

Resources for AB540/Undocumented Students

Accessing & Financing
YOUR
Higher Education



By the end of today you will know...

- What does it mean to be undocumented?
- If I am undocumented, can I go to college?
- If I am undocumented, can I apply for financial aid?
- What is the process of applying for college for undocumented students?
- Now that I know, what should/can I do?

What does it mean to be undocumented?

- If you are not a U.S. citizen, legal permanent resident, do not possess a green card, visa, or other legal documentation, you are considered undocumented.
- Who are undocumented students? Undocumented students include those born outside of the United States, many of whom have lived in this country for a significant portion of their lives, and who reside here without the legal permission of the federal government.

If I am undocumented, can I go to college?

YES!

- ✓ You can go to any college or university in California, if you meet the admissions requirements.
- ✓ You cannot be denied admission based on your immigration status.



California State Law Assisting Undocumented Students

- AB540, signed into law on October 12, 2001, authorizes undocumented students who meet specific criteria to pay in-state tuition at California's public colleges and universities.
- Any undocumented student, except a person in nonimmigrant status, who meets the requirements, shall be exempt from paying nonresident tuition at all public colleges and universities in California.

AB540: The Requirements

- ✓ Must have attended a California high school for 3 years or more,
- ✓ Must have graduated from a California high school or attained the equivalent (GED),
- ✓ Register or currently be enrolled at a public California college or university.

Students must also file an affidavit stating they meet the requirements and will apply for legal residency as soon as they are eligible to do so. This affidavit is kept confidential by the college/university and by law is not to be shared with BCIS (formerly INS).

AB540: The Facts

- AB540 does not apply to private colleges and universities.
- **AB540 does not grant legal residency to qualifying students.**
- AB540 does not grant state or federal financial aid eligibility.
- **AB540 only provides an exemption to the requirements to pay nonresident tuition**

If I am undocumented, can I apply for financial aid?

- As an undocumented student, you do not qualify for state or federal financial aid.



(If you are in the process of obtaining residency you may already be eligible for aid.)

HOW CAN YOU PAY FOR COLLEGE?

- Use creative ways to fundraise (i.e. raffles, donations, etc!)
- Apply for scholarships that do not require U.S. citizenship or residency.
- Evaluate your personal situation and make decisions based on your needs.

Scholarship Tips for Undocumented/AB540 Students

- ✓ Scholarship providers have their own eligibility requirements. Make sure to obtain current information by contacting each provider directly.
- ✓ Scholarship monies are limited. Do not rely heavily on these.
- ✓ Begin looking for scholarships as early as possible. Search within your school, school district and local community.
- ✓ Find creative ways to fund your education (i.e. ask family members, teachers, local business or large companies)
- ✓ Network. Get to know current AB540 support groups in high school, community and the college you will be attending.

What is the process of applying for college for undocumented students?

- Talk to your college counselor as early as possible to receive all the information you need about planning for college including college applications, entrance exams, fee waivers, cost of attendance, and available resources for undocumented students.
- Talk to AB540 College students to get advice about applying to and attending college.
- Research scholarships and other ways to pay for college.
- Know that you have a right to higher education and it is going to take much work and dedication on your part. You can do it!

California Four Systems of Higher Education

- Community Colleges
- California State University
- University of California
- Private Colleges & Universities.

Each system has its own requirements, such as

- ❑ A-G requirements
- ❑ Entrance Exams (SAT, ACT)
- ❑ GPA
- ❑ Applications deadlines

Create your own educational plan!

Useful Websites:

- www.ucop.edu UC
- www.csumentor.edu CSU
- www.laccd.edu Los Angeles CC
- www.cccco.edu California CC
- www.salef.org Scholarships
- www.maldef.org Scholarships

For more information regarding accessing higher education and resources for AB540/undocumented students contact Mayra Soriano at (213) 480-1052 or msoriano@salef.org or Paz Oliveriez at (213) 740-2881 or oliveriez@usc.edu

Now that I know, what should/can I do?

- Get involved!
- There are many organizations that are working to pass legislation and advocate on behalf of students. (i.e. DREAM ACT, California DREAM ACT)
- Connect with AB540 Student Groups
- Create your own AB540 Student group in your school if one does not already exist.

Thank you to...

- The information in this presentation is a compilation of the work of many individuals and organizations who work and advocate on behalf of students rights.
- They include:
 - CHIRLA
 - MALDEF
 - SALEF
 - Laura Barrera, LAUSD School District 2
 - Paz Oliveriez, USC CHEPA
 - Malou Chavezand many others!