



June 17, 2020

## Letter to our Colorado Communities: A Statement from the Colorado Department of Higher Education and Colleges and Universities on DACA

A year ago, all of us came together with colleges and universities from across the nation to join an *amicus* brief in support of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) in the case before the Supreme Court. On Sept. 5, 2017, the federal executive administration rescinded DACA, an initiative that provides work permits and protection from deportation for more than 700,000 undocumented students, often known as “Dreamers.” Like many in the immigrant community, the presidents of Colorado’s public and private colleges and universities await the upcoming ruling from the Supreme Court.

We offer our unwavering support for our DACA and immigrant students and families. These students bring a tremendous amount of diversity to campuses across the nation, especially here in Colorado. Our nation and institutions have invested in the success of these students and the continued existence of DACA is essential to ensure the career and life success of these immigrant youth. The triumph of DACA students is our triumph, whether ensuring robust graduates, injecting new perspectives and diversity into our campuses and communities, or expanding our nation’s tax base—our institutions stand behind DACA students and Dreamers.

Our students contribute much more to our communities than can be measured. Our DACA students have taught us what it means to dedicate oneself to your dreams and your community with determination and resolve. They remind us every single day what it means to continue to believe in the promise of the American dream and why we must do everything we can to defend it.

DACA recipients are American in every way; they built their lives here and contribute to our campuses, communities and our country’s economy daily. We believe it is vital to protect this vulnerable population when their futures are in question. Their home is here with their families, their classmates, their professors, and their communities. We will do everything we can to defend their rightful place in this country. We believe it is vital during such tumultuous times that we look to rebuild and reimagine an America that is more just and inclusive.

To our DACA students:

- We stand shoulder to shoulder with you; we will rethink and reimagine what pathways to opportunity will look like. You are not alone.

- We are committed to advocating for state and federal policies to provide permanent legislative solutions that honor the work and sacrifice of you and your families.

- We recognize the fear, pain, and anger this decision brings. We are ready to support you on our campuses by making resources available to address mental health and well-being and create spaces where you can process and heal.

We hope, for the sake of justice and equity, the Supreme Court recognizes the valuable contribution DACA recipients make to higher education in Colorado and the nation.

Sincerely,

Tim Alvarez, President, *Otero Junior College*  
Lance Bolton, President, *Pikes Peak Community College*  
Leah L. Bornstein, President, *Aims Community College*  
Janine Davidson, President, *Metropolitan State University of Denver*  
Philip P. DiStefano, Chancellor, *University of Colorado Boulder*  
Stephanie Donner, Executive Director, *Emily Griffith Technical College*  
Andy Dorsey, President, *Front Range Community College*  
Diana Doyle, President, *Arapahoe Community College*  
Donald Elliman, Jr., Chancellor, *University of Colorado Anschutz*  
Rhonda Epper, President, *Trinidad State Junior College*  
Patty Erjavec, President, *Pueblo Community College*  
Andy Feinstein, President, *University of Northern Colorado*  
Father John P. Fitzgibbons, S.J., President, *Regis University*  
Tim Foster, President, *Colorado Mesa University*  
Tony Frank, Chancellor, *Colorado State University System*  
Curt Freed, President, *Morgan Community College*  
Everette Freeman, President, *Community College of Denver*  
Joe Garcia, Chancellor, *Colorado Community College System*  
Ron Granger, President, *Colorado Northwestern Community College*  
Jeremy Haefner, Chancellor, *University of Denver*  
Michele Haney, President, *Red Rocks Community College*  
Carrie Besnette Hauser, President & CEO, *Colorado Mountain College*  
Dorothy Horrell, Chancellor, *University of Colorado Denver*  
Paul Johnson, President, *Colorado School of Mines*  
Mark R. Kennedy, President, *University of Colorado System*  
Jay Lee, President, *Northeastern Junior College*  
Charles G. Lief, President, *Naropa University*  
Cheryl D. Lovell, President, *Adams State University*  
Linda Lujan, President, *Lamar Community College*  
Joyce McConnell, President, *Colorado State University Fort Collins*  
Tim Mottet, President, *Colorado State University Pueblo*  
Betsy Oudenhoven, President, *Community College of Aurora*  
Angie Paccione, Executive Director, *Colorado Department of Higher Education*  
Venkat Reddy, Chancellor, *University of Colorado Colorado Springs*  
Greg Salsbury, President, *Western Colorado University*  
Tom Stritikus, President, *Fort Lewis College*  
Jill Tiefenthaler, President, *Colorado College*  
Collen Walker, Chief Executive Officer, *Auraria Higher Education Center*