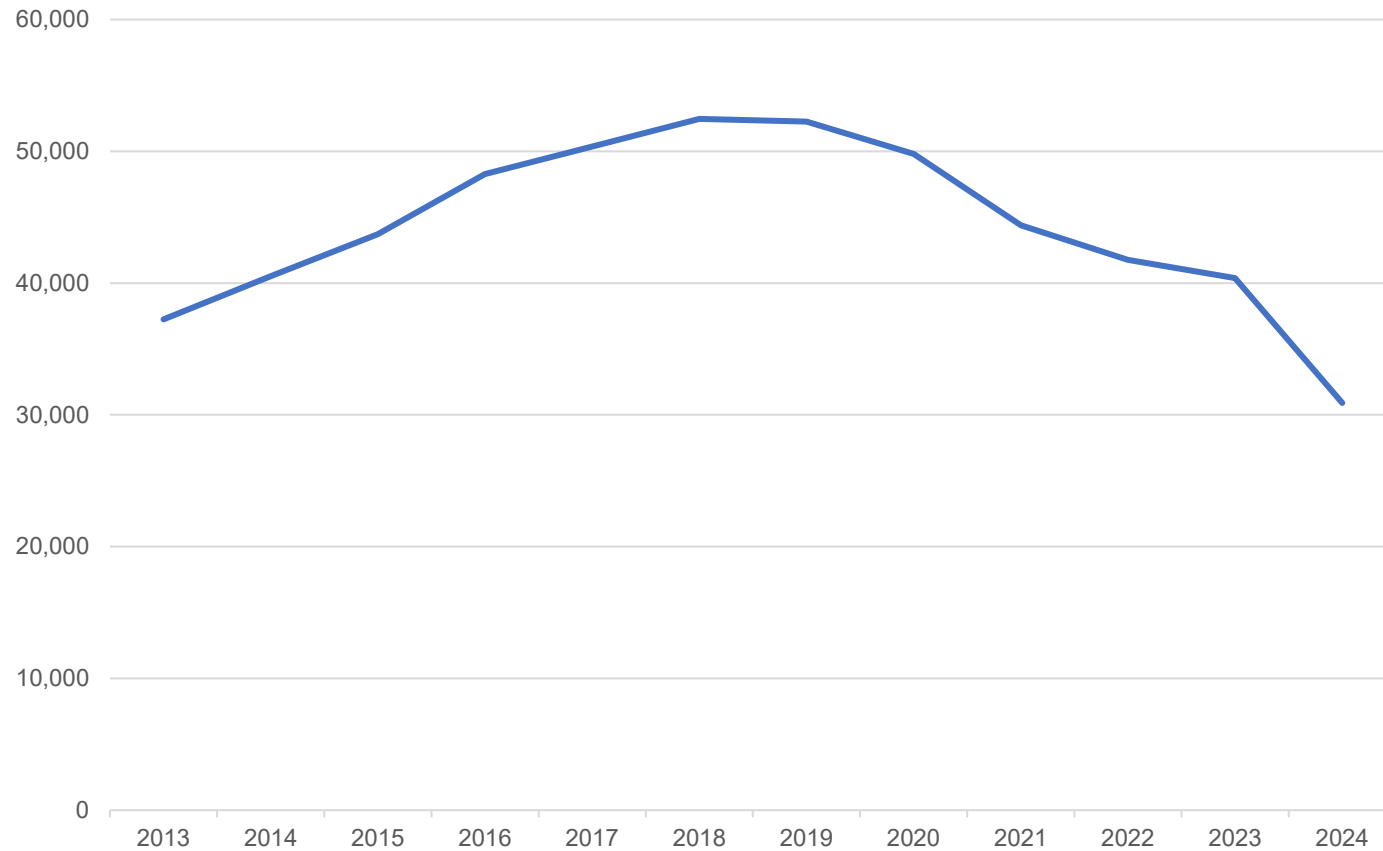
Reimagining our outreach approach

Addressing undocumented students' anxieties about financial aid by creating:

- Dedicated and centralized landing page
- Student-focused toolkit that speaks to students in a way that resonates and addresses their concerns:
  - Welcome letter/getting started guide
  - FAQs
  - Summary of financial aid availability
  - Social media graphics
  - More to come!

UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS

DREAM BIG
FINANCIAL AID AND RESOURCES FOR UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS IN CA

START HERE
Welcome to your ultimate guide to navigating higher education as an undocumented student in California. We know this journey can feel overwhelming, but the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) offers the best financial aid opportunities for undocumented students in the nation, and we're here to help you every step of the way! Together, we'll navigate the resources and support systems designed *just for you.*

YOUR SAFETY AND PRIVACY IS CSAC'S PRIORITY
We understand that sharing personal information and applying for government aid can be scary! Rest assured that any information you provide through the CA Dream Act Application is only used to determine your eligibility for financial aid and is *never shared with the federal government.*

YOU ARE COLLEGE MATERIAL
Education isn't just a dream-- it's a real opportunity and investment in your future! Undocumented individuals in California who graduate college or complete a trade or certification program can significantly increase their earning potential compared to those with only a high school diploma. CSAC helps thousands of undocumented students every year, and we're excited to guide you on your path to success too!
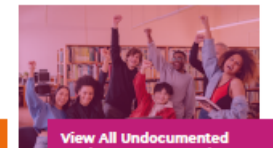
STORIES FROM STUDENTS LIKE YOU
Sometimes it helps to hear from others who have been in your shoes. Watch and read success stories from fellow undocumented students who are thriving with the help of financial aid! Click here to view them all.
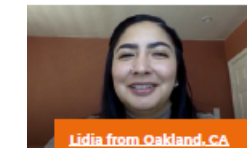
Lidia from Oakland, CA
1st generation journey

Kenny from Van Nuys, CA
Mom's perspective

View All Undocumented Student Success Stories!

www.csac.ca.gov/undocumented

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2025-26 CA Dream Act Application Key Updates

- 2025-26 CADAA will open on **December 1, 2024**
    - Ensures a stable CADAA release that aligns with FAFSA technical changes

- CADAA will continue to be an option for students from **mixed-status families**
    - Federal Student Aid continues to work out account creation issues for non-SSN contributors

Facilitating a Smoother AB 540 Process

AB 1540 (2023)

- Embedded the AB 540 Affidavit into the CADAA starting in 24/25

- Public institutions must accept students' AB 540 affidavit provided via the CADAA
  Institutions can provide their own affidavit for students who do not submit a CADAA

- "AB 540 School Report" captures AB 540 Affidavit responses
  - Housed within Web Grants > CADAA > AB 540 School Report
  - Web Grants System Administrators (SA) at each campus can grant access
  - SAs typically work in the financial aid office
  - CSAC School Support 1-800-294-0153 for help identifying your school's SA

Reducing Burden of Proof in the AB 540 Process

REMINDER #1:

➤ Institutions *(not CSAC)* will continue to be the only entity responsible for determining students' AB 540 eligibility

REMINDER #2:

➤ Per recent updates to the CCCCO's regulations on Nonresident Tuition Exemption Implementation, community colleges are permitted to accept AB 540 affidavits submitted via CADAA, and practice self-certification

Final Revisions to Title 5, California Code of Regulations relating to Undocumented Students and Nonresident Tuition Exemption Implementation (cccco.edu)

REMINDER #3:

➤ CSAC's Program Compliance auditors will continue to follow colleges' existing AB 540 policies and procedures (including self-certification policies)

   Grant Special Alert 2024-40 (ca.gov)

- **No need to ask students for additional documentation beyond existing policies**

- **No need to store documentation beyond existing policies**

Forthcoming Enhancements to the CA Dream Act Application

- Inclusion of "credits/hours" on AB 540 section of CADAA
  - Help text will provide calculation instructions

- California Department of Education and CSAC data sharing agreement
  - CSAC will receive 9-12th grade enrollment data for public school students
  - Reduce burden of proof for students', especially if attending a self-certification campus
  - Staff at non-self-certification campuses save time and focus on helping students with more complicated pathways to AB 540

