AMERICAN DREAM DISRUPTED:
AN EXPLORATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND CIVIC EXPERIENCES OF LATINA/O DEFERRED ACTION CHILDHOOD ARRIVALS IN ARIZONA

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ABSTRACT

AMERICAN DREAM DISRUPTED:

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CAROL E. JOHNSON

Education attainment rates for Latina/os in the United States have significant discrepancies including a 44% high school graduation rate and students of Latina/o descent comprise two-thirds of the overall undocumented high school graduate composition (Perez, 2009; Yosso, 2006). Undocumented Latina/os seeking to matriculate into higher education also face racism, nativism, and substantial institutional barriers. Contending with these challenges, thousands of undocumented Latina/o high school graduates attempt to achieve a higher education annually as they also experience precarious legal situations.

The purpose of this qualitative interview study was to explore the educational and civic experiences of individuals who self-identify as Latina/o and have Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). Interview data was used to develop counterstories that demonstrate how these individuals are navigating their non-majoritarian lives. The study highlights where DACAmented Latina/os find barriers in education and how they utilize civic engagement and social wealth found in the larger undocumented community to develop themselves personally and professionally as they anxiously await comprehensive immigration reform.

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Introduction

Isabel enters her senior year of high school in Phoenix, Arizona sharing anticipation for the year ahead with her peers. The year will mean applying to colleges, taking trips to visit university campuses, and researching tuition and scholarship opportunities. As the year unfolds, she finds her opportunities diminishing as she uncovers realities about her life. When she asks about completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FASFA) form, her family tells her that when she arrived in the United States at age 3 from Mexico that she did not receive the required social security number to complete the form. Now, her FAFSA ineligibility further disqualifies her from applying for many other scholarships. This reality also precludes her from applying for some available state aid; furthermore, she cannot qualify for in-state tuition because she lacks the required documents. Finally, Isabel's family tells her that they cannot afford the out-of-state rates at the Arizona universities or community colleges.

Isabel becomes despondent as she wonders if all of her efforts to maintain high grades in school, participation in student government and soccer, and volunteering at the neighborhood food bank were for nothing. She sees her prospects of a higher education and the chances to transition into adulthood with her friends at college vanish. Isabel realizes her best friends have different opportunities to social and economic mobility than she does and those other transitions into adulthood, including driving and traveling are limited to her. She does not know how she will have a career and a successful future without a higher education. Finishing her senior year in high school now appears to be a wasted endeavor. Her motivation evaporates. Isabel's ordeal

reflects the harsh reality for approximately 65,000 undocumented high school students in Arizona and throughout the United States 'educational system annually.

Statement of the Problem

Although the 1982 United States Supreme Court decision in *Plyler v. Doe* guarantees the right to a public education for all children regardless of immigration status, this privilege does not extend to a higher education. "Currently, the *Plyler* decision protects the educational rights of approximately 1.8 million children under 18 years of age, about one-sixth of the total undocumented population" (Perez, 2009, p. xix). Approximately 65,000 students complete compulsory education annually in the United States labeled as both "high school graduate" and "undocumented." The shift in educational rights for these individuals is a move from a protected status to one that discriminates against their access to higher education through means that could include denial of state and federal aid and in-state tuition. Furthermore, negative rhetoric distorts their circumstances by classifying them as individuals who do not deserve the right to higher education, in favor of 'real' Americans. Of the undocumented students who graduate from high school, only 7,000 to 13,000 continue their education into college (Diaz-Strong, Gomez, Luna-Duarte, & Meiners, 2010).

If it is enacted, the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act, will provide a pathway to citizenship and affect access to higher education for undocumented high school graduates. The proponents who would qualify and advocate for this legislation often self-identify as DREAMers. "The DREAM Act, first introduced in both the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate in 2001, is a narrowly tailored bill that would allow eligible undocumented youth to legalize their status in the United States" (Corrunker, 2012, p. 144). Since its inception, it has languished in varying forms. Perez (2009) notes:

> Although there have been some modifications from initial introduction of the bill, the DREAM Act would extend a six-year conditional legal status to undocumented youth who meet several criteria, including: entry into the United States before age 16; continuous presence in the United States for five years prior to the bill's enactment; receipt of a high school diploma or its equivalent (i.e., a GED); demonstrated good moral character. Qualifying youth would be authorized to work in the United States, go to school, or join the military. If during the six-year period they graduate from a two-year college, complete at least two years of a four-year degree, or serve at least two years in the U.S. military, the beneficiary would be able to adjust from conditional to permanent legal resident status. Otherwise, after six years, their conditional status would lapse. (p. xxii)

The legislation's complexity stems from both social issues surrounding immigrant rights and a lack of a legal model. "Making legal status conditional on young adults' educational and military choices has no precedent in U.S. immigration policy" (Perez, 2009, p. xxii). In June 2012, President Obama established a deferred deportation policy in response to Congress continued failure to pass the DREAM Act. The president's executive order, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), grants deferred deportation and a work permit for 2 years for undocumented immigrant youth who meet certain standards. DACA, which has nearly identical eligibility criteria as the DREAM Act, is essentially providing a 2-year DREAM Act. Of course, DACA's most significant distinction is that it does not offer a pathway to a permanent legal status.

DACA rights differ greatly between and within states, making identification of discrepancies important to the fight for equity. These inconsistencies include the right to in-state tuition and eligibility for a state identification card or driver's license. These differences are

relevant to both undocumented individuals and educational institutions serving this population as they seek educational equity. The executive order renewed hope for a better future for over 1 million young people. There is a deficit in the literature about DREAMers in higher education in general and information about DREAMers who have been granted DACA; therefore, DACAmented DREAMers are emerging. This literature deficiency fails to offer any insight regarding DACA's impact on individuals' educational goals and civic participation. Therefore, self advocacy has emerged as a common theme from the limited literature. "Significantly, undocumented activists taking the lead in fighting for legalization and resisting deportation is an important theme that emerges in comparing examples of anti-deportation movements in a global context" (Corrunker, 2012, p. 155). Advocacy efforts are occurring from community to national levels.

Education issues for undocumented individuals. Currently, all undocumented individuals in the United States face discrimination due to their immigration status. In fact, the majority of undocumented individuals in the United States have not been racialized as White; therefore they are classified as People or students of Color meaning they contend with other juxtaposed discrimination. The Migration Policy Institute (2010) notes:

> With regard to country/region of origin, we find that the overwhelmingly majority of the 2.1 million potential DREAM Act beneficiaries are from Mexico and other Latin American countries: 62 percent from Mexico, 11 percent from Central America, and 11 percent from the rest of Latin America. About one in 10 is from Asia, and the remaining percent are from Europe, Canada, Africa, and the rest of the world. (p. 6)

Thus, undocumented individuals are likely to also share common experiences of racism. The small percentages of undocumented students who matriculate to college or university add legal

and institutional barriers to their struggles. The distinctive higher education experiences of undocumented students are described by Diaz-Strong, Gomez, Luna-Duarte, and Meiners (2010):

> While undocumented students confront difficulties similar to those encountered by many low-income and first-generation college students across the United States, they also face unique challenges. For example, in most states, undocumented students cannot legally drive and have to depend on public transportation and rides from family and friends or put themselves at risk by driving without a license. Their lives and those of their families are at the center of often vicious public debates regarding employment and health care; recently even the right to U.S. citizenship of children born in the United States to undocumented parents has come under attack. Furthermore, with the 2001 folding of Immigration and Naturalization Services into the Department of Homeland Security, the undocumented have become an integral and expanding component of a criminalized class subject to raids, detention in a network of private and public prisons, and deportation. (p. 29)

This criminalization issue largely affects the way undocumented students interact within their communities and with faculty and student affairs personnel at higher education institutions. Individuals eager to work who do not have adequate documentation may be hesitant to approach employers and if they do secure an off the record position potentially work in constant fear of raids that may lead to jail and/or deportation. Levels of communication within educational institutions often depend on issues around who can be trusted with information regarding their immigration status. Precarious decisions must be made between giving that information to strangers and pursuing their educational dreams.

The pursuit of higher education for undocumented students often includes experiences of cultural and institutional discrimination based upon their status and the stigmas associated with not being "real" Americans (i.e., undeserving of educational benefits). Federal or state legislation and institutional policy have a significant impact on financial issues for this population. This includes ineligibility to submit the FAFSA and ineligibility or considerable limitations to state and institutional aid. Many undocumented high school graduates are ineligible for in-state tuition in the very state in which they reside and graduated from high school. This further contributes to their struggles to achieve college-bound goals and/or effectively pricing them out of higher education by making tuition extremely expensive.

Educational issues for Latina/os. Students of Latina/o descent comprise two-thirds of the overall undocumented high school graduate composition (Perez, 2009). The overall education attainment discrepancies for Latina/os in the United States are substantial. The context of their educational pipeline is explicated by Yosso (2006):

> Utilizing 2000 U.S. Census data and information from the National Center for Education Statistics, we begin with 100 Chicana and Chicano students at the elementary level, noting that 56 drop out of high school and 44 continue on to graduate. Of the 44 who graduate from high school, about 26 continue on toward some form of postsecondary education. Of those 26, approximately 17 enroll in community colleges, only one will transfer to a 4-year institution. Of the nine Chicanas/os attending a 4-year college and the one community college transfer student, seven will graduate with a baccalaureate degree. Finally, two Chicana/o students will continue on to earn a graduate or professional school degree and less than one will receive a doctorate. (p. 4)

These realities indicate that many Latina/o students are viewed by the majority in the United States as deficient. "Early scholarship on college persistence was anchored on assimilation/acculturation models which defined Latino/as and other ethnoracial minorities as poorly poised for success, emphasizing purported deficiencies within minority and poor households" (Munoz, & Maldonado, 2011, p. 1). This manner of thinking has a potentially negative impact on the academic performance and completion rates expectations of Latina/os by instructors and the students themselves. Although some recent pedagogy may break from deficit thinking, student retention frameworks historically are geared towards predominantly White, upper-middle class students from college-educated households (Munoz & Maldonado, 2011).

Financial concerns by Latina/o students play a major role in their access to higher education. A report produced by the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center (CSRC) revealed that students who participated in the study stated that their largest concerns were related to financial aid and the legal employment needed to fund their education (2009). A few states have enacted DREAM-like legislation allowing undocumented high school graduates to qualify for in-state tuition in that state; however, other states, including Arizona, have legislated bans on eligibility (Dougherty, Nienhusser, & Vega, 2010). Passed in 2006, Proposition 300 meant ineligibility for in-state tuition and state aid for undocumented students in Arizona. Recent DACA adaptation in Arizona higher education varies between institutions. Only two of the 10 state community college districts allow the DACA-issued work permit as acceptable documentation for in-state tuition. Although DACA functions to increase access to education at certain institutions, it is temporary and students fear that their work permits could be revoked at any time (Miranda, 2012).

Community colleges often serve as the gateway for undocumented students into higher education (Gardezi, 2012). DACA and DREAM legislation have the potential to positively affect enrollment numbers. "If the federal bill becomes law, it is considered highly probable that most of those eligible to seek permanent residency will enroll in community colleges – which are already facing growing demands to serve other populations – rather than four-year institutions" (Beamon, 2012, p. 11). This pivotal role in access to higher education has been heightened by those encouraged to further their education as a result of the DACA policy (Gardezi, 2012). In Arizona, a universal decision has not been reached by state institutions of higher education in terms of what DACA means for tuition rates. None of the three state universities provide in-state tuition to DACA recipients and very few of the community colleges grant in-state tuition rates. One of the community college systems that offer in-state tuition based upon the work permit issued under DACA is the Maricopa County Community College District (MCCCD). Former Governor Janet Brewer sued MCCCD regarding its decision, a lawsuit that remains active. This lawsuit adds to legal action that targets Arizona individuals of Hispanic descent, both documented and undocumented, which is indicative of the intersection of race and racism in the state.

Purpose of the Study and Guiding Questions

The purpose of this research is to elucidate and give voice to the experiences of DACAmented Latina/o students in higher education in Arizona. The students in the study have been granted DACA and would be eligible for the pathway to United States permanent residency through legislative enactment of the DREAM Act. The study examines the self-reported experiences of DACA-granted Latina/o students pursuing higher education at MCCCD. This study will explore how being granted DACA affects students in terms of their educational goals

and civic engagement. This information is important to uncover in an effort to address the literature deficit, which is notable as DACA numbers grow. The research questions guiding this study were:

- How is DACA affecting the narrative of Latina/o DREAMers who are students in the Maricopa County Community College District?
    - How do DACA students feel that having DACA affects their potential to achieve their educational goals?
    - How do DACA students feel their access to education in terms of aspects such as tuition rates, ability to enroll into more classes and availability of institutional services has changed as a result of DACA?
    - How are DACA students sharing their immigration status or interacting differently with faculty, staff, and students?
- How do DACA Latina/o DREAMers view civic engagement and their roles and responsibilities in the community?
- How are these individuals viewing DACA in terms of it being a temporary change to their immigration status?

This exploratory qualitative interview research provides detailed accounts of DACA-granted Latina/o students navigating Arizona's higher education. Participants were interviewed multiple times and their anonymity was protected by the researcher. Interviews were analyzed for narrative description and thematic development and presented as counterstories.

Significance of the Study

The American identity plays an important role in the lives of DREAMers. DREAMers participate in education purported to provide them the political and socio-economic opportunities as their documented peers. These individuals may have neither familial nor language connections to their country of birth and consider themselves as society members of the United States, with no caveat. The nativist opposition rhetoric surrounding them refutes this view by typically accusing the DREAMers of seeking or abusing benefits intended for individuals with United States citizenship documents. "This distinction between native and foreign is important to our definition of nativism because it centers on the natives, their identity, and their potential action to oppress others based on perceptions of being native" (Huber, Lopez, Malagon, Velez, & Solórzano, 2008, p. 42). Counterstories from individuals serve as an entry point to describe how these individuals fight interlocking issues such as race, class, and nationality to participate in a college-bound process (Knight, Norton, Bentley, & Dixon, 2004).

Contending with structural, cultural, and legal barriers, undocumented students continue to graduate from American high schools and pursue a higher education. These numbers increase in the face of issues of access at every level of education. However, undocumented individuals are becoming more vocal about their rights to a higher education. This includes their desire to attend institutions that are effectively pricing them out of school or criminalizing their presence through out-of-state tuition policies. In Arizona, state-wide legislation, such as Proposition 300, exists to limit access to higher education for undocumented individuals. Currently, Arizona has no universally-accepted implementation of DACA policy; however, a small number of institutions are granting in-state tuition to students as a result. The research and literature on

undocumented students in higher education in Arizona is limited. The counterstories of those who are DACA granted and pursing higher education is severely limited.

DACA has the potential to grant as many as 1.76 million immigrants relief from deportation and potentially increase higher education access, with the majority of applicants originating from Mexico and Central America (Gardezi, 2012; Valbrun, 2013). Many institutions of higher education within the United States that operate amid confusion as they attempt to serve undocumented students legally are uncertain about the implications of the DREAM Act for their institutions (Beamon, 2012). If federal legislation is enacted, having access to research on students in higher education who have benefited from the DREAM experience through temporary state granted benefits would be of immense value to colleges and universities. Institutions would be able to investigate how policies were implemented. Quantitative data can be aggregated on numbers of DACA applicants enrolling in higher education. Qualitative data would be available to identify the needs of students in both instructional and student services. The information would provide the opportunity to replicate great efforts, avoid negative results, and also serve to humanize the individuals at the center of this intense and controversial immigration debate.

Issues surrounding the United States' immigration policies are contentious. Undocumented individuals are often labeled as "illegal" and "alien," language that seeks to dehumanize, belittle, and silence their voices. Unfortunately, education issues related to immigration often develop into an "us versus them" discourse. "Absent from this debate are the real-life stories of DREAMers who have been educated and raised in this country and are now desperate to contribute" (Hernandez, Mendoza, Lio, Latthi, & Eusebio, 2011, p. 500). These

narratives humanize the individuals at the core of the debate by offering their unique perspectives to emphasize how immigration legislation and policy affect their lives.

Counterstories from these individuals drawing from scholarship in critical race theory can identify the deliberate and unintended discrimination affecting Latina/os in education (Yosso, 2006). "Counterstories reflect on the lived experiences of People of Color to raise critical consciousness about social and racial injustice" (Yosso, 2006, p. 10). The counterstories of the students in this research are important as both a method for these individuals to reposition their identities and to document and challenge how discriminatory practices are perpetuated throughout higher education.

Definition of Terms

Civic Engagement. The political and non-political individual and collective actions, including activism, performed to address issues affecting communities. The work that is conducted to make a difference in the civic life of all communities while developing the knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to make the difference (Boyd & Brackmann, 2012).

Colorblindness. A dominant ideology, mechanisms, and practices designed to keep racial minorities in a position of inequality through beliefs that one should treat all persons equally, regardless of their race (Bonilla-Silva, 2010; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001).

Counterstories. The stories of those who do not have the majoritarian experience. The unique experiences of those who may be marginalized by society are often used to challenge racial dominance and dominant ideologies and address social and racial injustices (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002; Yosso, 2006).

Critical Race Theory. "Critical race theory treats race as central to law, policy, history, and culture in the United States" (Castagno, 2014, p.6). It functions as a method of challenging dominant ideologies centered on the intersectionality of race and racism with social justice aims (Pérez Huber, 2010). "CRT in educational research unapologetically centers the ways race, class, gender, sexuality and other forms of oppression manifest in the educational experiences of People of Color" (Pérez Huber, 2010, p. 78).

DACAmented. A term used to identify an individual who has been granted Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals.

DACAmented DREAMer. Immigrant youth who would qualify for the DREAM Act and have been granted the temporary reprieve of DACA.

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). Executive order issued by President Obama and implemented by the Department of Homeland Security on June 15, 2012. This deferred deportation policy provides a 2-year employment authorization permit and a 2-year halt to deportations of individuals who arrived in the United States before the age of 16; individuals must currently be under the age of 31, have maintained presence in the United States, and have not been convicted of a felony or significant misdemeanor. While currently renewable, DACA does not provide a pathway to permanent legal status.

Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act. Proposed federal legislation introduced in 2001 by Utah Senator Orrin Hatch that has languished in Congress. It would provide a pathway to permanent legal status for undocumented youth who meet the requirements of having a good moral character, lived continuously in the United States for no less than 5 years, arrived in the United States before the age of 16 and be between 12 and 35 years old at the

time of enactment. During the 6-year temporary residency, individuals were required to complete 2 years in the military or 2 years in higher education.

DREAMer. An individual who would qualify for the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act if enacted and is engaged in advocacy for immigrant rights. The term, "provides an alternative designation to a stigmatized population that connotes ambition, idealism, and promise, thus inverting and confounding negative stereotypes of unauthorized immigrants" (Germano & de la Torre, 2014, p. 15).

LatCrit. LatCrit is a, "branch of critical race theory that considers issues of concern to Latinos/as such as immigration, language rights, and multi-identity" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 149). "LatCrit's theoretical approach is uniquely situated to critically examine embedded power structures that potentially perpetuate inequality and subordinate minority populations and to carefully design structural reforms to effective transformative social and legal emancipation" (Jacobs, 2004, p. 603). LatCrit scholars, "bring to bear the sociological notion of nativism to name and explain the recent spate of measures aimed at foreigners and immigrants" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 81).

Latina/o. The term used to identify individuals of Hispanic origin, including people of Mexican descent, Chicana/os, and people from Central and South America, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and other Latina/os. Although race and ethnicity play no role in DACA eligibility, DACAmented Latina/os are the focus of this study and the majority of DACA applicants and recipients.

Maricopa County Community College District (MCCCD). The largest community college district in Arizona located in the Phoenix metropolitan area and one of two in the state that grant in-state tuition to DACA-granted individuals.

Nativism. Ascribing differences, both real and invented, that position a person born in the United States as dominant to individuals who have immigrated to the United States.

Racist Nativism. Assigning differences, both real and invented, which are designed to justify the dominance of those racialized as White, considered native in the United States, over people and immigrants of color, considered non-native (Pérez Huber, 2010). In the United States, there is the notion that the "American" identity belongs solely to those who are Anglo (Pérez Huber, 2010).

Whiteness. The cultural, historical, and social aspects of the socially-constructed White identity that serve to maintain racist material and symbolic privilege (Chubbock, 2004). Within the context of race in the United States, whiteness exists across interacting categories of identity, ideology, and institution (Kincheloe, Steinberg, Rodriguez, & Chennault, 1998).

Chapter 2

Literature Review

In the spring of 2006, William Perez began interviewing undocumented students for his book, *We ARE Americans*. The purpose of this book was to understand the educational experiences of these individuals within their context of growing up "American" (Perez, 2009). These students may appear indistinguishable from their peers in terms of how they dress, behave, and what they aspire for after high school. Although they shared the right to pursue an education with their peers through the secondary system, they are challenged by the implications of their immigration status and its impact on their lives. "The scant existing research on undocumented youth notes that undocumented status depresses aspirations and sensitizes them to the reality that they are barred from integrating legally, educationally, and economically into U.S. society" (Gonzales, 2011, p. 605). These realities have been correlated to issues, including low high school graduation rates, which have lasting, negative consequences.

The minimal amount of exploration on undocumented youth has also produced stories of resilience and engagement by these individuals. Perez (2009) was surprised by the research that emerged:

> Although I was expecting the usual list of school activities, I did not expect the high levels of community service and volunteering that they reported. This trend was particularly remarkable because these youth are so marginalized in our society. They have almost no legal rights, they can be deported at any time, they are not eligible for most government services, they cannot legally work, and, most frustrating of all, they are not eligible for financial aid to attend college. So I started to wonder: What motivates these marginalized young adults to be so civically involved? Why are they devoted to a society that shuns them socially and politically? (p. xi)

Although thousands enroll each year, it is increasingly difficult for undocumented high school graduates to attain a higher education. These students contend with extreme social barriers, such as being labeled criminals and limitations imposed by federal and state legislation and institutional policy that limits higher education access. Despite their obstacles, between 10 and 20 percent (or between 7,000 and 13,000) of the undocumented high school graduates, enroll annually in an institution of higher education; approximately two-thirds of these individuals are Latina/o (Perez, 2009).

According to recent estimates, there are 2.1 million undocumented young people in the United States who have been in the United States since childhood; the overwhelming majority is from Mexico and other Latin American countries (Batalova & McHugh, 2010). More than a million of these individuals are now adults. Although it is clear that most undocumented immigrants in the United States are from Latin American countries, the research focusing on this group of students lags far behind the demographic growth (Pérez Huber, 2010).

The immigrant children, 85 percent estimated to be Latina/o, have grown up in American school systems and are attempting to transition into life as American adults. “Relatively little is

known about this vulnerable population of young people, and their unique circumstances challenge assumptions about the incorporation patterns of the children of immigrants and their transitions to adolescence and adulthood" (Gonzales, 2011, p. 603). A comprehensive understanding of the realities of this group is critical as it is growing, yet struggling to achieve the educational attainment rates of other groups. This is particularly urgent because those who identify as Latina/o are expected to comprise approximately one-third of the population of the United States by 2050 (Rivera, 2013).

For those brought into the United States as children, public education becomes the primary introduction to American culture. However, acculturation can become complicated due to immigration statuses and because this population of undocumented youth remains largely underrepresented in education and psychology literature (Ellis & Chen, 2013). The transition into adulthood for many young Americans often includes attending a college or university, which is correlated later with positive economic and social mobility. The disparities in educational attainment rates vary greatly by racialized groupings with students identified as Latina/o or Black having the lowest rates. Latina/o students often have additional challenges surrounding cultural and political statuses. Perez, Cortes, Ramos, and Coronado (2010) note the strong social stigmas affecting undocumented Latina/os college students who are seen as "having a 'triple minority status': ethnic origin, lack of documentation, and economic disadvantages" (p. 39). Although these issues have negative effects on primary and secondary school attainment, they become greater barriers to higher education achievement.

The Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act is a long languishing piece of legislation that would provide a pathway to citizenship for undocumented youth brought to the United States as children if they go to college or join the military while

meeting other requirements, including good moral character. Several states have enacted DREAM-like legislation to assist the undocumented youth who have graduated from high schools in those states to transition into higher education. Although state DREAM legislation does not offer a pathway to citizenship, students in these states have access to other provisions that the legislation would provide, including in-state tuition and in some states, state financial aid. Arizona remains one of the states that has not enacted DREAM-like state legislation. This signifies an absence of experiential information for Arizona students should they qualify for the DREAM Act.

Students in Arizona may apply for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). This executive order issued by President Obama, which went into effect in 2012, is a temporary reprieve from deportation for youth who meet essentially the same criteria that would qualify them for the DREAM Act. DACA benefits, aside from the deportation reprieve, have varied between and within states. In Arizona, this discrepancy includes rights to in-state tuition.

As noted, literature on undocumented students in the United States must be more robust. "Although their stories offer a glimpse into their struggles, much of what undocumented college students endure remains just that: undocumented" (Hernandez et al., 2010, p. 67). This is evidenced in Arizona as eight of the 10 community colleges do not recognize DACA as an opportunity to provide additional access through in-state tuition. Senate Bill (SB) 1070 installed a fear of penalty in higher education employees for issuing benefits to non-citizens, meaning DACAmented students are asked for a work permit to qualify for in-state tuition rather than their DACA identification care resulting in a lack of data on DACAmented educational pursuits. Information on DREAMers who are DACAmented students, which means they are temporarily documented, is an important subgroup to research. This examination into DACAmented students

in Arizona has the potential to address the gaps in knowledge, including how these individuals are navigating educational quests and other areas of life as they enter adulthood.