- Inclusion of IRS tax form screenshots within help text

MOVING FORWARD

- Visit and refer students to CSAC's dedicated student landing pages:

  www.csac.ca.gov/undocumented

  www.csac.ca.gov/cadaa-msf

- Stay informed on forthcoming CADAA changes:

  www.csac.ca.gov/pod/subscribe-listserv

- Attend a training:

  www.csac.ca.gov/cash-college

- Contact us:
  Daniela.Rodriguez@csac.ca.gov
  Javier.Arguello@csac.ca.gov

SAVE THE DATE
CALIFORNIA COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY SUMMIT

NOVEMBER 7, 2024

Join us for this virtual event to learn about **key updates** to the financial aid applications, **new resources and practices**, and **networking opportunities** to better leverage partnerships to ensure **student success**!

CALIFORNIA
STUDENT AID
COMMISSION

www.csac.ca.gov/2024-college-affordability-summit

California Community Colleges

Dream Act Service Incentive Grant (DSIG)

Implementation and Departmental Collaboration

Presented by: Alejandro Ramirez
Student Services Coordinator and Undocu-liaison
First Year Support Center
Santiago Canyon College - Orange, CA

Objective:

To inform and engage college staff and faculty on the effective implementation of the Dream Act Service Incentive Grant (DSIG), while highlighting the importance of interdepartmental collaboration to ensure eligible undocumented students receive financial support through community service, and to foster a coordinated approach for tracking, promoting, and administering the grant.

Overview of the Dream Act Service Incentive Grant (DSIG)

What is DSIG?

- The California Dream Act Service Incentive Grant (DSIG) Program offers up to $4,500 per year to eligible Dream Act students with Cal Grant A or B awards. Students can receive funding for up to 8 semesters or 12 quarters while completing community service. To remain eligible, students must meet Satisfactory Academic Progress and complete any required Cal Grant verification.

Eligibility

- Completed and submitted California Dream Act Application (CADAA).

- Is an active recipient of a Cal Grant A or Cal Grant B award. Cal Grant A recipients must have met Cal Grant B eligibility.

- Demonstrate enough financial need (determined by CSAC or the institution).

- Enrolled in a qualifying institutions.

Importance and Benefits of DSIG

- Financial Support for undocumented students without DACA

- Encourages community and civic engagement

- Enhances educational and career opportunities

- Promotes social responsibility and community involvement

- Cost free to our campus partners

Implementing DSIG at SCC

- Work with Admissions and Records to run a query to determine potential applicants

- Received a query from Admissions & Records of all potential AB540 students and CADAA submissions and notified students about DSIG and the steps necessary to be considered for DSIG

- Work with Financial Aid Office to run a query on all applicants who submitted a CA Dream Act Application

- Inform departments about DSIG and its purpose while creating a list of host departments

Collaborative Strategies

- Set-up one-on-ones with all coordinators/supervisor to inform them about DSIG and its purpose

- Walked campus partners through the DSIG application process

- Provide campus partners with an overview of how students track their hours

- Ensure coordinators/supervisors understand that DSIG students are no student workers, but volunteers

Campus Partners

- Departments | Numbers of Students Hosted:
  - Transfer Success Center | 1
  - High School & Community Outreach | 1
  - Counseling | 1
  - Hawks Nest Food Pantry | IP
  - **Admissions and Records Office** | 1
  - **Black Legacy Achievement Center of Knowledge** (BLACK) | IP
  - **Career Counseling** | IP
  - TRiO Classic | 5
  - TRiO Future Teachers | 4
  - First Year Support Center | 2

DSIG Application Process @ SCC

1. Students interested in DSIG contact the First Year Support Center (FYSC) or are referred for assistance with the application.