This qualitative in-depth interview study explores educational and other experiences of Latina/o youth who would qualify for the DREAM Act and are currently DACAmented and pursuing a higher education. Their narratives or counterstories provide information to address the following questions:

- How is DACA affecting the narrative of Latina/o DREAMers, who are students in the Maricopa County Community College District?
    - How do DACA students feel that having DACA affects their potential to achieve their educational goals?
    - How do DACA students feel their access to education in terms of aspects such as tuition rates, ability to enroll into more classes and availability of institutional services has changed as a result of DACA?
    - How are DACA students sharing their immigration status or interacting differently with faculty, staff, and students?
- How do DACA Latina/o DREAMers view civic engagement and their roles and responsibilities in the community?
- How are these individuals viewing DACA in terms of it being a temporary change to their immigration status?

Literature Review Introduction

This examination of existing literature will focus upon the cultural, social, and political realities of the participants of this study. The review of the literature will address racist nativism and whiteness, societal discrimination, the evolution of cultural deficit thinking concerning

Latina/os, institutional financial barriers to education, identity development while navigating education by undocumented Latina/os, cultural and social capital, and civic engagement and activism. The gaps in knowledge on DREAMers in general and the uniqueness of DREAMers with DACA in Arizona will demonstrate the need to add to existing literature. Narratives play a crucial role for these students because the stories of their experiences challenge majoritarian notions that maintain systemic inequities.

Racist Nativism and Whiteness

Issues facing DREAMers such as criminalizing their existence and denying what are considered public benefits stem from social structures such as racist nativism and whiteness. Most of those who would benefit from the DREAM Act are not racialized as White; therefore, they contend with the cultural, historical, and social aspects that function to maintain White material and symbolic privilege (Pérez Huber, 2010). This is especially poignant for DREAMers as they challenge barriers to education while often being the product of severe race-based educational inequities. The dominant ideologies of racist nativism are explicitly apparent in the argument that DREAMers, although United States' high school graduates and long-term residents of the United States, remain non-native; therefore, they are not eligible for in-state tuition. Racist nativism and whiteness also fight against legislation that has the potential to affect social, political, and educational mobility for DREAMers.

Nativism is directed at not only Latina/o immigrants, but all immigrant People of Color in the United States (Huber, Lopez, Malagon, Velez, & Solórzano, 2008). Immigrants of Color, as compared to earlier European immigrants, are perceived as failing to assimilate into the American mainstream and thus are deemed subordinate, regardless of citizenship status, in the United States (Huber, Lopez, Malagon, Velez, & Solórzano, 2008). Whiteness detrimentally

affects Latina/os culturally and structurally. The issue can be viewed as an integral part of power differences between White and nonwhite people, social and group beliefs surrounding the American race, and reproductive practices validating White domination (Castagno, 2008). Whiteness is important for institutions to acknowledge in policymaking because often actions unintentionally favor particular groups of students. "Thus, in examining and illustrating the structural and systemic nature of Whiteness, it is important to highlight the exclusion and oppression it produces, reproduces, and maintains for racialized people" (Castagno, 2008, p. 320). Current educational access, retention, and completion rates for Latina/os reveal the negative effects of Whiteness.

Societal Discrimination

Historically, the United States has been a nation of immigrants. Currently, immigration is a divisive concern, highly charged both politically and socially. The fact that the majority of undocumented immigrants are Latina/o, and that nearly all media images and political discourse focus on Latina/os, promotes the racialization of the 'illegal immigrant' category (King & Punti, 2012). Many legislative efforts focused upon the U.S.-Mexico border and many discriminatory efforts have focused upon those from Mexico in particular. The racist rhetoric often revolves around Latina/o abuse of benefits and services that belong to 'real' Americans and the need to remove or exclude those who do not deserve to be or belong in the United States.

Negative rhetoric surrounding undocumented individuals often leads to accusations of misusing public benefits and being a financial drain on documented Americans. As with other social benefits, the use of educational assistance by undocumented individuals is viewed as an abuse of a benefit for which they should have no rights. Perez explains the inaccuracy of these stances (2009):

> A perception that drives hostile public opinion about undocumented immigrants is that they are exploiting the U.S. economy. The widespread belief is that the undocumented cost more in government services than they contribute to the economy. This belief is demonstrably false as noted by almost every empirical study on the economic impact of undocumented immigrants. The research documents the exact opposite, that the undocumented actually contribute more to public coffers in taxes than they cost in social services. Their labor brings down the cost of goods and services for all and makes firms and sometimes industries more competitive. (p. xv)

The flawed hostility leads to issues of access to education for undocumented students. For undocumented individuals seeking higher education, the benefits they are accused of exploiting or possessing include in-state tuition and state and federal financial benefits for education. However, undocumented individuals are ineligible for federal financial aid and in most cases, state aid.

According to the Pew Research Center, Latina/os are currently the most discriminated against group in the United States. One in four Americans believe Latina/os face significant discrimination and one-third of Latina/os report that they, a family member or close Latina/o friend have experienced racial or ethnic discrimination in recent years (Pew Research Center, 2010). The historical and present-day discrimination is significant to large numbers of documented and undocumented Latina/os in Arizona. In 2008, there were approximately 500,000 undocumented individuals in Arizona, nearly all of whom, approximately 94 percent, were from Mexico and comprised around 10 percent of Arizona's total workforce (Pew Research Center, 2010). The workers build lives and raise families in Arizona. Their children are the DREAMers.

Legislated Education Discrimination. Although the 1982 Supreme Court decision in *Plyler v. Doe* guarantees that all children, regardless of immigration status, have the right to attend public primary and secondary schooling, Latina/o immigrants continue to struggle with issues of education equity. The increased numbers of Latina/os in public schools correlates with both patterns of immigration and decreases in school funding, notably in the Southwest and Midwest. In the first decade of the new millennium, state and local public education systems were decimated by budget reductions that led to greater inequity in individual school funding (Johnson, 2013). Consequently, the poorest districts are those with the largest populations of people not racialized as White. The result is immense discrepancies between White and non-White students in terms of graduation rates and college preparedness.

The right to primary and secondary public education, though unequal in terms of funding and outcomes, is afforded to undocumented children. The majority of undocumented children are Latina/o and these children are often the targets of racist criminalization due to their existence and are more likely to receive mediocre public education with limited potential to matriculate past secondary school. The few education rights that undocumented children have currently are often challenged. There have been several attempts by states to challenge *Plyler v. Doe* rights, including Arizona's (SB) 1070, House Bill (HB) 2008, and Alabama's House Bill (HB) 56. The arguments suggest that undocumented individuals, Latina/os in particular, abuse benefits intended for 'real' Americans. HB 56 includes language such as 'illegal immigrants,' which is coded to target Latina/os. This bill requires school districts to collect information on the immigration status of not only students, but their parents as well. HB 56 places unprecedented demand upon schools and educators by making them responsible for facilitating the law by reporting undocumented students and their families (Feasley, 2012). Furthermore, it prohibited

higher education enrollment for undocumented individuals. As a result, Latina/o absences in primary and secondary schools doubled due to the clearly anti-Latina/o efforts.

Border Issues. Deportation tactics frequently center upon removing 'illegals.' The practice of 'sweeping' or targeting areas that are high density Latina/o is a common practice in the Phoenix, Arizona metropolitan area of Maricopa County and is framed by law enforcement as a crime suppression tactic. Similar to current tactics exhibited in Arizona historically and today, the 1950's Operation Wetback utilized the practice of sweeps in brown communities. Operation Wetback surfaced to destroy the formation of a Mexican American middle class following World War II when social standings in the borderlands were improved. "No Mexicans Allowed" signs were gone, and Latina/os were increasingly becoming integrated (Golash-Boza, 2015). "At the same time, the Border Patrol became more firmly entrenched as part of the Federal Government, meaning that its policies often reflected Washington's interest more than local interests along the border" (Golash-Boza, 2015, p. 364). These policy changes created tensions in functioning communities. Golash-Boza (2015) describes a particularly damaging event on July, 30, 1952:

> At dawn, about 100 Border Patrol agents began to arrest Mexicans by the hundreds in an area near Brownsville, Texas. By the end of the day, they had made 5,000 arrests and had transported all of those people to the bridge that led back to México. These sorts of roundups continued through 1954. In October 1954, the Border Patrol announced it had deported more than a million Mexican immigrants. (p. 365)

Operation Wetback agents, "adopted the practice of stopping "Mexican-looking" citizens on the street and asking for identification" (Dietz, 2008, para. 3). Similarly, the passage of Arizona's SB 1070 in 2010 made this practice legal. "This narrates Mexican identity with images

of illegal immigrants feasting on free public services; as carriers and sellers of drugs in unsuspecting communities in the Unites States; and as smugglers of people across the US-Mexico border" (Aguirre, Rodriguez, & Simmers, 2011, p. 696). These practices function to equate criminals with a Latina/o identity.

The historical and current immigration practices on the United States/Mexico border serve discriminatory functions. "The apprehension practices implemented by the Border Patrol transformed border crossing between Mexico and the United States into a 'painful and abrupt event permeated by an atmosphere of racism and control – an event that clearly demarcated one society from another'" (Sanchez, 1993, p. 61). The structure of this demarcation positions White individuals in a dominant stance with the message that Mexicans and other Latina/os are not welcome on the north side of the border. These painful and abrupt experiences are physical (e.g., the aggressive apprehension tactics of armed agents), conceptual (e.g., the hostility concerning whether Brown immigrants deserve 'American' benefits such as education), and institutionalized (e.g. the denial of in-state tuition that effectively shuts down the imaginary border from high school to higher education).

The practices of the Border Patrol and other law enforcement agencies, which focus on the forceful removal of Brown individuals, create an environment of perpetual fearfulness for Latina/os. This is a concern individually because a Brown face can generate a question about immigration status, as well as communally where there is a higher concentration of Latina/os, the more likely large, racist sweeping practices occur. Undocumented children learn through this atmosphere of discrimination that their skin color is a societal issue. This was demonstrated in Alabama when families were too scared to send their children to school if they looked Latina/o,

even though this was not an illegal act, and within national targeted efforts to end schooling for undocumented children of immigrants, the majority of whom are Latina/o.

The Evolution of Cultural Deficit Thinking about Latina/os

Cultural deficiencies regarding education imply a lack of knowledge or propensity to succeed in current educational institution structures. "Cultural deficiency models argue that since parents of color fail to assimilate and embrace the educational values of the dominant group, and continue to transmit or socialize their children with values that inhibit educational mobility, then they are to blame as low educational attainment continues into succeeding generations" (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001, p. 6). This not only places culpability for educational attainment discrepancies squarely on perceived Latina/o deficiencies, it also ignores the structures of the dominant group that function to reproduce inequities.

Deficit-based theories in education function to uphold the subordination of Latina/o students (Solórzano & Yosso, 2011). Latina/o students are often positioned by educators as being deficient in terms of educational proclivity and cultural capital. Historical and contemporary ideas are illustrative regarding how Latina/os are viewed as deficient of the skills and knowledge of the dominant group needed to achieve educational success. These notions also reproduce lower expectations from Latina/os in terms of their ability to be successful in education.

Low expectations of Mexican children were demonstrated by the blatantly discriminatory practice in the early twentieth century of the non-enforcement of compulsory education (Spring, 2011). This practice informed Mexican children and their families that their contributions to working in fields as labor were more valuable than their contributions in schools as students. The Mexican children who were getting an education at this time attended segregated schools that served to educate against their traditions and values. This exemplifies the depreciation of cultural

knowledge outside of those in the majority culture. Yosso (2006) notes the historical construct of how this was translated into procedure:

> Mainstream schooling practices for at least the first half of the 20th century presented knowledge to Chicana/o students with little regard for their language, culture, or potential to think critically. For example, schools insisted Chicana/os needed lessons on "proper" hygiene, "standard" English, manual arts, and menial labor. This "banking method" sought to prepare socially productive citizens by depositing "American" knowledge into students of Mexican descent. (p. 57)

This deficit thinking in the early twentieth century translated into education practices that included not only the enculturation of "American" ideals, but also the deculturalization of Méxicans ones, framing Méxicans as second class citizens. White educators at the time believed that Méxican culture and values discouraged economic entrepreneurship, which are needed for an advanced society and placed too much attachment on family and small, community organizations (Spring, 2011).

Latina/os lack of social mobility is often blamed on their failure to assimilate into mainstream American culture. Solórzano and Yosso's study on racial stereotyping and deficit discourse offer a theory from educator Cecilia Heller from 1966 regarding Mexican Americans' lack of social mobility (2001):

> The kind of socialization that Mexican American children generally receive at home is not conducive to the development of the capacities needed for advancement in a dynamic industrialized society. This type of upbringing creates stumbling blocks to future advancement by stressing values that hinder mobility – family ties, honor, masculinity, and living in the present – and by neglecting the values that are conducive to it – achievement, independence, and deferred gratification. (p. 5)

This quote exemplifies an attitude that Latina/o culture opposes social mobility. This mindset convinces some Latina/o children that they cannot be successful without emulating their White peers.

Cultural and behavioral deficit thinking traditions continue into the twenty-first century, shaping the educational experiences of Latina/os (Yosso, 2006). This deficit philosophy allows both educators and the public to dismiss inequities in educational achievement because of the Latina/o culture and subjects Latina/o students to lower expectations. These diminished expectations have the potential to preserve both racist attitudes and institutional structures of inequity. The dismissive treatment of Latina/o cultural strengths, in conjunction with other equity issues such as inequality of elementary and secondary school conditions, contribute to dismal statistics within the United States where Latina/os hold the fewest bachelor's degrees in relation to every ethnic or racial group (Yosso, 2006). Deficit thinking by higher education professionals adds another barrier to academic achievement that has the potential to discourage educational goals. "So, even though Chicana/os most often enter the community college with goals of transferring, low counselor and faculty expectations play a role in 'cooling out' these dreams" (Yosso, 2006, p. 100). This functions to maintain systemic inequities, which produce generate unequal academic achievement rates.

Critical race theory and counterstories provide a way to challenge dominant ideologies that discriminate against Latina/os. "Recent scholarship breaks away from such deficit thinking to account theoretically and empirically for the strengths, knowledges, and potentials that exist in minority households, and for how these contribute to student success" (Muñoz & Maldonado, 2011). Critical race theory recognizes that experiential knowledge is an asset and critical race methodology in education challenges traditional theories by exposing deficit-informed research and methods that silence marginalized students by using the knowledge as sources of strength (Solórzano and Yosso, 2002).

Narratives of Latina/o DREAMers and DACAmented students provide a wealth of experiential knowledge that challenges discriminatory practices and structures affecting undocumented Latina/os. Delgado (1989) explains how counterstories can address false assumptions of social and cultural structures:

> The stories of the outgroups aim to subvert that ingroup reality. In civil rights, for example, many in the majority hold that any inequality between blacks and whites is due either to cultural lag, or inadequate enforcement of currently existing beneficial laws – both of which are easily correctable. For many minority persons, the principal instrument of their subordination is neither of these. Rather, it is the prevailing *mindset* by means of which members of the dominant group justify the world as it is, that is, with whites on top and browns and blacks at the bottom. (p. 2413)

Counterstories illustrate how lives are navigated by employing non-majoritarian yet rich resources. Recognizing the experiential knowledge, community, and cultural wealth of undocumented students is critical for institutions of higher education. The information must be

presented to those with the power to educate and can serve as an antidote to racist deficiency models.

Institutional Financial Barriers to Education

Undocumented students' financial circumstances are comparable to those of low-income students, a category into which they are also likely to fall. Low-income students, for several reasons, are 30 percent less likely than high-income students to apply to college (Garcia & Tierney, 2011). However, documented low-income students, as opposed to their undocumented peers, have access to comprehensive financial aid, campus employment opportunities, and alternative funding— all of which are shown to correlate positively with enrollment rates (Garcia & Tierney, 2011). In addition to the frequent denial of tuition assistance due to their immigration status, undocumented students are effectively priced out of higher education with out-of-state tuition rates, or at best, have the escalated rates serve as another obstacle to the achievement of education goals.

Financial policies shape how undocumented students perceive their value as a student at an institution. Dulce, a student from a 2010 study by Pérez, Cortés, Ramos, and Coronado, was offered a Presidential Scholarship due to her high academic achievements at her California high school. This scholarship, which would have allowed her to attend a state university for free, was rescinded once the university learned of her status. "The dehumanizing episodes these students experience and the overwhelming exposure to rejection often contribute to a great sense of insecurity" (Pérez, Cortés, Ramos, & Coronado, 2010, p. 38). These experiences remind undocumented students that their academic diligence in high school is somehow valued less because of their immigration status. These incidents are often juxtaposed with ineligibility for

financial aid, which adds to their insecurity about being perceived as less than their peers regarding rights to federal and state education assistance.

In 2006, college and university-bound DREAMers in Arizona were forced to pay out-of-state tuition rates after Proposition 300 passed (MCCCD, 2011). This policy negatively affected undocumented higher education students at that time because it meant their tuition rates tripled; state scholarships were no longer a possibility, and any state scholarships in use were revoked (Hernandez et al., 2010). Out-of-state tuition remained the reality across the state for all undocumented students until DACA was enacted 6 years later. Currently in Arizona, none of the state universities are granting in-state tuition to DACAmented individuals. The out-of-state tuition remains a financial barrier at all but two of Arizona's community college districts. Whether or not DACAmented individuals should qualify for in-state tuition is often an irrational argument. In fact, in-state tuition policies based on DACA send a strong message to DREAMers about how receptive or non-receptive institutions are to their presence, and whether these colleges consider them deserving of equal educational access like their documented peers.

Identity Development while Navigating Education by Undocumented Latina/os

The identity development of Latina/o undocumented students includes controversy over negative media images and historical discrimination—political and social—against Latina/os in the United States. American nativism and distorted views of media portraying undocumented individuals as criminals and social threats negatively affect identity development (Perez, Cortes, Ramos, & Coronado, 2010). Discourse in the United States about immigrants is frequently racist, dehumanizing, and reflects public opinion (King & Punti, 2012). These realities, which permeate all aspects of life for DREAMers, construct how these youth view, who they are and how they

operate within education systems, where messages such as out-of-state tuition policies discourage their presence within other communities.

Many DREAMers discover their immigration status and the implications of the status during their youth; it is a realization that their lives are a paradox. They begin to understand that they live in two worlds—one that they created for themselves with their families surrounding them in the United States as permanent residents; and another constructed by the government and political discourse, which labels them as 'illegal' (King & Punti, 2012). Gonzales describes the significance of this revelation to undocumented youth in a 2011 study:

> Discovery of illegal status prompted reactions of confusion, anger, frustration, and despair among respondents, followed by a period of paralyzing shock. Most respondents conveyed that they were not prepared for the dramatic limits of their rights. They struggled to make sense of what had happened to them, many feeling as though they had been lied to. (p. 610)

Such shocking existence is often followed by apprehension regarding the impact of this new reality, especially as they transition into adulthood as individuals with a perilous status.

Entering the United States as an undocumented youth means being acculturated into a new environment mainly through public schooling. Since most undocumented children are Latina/o, this cultural change also means conflict with structures of Whiteness that devalue their ascribed ethnic identity. As undocumented youth approach high school graduation, they must acknowledge what their immigration status means to their prospects as an adult. Ellis and Chen (2013) examined how undocumented students in the United States negotiate acculturation, ethnic identity, and educational endeavors in higher education. The research discovered that undocumented students, "are often confronted with actual and perceived barriers to their

education and career aspirations, and their assessment of their capacity to overcome such barriers leads to varying reactions and outcomes in the educational and career domains" (Ellis & Chen, 2013, p. 251). This examination is significant because it addresses a deficit in literature while exploring both positive and negative implications on the navigation strategies among these students.

Four major themes emerged from Ellis and Chen's research: 1) exploring the salience of bicultural identity; 2) enhancing positive attributes derived from addressing the challenges that emerge from immigration status; 3) experiencing interpersonal conflict; and 4) realizing identity formation, as an ongoing negotiation. These themes supported the notion that both home and host cultures, contextual barriers, and personal attributes, such as resistance are factors that influence identity development (2013). Ellis and Chen revealed:

> "Sewn with two threads" describes the salience of bicultural identity; enhancement of positive attributes as a result of documentation struggles; challenging reflections, addressing the ways in which documentation status challenges one's perception of oneself and the world; and identity formation as an ongoing negotiation, capturing the long-term shifts in understanding of status implications and emotional response to this understanding. (p. 251)

Within the first theme, exploring the salience of bicultural identity, undocumented youth noted substantial examples of positive and negative identity development. Castro-Salazar and Bagely provide examples of individuals struggling with this type of identity development. Included in the 2010 study was Marina who had a strong sense of isolation and not belonging, despite interactions with both Méxicans and Méxican-Americans. Marina described her struggle to fit in—first with other Méxican children and then with her English speaking peers. Her south

México accent was distinct from the other Méxican children who came from northern Méxican cities. She never felt that she fit in completely because she could neither identify with her English-speaking, native born, nor Méxican classmates. Justo, also interviewed in the Castro-Salazar and Bagely study, needed to obtain a Méxican passport because he was not eligible for a United States passport. He needed this passport to go on a trip he had been invited to by the United States Department of State. He explained how uncomfortable the officials in the Méxican consulate in Arizona made him feel because his Spanish was imperfect. These examples engendered the notion that they have nowhere to belong (Castro-Salazar & Bagely, 2010). However, students in the Ellis and Chen (2013) study also reported their ability to understand multiple perspectives, and they felt a connection with the other marginalized individuals. The divergent result of the same theme was found mainly within family structures.

Students reported that parents, who initially were highly participatory in guiding their educational goals, relinquished these roles when the students gained their independence (Ellis & Chen, 2013). Consequently, this type of resignation contributed to the parents of DREAMers lacking navigational knowledge about higher education in the United States. Some undocumented high school students note the need to disengage physically from their homes, which may be crowded, to seek assistance in looking after younger siblings, in order to complete homework (Perez, Espinoza, Ramos, Coronado & Cortes, 2009). These disconnects can also signify disengagement with home culture. Some participants acknowledged that actively disengaging offered them a way to disassociate themselves with the negative stereotypes of their ethnicity (Ellis & Chen, 2013). Additionally, cultural immersion led to stress. The immigrant children adopted the dominant culture into their identity, while senior family members embraced the traditional values of the home culture (Ellis & Chen, 2013).

The enhancement of positive attributes derived from addressing the challenges that come with immigration status was also a theme in the Ellis and Chen study. Students reported that being able to find the same educational success as their documented counterparts was due to their ability to develop new skills to help them overcome barriers; as a result, they used this optimism to continue their education (Ellis & Chen, 2013). Many participants reported feeling that they were representatives of their ethnicity or country of birth, and for this reason, they rose to the challenge of fighting stereotypes. They used this approach to connect with others from different marginalized groups. This theme had a positive influence on identity development.

The internalization of negative experiences such as finding themselves ineligible for programs and learning as children that undocumented immigrants experienced discrimination is common in the literature. Also of note is the change in educational experiences as they transitioned from inclusion in public education as children to a tenuous acceptance in higher education as young adults. Students feel voiceless as adults— a situation that results in fear, vulnerability, and shame (Ellis & Chen, 2013). Consequently, they avoid thinking about their status and displace their negative emotions onto others as defense mechanisms in their efforts to halt the internalization of lived experiences.

Interpersonal conflict is another theme that arises. "In a general sense, participants described the emotional burden of being undocumented, being members of ethnic and racial minorities, and making sense of society's messages related to their status" (Ellis & Chen, 2013, p. 259). The messages DREAMers receive related to status grow more complex upon entry in to higher education. Narratives from DACAmented DREAMers can provide information on how DACA has the potential to affect feelings of being voiceless and aid in challenging undocumented stereotypes.

Finally, identity formation, as an ongoing negotiation, is a theme in this study. Many students comment on how their experiences and emotions are in a state of constant flux. "As adulthood and exclusion from American society loom, undocumented immigrant students must make sense of their experiences and begin to take action to counteract the contradictory social messages they have received (e.g., they do not exist)" (Ellis & Chen, 2013, p. 259). At this time, undocumented individuals in Arizona receive clear messages opposing their residency via voters and Border Patrol tactics. DACAmented DREAMers receive anti-immigrant and anti-Latina/o messages from the media and within their communities. However, from limited institutions, they are also seeing small, yet positive changes to their access to higher education through in-state tuition and other changes, which have the potential to increase their opportunities for growth.

A 2010 study, *Ni De* Aquí *Ni From There*, examines the journey of six undocumented students of Mexican origin who navigated the contexts of their identities while they were enrolled in an Arizona community college. The researchers argue the importance of understanding this population by positioning them as an internally-colonized community. Internal colonization is described as the relationship between dominant and subordinate groups, based upon ethnic and racial lines that serve the interest of the dominant group (Castro-Salazar & Bagley, 2010). Furthermore, internal colonization is a form of racism that is imposed by the dominant group through its attacks upon the subordinate group's culture, language, religion, and history—actions that range from violent to subtle (Castro-Salazar & Bagley, 2010). Examples provided through in-depth interviews of study participants included seeing signs in Texas that read "No Mexicans," a conversation with a young Republican's college club members, which criticized the practice of leaving water in the desert for Méxican migrants, and a racial slur from a White woman while waiting in line to see a movie. These experiences tend to silence those

who fall into marginalized categories subject to racism and nativism on many levels. They experience outright discrimination that forbids those of México descent to enter certain spaces, institutional discrimination as they attempt to participate and integrate as students in education settings, and microaggressive acts the perpetrator may not have intended for their ears.

At a time when globalization translates into more fluid borders, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) focuses on the attainment of "English proficiency," while effectively ending the Bilingual Education Act that fostered both English and native language skills (Garcia, 2011). "The "English only" ideology, with its powerful political support, lurks as a substantive burden to the policies needed to support the nation's English learners" (Garcia, 2011, p. 49). The attacks to and devaluation of Latina/o culture in education today is perpetuated through the continuation of English-only policies and with the termination of programs designed to promote Latina/o identity, such as the Arizona ban on Ethnic Studies, House Bill (HB) 2281. This is particularly dangerous as, "racial identity salience is an important component of identity development that is associated with a number of educational outcomes" (Hurtado, Alvarado, & Guillermo-Wann, 2015, p. 127). HB2281 ended an Ethnic Studies Program that was shown to increase Latina/os graduation rates in Arizona, a positive and transformative step in identity development. The purposeful removal of incentives that foster minorities in educational equity reproduces structural inequalities and reinforces deficit-thinking notions.

The students in the Castro-Salazar and Bagley study reported a sense of not being able to belong in their new communities. One student, Rosario, equated this experience to the Mexican saying, which was used by two other study participants, *Aunque la jaula sea de oro no deja de ser prisión* (even if the cage is made of gold, it is still a prison). Rosario elaborated by noting that she and her family were experiencing many comforts living in the United States, but at the same

time they could not experience a sense of freedom because they were in constant fear of raids and being stopped. She described struggling with depression that caused her to feel extreme loneliness even when she was in a room filled with people. Her poignant story illustrates the gilded cage analogy.

Marina, another interviewee, described her feelings when she learned about her status from her parents. She felt that being an 'illegal immigrant' was worse than being a thief or a drug dealer, and that the former would be treated worse in an actual prison. She revealed that her illegal immigrant status made it difficult for her to want to be in public, especially after seeing negative news stories about undocumented individuals. Marina's status led to self-deprecation and, "in Freirean terms, she internalized the consciousness of the colonizer" (Castro-Salazar & Bagley, 2010, p. 29). Undocumented students suffer from colonization because of their racially-determined roles in the educational systems of production (Rong & Preissle, 2009). The students in the *Ni De* Aquí *Ni From There* study navigated social and political barriers sufficiently to graduate from an Arizona community college. "The identity structures of the participants appeared to be malleable and fluctuate between two worlds, their evolving thoughts and experiences demonstrate the complexity of their cultural identity" (Castro-Salazar & Bagely, 2010, p. 31). Their experience demonstrates incredible fortitude—an incredible attribute that is required for individuals to maintain bi-cultural identities.

What labels mean for undocumented Latina/os. For Latina/os being identified as 'illegal' has the potential to add another discriminatory label to ones that have already been ascribed to them based upon their skin color. Labels based upon immigration status are particularly challenging for young undocumented people because they transition out of the public secondary education system, where their rights to education were not questioned. For

undocumented children, this change signals a shift from protected to unprotected and de facto legal to illegal—a transformation that requires a nearly comprehensive change to daily routines, survival skills, and social patterns (Gonzales, 2011).

Adverse labels follow students through all contexts of their lives. The significance of being labeled 'undocumented' or 'illegal' poses new challenges for DREAMers as adults. This includes rights and access to higher education, which previously had been afforded to them, regardless of immigration status. The lack of understanding regarding what the status signifies also indicates a dearth of knowledge for DREAMers, who are seeking higher education. As the connections between education and social and economic mobility become obvious, the implications concerning this lack of information are dire.

Narratives contest discriminatory labels that suggest Latina/os are unprepared and undeserving of education. "These emotionally compelling 'coming out' stories refute stereotypes of undocumented youth as unmotivated academically or unwilling to learn English in order to build support for in-state tuition policies at the state level and passage of the federal DREAM Act" (King & Punti, 2012, p. 236).

The purging of labels from the rhetoric is important to discussions about who deserves to be a student in the United States. This is crucial especially concerning the discriminatory term 'illegal' because it implies the rightful denial of access to education.

Concealing and sharing identity. Sharing or concealing immigration status while contending with social and institutional discrimination and barriers play a role in how DREAMers traverse education. Enrolling into college for them means to experience the complexities of becoming a student of higher education while being unsure about who can be trusted with status information. "Although most student affairs professionals have a genuine

concern and interest in students' well-being, generally undocumented students will reveal personal and private information with only close friends and confidents" (Hernandez, 2010, p. 68). This demonstrates the current need for DREAMers to be able to rely on social networks as their level of trust with education professionals is tenuous. Many students do not have a history of positive experiences surrounding their documentation status; therefore, schooling remains guarded in those settings.

The informal lessons about what undocumented students should not say were studied in 2011 by Educators for Fair Consideration (E4FC). E4FC is a non-profit organization that advocates for low-income immigrant students who have grown up in the United States and struggle with barriers due to their immigration status and financial need. E4FC gathered autobiographical stories and titled the collection, *Things I'll Never Say: Stories of Growing Up Undocumented in the United States.* The stories relayed experiences of undocumented students' transitions from primary school to high school, and then into higher education.

A common theme in the E4FC study was the eventual feelings of empowerment and activism that evolved in DREAMers once they entered higher education. The study did not isolate the reasons for the changes. Many narratives describe DREAMers becoming vocal and active as adults. An understanding of how empowerment developed, notably at a time when they are in further legal jeopardy as adults, challenges subordination notions and cultural deficit theories.

Learning to be an 'illegal' Latina/o. For Latina/o DREAMers, immigration status poses challenges to identity development, societal inclusion, and education. As youth, these individuals may navigate between conflicting messages at home, where family status and nationality may be a source of pride, and at school, where they are included in a traditional aspect of American

society. However, existing in American culture for Latina/os inside and outside of the United States' schools systems also means being criminalized. One in 10 Latina/os in the United States report having a police officer or other person in a position of authority ask them about their immigration status (Pew Research Center, 2010). For Latina/o DREAMers, this links their ethnicity to legal rights.

The narrated experiences of DREAMers were explored in terms of legality and illegality by King and Punti, who assert that the major demographic trend of undocumented migration is under researched and under-theorized (2012). The research collected 20 narrative accounts of ordinary daily lives of undocumented youth and discovered that immigrant status is experienced and understood largely in racial terms and through both subtle and aggressive actions (King & Punti, 2012). One student in the study, Pamela, provided an example of how she interpreted prospects for undocumented individuals worsening in the United States. She identified Arizona's SB 1070 law under the perception that *no nos quieren* (they don't want us) because of the public sentiment affixed to undocumented people—Latina/os in particular. Another DREAMer in the study, Clarita, provides an account of an aggressive act of racist nativism. She recounts being at a stop sign at the same time as several White boys from her school who proceeded to shout at her to go back to Mexico. She shared the encounter with her parents who tried unsuccessfully to allay her worries. For her, the salience of race is ingrained in the encounter. Since the boys are defined as "White," Clarita understandably depicts herself as a victim, and her parents are framed as both ineffective and powerless (King & Punti, 2012). Even though the boys in her story were her peers in school, her role was as an outsider due to her immigration status.

Narratives provide examples of daily life for undocumented youth. "Youth are aware that they are constructed by the broader discourse as 'illegal' and often as 'criminals,' yet they

perceive themselves (and want to be perceived by others) as good, moral individuals who are respectful, law-abiding, and hard working" (King & Punti, 2012, p. 246). Comprehensive and widespread knowledge of their narratives can support positive identities, increase inclusion, and fight marginalization. Feelings of inclusion are crucial to academic success for undocumented students who also have to contend with academic, personal, and financial obstacles (Garcia & Tierney, 2011).

Cultural and Social Capital

Pierre Bourdieu championed the theoretical ideas of non-tangible cultural and social capital. Cultural capital includes mainstream knowledge, including academic navigation, which is conducive to success in educational settings (Brubaker, 2004). "Social capital is constituted as the social resources and networks that enable people to promote their own or others' educational achievement and attainment" (Hemmings, 2007, p. 10). Bourdieu theorizes that cultural and social capital in education contributes to the reproduction of socio-economic inequalities (Hemmings, 2007). However, an analytical examination of non-majoritarian capital produces evidence of cultural wealth in minority communities.

Critical race theory provides a method of challenging notions of how cultural deficiencies in Latina/o communities contribute negatively to educational experiences. Critical race theory shifts the lens from the disadvantages of poverty to the often disregarded array of cultural knowledge and skills that exist in marginalized communities (Yosso, 2005). An understanding of the stories surrounding cultural and social capital from Latina/o communities is important to issues of social justice and educational equity as they may run counter to White, middle class dominant ideas.

Enriquez (2011) drew from the educational experiences of 54 undocumented Latina/o students to identify ways in which various forms of capital, specifically emotional, informational, and financial was used as a navigation tool in K-12 and higher education institutions. The study uncovered a pattern of patchworking, a piecing together of various resources in order to realize goals, as well as a collectivist model for empowerment. "Ultimately, the findings from this study suggest that reconceptualizing one's social network as a 'family' more aptly captures the nature of undocumented immigrant students' social capital while also providing an opportunity to empower marginalized communities" (Enriquez, 2011, p. 476). The nature and value of these forms of capital are often overlooked or discounted for majoritarian forms of capital including a familial history and experience with higher education.

Emotional resources. "For Latina/o families, cultural deficiency models are often used to blame families for the low achievement levels of Latina/o youth" (Enriquez, 2011, p. 484). Most of the respondents in the Enriquez study credited their families as their chief source of emotional support in their educational pursuits although this was often accompanied with a lack of knowledge on how to navigate institutions of higher education. Support from families for Latina/o youth to be successful in education has been well established; however for families with undocumented individuals, the issues around transitioning into higher education are more complex. "At home, undocumented students often must convince their families that their college attendance is worth the risk of being detained and possibly deported" (Hernandez, 2010, p.68). The support the undocumented students receive from their family often comes with minimal educational experiences. This is significant as familial knowledge is often associated with academic success. Although DREAMers feel emotional support from their families, minimal familial college-bound knowledge in conjunction with fears around immigration status often

mean peers and social networks are a primary source of emotional and social capital for educational endeavors.

The students in the Enriquez study made a clear distinction that while they derived support from family, the support they received while physically at school came mainly from peers. Friends at school provided social capital both in the classroom and while future education plans were made. Some of the participants noted the value of teachers who encouraged academic success and fostered a college-bound environment. However, these same individuals recognized that these experiences were unique within a broader marginalized student population (Enriquez, 2011).

Limited informational resources. Contrary to the suggestion from some literature that informational resources for undocumented students come from institutional sources, undocumented-specific institutional knowledge is often obtained through tenuous ties to other undocumented students (Enriquez, 2011). These connections are made through online and community social networks, through conversations with peers and friends, and even with information obtained through what a friend heard from an acquaintance. This highlights the critical importance of multiple resources for DACAmented students and DREAMers. It also sheds light on inconsistencies and ineffective institutional practices to assist DACAmented students and DREAMers in higher education.

Many of the students in the Enriquez study, who were identified through Advanced Placement (AP) classes in California, provided varying examples of how they came to learn about Assembly Bill (AB) 540. AB 540 increases access to higher education for California high school graduates with more affordable tuition rates and thus also provides an incentive to finish high school. One student in the study was told by her high school counselor that she would have

to pay out-of-state tuition, even though AB 540 had passed 3 years prior. There is a greater potential for misinformation to occur in schools that do not have large immigrant populations. Another student reported hearing about AB 540 from his high school counselor; however, he was unable to provide the specifics of what the legislation meant. An additional college student in the study reported hearing about AB 540 from another undocumented high school friend who had heard about it from a community college coach trying to recruit the student as a runner. Just how tenuous information resources can be is highlighted with another example from a college graduate who learned about AB 540 from the friend of a neighbor who knew of a knowledgeable college counselor.

Noting that little is known about the ways in which school experiences shape postsecondary outcomes, Gonzales conducted a 2010 study to examine how school structures shape access to resources needed for postsecondary matriculation of undocumented Latina/o students. It was noted that within the California school system being examined, as is common in many large urban areas, school employees have scarce time and resources and struggle to properly assist each individual student. "Consequently, teachers and counselors expend these resources on those who have been designated as "worthy," whereas those who have not face the difficulty of making ends meet without resources" (Gonzales, 2010, p. 473). This research concluded that students, who are positively tracked, benefit from experiences that foster learning and the development of relationships with teachers and other adults at the school while being shielded from some of the broader problems that plague large urban schools (Gonzales, 2010).

The DREAMers in the Enriquez and Gonzales studies that benefited highly from informational capital obtained from schooling were AP students or students who were positively tracked by their schools. These are not the average secondary experiences for undocumented

Latina/o youth. Deficit notions and misconstrued views of Latina/o community wealth by primary, secondary, and higher education professionals negatively affect information resources for these students. This reality makes it difficult for undocumented youth to rely on schools for educational information.

Institutional implementation of legislation that affects undocumented students is significant to informational capital. A primary theme that emerges in higher education is the lack of training and understanding of policy directives that affect undocumented students from the state or institution by front line personnel (Oseguera, Flores, & Burciaga, 2010). In Arizona, HB 2008 further challenges information capital emerging from institutional personnel with a threat of penalty to employees and their supervisors who assist undocumented students by providing benefits. This limit to information capital as provided by educational institutions demonstrates the necessity of relying on social capital in the form of community wealth.

Financial resources. The financial support needed for undocumented students to attend higher education, like emotional and informational support, is often derived from multiple sources. Undocumented students are ineligible for many types of aid that assist low-income students with educational pursuits, and many times their families are not always able to provide financial support. Those family members who can help financially are often documented relatives or permanent residents with access to higher-paying and more stable employment (Enriquez, 2011).

Hernandez et al. (2010) shared the educational experiences of Ariana, who diligently pursued higher education despite her father's negative opinion of the value of education. She first arrived in Arizona from México just shy of her 14th birthday. Although she had been working in the field and not in school for the past 2 years, she was ready for the eighth grade.

She worked hard through high school despite her father's insistence that school was a waste of time and money, particularly the extracurricular activities that cost money. She persevered and was awarded four scholarships that paid for all of her education costs. "In Ariana's junior year of college, Arizona passed a law that prevented undocumented students from receiving in-state tuition and financial aid, and she lost all of her scholarships" (Hernandez et al., 2010, p. 70). Ariana was able to finance her education by being creative. She found and was awarded private scholarships, had several roommates, and did many off the record jobs such as babysitting and holding yard sales. Although Ariana's narrative describes how she completed her education, there are few stories of the after effects of the Arizona law at that time.

Students in Arizona who have been DACAmented have been partially unburdened financially. Along with the 2-year reprieve from deportation, these individuals are issued a permit that allows them to work legally in the United States. Until a 2015 federal judicial decision, then Gov. Brewer of Arizona refused to issue driver's licenses to DACAmented people, thereby maintaining transportation difficulties to both work and school, and restricting upward mobility.

Civic Engagement and Activism

DREAMers find difficulty participating into political, social, and economic aspects of society. Civic engagement and activism provide undocumented students with an outlet to participate in their communities and fight against impediments due to their legal marginality (Perez, Cortes, Ramos, & Coronado, 2010). These acts of political and democratic participation challenge the dominant discourse of deficiency (S.I.N. Collective, 2007). Although efforts may be slow and demanding, DREAMers have done well mobilizing, marching, and advocating for

their rights believing that direct involvement, as opposed to waiting for others to intervene on their behalf, has the best chance to generate change (Connell, 2012).

DREAMers often participate in civic engagement as a way of becoming active members of their communities and resisting the criminalization and marginalization of their identities. Perez, Cortes, Ramos, and Coronado (2010) found that providing social services, tutoring, working for a cause, and political activism were the most prevalent civic engagement activities of DREAMers. The manner in which civic engagement affects identity development is noted by Perez, Cortes, Ramos, and Coronado (2010):

> Interviews with undocumented students revealed that they were driven to become civically engaged not just by their commitment to certain political and social ideals, but their civic engagement served as an antidote to the political and social marginalization they faced as undocumented students. Civic engagement allowed them the opportunity to affirm themselves as good people and model citizens. (p. 46)

Narratives of civic engagement garner support for undocumented students by allowing others to understand the roles they actively play in their communities. These counterstories also disrupt the negative label of DREAMers as 'illegals' and provide concrete examples of how they are attempting to integrate into American society.

Fermin, a student in the E4FC collection of autobiographies, began his story by recounting a boat trip across the Rio Grande River and later a car ride where he and his sister pretended they were speaking English. A brief stop at a McDonalds was described as a taste of the American dream. When Fermin was in the ninth grade, his geography teacher asked all students to identify their birthplaces. He was scared to tell about his hometown because his peers did not know he was from Mexico. Another student in the class stated he was born in

Matamoros, a Mexican city. Fermin was sure that this other Mexican student had his papers because he was confident, popular, and his parents spoke English. Fermin stated the actual city of his birth, fabricated an answer to his teacher's question about the city's population, and wondered if his peers now knew that he was 'illegal.' While in college, Fermin began to share his immigration status. The subject arose during the 2008 election season. He recalls it was a very confusing time because Obama's election appeared to offer a positive step towards a more racially inclusive society, while California's Proposition 8 set out to eliminate the rights of same-sex couples. This was an election year that sent two very different messages. He began addressing his status to his peers when he was asked if he would vote. Despite the conflicting messages, that election year spurned activism within him. Later, he graduated with a degree in public policy from Stanford University and became an activist for gay and immigrant rights upon graduation.

The pressing civil rights issues at any time in history reflect changing demographics, which today means Latina/o issues. This currently includes the denial of educational rights, considered a civil right. "To date, the bulk of the research with undocumented students has focused on their civic engagement, and in particular, on efforts to increase access to higher education" (King & Punti, 2012, p. 235). The failure to enact the DREAM Act has inspired activism from DREAMers. This has been notable in efforts that led to the enactment of DREAM-like state legislation, which allows undocumented high school graduates to qualify for in-state tuition in the state where they graduated. Grassroots efforts are common on college campuses, and online through Facebook, Twitter, and blogging. The formation of groups such as United We Dream, the largest immigrant-led youth network, has facilitated nationally organized efforts. Activism efforts often include electoral strategies such as increasing Latina/o voter

registration and participation, which are significant as Latina/o political power continues to grow.

Activist campaigns often revolve around fighting against deportations. "In the face of this crisis, undocumented youth have used a combination of direct action and media activism to shine a spotlight on immigrant detention and deportation, which has largely remained hidden from public view" (NACLA, 2011, p. 17). These powerful descriptions offer vivid impressions to the discussion, and illustrate how families are torn apart.

The DREAM Act and other educational rights remain high priority within DREAMer activism. Small victories from political activism include DREAM-like legislation in some states. Although DREAM-like state legislation does not move individuals closer to a permanent legal status, it does extend in-state tuition and often state aid for education for DREAMers (NACLA, 2011).

Critical to note in regards to DREAMer activism is the trend of status disclosure. This has been a form of resistance that has also humanized the undocumented youth movements by putting faces to the stories. Galindo (2012) explained the impact of these revelations to this struggle:

> The disclosure of undocumented status by student advocates is often accompanied by a life story that narrated an arrival to the United States, the threat of deportation, and the beginning of advocacy work. This public disclosure of undocumented status is a political act that interrupts the "regime of enforced invisibility" under which undocumented immigrants are expected to live, attend school, and work. (p. 378)

The disclosure functions as a 'coming out' method for DREAMers that disrupts their invisibility within their communities. Although the action comes with risk, it allows DREAMers to gain increased ownership in their battle for civil rights.

DREAMer activism growth is common and is often covered by the media. This activism increase is occurring even in areas such as Arizona where there is little legal reprieve for these individuals and a very real threat of deportation. While student activism may be fairly well addressed and it is common for narratives of high achieving undocumented students to be reported, significant gaps in the literature remain. DACA, with its potential to increase access to higher education with in-state tuition rates, may change the DREAMer narrative by providing a documented, though temporary, voice.

Conclusion

The DREAMers' narratives are not yet significantly explored and even less is known about DACAmented students, a new DREAMer subgroup. DACA, although by no means comprehensive immigration reform, is arguably the most significant policy change affecting immigrants. DACA has great potential to change DREAMer lives. These individuals' stories will provide a glimpse into what this change, albeit temporary, means. These accounts demonstrate a myriad of vital issues surrounding DREAMers such as those outlined in this literature review. They demonstrate the need for community colleges to be prepared to enroll diverse undocumented students and for all higher education institutions to realize how vital funding is to completion. Notably, these narratives speak to the need for immigration reform—even if it is not yet comprehensive—and for these youth to be able to actively pursue and achieve education within the United States.

Chapter 3

Research Design and Methodology

This qualitative study explores the educational experiences of DACAmented Latina/o DREAMers enrolled at the Maricopa County Community College District (MCCCD). The study examines how being DACAmented affects how participants interact with their educational and other communities, and how they view their access to educational services and their ability to achieve educational goals. The study also explores how DACA plays a role in civic engagement and the effects of its short-term impact. This study addresses the following research questions with the use of a qualitative in-depth interview-based research design:

- How is DACA affecting the narrative of Latina/o DREAMers who are students in the Maricopa County Community College District?
    - How do DACA students feel that having DACA affects their potential to achieve their educational goals?
    - How do DACA students feel their access to education in terms of aspects such as tuition rates, ability to enroll into more classes and availability of institutional services has changed as a result of DACA?
    - How are DACA students sharing their immigration status or interacting differently with faculty, staff, and students?
- How do DACA Latina/o DREAMers view civic engagement and their roles and responsibilities in the community?
- How are these individuals viewing DACA in terms of it being a temporary change to their immigration status?

Research Design: Qualitative In-Depth Interview

Qualitative data collection is particularly useful in this instance because there is little known about the educational experiences of DACAmented Latina/os enrolled at MCCCD. Qualitative research can be an exploratory research method that is used to understand little-known experiences and express the perspectives of individuals (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). This is particularly important in literature that lacks experiential evidence in general and in particular to scenarios where litigation is current. This study will allow for future work to be framed by this data. Qualitative analysis can allow for research to be conducted using a critical theory lens. Qualitative researchers, who are the primary data-collection instrument, collect qualitative data through means such as in-depth interviews, participant observation, field notes, and open-ended questions (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). This type of research allows for thick, rich descriptions of individuals and phenomena.

Four participants were interviewed in-depth as the goal was to produce comprehensive descriptions of individuals and events as opposed to generalizing to a larger population. "Qualitative research is characterized by its aims, which relate to understanding some aspect of social life, and its methods which (in general) generate words, rather than numbers, as data for analysis" (Patton & Cochran, 2002, p. 2). The granting of DACA is both temporary and a fairly recent immigration policy change affecting the lives of qualifying individuals. In situations where little is known about a group or a phenomenon initiating research with a qualitative study is a logical approach.

Little is known about DACAmented students nationally, and notably in higher education in Arizona. The numbers of undocumented students graduating from American high schools and the low percentage of those students matriculating into higher education is known. However, the

specific barriers and access issues being faced by DACAmented Latina/os in Arizona is unknown. In-depth interviews with a small group of students provide a more holistic understanding for educators and the community on the challenges to educational achievement faced by these individuals. The themes that emerged from these interviews generated need for future research, yet they also empower institutions to address current barriers. Importantly, this study provided DACAmented DREAMers the opportunity to share their stories.

Theoretical Framework: Critical Race Theory

The theoretical frameworks, used to inform the methodology of this study, are Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Latino Critical Race Theory (LatCrit). The aim of inquiry based in critical research is to analyze and transform power structures that are constraining individuals based upon ascribed structures (Lynn & Dixson, 2013). The goal of this study was to address such issues through the counterstories of the participants.

Critical race theory. CRT examines the relationship between race, racism, and power, considering civil rights and ethnic studies, while also addressing broader perspectives such as economics, history, group and self-interest, and consciousness (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). A critical race theory framework was important to this study for numerous reasons. As Latina/o students with precarious legal statuses, this study reveals how they contend daily with a history of legislative and social discrimination against those with whom they share a minority status. They also face educational inequity, racist nativism, and systemic social and educational issues of whiteness.

"CRT in educational research unapologetically centers the ways race, class, gender, sexuality and other forms of oppression manifest in the educational experiences of People of Color" (Pérez Huber, 2010, p. 78). Critical race theorists have made the case to offer

counterstories, as are narrated in this study, to contest the majoritarian narratives, especially for those most affected by injustice (Covarrubias, 2011). CRT challenges dominant ideology and advocates for social justice. This includes using empirical evidence such as the in-depth interviews from this study that explore the intersectionality of race and racism. Castro-Salazar and Bagley (2010) note:

> As an approach, CRT can be utilized to challenge the existing social order in different ways; including: exposing how racism continues to benefit the privileged classes and disadvantage minorities and people of color; criticizing the notion that significant social change can occur without radical transformation of social structures…and utilizing storytelling (or 'counter-storytelling' and 'counter-history') as a means to legitimize and support the voices of racial minorities, incorporating their experiential knowledge into the critiques of the dominant society. (p. 26)

Critical race theory in education is defined by Solórzano and Yosso (2002) as, "a framework or set of basic insights, perspectives, methods, and pedagogy that seeks to identify, analyze, and transform those structural and cultural aspects of education that maintain subordinate and dominant racial positions in and out of the classroom" (p. 25). This exemplifies the need for the collection and dissemination of counterstories from the participants in this study. CRT challenges the claims of meritocracy, race neutrality, and equal opportunity from institutions of higher education (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Not only is there a need for more counterstories of DREAMers, many of whom also deal with grim college achievement rates for Latina/os, there is a dearth of counterstories from DACAmented DREAMers' students pursing higher education in Arizona.