2. Students are screened to ensure eligibility (i.e., CADAA submitted, Cal Grant Recipient, and SCC home location).

3. If eligible, the FYSC will assist the student by placing them in an office that best fits their interest.

4. The student is walked over to the Financial Aid Office so the Financial Aid Coordinator can complete Section 2.

5. After the Financial Aid Office completes Section 2, we walk the student over to the office they will be placed to complete Section 3 and ensure a warm hand-off.

6. Lastly, students eligible for DSIG must complete a Volunteer Service Form and Waiver Agreement. Students must complete a TB testing and livescan; however, we reimburse them through undocu-liaison funds.

Section 2: School of Attendance Information (Required) To Be Completed by Financial Aid Administrator

School Name:		OPE ID:
FAA Name:	YES ☐ NO ☐ Student has been offered a Cal Grant A with Cal Grant B eligibility or Cal Grant B Award.	
FAA Email:	YES ☐ NO ☐ Student has at least $4,500 of financial unmet need to be eligible to receive up to $2,250 per semester or up to $1,500 per quarter. Student's unmet need [____]	
FAA Signature:	☐ Understand that the grant awarded under the program shall not offset or replace any other source of grant aid, including, but not necessarily limited to, institutional aid and scholarships. ☐ Understand that initial DSIG payment will occur after student receives at least one Cal Grant A or B payment. ☐ Student will submit payment request after service hours have been completed. ☐ FAA notified when payment is approved and check has been mailed to institution.	

Section 3: Service Organization Information (Required)

Organization Name & Date Established:		Employer Identification Number (EIN):
Street Address:	City:	Zip:
Contact Name:	Contact Email:	Contact Phone:
List members of your organization who will verify completion of service hours performed by the student. A certifying official name and signature must be on the document validating service hours performed by the student. This information will be sent to CSAC in a timely manner.	Certifying Official Name 1: / Certifying Official Name 2:	Signature 1: / Signature 2:

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25 YEARS OF Excellence SANTIAGO CANYON COLLEGE

Success Stories and Testimonials

DSIG has positively impacted me during my time in college. It has allowed me to gain experience as someone who can't work. DSIG has helped me build connections and be more involved in school. I'm forever grateful to be a part of DSIG, as it has shaped my journey here at SCC.
(Citlalitl - Volunteers at TRiO for Teachers)

DSIG is a good opportunity for students who are rejected from job opportunities because they cannot work since they do not have an SSN. DSIG is a great thing for those wanting to get involved in school. DSIG has allowed me to grow while relieving some financial stress from my family.
(Gisell - Volunteers at TRiO for Teachers)

Success Stories and Testimonials

The DSIG program has helped me in so many ways. For example, financially. My parent cannot contribute to my education financially, and it has been hard for me to find ways to support my education, not counting the aid I receive from CADAA. The DSIG Program provided me with the financial support I was looking for. Now I feel more relaxed, and my parents do not have to worry as much. It has also helped me get more involved in school and create connections with students and staff. **(Eseme - Volunteers at the Transfer Success Center)**

DSIG has been a lifesaver for me as a community college student. It's provided me with amazing opportunities, resources, and support that have helped me succeed. Personally, DSIG has connected me with mentors in my field, helped me build my skills, and given me the confidence I need to succeed. I can't recommend it enough - it's truly a game-changer. If you're a student looking for help, check it out! **(Flo - Volunteer at TRiO for Teachers and ASG President)**

California Community Colleges

25 YEARS OF Excellence SANTIAGO CANYON COLLEGE

Outcomes and Impact

- Number of students who have applied (2024-2025): 15
- Number of students who are working on their hours: 10
- Number of students who applied and were approved but did not follow up: 1
- Number of students who did not qualify for DSIG: 4
- Number of student who did not qualify but SCC provided funds: 2
- Total of service hours estimate for Fall 2024: 1,800
- The overall impact on student success and community engagement:
  - Increase involvement and retention
  - Increase the opportunity to become competitive applicants for transfer and internships/fellowships
  - Increase student engagement
  - Increase financial opportunities
  - Create professional relationships with staff/faculty (networking)
  - Create a home away from home

Thank You!

Alejandro Ramirez
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