Critical race theory should address the fact that marginalized groups do not always contest majoritarian stories; therefore, it is crucial to address the relationship between power and resistance (Muñoz & Maldonado, 2011). Muñoz and Maldonado state that it is important to "account for how, in the pursuit and navigation of identity projects (Hobbel & Chapman 2009), students of color might also internalize racist, sexist, and classist ideologies and reinscribe oppressive discourses" (2011, p. 4). Internalization of dangerous and false notions provides further support for the rationale behind collecting and sharing the stories of those who are not a part of the majority's story, thereby disregarding oppressive, dominant ideologies. This study allowed for the exploration of changes to resistance strategies based upon a change to immigration status.

Latino critical race theory. Critical race theory evolved in resistance to a Black/White binary system that could not sufficiently address the societal and legal oppression of other marginalized groups (Yosso, 2006). Branches of critical race theory emerged to address issues faced by other marginalized groups including, but not limited to women, or FemCrit, Asians, or AsianCrit, and Latina/os, or LatCrit. Yosso (2006) expands on LatCrit:

> Latina/o critical race (LatCrit) theory scholarship in particular brought a Chicana/o, Latina/o consciousness to CRT in examining racialized layers of subordination based on immigration status, sexuality, culture, language, phenotype, accent, and surname. This LatCrit consciousness extended critical race discussions to address the layers of racialized subordination that comprise Chicana/o, Latina/o experiences within and beyond U.S. borders. (p.6)

LatCrit was appropriate when researching the individuals in this study because Latina/o students in Arizona face social discrimination such as those displayed by inequities in education

attainment. These individuals also face legislative and institutional discrimination that specifically target Latina/os. The counterstories of Latina/o DACAmented students, a new and temporary phenomenon, are crucial to an understanding of contemporary social and legal realities of these individuals. This study emphasized educational experiences while also describing the civic engagement of participants and the effects of DACAs temporariness. The education system in the United States historically and currently has benefited those born into privilege. This includes, but is not limited to, issues of access to higher education that have implications for economic and social mobility, which currently affect the individuals in this research.

During the past 10 years, legislation has targeted Latina/os in Arizona by limiting access to higher education, thus subordinating Latina/o existence within the state. Recent examples of these laws are House Bill (HB) 2008 and Proposition 300, both of which are addressed in more detail in the Context/Research Site section of this chapter. Proponents of these discriminatory measures frame their claim around who should be entitled to, and excluded from, state benefits. "LatCrit also would provide a singular view of the way in which judicial institutional structures impact subordinate groups and the method by which these groups might seek to transform the political economy" (Jacobs, 2004, p. 606). Immigrants, particularly those of Latina/o descent, are frequently noted as undeserving of benefits. DACA manages to circumvent both HB 2008 and Proposition 300 at MCCCD by providing a document, a work permit, which qualifies individuals to pay in-state tuition as well as have the choice of whether or not to disclose the terms of the immigration status that afforded them the permit. A LatCrit frame was used to examine the counterstories in this study by identifying layers of subordination of these students in terms of their ascribed characteristics.

Solórzano and Yosso posit that, "a critical race methodology offers space to conduct and present research grounded in the experiences and knowledge of people of color" (2002, p. 23). Frameworks such as LatCrit meet the need for more specific theorization around complex, intersectional issues (Pérez Huber, 2010). Such frameworks allow for the emergence of themes using CRT and LatCrit lenses to reveal structures of oppression (Pérez Huber, 2010). In accordance with critical race methodology, this study describes the experiences of the participants as sources of strength that challenge a dominant ideology. The counterstories of the participants provide often overlooked experiential knowledge. These stories focus on the racial and class experiences of students of color, thereby offering the potential to offer transformative solutions to the subordination of students of color (Solórzano & Yosso, 2003).

Critical Race Counterstories

Critical race counterstories provide a method to communicate the experiences of racially and socially marginalized individuals (Yosso, 2006). The majority of these stories are presented from the perspectives of the dominant group. "The stories or narratives told by the ingroup remind it of its identity in relation to outgroups, and provide it with a form of shared reality in which its own superior position is seen as natural" (Delgado, 1989, p. 2412). Consequently, the majoritarian story distorts and silences the experiences of people or color, allowing people to infer that darker skin and poverty align with bad neighborhoods and schools (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). "It informs us that limited or Spanish-accented English and Spanish surnames equal bad schools and poor academic performances" (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). The majoritarian view that Latina/os do not have the academic achievement rates of other racialized groups is often insufficient considering the unequal educational environment for many Latina/o

students. This includes impoverished schools that continue to endure segregation as they manage with a few well-trained teachers and no college-bound curricula or atmosphere (Yosso, 2006).

The counterstory, a term used to describe the experiences of those who are not considered to be among the privileged majority, can play a role in social change. A counterstory begins with an understanding that inadequate educational structures limit equal access and opportunities for Latina/o students (Yosso, 2006). These narratives can challenge notions such as criminalization, which ultimately marginalize Latina/o DACAmented individuals and DREAMers. Critical race theorists examine counterstories to understand how Americans view race, including the examination of what is frequently ignored in legal cases such as the effects of legislation on certain groups of people (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). This research explored the impact of obtaining legal immigration status, although temporary, for the first time and how it affects a student's ability to achieve a higher education.

CRT in education advances the importance of counterstories as a tool in understanding the nature of reality, in particular by people of color, who are often marginalized in education (Milner & Howard, 2013). "In educational scholarship, the term counterstories has been used to refer to the stories told by those who are marginalized about their own experiences, stories which are not often told, acknowledged, or valued" (Munoz & Maldonado, 2011, p. 3). Contributing to this lack is, "the stories of people on the bottom illustrates how race and racism continue to dominate our society" (Bell, 1992, p. 144). CRT was utilized to methodologically inform this study and share the vibrant stories of the participants.

Context/Research Site

The Maricopa County Community College District (MCCCD) is located in the greater Phoenix, Arizona metropolitan area. The district is comprised of 10 colleges, two skills centers

and numerous education centers that serve more than 250,000 students annually. Nearly a quarter of the district student enrollment is Hispanic and some of the colleges qualify as Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs). Approximately three-quarters of the students enrolled at MCCCD fall into the age range requirement of DACA. According to the *MCCCD 2012 Fact Book*, the ethnicity and age composition of students at the 45th day of fall 2012 is as follows:

Figure 1

Student Ethnicity at Maricopa County Community Colleges

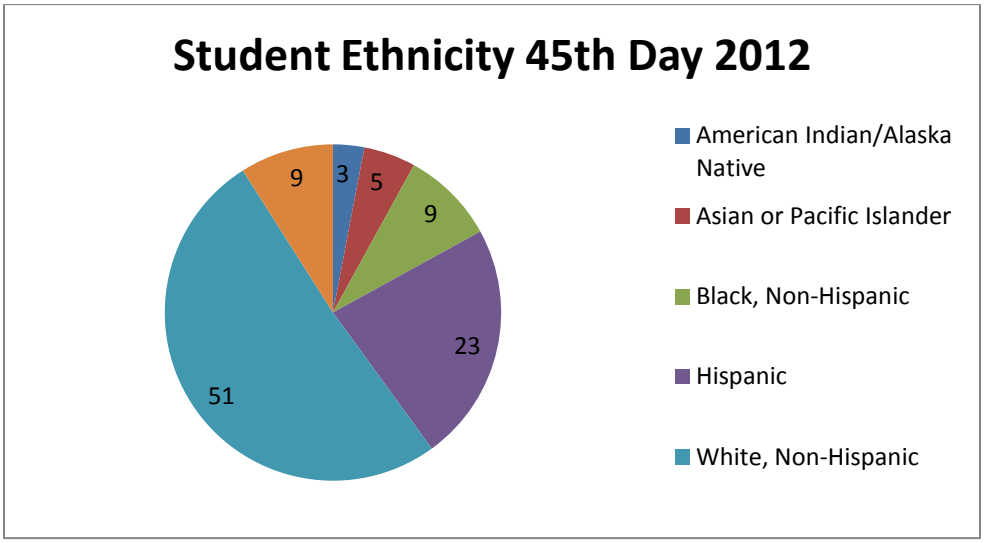
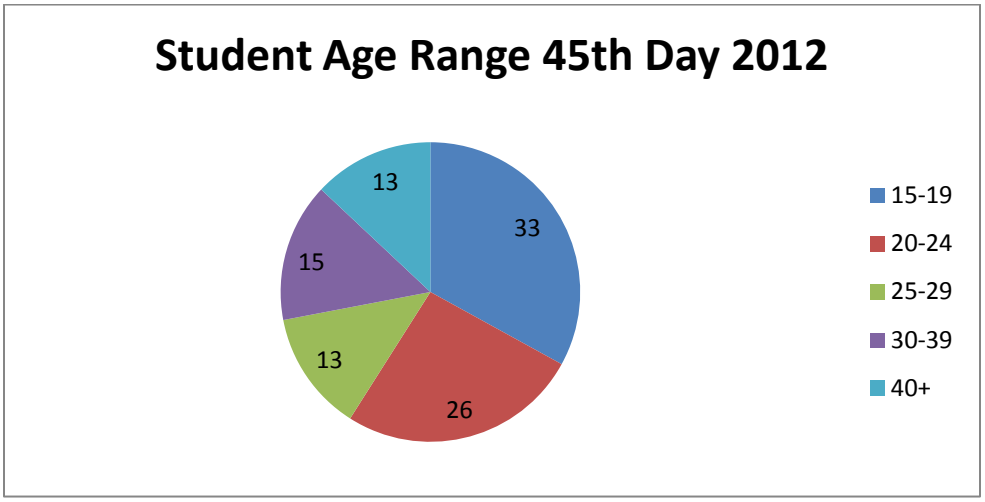


Figure 2

Student Age Range at Maricopa County Community Colleges



As a public entity, MCCCD is governed by a publically-elected board and subject to state legislation and election mandates. In 2006, Arizona voters passed a proposition that increased higher education's tuition rates for individuals without documentation. "In 2009 and 2010, the Arizona State Legislature passed laws relating to immigration that affect MCCCD" (MCCCD, 2011, p. 3). Overwhelmingly, Latina/os were affected by these changes.

MCCCD published a document, *Handbook for HB 2008, SB 1070 and Prop 300: FAQs Related to Legislative Compliance*, in August 2011. This resource guide provides guidance to MCCCD employees concerning immigration issues affecting the institution. The handbook provides a summary of citizenship/legal status, formerly Proposition 300, (MCCCD, 2011):

> Proposition 300, passed by Arizona voters in November 2006, stipulates that college students who are not legal United States citizens or are without lawful immigration status must pay out-of-state tuition, and that persons who are not United States citizens and who are without lawful immigration status are not eligible for financial assistance using state money. (p. 12)

Following Proposition 300, MCCCD established a policy that accepted the Employment Authorization Document (EAD or Form I-766) as lawful presence under the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibilities Act. At MCCCD, this is a qualifying document for in-state tuition.

HB 2008, passed in 2009, is another immigration law that affects MCCCD operation. HB 2008 prevents those without lawful presence from receiving a federal public benefit or a state or local public benefit. HB 2008 additionally has consequences for employees and their supervisors for issuing public benefits to those without lawful presence. MCCCD accepts the I-766 as evidence of lawful presence for state and local benefits, a term defined by the statue to include resident tuition (MCCCD, 2011).

The Arizona State Legislature, in 2010, passed SB 1070, which is also referred to as the Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act. The law's purpose is published in the Arizona State Senate Fact Sheet (2010):

> Requires officials and agencies of the state and political subdivisions to fully comply with and assist in the enforcement of federal immigration laws and gives county attorneys subpoena power in certain investigations of employers. Established crimes involving trespassing by illegal aliens, stopping to hire or soliciting work under specified circumstances, and transporting, harboring or concealing unlawful aliens, and their respective penalties. (p. 1)

SB 1070, "Prohibits public entities like MCCCD from limiting enforcement of federal immigration laws; Permits any legal resident to sue a public entity like MCCCD for adopting a policy restricting enforcement of federal immigration laws to less than the fullest extent permitted by federal law" (MCCCD, 2011, p. 8).

The implementation of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) has differed across and within states. When DACA was enacted in 2012, eligible students were issued the I-766 Employment Authorization Card. In Arizona, whether or not the work permit qualifies students for in-state tuition is an example of inconsistent implementation. None of the three state universities allow DACAmented students to qualify for in-state tuition as of the 2014/2015 academic year. Furthermore, qualifying for in-state tuition at Arizona community colleges differs between institutions.

Beginning in the 2012/2013 academic year, MCCCD allowed DACAmented students with the I-766 permit to qualify for in-state tuition. For the 2013/2014 academic year, this designated tuition for DACAmented students at $81 per credit hour as opposed to the out-of-state rate of $322 per credit hour. Currently, students must present their permits to request in-state tuition, but are not required to state that they are DACAmented. For this reason, MCCCD is not

collecting data on the numbers of students attending an MCCCD institution who are DACAmented.

Immediately following the enactment of DACA, then Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer issued an executive order stating that DACAmented individuals shall not be allowed to have state issued driver's licenses or receive public benefits. However, the executive order does not specifically refer to in-state tuition; later, then Arizona Attorney General Tom Horne filed a lawsuit against MCCCD for allowing DACAmented students to receive in-state tuition.

During the Citizen's Interim portion of the MCCCD Governing Board meeting on September 24, 2013, multiple requests were made to address the Board about the lawsuit. DREAMers, DACAmented individuals, and allies, many of whom are a part of The Arizona DREAM Act Coalition (ADAC), an alliance of organizations in Arizona dedicated to the enactment of the DREAM Act, expressed gratitude to the Board for fighting the lawsuit. Several students noted that they would not be in school without the in-state tuition provision MCCCD offers to DACAmented individuals. One student, representing ADAC, stated, (MCCCD, 2013):

> She is a 20-year-old Dream Act Coalition member and student of Phoenix College. She thanked the Board for giving DACA students the opportunity to get an education. She said it had been very difficult to get any kind of support to go to school but even though it was hard, it had been worth it. She wants to become a teacher and return to her community to give back in kind. She said she is incredibly grateful for the Board's support. She asked the Board to keep fighting AG Tom Horne. (p. 3)

Another student, representing the Arizona Student Alliance Project (ASAP), an advocacy group organized by youth from underrepresented groups such as those who are undocumented, stated (MCCCD, 2013):

> He was a student of Phoenix College earning an Associates in Medical Assistant. He said he was brought to the U.S. when he was five years old. When he became DACA eligible he was finally able to go back to school. He's a full-time student and works full-time in order to afford his education. He was able to make the decision to go full time when in-state tuition made it affordable. He is worried that AG Horne will take it away from him. He said he needs a driver's license now to help him get where he needs to go. (p. 4)

Participants

Purposeful sampling is the term used in qualitative research to identify studies where individuals and sites were chosen purposefully rather than at random to understand a central phenomenon (Creswell, 2005). The research site, MCCCD, was selected because this district is granting in-state tuition to individuals who possess the work permit issued under DACA. This purposive selection was made as only two Arizona community colleges are offering in-state tuition to DACAmented students and none of the state universities are offering in-state tuition to DACAmented students. The rarity of this is important to this study because it explored educational experiences, including those of access, of DACAmented Arizona students.

Purposeful sampling was utilized to identify participants. Purposeful, or criterion-based, selection was appropriate as desired characteristics of the individuals to participate in the study were identified. Purposive sampling provides information rich descriptions aimed at the educational experiences of these individuals rather than empirical generalizations from a sample to a population (Johnson & Christensen, 2012).

The use of a nonrandom sampling technique produced homogeneous individuals who self-identify as Latina/o. They also fall under the criteria of having been enrolled, being enrolled, or attempting to enroll at MCCCD. Lastly, they are DACAmented. The participants were at least

18 years old at the time of the interviews; therefore, no additional family members needed to provide consent for study participation. Participants met the study criteria and agreed to participate in the interviews.

Four individuals participated in this study. The primary goal of this research was to explore the unique educational experiences of DACAmented Latina/o MCCCD students. The homogeneity of the individuals allows for a small number of participants, which is important as the ability to provide an in-depth picture diminishes as the number of participants increases (Creswell, 2005; Johnson & Christensen, 2012). This small number allowed for in-depth interviewing. The in-depth interviewing meets the goal of qualitative research by examining the complex interrelations through inquiry, not for the purpose of explanation, but for understanding what is occurring (Stake, 1995).

The participants in the study were located using an intermediary and through the Arizona Dream Act Coalition (ADAC) offices. Finding participants through the ADAC offices meant that these individuals were actively engaged in civic activity surrounding their rights. This illustrates a high level of self-efficacy as they were deliberate in selecting a social environment where they exercised control over situations and behaviors. ADAC is an alliance of organizations in Arizona dedicated to the passage of the DREAM Act based in Arizona State University. Many DREAMers active in civic engagement attend meetings, organize engagement activities, and socialize at the ADAC offices. I attended many of the open bi-weekly ADAC meetings and other ADAC events, including press conferences.

The intermediary was employed to add additional protection to the identity of the participants. The intermediary, Ms. Carmen Cornejo, agreed to post messages on social media sites asking for participants for this study. Additional efforts to protect participants' identities

were delivered by her identification of participants, followed by introducing them anonymously to me and I would immediately provide a list of pseudonyms to assign to them. Ms. Cornejo was asked to facilitate this role because she is well-known within the DREAMer communities. She is a longtime advocate for the DREAM Act. She began advocacy for DREAMers by helping to produce, along with others from the group CADENA, a mix of teachers, school counselors, lawyers and students, the first website to offer guidance to students and educators on how to navigate Arizona's immigration system. CADENA members helped to prevent deportation of DREAMers, lobbied Congress, and served as liaisons with members of the media for DREAMers before they reported on their stories. Ms. Cornejo was asked to join ADAC and she provided many training opportunities to ADAC members, including media relations and assisting the organization in securing its first significant grant.

In addition to posting on social media about the research, Ms. Cornejo made announcements in the ADAC offices before weekly public meetings about this study. She introduced me as the researcher, the research project, and participant criteria. Participants were identified in this manner, and I was able to approach individuals following her announcement to determine if they would like to be interviewed.

Confidentiality

Although those with DACA status are on record with the Federal Government, the participants are currently afforded only a temporary reprieve from legal actions based upon immigration status; of course, the potential for the status to change to an actionable one creates a sensitive condition.

The Informed Consent process, along with providing individuals the details of the study so that they could make an informed decision about their participation in the study, clearly

outlined the plan for the data's confidentiality. Interview data will be destroyed 2 years following the study. Electronic storage of data is on a password-protected computer and only I have the password. Audiotapes of interviews were destroyed after interviews were transcribed. Transcriptions list participants based on pseudonyms.

Once students agreed to participate in the study, they were given a copy of the Informed Consent form. The forms were not signed and kept by me because I did not retain information on their given names. Once they agreed to participate, I presented them with a list of names, pseudonyms, for them to choose from as their identifier in the study. I used a book of names to compile the list that included names from different ethnic backgrounds. The list had a female and male name starting with each letter of the alphabet. One female participant opted to select a traditionally masculine moniker.

Data Collection

Data collection for this study was conducted qualitatively using in-depth interviewing. The interviews occurred at agreed upon public locations that have no affiliation with MCCCD. This included the ADAC offices in Phoenix, Arizona and Mesa, Arizona's public library. Private offices and private, reserved rooms were utilized at each location, respectively, to ensure confidentiality and promote open responses.

Interviews. The data collection for this qualitative interview-based study was conducted using open-ended interview questions. See Appendices A and B. I interviewed four participants two times each for approximately 60 to 90 minutes, utilizing the interview protocols. As a native-born, White female working on a doctorate, I attempted to be passive in the interviewing process. I framed the research with the importance of constructing their stories rather than collecting the information needed to finish my dissertation.

Interviews were audio taped and transcribed. Participant feedback, or member checking, was employed after each interview by asking follow-up and clarification questions about the transcription of the previous interview. The data were also recorded and transcribed. The use of participant feedback was to both establish a rapport with the participant as well as increase accuracy, credibility, and validity. During the follow-up questions, I restated information, allowing the participants to comment on whether or not summaries are representative of their views and experiences (Harper & Cole, 2012).

The focus of these interviews addressed the research questions. Specifically, the participants were asked about their overall educational experiences and how DACA is affecting the pursuit of their higher educational goals in terms of legal and institutional policies and interactions with others at the colleges; how DACA is affecting their views on civic engagement and their roles and responsibilities in their communities; and how they are experiencing DACA in terms of its temporary usefulness.

Follow up. I followed up with participants via text and in person when clarification of data was needed. I had participants listed in my cell phone contacts under their pseudonyms.

Data Analysis

The primary goal of this research was to understand the experiences of Latina/o students who are DACAmented and enrolled at MCCCD. Data analysis began with finding the primary sources of data, namely DACAmented Latina/o MCCCD students. The literature addressing the issues that affect these students framed the research questions and subsequent interview protocols. The data collected was organized into individual counterstories. Since very little information exists on DACAmented students, this qualitative approach of understanding what is occurring provides additional social context to the literature. As with traditional qualitative

researching, categories and themes emerged from the data suggesting how the counterstories should be situated.

The thematic analysis of data consisted of reading and annotating transcripts, identifying categories, developing a coding theme, and coding the data (Patton & Cochran, 2002). I coded as much of the transcripts as possible to ensure a holistic and comprehensive data analysis. Three main themes emerged from the coded, categorized data: Educational experiences which include hiding their undocumented identity and being outed; coming out as undocumented and civic engagement; and the negative effects of DACA. CRT was used to methodologically inform the study by connecting themes to larger issues such as the intersectionality of race and racism and challenges to dominant ideology. Data is presented in the following chapter as counterstories.

"The counter-story is also a tool for exposing, analyzing, and challenging the majoritarian stories of racial privilege" (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002, p. 32). Three main types of counterstories are employed by critical race scholars: Personal Stories or Narratives, Composite Stories or Narratives, and Other People's Stories or Narratives. The latter was used in this study. "This type of counter-narrative usually offers biographical analysis of the experiences of a person of color, again in relations to U.S. institutions and in a sociohistorical context" (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002, p. 33). Other people's narratives, or counterstories, are presented on each individual, so individual experiences of each participants were not lost. The data analysis is presented in narrative form and organized by counterstories, and then a cross-case comparison of the themes is made. The findings related to the research questions include narratives and quotes.

Validity/Trustworthiness

Efforts were made to ensure validity and trustworthiness of this study. The goal for the research was to be confident that the findings reflect the experiences of the participants in

connection to the research questions. Interviews are identified as a best approach to understand and offer meaning of the experiences, educational and otherwise, which connect circumstances, times, and places (Castro-Salazar & Bagley, 2010). Multiple strategies to ensure validity and trustworthiness were employed. Researcher bias is addressed in the following Positionality/Reflexivity section of this chapter with acknowledgments surrounding the partiality of the researcher. Member checking during interviews was a strategy of interpretive validity. This is perhaps the most critical tool of trustworthiness as the participants had the opportunity to clear up any miscommunication surrounding my interpretations. Follow up with participants if information about the data was unclear also substantiated interpretive validity, and participants had the opportunity to review final interview transcripts with me. I provided them with a copy of the transcript and we reviewed it together. I emphasized that while I was composing the stories, the importance was on the accuracy and richness of their experiences. Finally, the use of counterstories allows the data to center on the humanity of those exist in the margins of society (Lynn & Dixson, 2013).

Positionality/Reflexivity

I am a White, middle-class female working in higher education and pursuing a doctorate. I live in Arizona's largest metropolitan area and I work as a residential faculty in a rural community college district. My instructional background prior to my current position was adjunct faculty in the largest, urban community college district in Arizona, the Maricopa County Community College District. In addition to teaching, my professional experience includes many years of student affairs work in different capacities. My employment background in education includes work at two of the colleges, one small and one large, in Arizona's largest urban community college district and at a vocational postsecondary institution in Phoenix. The students

I have worked with during my career have been diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, generation, level of academic preparedness, physical ability, and level of interest in education.

I have learned that my interactions with students must be inclusive for me to perform effectively as an educator. The diversity of students I have worked with has emphasized that the educational experiences of students can be quite different among individuals. This diversity includes realities based upon ascribed characteristics such as immigration status, race, ethnicity, and gender. As an educator, these realities have demonstrated where I must be cognizant and deliberate about students' needs, particularly in areas that I consider critical such as educational access and discriminatory practices.

My work as faculty and in student affairs reflects my commitment to and interest in education. I believe learning, both formally and informally, contribute to a fulfilling life and stimulate further curiosity. A formal education provides an individual with many tangible benefits, including information, access to people who are educated, credentials, and a potential for increased lifelong income. Formal education has the ability to foster intellectual development, critical thinking skills, and curiosity that stimulates the acquisition of knowledge through methods such as daily societal interactions. This informal learning potentially includes learning and understanding of other cultures and individual realities. My belief in the value of education is the reason I am working towards my doctoral degree now. I am committed to my profession as an educator because it offers me the opportunity to stimulate both the formal and informal acquisition of knowledge.

Furthermore, I am interested in issues of social justice. I believe this interest stems from being raised in a well-educated family who valued learning and examining both sides of social

and political issues. I was raised in Portland, Oregon, which is a predominantly liberal community. Although I do not have one specific personal episode that changed how I view the world in terms of justice, I do have anecdotal memories, such as viewing violence against others and being intimidated while participating in a protest against deforestation that threatened an endangered species. Consequently, I recognize that my identities and position play a role in how others interact with me and have the potential to affect our discourse.

As an educator, my work with diverse students includes the student's own level of interest in acquiring and completing education. I have worked with students whose education were fully funded and witnessed apathy towards what I consider a great gift. Although this does not intentionally change the way I interact with students, I find the attitude frustrating. I have also been in the position to impede the educational acquisition of undocumented students by enforcing out-of-state tuition rates for individuals I consider fully deserving of American educational rights because they identify as culturally and socially American. These students have done the work to obtain a secondary education through the United States school systems and wish to continue with their peers to further educational endeavors; however, they are finding that they do not have equitable access to the next level. I oppose out-of-state tuition rates imposed upon DREAMers on ethical and political grounds.

My political position on the DREAM Act is one of support and I am the recipient of a DREAM Ally certificate issued by and after training from ADAC. I have been a member of the ADAC closed group Facebook page for over 2 years and have attended several bi-weekly open meetings and events in the downtown Phoenix offices. I have built additional connections to the DREAMer communities with attendance at the Arizona DREAM Conferences Supporting the Needs of Immigrant Students hosted by Scholarships a-Z in March 2013 and at the Dining with

DREAMers Luncheon hosted by the Franciscan Renewal Center in February 2013. I fully advocate the decision of MCCCD to grant in-state tuition to DACAmented students and hope they are the victors of the current lawsuit brought by the former governor opposing this policy. Through personal conversations, I understand that my current college president is weighing legal issues in her own decision over whether or not to seek in-state tuition in her district for DACAmented students. The president is aware of my dissertation topic and I hope what I share with her as I conduct research will persuade her to act in favor of an in-state tuition policy.

I view education as a human right. I believe that rights granted to those in our education systems, such as those under *Plyler v. Doe* to any child in the K-12 system regardless of immigration status, should extend to higher education. I have a moral objection to the creation of barriers to education, such as out-of-state tuition rates implemented based on political views, for DREAMers. I feel that the acquisition of education and the roles of educators should not be defined, hindered, and affected by immigration rhetoric.

My personal experiences with individuals who have shared their undocumented immigration status with me have been principally Latina/o students. My research focuses on their stories and experiences navigating higher education in Arizona. I hope that my research on the experiences of DACAmented students, who would qualify for the DREAM Act, will contribute to the literature and be used as leverage for transformative and permanent change. Through my formal university education and my informal learning, including interactions with students, I am developing a more complete and complex understanding of systemic disparities within our educational structures. I view the issue of access to higher education for DREAMers as something that I have the potential to act upon through contributions to the literature and through actions as a DREAM Ally.

Chapter 4

Findings

This study set out to explore how Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and its temporary status is affecting the educational experiences of Latina/os in the Maricopa County Community College District (MCCCD) and their civic engagement within their communities by sharing counterstories. These narratives convey actual experiences and empirical data contextualized within specific settings (Lynn & Dixon, 2013). Participants provided answers to the research questions by describing how they navigate their lives in atmospheres where they endure racism and nativism, where they find strength in numbers, and how deadlines to their status reprieves affect how they function.

The purpose of answering the research questions through counterstories is to both highlight unique, non-majoritarian experiences and find inroads to making significant changes. These stories can positively inform policies and procedures in education in important ways by combating current systems that produce inequities. Building community among marginalized groups through alternative realities, and providing comfort to other marginalized people by letting them know that they are not alone and that they can learn from one another (Lynn & Dixon, 2013). "Counterstories bring attention to those who courageously resist racism and struggle towards a more socially and racially just society" (Yosso, 2006, p. 10). This study's participants exemplify this spirit.

The Participants

Tobias, Zara, Aimee, and Xavier shared their life stories for this study. They revealed their experiences, both positive and negative, which are developed here as counterstories – narratives of their extraordinary lives. After reviewing an informed consent form with the participants, I provided them with a list of names, the pseudonyms used here, to choose from. Each of them laughed a bit as they read over the list and selected a name. I explained that initially I planned to give them the choice to use their given name or select a pseudonym because I understand that being out and proud as a member of the undocumented community is an important method of resistance in their lives. Furthermore, I explained the importance of using pseudonyms in this study to ensure that I would not disclose their identity as a way to protect their identities. They all still found it humorous and smiled as they selected their pseudonyms.

Table 1

Demographic and Professional Aspiration Details

Participant	Sex	Age Upon Arrival to the U. S.	Current Age	Status of Education	Professional Aspirations
Tobias	Female	8 months	21	Community College graduate (fall 2014). Currently seeking funding to continue.	Elementary Education Teacher
Zara	Female	5 years	25	Community College Graduate (spring 2014). On a scholarship from DreamUs working on a bachelor's in Human Communication with a minor in Business. Selected this particular online program as all students pay the same tuition rate.	Attorney
Aimee	Female	7 years	22	Working on associate's degree. Currently taking the semester off (spring 2015)	Designer/Artist
Xavier	Male	4 years	25	Enrolling in free MOOCs. Hoping to attend community college. Looking for funding.	Engineer or Computer Programmer

The stories of these interesting young people can help others to understand the intricate details of life in a world unfamiliar to the majority (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Following the counterstories is a data analysis section that explores the themes that emerged from the interviews. These powerful stories deserve distinctive spotlights because there is limited research on individuals who fall into the categories of having DACA, identifying as Latina/o, while

attempting to achieve a higher education. Tobias, Zara, Aimee, and Xavier's accounts are as important as they are rich and vibrant, challenging and disrupting the majoritarian knowledge.

Tobias

Born in Guanajuato, Mexico 21 years ago, Tobias is a young woman with an infectious smile that highlights her bright lipstick and braces. She sweeps black eyeliner across the top lid of her big eyes. She wears her thick, dark hair in a chin-length bob and sometimes covers it up with a bright scarf. She easily smiles and speaks to all around her. When she talks about herself, she often mentions her family members and how they helped to shape the person she has become.

Unable to sustain work in Guanajuato, her father began leaving his spouse and two young daughters for long periods to work in Arizona. The separation proved emotionally draining on the family, particularly when the girls stopped recognizing their father upon his returns. The family refused to continue to live apart; therefore, once her father was able to secure an apartment and a vehicle, he brought the family together in Arizona. Tobias was 8 months old. "I have no recollection of México; every memory that I can recall has been here in Phoenix."

Tobias finds strength from her close-knit family while also resisting what she considers the expectations of women in Mexican culture. Specifically, she notes that cooking and cleaning are basic skills that everyone should have, not her obligation as a woman. "I hated that, like, no, he can cook, he can clean, too," she laughs, "these are basic skills that you need to survive." She laments that the first question posed by relatives at family gatherings like quinceañeras and first communions is whether she has a boyfriend. When she replies, "No," her relatives then ask, "Oh, are you a lesbian?"Although she views her parents as traditionalists, who observe gender roles that she does not want to reproduce, her parents' unwavering resolve inspire her to achieve

her own goals. In fact, she is particularly proud of her father because "he only went up to like a sixth grade education and he's done so much for himself, and still not knowing the language like that's amazing, how incredible is that." Tobias' mother never got the chance to pursue her dreams of becoming a teacher, but she encourages Tobias to be self-sufficient. "Never feel like a man had to be the one to support you; you're going to support yourself first and love yourself first." Tobias took her mother's advice, and now thinks and acts on it today.

Tobias juggles her bi-cultural identity in several ways. Although she currently resides with her parents and siblings, she speaks of rebelling against the Méxican tradition of living with her family until she gets married. "I want to be on my own already." This desire to find her own "space" is a struggle for her because she adores her family; however, she desires to grow creatively into her own woman. Now, her plan is to work, save money, and explore her options such as moving to another state that might provide the space she desperately seeks. Tobias has taken a deliberate, noteworthy step towards gaining her own identity and independence:

> There was…it's insignificant to other people but I had really long hair and I felt like that was a kind of emotional baggage. It's a physical thing that's there, but it was also an emotional thing that I was attached to. I was so attached to my hair. And then there just came a point where I was ready to let it go. Like I needed to move past it and stop hiding behind my hair. And so I cut it off and I felt amazing, I felt so good, I felt liberated. Even though people would tell me, don't cut it, don't cut it. I cut it and I felt so good about myself and I thought, I can apply the same thing to other things. Like maybe, I'm ready to let go of Arizona. I want to go somewhere else. I want to live on my own. In California maybe, just explore, just see everything, and experience new things, new people.

Tobias' chopping off her locks was a big step as were her decisions to announce her undocumented status in spaces where she is finding her way as an adult. For now, she participates in a traditional Méxican role as she resides at her parents' home as an unmarried young woman.

As a child, Tobias' family spoke only Spanish in her home; therefore, she entered kindergarten not knowing how to speak or understand English. She was placed in English as a Second Language (ESL) courses in which she remained until the fourth grade. As a child, she felt ashamed of her first and last names because other people had difficulty pronouncing them correctly. When she became older, she often thought, "I'm going to change my name to something like Samantha." As a young adult who craves literature and culture, she embraces her given name despite her view of society's urgent need to be redefined to increase inclusiveness. She plans to pass on her birth culture by giving her own children Hispanic names. By preserving this tradition, she hopes "to keep in mind these are the struggles that I've gone through and it's just something like my name is 'Tobias' and I'll forever hold that deeply in my heart and I'm never going to change that."

Although she felt her name distinguished her from her classmates, Tobias described herself as the same as the children at her elementary school. "We were all playing in the dirt and we didn't really care." For Tobias, English did not create a barrier in her efforts to form friendships with the other schoolchildren. Even though she recalls that she felt like the rest of the children, she was removed from the classroom regularly to work individually with a Hispanic tutor who spoke only English. Tobias recalls being confused by why the pronunciations of the 'c' in ice and the 's' in snake were so different. To facilitate her language acquisition, she watched

PBS at home; she even chuckled as she remembered that *Barney* and *Sesame Street* helped her to acquire her English language skills.

Once in high school and out of ESL, Tobias did everything she thought she was supposed to do to achieve. She was at the top of her class academically and was active in extracurricular activities like student government. Reflecting on her engagement during high school, she states:

> I graduated with a bunch of honors; I had a lot of cords. NHS, student government, sports medicine, I just like did a lot of things when I was in high school and I think when I was growing up, I always, like I say this a lot because I still find it very true that I always knew I was from México. I knew I was different from a lot of people but I never realized how that was going to affect my life after high school.

When Tobias attended school, she did not share her undocumented status; however, she acknowledges that she and other undocumented students "just knew" who shared this status. She disclosed that she was different because of her status, but did not recognize, at the time, the impact and significance of her undocumented status as she approached adulthood. The self-professed big ego she developed because of her success in high school "came crashing down" once she realized what her status meant for her as she neared the end of high school.

During high school, the realization of what Tobias' undocumented status signified set in. At this time, she also witnessed her older sister's challenges, which included paying for higher education. This prompted Tobias to share her status with staff at her high school:

> I saw how she struggled, trying to go to community college, how expensive that was and I thought it's going to be different for me. I'm going to do things differently. I'm going to reach out to my counselor; she's going to help me.

Instead of help, Tobias encountered a condescending attitude from her high school counselor, who informed her that community colleges, if she pursued higher education at all, constituted her only option—instead of an "infeasible" university education. In a few words, this counselor dismissed her hard work and achievements in high school as less important than those of her documented peers.

While Tobias was unsuccessful in obtaining guidance from her high school counselor to transition into higher education, she did find some much-needed support at home. She watched and was inspired by her older sister, who was the first college student in the family. Knowing that her parents were unable to help much with tuition, she followed another example her sister set by working with her, off the record, at a restaurant. That experience, she recalled included, "working really bad hours, dealing with really crappy people, and just feeling like I was exploited a little bit." However, her sister's example provided them both with inroads to college. "For her it's been harder because she's been the one who has been paving the way for me." As Tobias follows her sister's example, she calls her sister the pioneer of her family.

Despite being deflated by her limitations and subjected to her high school counselor's rejection of her educational dreams, Tobias persevered as she entered adulthood and enrolled at Phoenix College (PC) where she, unlike many of her fellow high school graduates, was forced to pay out-of-state tuition because of her status. Revelations concerning her undocumented status at PC occurred in various ways—with and without her consent. For example, there were occasions that she would see her former high school peers who would ask her, knowing how she previously excelled academically, why she was enrolled in only one class, and why was she attending a community college instead of a university. Their inquiries caused her to disclose that she was not born in the United States and, "they tell me, well you don't even have an accent." Then, she

would explain the difficulty of securing employment and her inability to apply for federal aid and many scholarships, which made a university education unaffordable. She recalls that life felt extremely bleak at the time, causing her to feel unmotivated. Questions such as, "why don't you just apply for citizenship" highlighted her experiential differences.

Aside from a few exchanges with high school acquaintances, Tobias guarded her status until DACA materialized. After DACA was implemented, Tobias and her sister, also a DACA recipient, had grand plans to utilize the community college environment as a platform to generate change. They planned to, "start a group of DACA people or something and start educating our educators, our classmates, our peers, everybody in the community." However, activism efforts at the community college did not flourish. Tobias did not share her status with community college faculty and staff except when necessary and she revealed that she still felt intimidated doing so. When she went to request in-state tuition, she suggested that she might have been the first DACA recipient to do so because the front line staff did not know what to do. The staff referred to her status as the DREAM Act, a common mistake that all DACA participants noted. She considered correcting the college employees, however, her fear of intimidation and doing something wrong, prevent her from starting such a conversation.

Once she secured DACA, Tobias felt more comfortable sharing her status at school with documented students although those admissions were intended mainly to inform others. She notes that she has more knowledge than the public concerning what DACA can and cannot do for DACAmented students. "I feel like I serve as a vessel of education for them, educating others." As her impending graduation from PC approached during the fall of 2014, a classmate asked Tobias about her plans to transfer credits to a university. Once again, she explained about

the current tuition discrepancies for undocumented students at the next level of education. She also corrected this classmate when he erroneously referred to her status as the DREAM Act.

Although some students engaged in dialog with Tobias about barriers unique to her reality, others had micro and macro-aggressive responses saturated in racist and nativist rhetoric. For example, she recalls an incident where a student with whom she had previously shared her DACAmented status handed her a laminated green piece of paper, and then announced, for the entire class to hear, "here's your green card." Instead of chastising the student, the faculty member in charge of the class responded by saying, "Oh, you're an illegal." The faculty member in Tobias' situation helped to escalate instead of quell the discriminatory rhetoric. Initially, she asked Tobias, "You're not from here?" Tobias responded by telling the instructor that she was from México. Then, Tobias recalled the instructor's appalling response:

> 'Oh, you're an illegal.' She said that in front of the class and I said, ahhh, I didn't say anything. I should have said something like no, I didn't say anything. And I felt really awkward because she said it so abruptly and the demeanor that she said it like, 'oh you're an illegal.' When she said it she was at the podium and she started laughing and so I'm like, I didn't know how to take it and luckily the conversation changed. I'm so grateful that someone else brought something up.

The existing power structures created a climate where her instructor and her peers felt free to insult Tobias and use derogatory labels to position her as less deserving of a higher education than her documented peers. This type of treatment essentially treats her like an outsider. This exchange clearly demonstrates Tobias' struggles to find spaces where she feels safe.

By the spring of 2012, Tobias joined The Arizona Dream Act Coalition (ADAC). Unlike her experiences with those at the community college, where she repeatedly described her

repertoire with faculty and staff as uncomfortable, she is highly engaged with this community who found her during a neighborhood canvass looking to register people to vote. Tobias explained her family's status to the canvasser at her door and was invited to attend an ADAC meeting. Later, she attended the meeting with her sister and met a key organizer. Tobias recalls her conversation with the meeting organizer:

> I didn't know who she was at the time but I met her and she invited me to her wedding. I didn't go because I was like, who's this lady inviting me to her wedding? Me and my sister were like, sure we'll go, no. I wish I had gone though. And then I started becoming more involved.

This encounter provided a space where Tobias and her sister were welcomed and included immediately because of their status. She notes:

> That was me being introduced into other environments, other groups of people who were also undocumented and so it started those conversations and it really helped me heal and talk about it in ways that I never talked about before. And see how it's different for everybody and see what they came from, what they experienced.

Becoming a part of ADAC enveloped her into a community that extended well beyond her family or schools. She found a sense of relief to be around many others where she could express herself without any intimidation, fear, or unnecessary explanations.

Tobias' rediscovered self-motivation allowed her to excel academically and finish her associate's degree; however, she considers ADAC as a place where she can continue to achieve and where she feels most valued. "I thought I'm doing work here so at least my time and energy is being productive." It is through her work with ADAC that she regained her self-esteem—an attribute that she lost at the end of high school and was further stripped from her at the

community college. She has taken on leadership roles for the groups' initiatives, spoken in front of the Arizona Board of Regents on behalf of the educational rights of DREAMers, and sat down with Tom Horne, former Arizona Attorney General notoriously known for his lack of support for DREAMers, in his office to speak again on rights. Although her ADAC experiences have restored some of her self-confidence that she possessed as an excelling high school student, she continues to speak often of finding "spaces" where she will feel completely comfortable being herself, wondering if she would fit in better in a city with more cultural exposures and opportunities than she considers Phoenix to have.

Tobias let her guard down under the fervor of excitement that surrounded President Obama's June 2012 Executive Order introducing DACA. When news of the announcement broke, media rushed to ADAC to cover it. Although media coverage at the ADAC offices was common, Tobias and her sister had always been very protective of their status outside of the group. Her sister was asked to provide a television interview to comment on the Executive Order announcement, but not how it affected her personally. Another reporter approached Tobias for an interview and she recalls her reaction:

> I was crying and they put me on TV and started interviewing me and they told me, how long have you been undocumented? I said oh I'm 19, 20, I think I was 18 years old and so I put it out there, oh shoot later on I told my sister, oh I was on TV. I was thinking she was going to be proud of me and she tells me, 'What did you do?' And I'm like, what do you mean? And she's like, 'Do you know what you just did?' I'm like, I can't believe what I just did and then I started being afraid like yeah she said, Obama made the announcement for DACA but we don't have it yet, they just made the announcement, oh my God, I'm going to get deported before I even get my work permit and now what am I going to do?

Tobias' stress extended well beyond herself to her sister, family, and to the family of the restaurant where she was employed that often served police officers. She panicked, believing that the officers would remember her face. She had a small sense of security where she and her sister worked because of a kind family who employed them and more security at ADAC where she was a part of a community's wealth; however, this experience of a very public exposure of her undocumented status negatively altered her outlook. Fortunately, she suffered no legal or employment repercussions because of the interview with the reporter; however, she lived with a constant state of anxiety after the interview occurred until her and her sister's DACA cards arrived.

Her family's constant sacrifice is one of the reasons Tobias struggles with the impact of DACA. She is concerned that her family has given up so much to provide her with a better life and that she might not be able to maximize the opportunities DACA has offered to her. She worries that she might be angry with herself later for not doing enough.

Tobias expresses concern that DACA is giving her a special entitlement. Tobias, like many of her DACAmented peers, belongs to a mixed-status family and considers all of the unknown factors that could unfold for a family with different levels of security. She notes that educational attainment for undocumented individuals in general can feel unattainable and worries how children would fare if a parent were deported, "because you really do need that parental support and if that system isn't there, what are you going to do." Because of the emotional and financial support, family capital is tremendously important to many Latino families. Her mixed-status family causes her to lament that her parents will never qualify for DACA. She acknowledges that her hard-working father will never have access to even a temporary reprieve. She considers this paradox every time she works at her current job—an opportunity that she would not have without DACA. Then, she tears up a bit as she describes her dilemma:

> I work at Sears and we get a lot of male workers who like to buy our jeans and a lot of them, like the way that they sound they remind me of my Dad. And like, they all have the same demeanor, they're like, they have the dark complexion from being in the sun, the beards, and the construction clothes. It reminds me of my Dad. I see my Dad everyday but it still makes me sad.

Tobias shoulders anxiety over the meaning of her mixed-status family: her parents are undocumented, while she and her sister are DACAmented. Her younger brother was born in the United States; therefore, he is a citizen, but she wonders what will happen to him if something happens to her parents. She wonders if DACA means she or her sister could get custody of the brother who is still a minor and if so, would that be another solution that was only temporary. On her brother and beyond:

> I can't imagine, like, I'm thinking about him. What's he going to do? And what am I going to do if I lost my sister to deportation or something like that? I think that's a very common fear of mine and my family. And for some people it is a reality; that is what happened. And that is scary. And DACA doesn't really do much to aid that fear, not really.

Beyond her family, Tobias experiences guilt about being among the entire undocumented population that is currently DACAmented. She feels shame over being one amongst the larger undocumented population that qualifies for the temporary reprieve. She speaks of leaving people out:

> And then I still have an internal conflict about changing that dynamic. Ideally I think it would be awesome if we had education for all undocumented people not just DACA recipients because for whatever reason you know some of the undocumented people, they just couldn't qualify for DACA, they aged out, for whatever reason you know they came too late to the country and they've been here just as long as we have, they pay property taxes, sales tax, all those things and I don't want one group of undocumented people to have more privilege above the other because we're all struggling, we all come from the same place, struggling from the same place.

Tobias revealed that she feels guilt-ridden when she uses the word 'privilege' to identify the benefits of DACA. Despite the advantages, she admits that she does not she feel a reprieve from anxiety with DACA. "I think it only creates a temporary safety net for myself like, I'll be okay but I feel so selfish, privileged." She took advantage of in-state tuition rates and gained more profitable, on the record employments with her DACA status. These opportunities do not

relieve her of another issue, “this looming time clock telling you that you’re going to run out of time.”

Mundane realities stand out for Tobias in regards to the two-year stipulation, “I’ll be in the same situation like, I’ll have to worry about renewing it, another $500, and then what?” Tobias took advantage of in-state tuition at the community college to earn her associates’ degree while struggling with other limitations to her reprieve, noting:

> At least I can get that far but then over time I started realizing. I’m trying to think ahead, like five years, 10 years from now. I’m going to be 31 and be out of DACA by then. What am I going to do with myself after that? And I’m starting to think, like, DACA. I feel like it’s so temporary and I feel like my time is running out all the time. I feel like I’m running out of time. I feel like I’m running out of time right now.

The short-term existence of the program has created an anxiety that offers no relief.

Tobias also speaks of another education strategy others employ within the undocumented community; they pursue blue-collar training that could produce under the table wages later on regardless of immigration status. She speaks of a friend learning to become a mechanic:

> That’s really good because then by some chance, DACA stops, she’ll still be a mechanic. She can still do jobs for other people, can still make money off of that way to survive. You know, so I’m trying to think in that sense.

Other limits produce greater anxiety:

> Then I'll be 32 or something and then I won't be able to use my DACA anymore. It's just a matter of time, like and then if its cut off then I know that Congress, like Congress have tried cutting it off before in the past. Like, what if they're successful in the meantime? Then what? That's all I think about, and then what? What am I going to do in 10 years? That's how I think about it.

These timetables affect how she sees herself, "I still feel young but old at the same time."

Zara

Zara wears her long, wavy hair to a shade of blonde and dresses femininely, often in skirts or dresses, high heels, and makeup. She spends a lot of time with and is very close to other DACAmented activists in the Arizona DREAM Act Coalition (ADAC) offices. Although she smiles and laughs often with others, she sighs frequently when talking about herself and the struggles she has and will face.

When she reflects on her childhood, it is often filled with hazy recollections since leaving México at age 5. "We migrated because my mother was in an abusive relationship, in an abusive marriage, so we decided to come out here; she was fleeing from my dad." Her early memories in the United States include her mother, stepfather, and immediate younger sister. Although she initially lived in a predominately White neighborhood in Tucson, she has lived most of her life in the Phoenix metropolitan area. "I grew up in south Phoenix, pretty much anywhere in Phoenix, we would move a lot because we didn't have a very good income because both my parents are undocumented workers and as far as I can remember they worked two jobs, at night and in the morning." She attended nine or 10 elementary schools since she moved so often. "I'm not sure because I can't remember well but I'm pretty sure we were getting evicted." Even though her family eventually "settled down a little bit more," she attended three different high schools.

Zara attended school with and lived in mostly Black and Hispanic neighborhoods. She speaks of recognizing what this meant:

> On the weekends, my parents would take us to yard sales, we'd go to the park or we'd drive around to yard sales. And they'd take us to the nicer part of town where you would see the big houses and that's where you'd see the socioeconomic difference. And when you're little you're like, well how come we don't live here? And you didn't see, like any Brown kids there you know so that's where I could see the difference.

Zara realized at an early age that her skin color and her family's origins affected other areas of her life, including housing. She claims these differences did not bother her when she was young. However, she did not reveal her status at school noting, "I couldn't tell my friends because I was embarrassed or I thought what if they say something."

Zara always pushed herself to do well in school. Although, "I didn't really have a lot of resources, a lot of people backing me up," she excelled academically and joined extracurricular clubs. She served as student body president and captain of the cheerleading team. As an excellent high school student, it did not occur to her that moving on to higher education would be an issue. "I remember my mom telling me that I couldn't go to college and I was like, no you have to be wrong, that can't be right." Zara's reality solidified during her senior year in high school. "I was taken aback because I was confronted with my undocumented status; and I would have had the opportunity to go to any public university with a full scholarship and that wasn't a possibility for me due to Proposition 300." This was the first recognition of how those creating legislation were actively working against her success. Zara continued to guard her status as she approached the end of high school, stating that the administrators at her third and final high school were mostly White and there was no one at her school that could have provided her direction or guidance.

Zara also said she did not feel comfortable because of her status seeking assistance from her high school counselors. She lamented that all of this also came with being a first generation college student, which meant a lack of familial knowledge on how to navigate higher education.

She says she can only assume other students that she graduated with that shared her status; however, she noted, "it was a big secret then." She had significant examples of sharing her status with people she thought she could trust during high school; however, they later announced it, betraying her publically and cruelly and, "then it makes you feel ashamed to be who you are." She confided in a person who ultimately humiliated her in front of an educator, who saw Zara's potential:

> I remember my teacher telling me, oh you should apply for this internship because of the fact that I wanted to go into politics and she was like, oh I don't even know why you would ask her to do that because she knows she can't. And then it was a small school so she started rumors about me like how I wasn't legal and all these things so it was kind of heartbreaking.

She had been one of the popular kids within her high school; however, the rumors about her undocumented status changed the dynamic she had with her peers. Afterwards, she received a voicemail with this message: "You're lucky that we don't call Arpaio on you to go get you out of your house." In another incident, Zara was grilled by her White boyfriend's sister once she learned of Zara's status. "How can you be dating someone like that when you're off fighting for your country?" These acts of racist nativism positioned her as not only outside of the majority, but also as someone unworthy of having a relationship with a 'real' American.

The culmination of realities working against Zara's social mobility had detrimental effects. "After high school, I was a little rebellious because I was really upset." Instead of a full

ride to a university, she started working while struggling with depression about no longer being a student. She recalls her emotional state:

> It was a very bad and ugly feeling because it was like anger. I was like, this doesn't make any sense; I did everything they told me I was supposed to do. I went to school, I got the best grades, I helped the community, I was in student leadership. I did all the things and now you are telling me I can't go to school.

Zara, like many DREAMers, lived her life believing in the American myth of meritocracy. She talks freely about her bouts of depression and her struggles as she changed schools often. She was fully aware of how her undocumented status influenced housing and mobility. In 2010, she was due to her depression. This experience also resulted in a diagnosis of Lupus. "And I don't know if it was that I was depressed that I got sick or I got sick because I was depressed." Regardless, the diagnosis spurned her and, "after that I made it an oath, like, you know what, I'm not going to give up." In the years following high school, she struggled to create a patchwork of resources that would get her to college.

Zara used her self-motivation and continued to push herself slowly as she enrolled in classes at Estrella Mountain Community College (EMCC). She did this not only for her own benefit, but also to serve as an example for her five younger siblings. Despite her enrollment, she continued to face roadblocks. Her academic abilities resulted in placement test scores high enough for qualification for a prestigious 2-year scholarship with the community college district. "And the counselor was like, she was looking at my scores, and she was like, oh perfect you can sign up for the Presidential Scholarship; you don't have to pay anything." This was Zara's first experience in higher education admitting that she did not have the necessary documentation to take advantage of an opportunity that she had earned. The policy told her that her ability to test

well was of no value because of her status. Regardless, Zara enrolled in courses taking one or two classes at a time as she qualified for the in-state tuition rate, but only as a less than half-time student. This tuition discrepancy placed her into a different category than her high school peers, one that stunted her trajectory. Zara's family supported her in her educational pursuits, but she laments, "My parents weren't very educated on what I could do and they, even though they supported me, they weren't good guidance" – a reality that accompanies the lack of guidance at school, which resulted in her feeling alone.

Zara guarded her undocumented identity at the community college before DACA emerged. "I wasn't scared that they would report me but I didn't want to be put in that position of being discriminated or feeling like I was being discriminated against." Following the DACA announcement, Zara remained protective of her status. "I was always precautioned, like precautioned about who was helping me because I knew it was going to come up and I don't like to be put in that situation like who are they going to be or how are they going to react." The DACA announcement changed how she interacted with college employees. She later identified two Hispanic advisors on campus that she found were knowledgeable about DACA, something she never encountered with White staff, and she sought out those individuals for help when utilizing student services. Although legally she could receive in-state tuition, but not state or federal aid available to her peers, she did not perceive herself as holding the same level of value as a student to the White employees. Zara notes that without DACA, she may not have earned her associate's degree, "especially because like I said at this point, like my enthusiasm was starting to fade a little bit."

For Zara, being able to return and enroll in school as a full-time student, for the first time and because of DACA, made her feel, "like a real college student." She notes that her attitude

changed and she began speaking about the DREAM Act in her classes even when it meant she would be confronted with racist or nativist attitudes from her peers and faculty. She began to feel empowered and spoke up to address other marginalized groups by challenging a peer about the use of a term considered derogatory to the gay community. "And then someone was like, yeah, and illegals like to be called undocumented. And then I guess I really did feel bad. I didn't say anything, I was just kind of like, I didn't say anything about it."

Being subjected to disparaging labels was not a one-time experience for Zara. She recalls that during introductions on the first day of class, students were asked to share something from their book bags that told a story about them; so, she proudly and boldly displayed her DACA card. She remembers there was a brief discussion around status. During the discussion, the instructor shared that she was a former prison employee and told the class she and her former co-workers used the term, "deportables" to describe the undocumented inmate population. Not only did the instructor not correct the student for using marginalizing, insulting language, she, in her position of authority, reinforced the language by introducing and validating another derogatory term. Zara, reflecting on labels, considers the history behind terms. "So, for example, like nigger or faggot or homosexual or illegal you know, all of those words are given by the oppressor or the other side." On the day she shared her DACA card, the faculty member led the classroom.

Recently, Zara graduated from community college with a degree in Communication Studies. She is self-educated on many of the legal policies in Arizona that directly affect her and other undocumented individuals; she has even considered attending law school. There are no immediate plans, however, because she cannot currently afford university tuition. When she participated in the community college graduation in May 2014, Zara wore a DREAM Act button on her robe. As she crossed the stage and shook congratulatory hands, a Governing Board

member asked her if she was a DREAMer, and she proudly replied in the affirmative. She posted to social media that day and beamed that, “he even commented on my post on Facebook when I put the pictures up.”

“I never really came out and said, I’m undocumented to, until after I was graduated, until I came to this group.” Zara speaks of the relief of finding ADAC, which offers her moral support within her activist network:

> This is like my family, everyone understands me here. Like sometimes, it’s not like we talk about it, but it’s a given, like everybody knows, been through it, so we can relate to how we feel and you don’t have to hide who you are or feel like you’re less than anybody because you understand so it was really good, I’m really thankful for being able to find this group of people.

Zara acknowledges that DACA influenced her coming to ADAC. When DACA was announced, Zara was eager to apply. She notes the experience was like, “a trip down memory lane” as she was required to collect documents such as school records from most of her life. When she went to have her biometrics prepared, she recalls that when she was required to remove her shoes, “I was wearing two different colored socks and the guy made fun of me, the security guard.” She also remembers meeting another DREAMer there and remembers, “She was really excited.”

DACA was an expensive endeavor for Zara. In addition to the DACA fee, “I paid 12 hundred dollars for the attorney.” Following the work and cost that came with applying, she recalls:

> And then I got a return notice saying that is was denied and that was so scary and it was because the attorney didn't put a copy of my money order inside of it. They were like, no form of payment. I was like, oh my God I just got ripped off. I was like freaking out. But they fixed it.

Being able to share these experiences with others who could relate became an important social mechanism for Zara. With ADAC, she began by slowly attending the general meetings and getting a better understanding of the purpose as an organization. Now, Zara is leading a voting initiative and spends time canvassing neighborhoods as she encourages others to register to vote and discusses issues important to her.

Zara's initial activity with the DREAMer movement was activism; however, she did not join any groups officially for a couple years. "In 2010, I went outside of McCain's office and attended some of the demonstrations there with ADAC, and then also when the SB1070 came out I went to the big marches downtown and stayed the night out there." As she struggled to integrate into society as an adult, facing obstacles in her educational endeavors, Zara encountered a niche where she was not met with conflict and resistance associated with her identity. Now, she enthusiastically takes on responsibilities for the group. "I'm leading the campaign right now for civic engagement," Zara notes of her leadership role in a voting initiative.

She is an active advocate for the education rights of DREAMers. She is part of a small group challenging the Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) to make tuition more affordable at the state universities. Zara acknowledges that change sometimes occurs in small stages, and says she understands the plan to, "hold their hand and bring them down the path slowly…they're talking about the subsidy principles but again, we're taxpayers and we're feeding into that, at least I

have been for years." This uncertainty, coupled with the contentious political climate of the state, wears on Zara's optimism concerning the prospects of securing in-state tuition at the universities for DREAMers:

> This is a Republican state and everything here is like, Arizona feels like they have to hold their ground on immigration and they don't want to loosen up on anything which is really sad because for example the ABOR has the ability to start changing some of that, the public perception of immigrants and really help the state become progressive instead of staying stuck in the grounds of, we're always going to be the state that does this instead of doing something that caters to that frame of thinking even if they might not completely agree with it instead of taking leadership and trying to move the state in the morally corrupt direction.

This lack of support from decision makers at the university adds to the frustration of slow progress. This is particularly poignant when it concerns the human right of receiving an education. However, Zara admits that she plays "devil's advocate" at times when considering who from the larger undocumented community should qualify for in-state tuition and how guidelines should be established. "I think of the other side, like how would that be monitored?"

She speaks to the responsibilities she feels. "I do this type of work and be an activist because I don't want other kids or other young people or anybody to ever feel the way that I felt when I was at my lowest point." She adds how liberating the experience of coming out was for her once she found a community where she felt safe:

> I was here with ADAC and I wasn't scared to be who I am anymore. And it sounds funny when you say that because it's like you had some kind of deformity or something but it's just a part of you or where you came from and you're unfortunately labeled that way so you become, you know.

Once Zara was a DACA recipient, she felt obligated to contribute efforts to the larger undocumented community. "I feel like what I do is an obligation, I don't know if that sounds weird but yeah, I feel like I'm obligated to do it because of the work that came before me and because there's still a lot of work ahead and if there weren't those people before me putting in that work you know those efforts like DACA never would have happened."

Zara also experiences stress over a safety net that could deteriorate at any time. She reflects on potential outcomes:

> It is a scary thought because again it's uncertainty. You don't know what's going to happen. You could be doing great, you know you could be in school, have a job and all then all of a sudden something happens, you never know, they could overturn the order, you can't have your DACA anymore.

While waiting for comprehensive immigration reform, Zara notes that, she is cautiously optimistic about being DACAmented and that its temporary impact is not preventing her from pursuing and working towards her goals. In her mind, she recognizes that, "in the meantime anything could happen your DACA could get taken away and you're back at square one."

Doing her best to examine multiple sides of issues, Zara views the matter from the perspective of the employer and the DACAmented employee. She does not consider the issue as something that would limit the type of job she could pursue. She admits that employers might be leery of hiring a DACAmented worker, given the short-term nature of the employment permit.

Zara also expressed concern about Phoenix employers who might be familiar with migrant worker permits, which also have time caveats; but she worries that DACA may make employers even more skeptical because it is unlike other existing programs and is under constant scrutiny.

Zara ties immigration issues to her feelings of guilt concerning access for the larger undocumented community—the controversy is riddled with hype, which creates many highs and lows among those in the community. She laments that politicians can be very anti-immigrant and that those who profess to be pro-immigrant speak of implementing changes that are several years out, leaving undocumented individuals in a state of limbo, and possibly a risk of deportation. These are stressful emotions for communities to endure, especially when strained emotions affect their daily existence and threaten families' efforts to stay together. Comprehensive Immigration Reform seems too big to succeed, while the DREAM Act serves as a consolation prize to the larger undocumented community for not passing it. The issues of exclusion are not woven into the discussion; however, Zara bluntly explains her reaction to this isolation from society as she speaks about her community, which functions as a family, "How are you going to be selfish?" to leave some out.

Aimee

When reviewing her interview transcript for the first time, Aimee asks, "Does it say in there that I'm really fit?" Aimee delivered her story more cautiously than the other participants did, perhaps an ingrained response to protect herself and her status as she spoke to a White researcher and community college faculty member. Aimee wears glasses with thick black frames and is often more of an observer than a participant is when ADAC functions are happening, even though her role in keeping ADAC social media current is a large one. Aimee took and developed photographs that hang in the ADAC offices of individuals with captions about being

undocumented and proud. Although quiet, she cracks sly jokes. At the end of our first interview, which focused on her experiences as a student, I asked her if she had anything to add, and without missing a beat she said, "I'd like to thank my Mom," and then she laughed heartily.

She left Mexico City at the age of 7, headed for Phoenix. She attended school in the affluent suburb of Scottsdale. "I was just, I mean I was a kid, you know, so I didn't really think about that too much," she reflects on being a Latina in predominantly White schools. She was active on the basketball team where she was one of two Latinas and says she did not consider race among her teammates. However, she notes that when she stopped participating in extracurricular activities during her last years of high school, she started noticing racial differences among her peers.

Her status was not something that was shared with her White peers and she knew only a couple of other undocumented students. "Because it was senior year, it was time to like figure out, like, oh you're in the same situation." She did not feel confident navigating from compulsory to higher education, but wanted to be a college student because, "my mom brought me here for a better future." She found help transitioning to college from a high school teacher.

"The only teacher that knew I was undocumented was my art teacher." She cannot identify how her teacher discovered her status, but found this particular woman to be someone she could trust. "And she was Australian, well she is Australian, so she was always trying to identify herself with myself or like other students who weren't like, I guess, natives from here." This teacher encouraged and helped Aimee to sign up for dual enrollment with Scottsdale Community College, where she would continue with her education after high school. She is pursuing a Design degree; although she has varied interests, strives for formal and informal learning, and is interested in food and nutrition. "I tell my Mom that if it wasn't for Design, I

would probably be a chef." When asked what her specialty is, she laughs, "I make good sandwiches."

Reflecting on her status as a young student, Aimee remembers:

> I knew I was undocumented you know, 'cause I knew I didn't grow up here but I didn't really know what it like really meant. Just because there wasn't a lot of undocumented or Latino kids in my school so I was pretty much doing like what everyone else was doing so I didn't really see it as a big deal.

When asked if she thought she was treated any differently in general or by students or her teachers she said, "No, I don't think so." However, she notes:

> But when I stopped playing [sports] at the end of my junior year is when I really noticed the differences. And then, you know high school, there's a bunch of little different groups and that is when I was more aware of the differences and how like people were and kind of a thing.

Aimee notes that at this time she also began thinking about the undocumented youth in the grades below hers. Aimee believes that being Latino has a negative effect on transition rates into higher education:

> I think it's part of culture. And it's part of the political climate that we're on and I see like with some of my friends they're like, oh, he finished high school, he needs to go to work because that's how you were raised in México. You only went to school until you could and then you went and worked and provided for your family. So I think that's one of the reasons why you're here, because of that kind of culture thing. And another thing is that they don't see a lot of, a lot of I guess role models or roles for them to figure out, hey I can do that, too.

Aimee reflects on the deficit model thinking that occurs among educators who may not encourage Latino students to seek higher education achievements or to address the systemic structures that support these low achievement rates.

As Aimee transitioned to community college, another difference emerged, as she was getting ready to attend school. "They were like, do you have an ID, I was like, no, then you don't qualify for in-state tuition, then you have to pay this amount." She recalls that the college employees were, "just straight to the point." She describes the encounter procedurally and adds, "I wasn't treated any differently or anything." As sterile as she found those she needed to assist her to become a student, she was equally disengaged from campus life outside of the classroom. She admits that she did not utilize her instructors' office hours, "because there hasn't been a reason for me to then I don't." In terms of making friends at the college, "No, again, because I just go in and leave." When asked about using campus non-academic services or activities, she notes:

> I have a couple times like eaten at the cafeteria. Well, not really eaten at the cafeteria, just really grabbed stuff and walk to class eating kind of a thing. And activities, I haven't really. I went to a poem reading thing but that was because that teacher told us we needed to go there for class.

Aimee delivers the poem reading recollection with a chuckle. Of school in general she says, "I just want to go to college, get a job, the American way kind of thing." Even though she was experiencing new barriers to education, Aimee continued to play her part in doing everything she was supposed to do.

Aimee does not share a high level of enthusiasm or excitement that many of her status peers have about the DACA Executive Order. Much of this surrounds her acquisition of another

type of identification that allows her to function in a more open manner in society, a tax identification number. She learned about this option through a workshop held by Carmen Cornejo of ADAC. Ms. Cornejo informed DREAMers that they could have a Limited Liability Company (LLC) in Arizona, and then start their own business. Aimee was excited about this opportunity. Although she admitted she was nervous when she first registered with the state, she recalls how eagerly she chased after this opportunity:

> I had never been inside a, like that building and then they asked for an ID and I gave, I remember they asked for an ID if you were going to pay for by card but I was going to pay cash. So it was kind of scary because I was like what are they going to say but it went pretty smooth, it wasn't anything. The people there are pretty much like getting papers and stamping them and then giving them to you, so they don't really know.

Aimee and another DREAMer started a business in 2012 where her partner did web services and she focused on design. She was able to buy him out in 2013, noting that she wanted to focus more on creative aspects than traditional marketing. "Targeting different areas; what I do now is like multicultural and millennial marketing."

Aimee had a different perspective on DACA and employment than her participant peers, comparing the upcoming renewal to any other procedural obligation, "it's like going to the doctor's, you have to do it, or like the dentist, you know, you have to make an appointment and you have to go and go because you have to do it." She plans to renew her DACA; although she notes, "I didn't have it before and I've survived for like 10 years."

She has found her niche in ADAC as she plays a significant role in its social media efforts. She has been involved in other ways, including creating application drives and helping others to complete their DACA applications even before completing her own. Although she

claims DACA has not been a huge factor in her life, she does note that DACA allows her to take more classes at the community college. While Aimee continues to grow her business, she notes that without DACA she would not have returned to Scottsdale Community College (SCC). "I don't think so because it's super expensive so it was either, like feed myself, my mom or go to school for one class." She indicates that while she never acted in immoral or illegal ways while at SCC, she felt more comfortable being a DACAmented student. "With DACA you're not like, deportable."

In terms of legislative struggles, Aimee explains that, "the schools have already voiced their opinion on how they're going to treat DACA people so I think they should just leave it at that." Although taking advantage of current policy by utilizing in-state tuition, Aimee is unaware of individuals within the community college system that are supporting her rights. When asked if she was curious about that she reflects, "If we needed to talk to them because of in-state tuition or something, and we needed to go advocate or something, it would be good to have that contact or that knowledge."

Aimee states that her activism with and for the undocumented community is the reason she does not participate more at the community college. She deflects her lack of college participation outside of the classroom with a comment on activism work. "I feel like there's a lot of stuff that needs to be done." Initially, Aimee conducted research on her own for groups that supported the undocumented community. She located OneArizona, a non-profit advocacy network, which aims to increase civic engagement and voter participation in the Latino community. She volunteered to employ social media for OneArizona, and later a member of that organization connected her with ADAC. Consequently, two senior members of ADAC who heard she was web savvy approached Aimee. She laughed as she recalls the first meeting:

> We actually met at a Starbucks by my house. I thought they were going to kidnap me but, that they were going to kill me or something. I told Dulce, you sent a very threatening message that day. Because she was like, 'let's meet', because Dulce is a very direct, a very direct person. 'Let's meet', and I was like, okay, for what? Because I was doing some sort of like stuff on my own before ADAC because I didn't know ADAC existed. When I went and introduced myself to them, I had some ideas because I hadn't heard from them so I was telling them that they need a presence, to be out there. Not only in the community but outside, to the outside public and then from there it was just an easy transition.

Currently, Aimee is out and active because she wants her community to be better informed. "One of the things that I want to see in the Latino community overall is the education and their involvement level in whatever it is, whether its school or political or whatever, for them to be informed." She works towards this now goal now as she develops social media for undocumented organizations, while also increasing her creative, profession skills through art.

In an effort to extend beyond the Latino community, Aimee argues that the DREAMer's story can be an effective tool to achieve transformations because every story is compelling and capable of reaching broader audiences. "The outside community doesn't completely get it and I feel like they think we're all the same kind of thing, we fall into that category of 'illegals' and I feel like they're not very educated on what the DREAM Act is." However, she also comments that the labels that advocates use may actually be more detrimental than helpful in efforts to reach the masses. "Dropping those cliché words like 'DREAMer' or 'undocumented' or that because I feel that when people hear that, they already have an opinion to it, and they're like, oh

no, so they just back away from the topic." She believes mainstream media is a powerful method to connect with others:

> Because if they can understand that like me, you know, I went to school with their kids and I was pretty much like them and if they can see that we're just like everyone else, you know, I feel like they would be more inclined to just be in favor or that and then if it comes out in a bill or you have to call your Representative, they'll be, they'll remember those stories, they'll remember that kind of a thing and be like, oh, this is a good thing, and they can start some non-direct advocacy.

Although, Aimee claimed that she felt just like the other children that she attended school with in the K12 school system, she now realizes that they did not see her as their equal.

In terms of the temporary reprieve, Aimee worries that DACA and in-state tuition may go away after the next presidential election. "It's that same kind of sentiment that I have if the next president doesn't accept it or doesn't keep it in place." She credits the initial 2-year reprieve as a positive message to the majority. "I think that people are starting to see that it's a good thing, that it's not a bad thing to give people a work permit, that it's not a bad thing to have them work because they are starting to puzzle those two pieces together." Aimee hopes the public realizes that the 2 years of DACA did not damage the county—a realization that the public "might be more perceptive towards having it again, or having the next President not take it."

Xavier

Xavier will be the first one to tell you that he is a charming person. Like Tobias, he has a big, bright smile that he displays often. Despite the many obstacles that have plagued him, he remains a very positive young man and tries to serve as a father figure for his four younger brothers.

He speaks fondly of growing up in Mesa, Arizona. In the over 20 years that he has been there, he explains that the city has changed a lot, but always felt like "home." He further states that he does not know his birthplace. "I'm so comfortable here, I don't want to leave." For Xavier, childhood meant moving around to different schools; however, his upbeat disposition only recalls the positive memories. He says his elementary and middle schools were very diverse and very accepting. "There was, as kids might look different but we didn't care about that as kids, we just want to have fun."

Xavier says he loved school and attending Mesa High School, despite his poor academic record. "I was smart, I was just lazy." He chose not to participate in extracurricular activities, but fondly recalls spending time with his high school friends. Xavier first realized his status when he wanted to try for a job at Jack in the Box in his sophomore year of high school. "I wanted to apply and I asked my Mom, can I have my social? And she said, you don't have one. And I was like, well that sucks." He also chose not to share his status with his friends or teachers at school. "I was afraid and under the illusion that no one else was in my situation." In addition to feeling alone, he did not think others would be able to do anything to help him. While he was still in high school and unwilling to reveal his status, he would redirect conversations to protect himself:

> They would call me up and say, hey, let's go to the movies. We'll meet you there. I didn't want to drive because if I got caught, I would get into a lot of problems. So, I would tell them, maybe next time or I don't have gas right now.

"To be honest, my drive to graduate went down," Xavier recalls of coming to understand what his status meant when he was in high school.

He admits he was naïve in his teens and did not realize the full significance of his status. Although his employment limitations were a disappointment, he continued to do the things he

thought he should be doing to participate in the American Dream, going to school and thinking about college. A Sunday morning in 2006 clarified how the dream was trickier for him.

On his way to church, "I was, like I said, I was doing everything right." Then, he was involved in a serious car accident that put him in a coma. He does not remember the accident but, "my mom says, cause I was in a coma, I was in a medically induced coma and I was on life support they said, they told my mom that there were two options." The first option, paying the exorbitant medical bills, was not feasible for his mother so Xavier succumbed to the second option and was deported to México. His mother, who was pregnant at the time, arranged for him to go to the home of her estranged husband, Xavier's stepfather. Ironically, Xavier and his mom had tragically lost Xavier's birth father to a car accident just a few years prior. Eventually, his mom joined them there. He awoke from the coma about a month later on a rare day when his mother left the railing down on his bed when she left for the store. He recalls:

> I woke up from my coma and I had no knowledge of my accident. Last thing I remembered was one week before my accident, which is my homecoming dance. And so I tried to get up. When I tried to get up, I hit the floor.

Xavier had an emergency tracheotomy after the accident meaning that in addition to not having any strength in his legs, he had no voice. He went in and out of the coma for a while. The care he received in Arizona and México was inadequate. In Arizona, his family could not afford the care and thus he did not receive what he needed. In México, he says a lack of records on him is to blame. "So I was John Doe here and Juan Doe there," he jokes.

Once he was healthy enough to travel, he and his mom returned to Arizona. The accident and subsequent deportation to México meant he was unable to finish his senior year at Mesa High School with his friends because he had missed a significant portion of his final semester

and now was in a wheelchair, learning how to adapt to changed physical conditions. Consequently, the accident allowed his friends and others at the school to learn about his undocumented status.

He said his friends who had not been privy to his status, "don't care and are on my side." He found that the revelation of his documentation status led to some individuals being more thoughtful about the lives of undocumented individuals in the United States. The father of one of Xavier's high school friends told him the undocumented status does not really matter unless it affects someone you know. "But when people don't know about you," Xavier posits, "people don't care if it doesn't affect them in either a positive or negative way." Although Xavier credits his circle of friends from high school as a resource for social connections and information, he accepts that they fall into different categories. "I'm over here and they're over there." Although he felt supported by those in his life who learned of his status due to his accident, it also meant acknowledging the new terms by which he had to live as an unauthorized adult.

Ever the positive thinker, he figured out how to finish high school while adjusting to limited mobility and speaking after the tracheotomy. He found an online program to complete his studies. He admits that he toiled through it, but after 3 years, he earned his high school diploma. Then, he set his sights on college.

Xavier's first experience with higher education was accompanying a friend to her class at Mesa Community College (MCC) and speaking with staff who worked in enrollment services. He enjoyed the environment and experiencing the differences between high school and college. He spoke with employees from many departments and as he had done previously, tried to do everything as he was supposed to do, including the admission processes. His placement test scores were just a few points away from qualifying for the President's Scholarship, which would

cover his tuition for four semesters. The test is one he could take again at no cost. The pride he felt after he received his test scores quickly changed as he was forced to share his status. The promise of the prestigious scholarship was immediately rescinded once he admitted his undocumented status. Even though this incident told Xavier that his testing abilities and academic potential meant less than those of other students did, he was determined to find a way to be a student at MCC.

Xavier also found himself without the option to keep his status to himself when he got to the Financial Aid Office. He continued to do everything he was told to do, which meant that after taking his placement tests that he enrolled in classes and completed the Free Federal Application for Student Assistance (FAFSA). Later, he went to the Financial Aid Office to inquire about his FAFSA. Xavier remembers the front desk employee was:

> Giving me a face and well he walks over to his supervisor, talks to his supervisor, goes back to me and goes, 'well there seems to be a problem, you were flagged and you will receive a notice that will either ask you to provide a passport or an ID.' Well, that sucks. And I just left.

While Xavier states the employee was not discourteous, he notes, "I wouldn't say he was really nice but he wasn't unkind, he was just like, whatever." Xavier imagines that no alternative sources of funding were mentioned to him because the employees were protecting themselves "We don't want to do anything because we don't want people to say stuff" about assisting undocumented students.

Even after the disheartening experience with the Financial Aid office, Xavier continued to take the proper steps to enroll hoping that the Disability Resource Center could help him. In the Disability Resources office, he opted to keep his status to himself initially:

> When they don't know something that everyone is for or against, they treat you like any other human being and then they learn your status and, status at the disability center, they didn't know my status and they were really nice to me and it kind of scares me to share my status because everyone wants to be treated nicely. And I might be treated unfairly because of that. It's not right.

Xavier chose not to share his status in the Disability Resource office for two reasons: 1) He wanted the congenial behavior to continue; and 2) he wanted to separate his status from his disability. He wanted to use these college resources because "I'm disabled not because I'm illegal."

He has taught himself on the education pathway he wishes to pursue at Mesa MCC. "I might not be registered but I know what to do, I know what classes to take." He has identified a certificate in computer science that is 22 credits and can rattle off the cost per credits and the estimated book costs. In the meantime, he feeds his thirst for education with Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) options while searching for scholarships for which he would qualify.

Though currently enrolled exclusively in free online courses, Xavier is hopeful that DACA will increase access to higher education for all DREAMers. However, he sees the temporary status of the policy as a reason to avoid higher education. "I don't want to start school and not be able to finish it because you can't really get a certificate with half education." Xavier reflects on how he felt when he learned about the in-state tuition announcement:

> Personally, I thought, progress. This is progress. This is giving people hope. This is giving the people, giving DREAMers the right to a higher education because they came here of no fault of their own. They might not have papers but a piece of paper doesn't really tell you who you are and every morning we pledge allegiance to the same flag, we watch cartoons with our friends. We might not be American per se but we're Americans in every way except paperwork. Maricopa giving in-state tuition, yes, it's progress it's giving the people what they want and what they deserve and I'm hoping other counties, other states other, I hope every country, every state in this country opens their eyes and realizes that we're not here to mooch, we're not here to learn and leave, we here cause we want to learn and we want to help.

Xavier's reaction embodies the belief that many DREAMers grow up as American with no caveat.

Xavier views DACA as a way for some DREAMers to be more inclusive of their documented peers, but it maintains distinctions between those communities. Though his high school friends know his status, he is reluctant to talk about DACA because of the misunderstandings surrounding the DREAM Act and the short-term nature and limitations pertaining to DACA, which his documented friends do not comprehend. "I don't tell them I have DACA; I tell them I have a permit." Xavier qualifies his current, but temporary documented status by omitting the acronym. He believes that those outside of the undocumented community simply do not care as much as he does. He also believes that using the term *permit* allows others to think he holds some special privilege such as obtaining a driver's license.

Becoming DACAmented prompted him to find people who could understand his situation. "I reached out to a lot of immigration places like Chicanos por la Causa or ADAC and

we were able to raise the funds because we were able to share my story." Finding this network offered him financial and informational resources as well as a place where he could be completely open about himself. The individuals he has met through these organizations have provided him with opportunities to engage as a member of a larger community through activities such as immigrant rights rallies.

Xavier feels his story is compelling. His ability to share his story led to an important, mutually beneficial scenario. Advocacy groups were able to relay his tragic and touching experiences, which led to Xavier being able to get DACA:

> Because I have such an incredible story, a lot of people want to hear it and want to write about it and so I forget who but someone who was working for a Hispanic news article, they wanted to write about me. So they did. And the lawyer who is now my lawyer, he read my article. He contacted me and told me he could help me out.

The attorney worked pro bono on the DACA application. The article also meant contact from Carmen Cornejo, a high profile advocate for DREAMers. Through social media, he learned that Chicanos por la Cause wanted to speak with him:

> She sent me a Facebook message, hey Chicanos wants to talk to you. And she took me to them, she offered her time, she took me to them and took pictures. I felt like a celebrity. I received my check and I called up my lawyer and told him, guess what? And he was like, all right! Every time I talk about it, it was such a happy moment.

The organization Chicanos por la Causa presented him with a check for $465, the fee for a DACA application. Sharing his story led to information capital that allowed him to gain knowledge and assistance about how to navigate through the DACA application process as well as the financial resources for attorney and application fees.

These resources were crucial to Xavier's DACA application because he had a potentially troubling circumstance threatening his DACA approval— his absence from the United States following his accident. He credits his legal assistance for his DACA success:

> God bless my lawyer who reached out to me. He worked his magic and made it, made me qualify for it. He, I guess, showed that my absence was under humanitarian reasons so it wasn't really affected and when I received my permit in the mail, I was overjoyed. I was, I called the moment I received it, I can get a job. Still don't have a job but I'm looking.

It took tragic circumstances to create the story that led to Xavier's legal assistance and funding, which he needed to acquire DACA. Beyond his own narrative that describes how he received assistance to receive DACA, he believes the stories connect DREAMers to one another, enlighten, and educate the documented community.

"We all have different stories," he notes, "but if you hear the very beginning of the story it's pretty much the same." He laments that the majority's idea of why his family and other families are in the United States paints the wrong picture:

> I share my story many times I always say that my Mom brought me here to pursue my dreams, she didn't bring me here to get, to become a, what's the word? She didn't bring me here to get discriminated. She brought me here to go to school and get opportunities she never had because they say, I hear it all the time, parents bring us here for their benefit but in reality our parents bring us here to have the opportunities they never had. They were willing to sacrifice everything for our future and that's what makes me sad that people don't see that.

The human aspects of the struggles, he believes, challenge the nativist rhetoric, which contends that undocumented individuals arrive in the U.S. to abuse social services. He adds that other

misconceptions lead to erroneous notions that undocumented people fail to contribute to taxes and do not work hard in school. DACAmented individuals provide examples of how young immigrant youth are eager to work and obtain their degrees in higher education. However, they are on a clock.

"The temporariness in all forms; permit-wise, law suit-wise, it's just scary all around," explains Xavier. Then, Xavier reflects upon the constant sense of urgency that the temporary nature of DACA stirs within him:

> Yeah, yes it did because it's temporary. It's only two years until renewal and I don't know I don't know even if renew it, if I can get accepted. So yeah, it kind of motivates you. It's only temporary but it's a temporary motivation.

Reflecting more about the temporariness, Xavier admits, "well, temporariness because it's temporary it fills me with fear because I think, well it's only temporary if I end up losing it the government is going to know where I am and who I am and by the snap of their fingers they can deport me." He admits he is fearful because, "they can take it all away from me in the blink of an eye." When asked if he thinks about that potential scenario a lot he notes, "It's something I don't speak about with anyone especially my Mom because if I tell that to my Mom she's going to freak out so the last thing I want is for my Mom to freak out cause I want to be good." The pressure to be good and do the right thing, as he and others did during their youth in pursuit of the American Dream, continues to manifest itself in different ways in adulthood.

Xavier believes having DACA could mean deportation for him if the Executive Order ends because the government would now have information about him and his potentially pending unauthorized status. He admits that he is anxious beyond what could happen to him and speaks of his family's unknown future:

> I'm scared for me, for my Mom, and for my brothers because my brothers are, like as I said, a mixed-status family. My Mom and me are undocumented, they're documented, if something happens to us, they have no one else.

Although he strives to remain positive, Xavier worries about what will occur after the next presidential election:

> DACA has, having DACA even though it's a two-year permit, only a temporary solution has inspired me to reach out for my dreams and I'm a pretty optimistic person. I always see the good in everything. Even though DACA is temporary thing, it's going to have an effect, hopefully not when Obama is out. I think something better is going to happen, something permanent. It's not now unfortunately but in the future and yeah, that's what I believe. Some people might think otherwise, but that's them and that's not the way I think.

Although the statement is sanguine, it is infused with the most significant DACA reality: it is temporary. These thoughts, like his worries about starting an education he cannot finish, also keep him from moving forward. "It's a waiting game; I want to wait before things get worse before it gets better because I want to know what I'm going to because I'm not in a position to take that much risk."

As the eldest of five boys, which includes a 19-year age difference between him and his youngest sibling, Xavier states that he feels the need to play a father-figure role. He tries to perform this role with his next immediate brother who is considering higher education now. Even though Xavier could not use the FAFSA, he wants to help this brother to apply, "so I'm thinking, well he's my brother we can have the same credentials but he has the status." Xavier

maintains his positive attitude; and though it is slow going, he moves his life forward as he can. As he thinks about his future, he hopes for a better life:

> Well having a family, not being in a wheelchair. I want to be able to because the only reason I'm in this position, I'm disabled is because I'm not a citizen because I can't afford the treatment. I need a few surgeries. Physical therapy would help a lot. I want to better myself like everyone does. I want to be able to help people, I want to visit different countries, I want to travel, I want to have a little house on a cliff in Maine. I have so many dreams.

Counterstory Analyses

Examining the lives of Tobias, Zara, Aimee, and Xavier offers an extraordinary opportunity to explore how individuals with exceptional circumstances navigate their experiences. Though their stories are unique, similar themes emerged across interviews as participants discussed their lives. Categories that surfaced from their narratives included how education shaped their identity development; how that educational impact on their identities changed from elementary and high school to higher education; their view of the idea and pursuit of the American Dream; and their roles as adults within their communities. They shared the salience of bicultural identity, which included the structures fluctuating between two worlds and leading to a complex sense of self (Castro-Salazar & Bagely, 2010; Ellis & Chen, 2013). They were subjected to covert and overt racism during their education. Significant stories about either being outed as undocumented, coming out as undocumented, or both developed. They thoughtfully discussed how DACA positively and negatively affected their lives. The participants functioned in a nativist society by developing various forms of capital and methods of resistance. Grouping these categories into connected experiences produced three major

themes: 1) educational experiences that include hiding undocumented identity and being outed as undocumented; 2) civic engagement as spaces to come out as undocumented and grow personally and professionally; and 3) the unintended outcomes of DACA, which include the anxiety that accompanies its temporariness and the guilt that the reprieve is limited within the larger undocumented communities. Their counterstories challenge policies that subordinate and disenfranchise certain groups and disrupt storylines that maintain the majority's perspective (Milner, 2013). They highlight fortitude required of those in their unique circumstances.

Theme One: Educational experiences which include hiding undocumented identity and being outed as undocumented.

Tobias, Zara, Aimee, and Xavier revealed that they realized they were that they were undocumented as children and deliberately chose not to share that information or kept it closely guarded within their education settings. Sharing status with school friends, peers, and school officials, whom they thought they could trust, led to painful stories of betrayal, racist nativism, and obstruction to educational success. Receipt of DACA changed the dynamics of how status was shared and received in higher education—typically, with mixed messages. These encounters affected how they viewed themselves and navigated through school. Although they recognized that they had barriers their documented peers did not, they continued to pursue the American Dream, which they consider as achievable through the idea of educational meritocracy.

The ways in which they participated in and imagined their roles in the American Dream focused upon the perceived benefits that would come from educational achievements. Graduating from high school and transitioning to higher education was viewed as a means to an end even thought their ability to secure professional employment due to status was precarious. Each participant has a specific professional goal that they are focused upon that requires higher

education. For the participants, these dreams complement other traditional American lives including marriage and family.

Table 2

Participant Quotes from Theme 1

Participant	Realization and concealment of being an undocumented Latina/o	Transitioning into higher education	Sharing DACA status in higher education
Tobias	"I never told anyone that I was undocumented. That I'm from México. I never told anybody."	"I went in and I went out. I never formed a close relationship with anybody there mostly because I felt uncomfortable talking about my status with them."	"They kept calling it the DREAM Act. I was talking to one person and they were like, oh yeah, we've got a DREAM Act student here, can you help me out a little?"
Zara	"Ever since I was little, I kind of saw the, I started to see how Hispanics were segregated a little bit from other races."	"I was cautious about who I spoke to because, mostly because I didn't want them to make me feel bad. I wasn't scared that they would report me but I didn't want to be put in that position of being discriminated or feeling like I was being discriminated against."	"I was open about it versus before I was never open about it or my status or anything."
Aimee	"I knew I was undocumented you know, cause I knew I didn't grow up here but I didn't really know what it, like, really meant."	"I just want to go to college, get a job, the American way kind of a thing."	"After DACA, I recently went back to school."
Xavier	"And I was like, well, that sucks."	"I wanted to go to college. I want to educate myself in anything and everything. And I just want to be able to help people in my position or worse, both disabled and undocumented."	"This is giving the people, giving DREAMers, the right to higher education because they came here of no fault of their own."

Realization and concealment of being an undocumented Latina/o. The undocumented status and racial consciousness for participants were often realized following elementary education, where they felt safe, as though they belonged, and self-described as the same as the other children. Three of the participants indicated that they felt just like all the other children in elementary school and said as young children that they did not consider their positions as undocumented or Latina/o students in the Arizona system. The other participant was shown literal demarcations of race by spending time in high-income neighborhoods, where she realized no Brown or Black families lived.

Becoming aware of status and its significance signify a rite of passage for undocumented youth. Being identified by derogatory labels, either personally or collectively, related to status was a common experience for the participants in all levels of education. Racism, nativism, and media depictions of undocumented individuals in the United States often equate the terms with Latina/os, another part of their identity. They admitted to thinking of themselves or referring to themselves in the past by these disparaging terms; although, one participant noted that it was always bitter on her tongue. The internalized stigma of their status contributed to their hiding or closely guarding the status particularly in high school. This construction of their identity includes categorization as ‘illegal’ and ‘criminal,’ while many undocumented youth view themselves as individuals who have done nothing wrong, morally or lawfully (King & Punti, 2012). They navigated through life with this contradiction.

Even though they recognized that race and status affected their lives, participants retained the idea of achieving dreams through education. However, the belief that everyone has the same access and opportunities for success effectively maintains and reinforces the reproduction of whiteness rather than create equity (Castagno, 2014). As they struggled to understand that they

were not part of the majority, they learned coping strategies such as finding others outside of their educational systems to assist them in gathering higher education information and more importantly, social and emotional support. Although they embraced the idea of meritocracy through educational avenues, they felt compelled to hide their statuses from most classmates and school employees.

Transitioning into higher education. The shift into adulthood requires a comprehensive change of daily routines and the development of new survival skills and social patterns (Gonzales, 2011). The shift from high school to community college, where the majority of undocumented individuals pursuing higher education enroll, has a significant legal change that accompanies it. All through high school, undocumented individuals have a legal right to obtain and receive educational opportunities—regardless of status. However, these rights do not extend to higher education.

All participants pursued higher education before and after DACA, indicating their desire to further their education and prospects. Nevertheless, they all experienced barriers due to out-of -state tuition before DACA. This meant either not enrolling or severely limiting the number of classes they took. Three increased the number of classes they enrolled in immediately following DACA.

Participants maintained a shared reluctance to share and be open regarding their undocumented status, choosing to remain secretive or guard closely their statuses from faculty and staff as they entered college. They only shared their status with institutional employees when required by a college policy or procedure. DACAmented students in particular and DREAMers in general, encounter many issues concerning access due to a lack of knowledge by front line college employees as well as a lack of resources, often financial, for undocumented students.

This lack of information is often coupled with discrimination surrounding their status, ethnicity, or both. One participant noted that after struggling with White employees, she was only able to obtain the student services she needed after she identified a knowledgeable Latino ally in advising.

In the classroom, participants shared stories of being subjected to dehumanizing experiences after being outed or called derogatory names by classmates and faculty. Because of these negative experiences and lack of safe spaces to share their status, connections to faculty were not formed and no one spoke of making new friends on campus. Participation in extracurricular activities was minimal or nonexistent. The two graduates credit their success to self-motivation, which triumphed in spite of adversity.

Sharing DACA status in higher education. Although opposition is vocal and visible, the DREAMers in this study steadfastly believe in their rights to educational equity. The participants are appreciative that MCCCD is only charging them in-state tuition because they believe that action is the right action to take for their community. However, they also view this policy as a way to expose and fight against a system of exclusion towards Latina/os in the community. Three of the participants were able to take more classes as a direct result of access to in-state tuition.

Becoming DACAmented had various effects on the participants: for example, how and with whom they shared their status at the community college. Some participants told front line employees they had DACA when requesting in-state tuition, while others provided the work permit without the DACA context. Those who said they had DACA spoke about how college employees did not understand the difference between DACA and the DREAM Act.

Within the classroom, DACA provided burgeoning equity in terms of the right to be there and a sense of empowerment to participate as a DACAmented student. Two stories of sharing DACA status in a college class emerged; however, both were accompanied by offensive reactions from faculty and classmates. This was a shift, however, in sharing status.

DACA could have become the start of safe space for DREAMers to share status. As the in-state tuition policy developed, however, the work permit rather than the DACA identification card was requested for the purpose of tuition equity.

Theme One: Conclusion. The realization of being an undocumented Latina/o emerged during compulsory education, which required participants to develop exceptional navigation skills. Consequently, the individuals in this study used negative encounters to develop resourceful strategies for education while protecting their status information. In fact, learning to safeguard their status was a defense mechanism that all participants, at all levels of education and in all of their interactions with other students, faculty, and staff utilized. All persevered through high school, where their rights to education mirrored those of their documented peers, despite indelible differences of enduring racism and nativism. Levels of higher education success, where their rights to education become severely disjointed from their documented peers vary as racism and nativism now work in conjunction with institutional inequities.

Theme Two: Civic Engagement as Spaces to Come Out as Undocumented and Grow Personally and Professionally

Working with groups and organizations from the larger undocumented community has provided the participants with safe spaces that are lacking in other settings. They have developed themselves professionally and as leaders through civic engagement opportunities that they did not experience or feel comfortable seeking within higher education. The personal connections

that were lacking in the educational experiences were also found during these civic engagement opportunities. Within the secure embrace of these spaces, there was no longer a need to hide or guard status; they were free to be proud, undocumented youth advocating for change.

Table 3

Participant Quotes from Theme 2

Participant	Civic engagement as personal and professional development	Being out and civic engagement
Tobias	"I had a lot of different roles in ADAC. At first, I was just a member of Phoenix DREAMers and then I became the representative of Phoenix DREAMers. We held scholarship workshops and teaching kids how to do a personal statement. And then I was involved with the online team.	"Tom Horne actually wanted to meet with us. At his office. We're going to stand up, we're going to talk eye level and I was really nervous and I shared my story. And that's when I presented to him the petition and I read some of the comments that people had left asking him to drop the law suit."
Zara	"I'm leading the campaign right now for civic engagement so that will be open until November. I get some stipend income out of that."	"I was here with ADAC and I wasn't scared to be who I am anymore. So I think it's a liberating movement, coming out of the shadows movement is very liberating, it's empowering."
Aimee	"I did a campaign around that, work on their branding. The One Arizona Table was working with, and they needed my help with social media so I was managing the One Arizona Table through ADAC."	"The first time we canvassed was like 2011 and that was with Urban Revolution, which was a youth initiative to get people in the area to register to vote and to voice opinions on whatever was happening in the community."
Xavier	"I went to many of their meetings. I've met some interesting people. We have so and so planned, if you can help with this, and if I can help with something, I will."	"I reached out to a lot of immigration places like Chicanos por la Causa or ADAC and we were able to raise funds because we were able to share my story."

Civic engagement as personal and professional development. Most participants were engaged in activities outside the classroom, but in conjunction with schooling through high school. Though some participants had plans to engage at the community college, these intentions did not flourish on campus. Participation, with minor exceptions such as attending one club meeting, was not reported in higher education.

Transitioning into higher education and young adulthood was difficult emotionally and motivationally. Two participants credited their work as leaders and advocates on initiatives to remedy depression and to repair a deflated ego, respectfully. They became empowered as members of a community of undocumented individuals because that community enabled them to be open and fight for change. As young adults, the students in this study used skills acquired by being outside of the majority to reframe their experiences, notably leadership development through ADAC. They viewed this engagement as positive development personally and professionally.

The enhancement of positive attitudes through civic engagement factored into their identity development (Ellis & Chen, 2013). They became part of a larger group where being undocumented was not an exception and was accepted. There were friendships formed and community support framed around goals of social justice. They witnessed transformations that they felt were steps in the right direction, such as DACA, which motivated them to expand their activism efforts. This piecing together of various forms of capital serves as a collectivist model for empowerment (Enriquez, 2011).

Each participant felt supported in activism and educational endeavors by their families, although family willingness to share statuses varied. ADAC allow DREAMers to include their parents and families in collective efforts. Subgroups within this coalition that are run by

DREAMer parents and other undocumented adults, who have aged out of DACA eligibility, include Arizona Original DREAMers, DREAM Guardians, and Parents Youth in Action. They advocate while currently having no means to their own reprieve, exemplifying community wealth.

Civic engagement and activism for the undocumented community often revolves around the rights to education. They cultivate these skills while often relying on family for emotional support. Family members are often the champions for DREAMers to continue their education. The participants in the study developed a community wealth through this circular mode of resources.

Being out and civic engagement. Emotionally-charged coming out stories regarding status are crucial to dispelling deficit theories. Those surrounding educational rights highlight that undocumented youth are not only unwilling to learn English, but also demonstrate academic motivation (King & Punti, 2012). Openness in activism is an important part of growing the numbers of voices and in humanizing undocumented individuals and families. Public openness with status has demonstrated a transformation from hiding, enabling youth to coming out and to enter adulthood. Revealing their status has created a pathway for participants to grow in many areas.

ADAC has been a tremendous asset for participants in many aspects, including professional development, friendships, safe spaces to share statuses, and an informational resource for education and the securing of DACA. Although not exclusively Latina/o as an organization, most of the active members identify as Latina/o and often Spanish is the language spoken during these meetings. Employing the Spanish language fosters a comfortable environment for the participants to interact with others who know what it is like to share a bi-

cultural identity and fluctuate between different worlds. ADAC became a counterspace for participants, as opposed to the uncomfortable spaces in their education environments where they were subjected racism from microaggressions to overt discrimination. These counter spaces function as sites where deficit notions were challenged and positive environments were established and enjoyed (Solórzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2001).

The participants did not feel empowered as students at the community colleges to be vocal about their rights. As a part of a group of undocumented students who were not concealing their status, they participated in writing and delivering a speech at an MCCCD Governing Board meeting. They thanked the Board for the in-state tuition policy and for fighting the lawsuit that the state initiated to remove it. Two of the participants requested and received a meeting with the Arizona Board of Regents to argue for tuition equity at the university level.

DREAMers often use the media to publicly come out and contend with enduring vitriol through media. The participants were not reluctant to share their statuses with me as a researcher or reporters who would attend ADAC meetings. Most of the study participants and their ADAC peers participate in press conferences hosted by and at ADAC. All of them spoke of participating in demonstrations and one had spoken personally to former Attorney General Horne.

Theme Two: Conclusion. The networks participants used to navigate into adulthood were more meaningfully developed amongst social rather than educational networks. Their social networks provided spaces where they could develop themselves professionally and as leaders, where their family members were welcome, where they were not in the minority within the group in terms of race or status, where they could work towards meaningful change, and significantly, where they did not have to hide their status.

Currently, three of the participants spend a great deal of time in the ADAC offices. The other participant laments that transportation issues limit his availability. Time there includes activism efforts but importantly, time to be themselves in safe, social spaces. The three that frequent the offices are friends with one another and several others whose presence is common. There is a lot of laughter in these offices.

Theme Three: The Unintended Outcomes of DACA

The networking of information, social connections, and relationships among the undocumented community are important forms of capital. The undocumented community provides strength in both numbers of individuals supporting the struggles and in relaying necessary information needed to keep one another safe and identify opportunities to move towards equity in the United States. The unity creates a feeling of community that reaches beyond the movement.

Eligibility for DACA is defined with narrow criteria. Factors such as year of entry into the United States or a period of absence outside of the United States can disqualify an individual from obtaining the temporary reprieve. Those who meet criteria are extended a work permit in addition to a reprieve from deportation. Although the permit provides its recipients with agency, although limited, that they did not have before, agency comes with qualification and a looming potential end date. Currently, only those meeting DACAs limited criteria have an opportunity to obtain a reprieve, which places stress on the larger undocumented community.

Table 4

Participant Quotes from Theme 3

Participant	Discrepancies	Temporariness
Tobias	"I think it only creates a temporary safety net for myself. Like, I'll be okay but I feel so selfish, privileged."	"I feel like it's so temporary and I feel like my time is running out all the time. I feel like I'm running out of time. I feel like I'm running out of time right now."
Zara	"If you get DREAM Act that is only serving a small portion of your community. Like, how are you going to be selfish?"	"It is a scary thought because again, it's uncertainty. You don't know what's going to happen. You could be doing great, you could be in school, have a job and then all of a sudden something happens, you never know, they could overturn the Order, you can't have your DACA anymore."
Aimee	"If they can't even digest the DREAM Act, they're not going to be able to digest immigration reform."	"It hasn't damaged the country in the last two years. So I feel like they might be more perceptive towards having it again, or having the next President not take it."
Xavier	"I'm scared for me, for my Mom, and for my brothers because my brothers are, like I said, a mixed-status family. My mom and me are undocumented, they're documented, if something happens to us, they have no one else."	"It fills me with fear because I think, well it's only temporary. If I end up losing it the government is going to know where I am, who I am, and by the snap of their fingers they can deport me."

Discrepancies. One segment of the undocumented population obtaining this type of reprieve violates the social network that functions as a method of empowerment to marginalized communities (Enriquez, 2011). DACA criteria exclude most in the larger undocumented community from receiving its benefits. It imposes divides based upon current age and age at entry. This results in DACAmented individuals being in a separate category than many others in the movement and often within their families.

All of the study participants belong to mixed-status families. Prior to DACA, they shared the same status as their parents and at times, siblings. After DACA, they became a part of a

tenuously and temporarily protected class. All participants noted that they have younger siblings that were born in the United States. These distinctions produce anxiety around potential deportations. There was fretfulness expressed concerning how they would cope emotionally if they were separated from a parent, whether or not they would have legal rights to underage siblings if parents were deported, and being good role models and sources of information for young, documented siblings in education efforts as they struggled through those systems.

All participants spoke about the larger undocumented communities in various forms when discussing their lives. This included feeling selfish for advocating for the DREAM Act when it includes only a small segment of the larger population and angst over the privileges associated with DACA when it was not available to more. They felt obligated to mobilize efforts towards comprehensive immigration reform and to fight against deportations that separate families—very real issues in the larger community.

Temporariness. There are significant issues that surround DACA and its temporariness. The participants spoke of anxiety that accompanies the end date, the unknown factor concerning how long the renewals would be available, and whether or not it would simply go away at some point. Another significant factor of this study is the time-bound and policy-bound realities surrounding their agency. This contributes to both a sense of urgency as well as added anxiety to their already unstable existence.

Activism efforts by DREAMers are commonly related to issues of educational equity and are tied to their struggles to transition into society as professional adults. While pleased that MCCCD provides in-state tuition to DACAmented students, for participants, there is still a feeling of being stuck or limited when it comes to fully achieving educational goals. One participant spoke of a reluctance to start a program or degree without a guarantee of being able to

finish. Since none of the three Arizona state universities provide in-state rates to DACAmented students, professions or careers that require bachelor's or graduate degrees come with barriers for them that their documented peers will not face. To date, only one of the participants has matriculated to a university and did so by locating an online program that does not charge out-of-state rates to any of its students.

Another concern about the temporary nature of the work permit is how it will affect employment for DACAmented DREAMers. The majority of the professional development experiences of the participants thus far have been through involvement in civic engagement as opposed to paid employment. Those who had paid employment prior to DACA were off the record workers whose past experiences might not be verifiable. One participant suggested that the temporariness of the work permit might cause employers to discriminate against those with DACA because they could not assure the employer of a commitment that exceeded 2 years at the most.

Theme Three: Conclusion. The unintended negative consequences of DACA were significant to participants in terms of themselves, their families, and the larger undocumented community. They do not see themselves as more deserving of benefits, be they temporary, than other undocumented individuals. They worry about the security of their mixed status families.

The reprieve from deportation is valid for only 2 years and though currently renewable, all Executive Orders have the potential to be overturned when the next president is elected. None of the participants, when asked, had a positive outlook about the passage of comprehensive immigration reform that would benefit them, their families, or their communities.

Conclusion

Tobias, Zara, Aimee, and Xavier navigate complexities of their DACAmented lives with resiliency and purpose. They share goals of achieving a higher education, despite negative experiences of racism and nativism embedded in all levels of education. Ultimately, they found a way to contribute to their larger undocumented community through activism and sharing their own stories.

Chapter 5

Discussion, Implications, and Recommendations

This chapter provides a synopsis of my study and the important findings that emerged. The significance of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) to undocumented youth and its 2-year reprieve for those who qualify are promising attributes. As an unprecedented immigration policy, DACA is influencing how certain individuals traverse important aspects of their lives such as education and interactions within communities. Counterstories offer rich experiential data on these non-majoritarian lives. These narratives are especially important tools, which are used to highlight and comprehend individuals' unique experiences of finding success and overcoming struggles as they navigate their lives. Furthermore, the information that emerges is crucial for the identification and disruption of practices and systems that marginalize certain groups of people.

The participants in this study described their experiences living as Latina/o, DACAmented young adults, who are actively seeking to improve their lives through education and civic engagement. They shared their experiences, present realities, and hopes for the future. Their stories highlight how DACAmented Latina/os confront unique barriers to education, including discriminatory actions and policies, and challenges to integrating into society, including tenuous employment and a lack of avenues to rights and benefits enjoyed by others of their generation. They thoughtfully described how DACA affected their lives, illuminating this relatively new phenomenon of a temporary reprieve from deportation, a work permit, and at the Maricopa County Community College District (MCCCD), in-state tuition.

Discussion and Implications

In my study, I set out to explore how the educational and civic engagement experiences of Latina/o individuals, who have been granted DACA, were affected because of this temporary amnesty. I approached this exploration with the following research questions:

How is DACA affecting the narrative of Latina/o DREAMers, who are students in the Maricopa County Community College District?

Participants described keeping their undocumented status either a secret or a very closely guarded reality throughout their educational experiences. Elementary, high school, and community college environments were not spaces where they felt safe to disclose their status with instructors, staff, and friends. Immigration status for undocumented youth is understood largely in racial contexts through subtle and aggressive actions (King & Punti, 2012). For the study participants, rare disclosures in educational environments led to experiences where they were subjected to racist and nativist remarks as well as having their status shared with others without their consent. Thus, being DACAmented in a higher education context did not significantly change their narratives in terms of willingness to share status.

The results of having DACA in educational contexts produced a mix of positive and negative experiences. My data clearly indicate a disconnect between DACAmented DREAMers and the community college. Disconnects exist in policy and procedures like access to financial resources such as the FAFSA and at MCCCD, the Presidential Scholarship as well as in forming relationships at the colleges. The disconnects occur after negative experiences in elementary through high school, including the realization that the undocumented status means certain limitations and barriers to matriculation into college—obstacles that their documented

counterparts did not endure. The challenges in higher education became another setting where they were forced to be resourceful, rather than supported in their educational endeavors.

How do DACA students feel that having DACA affects their potential to achieve their educational goals? Discussed in more depth below, access to in-state tuition is the most significant affect that DACA had for participants in terms of their ability to achieve their educational goals. Undocumented students are likely to also fall into the category of low-income, which correlates with a statistic that reveals that 30 percent of these students are less likely to attend college (Garcia & Tierney, 2011). DACA indirectly affected educational goals through the work permit that allowed some participants new access to *on-the-record* jobs that helped them to pay tuition.

Outside of eligibility for in-state tuition, none of the participants reflected upon DACA in terms of expanding their access within higher education or potential to reach educational goals. Being open about their new statuses was more procedural in terms of obtaining in-state tuition than sharing their identities at the community colleges. Discussed below in more detail, the participants shared their status in settings when it was not a choice, but part of a process that led to additional negative experiences for this study's participants.

How do DACA students feel their access to education in terms of aspects such as tuition rates, ability to enroll into more classes and availability of institutional services has changed as a result of DACA? Receiving DACA provided an opportunity for motivated students to enroll into more classes at MCCCD because of access to the in-state tuition rate. This combated Proposition 300 that Arizona voters passed in 2006 that tripled tuition, eliminated state scholarships opportunities, and revoked state scholarships in use for undocumented students (Hernandez et al., 2010). Positive experiences at the colleges in regards to overall services were

limited. The frontline employees the participants encountered were improperly trained on procedures regarding the new status. The actual policy to receive in-state tuition requires students to produce the work permit, rather than the identification card, issued under DACA. Subsequently, this type of policy diminishes the existence of a safe space when entering community college, where these students can opt to share their status.

MCCCD's decision to allow DACAmented DREAMers the imperative right for in-state tuition eligibility, thereby increasing their higher education access is an exception rather than a norm in Arizona. Although DACAmented students currently pay in-state tuition at MCCCD, their access to this rate has a history of instability. Their eligibility for in-state tuition was available and then removed following Proposition 300 in 2006; now, it is at risk again due to the state's impending lawsuit.

A lack of access to comprehensive financial aid is another source of stress for the study's participants. Two of the participants had academic advisors tell them about the Presidential Scholarship that would have covered all tuition costs; however, the offer was rescinded once their statuses were revealed. These dehumanizing experiences contribute to feelings of insecurities in their educational environments (Pérez, Cortés, Ramos, & Coronado, 2010). All participants are denied the use of federal financial aid. One of the students who may have been eligible for the Presidential Scholarship also completed the FAFSA form only to be told by frontline financial aid employees that he was not qualified to use it. For this participant, the lack of financial assistance has kept him from attending college.

Frontline employees' limited understanding concerning DACA, the DREAM Act, and their significance to those pursuing higher education is another source of contention. This was poignantly noted with the participants' stories about their attempts to secure funding. Since

paying for school and academic advising are the first steps in college, their negative experiences served to discourage participants from seeking further assistance in other realms from college employees. This is significant in highlighting that policies and practices at institutions are not functioning to serve this motivated group of students.

How are DACA students sharing their immigration status or interacting differently with faculty, staff, and students? My findings indicate that undocumented youth are subjected to discriminatory labels based upon their ethnicity and documentation status as a part of their overall educational experiences. At the community college, the discrimination emerged from faculty, staff, and students. Therefore, the participants were forced to hide or closely guard their status within the classroom and student services offices—a continuation of this suppression from compulsory education. They revealed that it was less stressful for them to conceal this aspect of their identities than to be open about it. Concealing their status also led to a failure to connect to the college beyond the sterile process of gaining credits towards a degree or certificate.

Feelings of inclusion, especially by undocumented students as they also deal with financial barriers, are crucial to academic success (Garcia & Tierney, 2011). Among the participants, there was a uniform lack of personal relationships formed at the colleges due to their concerns about their status. Although one participant identified a Hispanic employee as a go-to-person when she needed student services assistance, she knew him only by facial identity and not by name.

Coming out as DACAmented to college employees for the purposes of qualifying for in-state tuition and during attempts to procure other financial assistance were detrimental experiences that were echoed in the rare instances when DACA status was shared in the classroom. Attempts to share DACA status by participants led to instances where other students

and faculty referred to them by racist and nativist labels. Although participants consider themselves as good and moral people who work hard and respect the law, they are subjected to actions that construct them as 'illegal' (King & Punti, 2012).

Although experiences in their educational settings were harmful, two of the participants demonstrated the fortitude to graduate from community college. The other participants plan to become community college graduates. Their plans reveal their strength and courage, which emanate from other life experiences.

How do DACA Latina/o DREAMers view civic engagement and their roles and responsibilities in the community? DACAmented DREAMers demonstrate resilience, fortitude, and the ability to develop professionally and as leaders despite the need to find avenues that deviated from traditional approaches. The participants in this research did not gain professional development experiences that other students might acquire such as leadership positions in student clubs or networking with faculty in their college environments. Working within a collective community was a positive example of identity development. Within surroundings like ADAC where they did not conceal parts of their identities, participants eagerly assumed significant roles.

Critical race theory shifts focus from the disadvantages individuals experience to the cultural knowledge and skills that exist in marginalized communities (Yosso, 2005). The support of the larger undocumented community, a place to engage in homophyly, encouraged leadership and activism. Activist DREAMers often find success intervening on their own behalf (Connell, 2012). Resisting the criminalization of their identities through political activism is reported as the most prevalent method to fight against this form of marginalization (Perez, Cortes, Ramos, & Coronado, 2010). While participants related experiences of hiding their status in education

settings, coming out about their status in other environments was very public and used as leverage for change. This included stories about participating in rallies, speaking at an MCCCD Governing Board meeting in support of the fight for tuition equity, and speaking directly to former Attorney General Horne.

Less high profile, but equally meaningful experiences in activism efforts, included leading a voter initiative campaign that canvassed communities registering people to vote and speaking on issues important to their rights, managing social media sites, and preparing to speak with the Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) about tuition equity at the state universities. Participation in these unrestrained efforts of political activism challenge notions of deficiencies amongst undocumented communities (S.I.N. Collective, 2007).

The participants in this study and other DACAmented DREAMers I engaged with through ADAC have created close, personal relationships through these larger undocumented community networks. Although the participants did not make friends through their higher education experiences, they did forge strong friendships and connections through civic engagement. The undocumented community networks also provide spaces where those who do not qualify for DACA feel safe to fight for immigrant rights, regardless of their status.

How are these individuals viewing DACA in terms of it being a temporary change to their immigration status? Although DACA provides benefits to recipients, including a work permit and eligibility for in-state tuition at two of the community college districts in Arizona, the data clearly indicates that there are developing forms of anxiety and stress that manifest around DACA including urgency to complete educational goals before DACA expires and the larger numbers within the undocumented community that remain ineligible for such reprieves.

One discovery regarding the work permit surrounds its expiration date. This issue served as a caveat to the new benefit of in-state tuition. Although DACA is currently renewable, at a high price, its short-term usefulness created a sense of urgency about having enough time to complete educational goals. In the case of one participant, this issue has hindered this participant's ability to start a degree after considering if it was worth initiating an educational goal that may never be completed if tuition rates rose.

All participants belong to the phenomenon of a mixed-status family living with at least one undocumented parent and at least one documented younger sibling. The participants rely greatly on their families as sources of emotional support. Low education achievement rates of Latina/o youth are often blamed on cultural deficiencies (Enriquez, 2011). The participants in this study and other studies have credited their families as a prime source of encouragement to obtain DACA and attain higher education. The benefits of DACA not extending to the participants' parents was noted as a source of despondency and point of contention. This exclusion is aggravated by the stress of constant worry that an undocumented parent or sibling experiences because of a fear of deportation and an anxiety about what would happen to those left behind—the younger siblings born in the United States.

The importance of the larger undocumented community is a critical component in community wealth and potency of activism efforts. DACAs narrow parameters omit many based upon details such as current age or date of arrival in the United States. Participants noted that DACA's omission of some in the community produced guilt over their newly acquired benefits because they view all members of their community as equally deserving. Participants also expressed guilt when efforts would focus upon the rights of those who would qualify for the DREAM Act, excluding many who were contributing to the fight for DREAMer rights. One

participant spoke of the obligation she felt to fight for the entire undocumented community because some of the individuals who provided the impetus for DACA were not benefiting from the change.

Implications for Policy and Practice

In-state tuition, safe spaces for students to be open about status, and advocacy from within educational institutions are critical areas to progress policy and practice within higher education. Broader access, persistence, and strong graduation rates are goals at all community colleges and universities and not addressing the needs of motivated students is a detrimental precedent.

This study is unique in addressing Arizona under the contexts Latina/o DACA recipients and their higher education and civic experiences. It is critical to continue the research as undocumented high school graduates face ever growing barriers including legislation targeting them and severe budget cuts to all education institutions. According to the United States Department of Education, Arizona had only a 76 percent high school graduation rate and even bleaker a 57.9 percent college-bound rate for the 2010-2011 academic year (2014). This demonstrates that incentives to encourage completion of compulsory education are important. Additionally, as employment requiring higher education credentials grows, it is urgent to increase access to higher education rather than implement institutional and political barriers, especially for individuals motivated to obtain degrees.

As noted by students in this study, the realization of barriers to higher education based upon status diminish drive and motivation to graduate from high school and matriculate into higher education. Equitable tuition rates serve as a financial incentive to not only complete high school education, but continue in higher education. As many Latina/o DACAmented youth also

fall into a low socio-economic status, out-of-state tuition effectively prices them out of college, thereby obstructing their social and economic mobility. Since most undocumented individuals who enter higher education attend a community college instead of a university, their pursuit of a degree within this educational environment that focuses on a philosophy of open access and service to the community, in-state tuition for these students is consequential. In-state tuition for DACA recipients sends a message that institutions are as invested in DACAmented students as their documented peers.

Universities in Arizona must also extend tuition equity to DACAmented students. Community college graduates seeking matriculation into universities is a sought after group for universities. They are currently producing barriers for these potential transfer students – a demographic with a history of success.

In-state tuition can only be a part of the equity process. A recent change in Arizona took a step in the direction of social justice. Between the time that these interviews were conducted for this research and the writing of this chapter, a federal judge overturned former Governor Brewer's ban on DACAmented DREAMers' ability to obtain driver's licenses. The lack of access to driver's licenses was lamented over by study participants during interviews because it affected their ability to get to school, work, and social settings. However, there remain several areas of contention, such as tuition equity at all state community colleges and universities and the right to vote, which separate DACAmented youth from their peers.

As coming out about status is important for DREAMers, it is imperative to provide spaces in educational environments for this method of resistance. A significant finding of this study was a lack of understanding regarding the usage and impact of racist terms that target undocumented Latina/os. Just as other derogatory and incorrect labels were used in the past to

refer to specific individuals, it is crucial for terms such as 'illegal' to be recognized as offensive and not used when interacting with students who have or had undocumented status. Educators must understand the benefits of disrupting racist and nativist rhetoric so that discriminatory practices and educational inequities are not reproduced. Although the percentage of DACAmented students in relation to the overall student population might be slight, it is a group that is both growing in numbers and motivated to succeed. Institutions need to ensure that employees understand what DACA means for their students and to combat the use of derogatory terms such as 'illegal.'

MCCCD and other institutions of higher education can achieve safe spaces through mandatory training and revisions to employee materials such as MCCCDs *Handbook of FAQs Related to Legislative Compliance*. This is critical for front line employees with whom students interact regarding status and tuition rates. There must be training updates provided to faculty and staff as policy and legislation change.

My study has highlighted areas where Arizona educators and policymakers can address change. Beyond change that educators and policymakers can implement to combat whiteness and its unjust outcomes, well-meaning researchers also have a charge. It is critically important to conduct research and report, but also to perform the work and use the information to educate and transform educational and work environments. DREAMers and DACA DREAMers are increasingly subjects of study. As researchers, we have to ensure that we are using the work to advocate for transformative action. We must work against subjecting these motivated individuals to something else—research fatigue. It is not enough to collect stories and write dissertations, books, and articles. We must join the fight and be advocates and supporters of change, starting at our own institutions.

Recommendations for Future Research

Absent from this study are the voices of the families of DACAmented DREAMers and the counterstories concerning how undocumented parents and documented younger siblings navigate as members of mixed-status families. Additional accounts will provide more substantial, richer data on the specifics of mixed-status family realities. These stories are crucial in humanizing the experiences of immigrant communities.

In addition to the scarce literature concerning DACA, there are few counterstories of DACAmented high school students. As evidenced in this study, motivation to complete compulsory education, which is the gateway to higher education, decreases as the realization of what the undocumented status means and the comprehension of limitations come into focus. Studies have highlighted high achieving undocumented and DACAmented college students; however, there is very little information on DACA's effects within high school settings.

The temporary nature of DACA played a significant role, in varying respects, on the participants of this study. Additional insight could be gleaned regarding how the short reprieve affects degree or certificate goals and college-bound rates. Exploratory studies on what DACAmented individuals are doing and not doing in their daily existence and in the pursuit of education and work due to the time limitation would be important to this new immigration policy phenomenon.

Collecting quantitative data on the educational achievements of DACAmented DREAMers would be valuable. This data could identify DACA's impact on college-bound and degree completion rates. Data on tuition equity or inequity, and information concerning how DACAmented DREAMers are paying for their education without access to federal funds and in many cases, state funds, would offer another layer of data important to research.

An avenue for creating best practices to serve DACAmented students in higher education can come from additional interviews with those students regarding the specific services, such as financial alternatives to fund education while the FAFSA is not an option that they need from their institutions. This would require a safe space where participants could be open about the challenges they face that are unique to their circumstances. It would also require that educators be open to constructive criticism and ready to transform the educational environments.

Concluding Remarks

Getting to know the DACAmented DREAMers in this study and having known other DREAMers in my professional settings, I am deeply concerned that my fellow educators and I are not currently doing enough to guide and encourage this group of people seeking to improve their lives through education. My hope is that safe spaces can be created on college campuses where DACAmented students can be open about their statuses, feel comfortable sharing their unique experiences, and enlighten their peers and educators on what DACA is and what it means in their lives.

I look forward to working as an advocate, beginning at my college, now that I am better informed regarding the historical and current contexts. As a researcher, I had the opportunity to hear and write about personal stories of DACAmented individuals. My first action will be to make the case to the Governing Board and the college president to implement in-state tuition for DACAmented individuals at my institution.

I deeply appreciate Tobias, Zara, Aimee, and Xavier for entrusting me with their stories. Although they are busy, ambitious young adults, they took the time to help me invest in my academic success and my hope is that I can return the favor.

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Appendix A

Open-ended Interview Questions (Interview 1)

Please tell me about yourself.

What was it like growing up in Arizona?

What were your experiences as a student in elementary and high school?

What are you studying now?

Would you describe DACA and what it means to you?

What were your educational and professional plans before DACA?

Has DACA changed your plans?

If so, how?
If not, why not?

What are your personal goals?

Did DACA change these goals?

If so, how?
If not, why not?

Is DACA helping you reach these goals?

If so, how?
If not, why not?

Is there anything else that you would like to add?

Thank you for participating!

Appendix B

Open-ended Interview Questions (Interview 2)

Has DACA changed the way have you been involved at your college?

It seems like not all college employees are up to date on DACA policies. Has DACA changed the way you interact with college employees?

If so, how?
If not, why not?

Has DACA changed the way you interact with faculty and students on campus?

If so, how?
If not, why not?

Has DACA changed the way you use campus services or extracurricular activities?

If so, how?
If not, why not?

Have you been involved in groups or networks with other DREAMers?

If yes to above:

How did you get involved?

What do you hope to get out of being involved?

Has DACA shaped the way you interact with others in your communities?

If so, how?
If not, why not?

Is there anything else that you would like to add?

Thank you for participating!

Appendix C

IRB Approval Letter

NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research

Northern Arizona University
PO Box 4087
Flagstaff, AZ 86011-4087

928-523-4340
928-523-1075 fax
www.research.nau.edu/vpr/IRB

To:	Carol Johnson, M.S.
From:	Donna Goldberg
Approval Date:	May 29, 2014
Project:	Out of the Shadows: Higher Education Experiences of Latina/o Deferred Action Childhood Arrivals in Arizona.
Project Number:	594882-1
Review Category/ies:	2) Survey procedures

Your research protocol has been approved by the Human Subjects Committee/Institutional Review Board (IRB) at NAU under the category of EXEMPT. This category means that your IRB approval for this project does not have an expiration date, so periodic renewal of approval is not necessary unless there are changes in your project that affect the status.

If your project **changes** in any way, you must file a Research Amendment form available at https://www.research.nau.edu/compliance/irb/forms.aspx PRIOR TO implementing any changes. You may not implement the changes until you have written approval for the change from the IRB, unless the change is necessary to eliminate immediate hazards to participants. Failure to do so will result in noncompliance and possible suspension or termination of your research project.

Any unanticipated problems or unexpected **adverse events** must be reported to the IRB within 5 business days (within 24 hours for serious adverse events) of your becoming aware of the event by filling out an Adverse Reaction or Event Reporting form (also available at website above).

As you conduct your research, please remember that:

1. Participants are volunteers or are involved in regular educational programs; they are free to withdraw from the research at any time without penalty.

2. Unless you are using existing data, Participants must be informed of the research project through written or oral explanation and must sign or approve electronically or verbally an informed consent form (for minors and children the parent or guardian must sign).

3. Unless the participants agreed to an alternative arrangement, the participants' anonymity and confidentiality must be protected. They should not be able to be identified through the responses. The presentation of the data should not put them at risk of any negative consequences. Access to the data is specified and restricted by the researcher and the department.

Additional IRB information may be found at https://www.research.nau.edu/compliance/irb/index.aspx.