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JSRI Perspectives on FAITH DOING JUSTICE

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The New American Dream

Loyola Grad and Dreamer Speaks Out on DACA's Demise

by Sue Weishar, Ph.D.

JSRI Future Activities

September 21-22

Dr. Alí Bustamante will be attending a conference of the Southern members of the Economic Analysis Research Network at the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta in Atlanta.

October 1

Fr. Fred Kammer will chair a strategic planning meeting in Baltimore for the Ignatian Solidarity Network.

October 19

JSRI will co-sponsor a film screening of *13th* with [Loyola Institute for Ministry](#) and others. Details to be determined.

JSRI Recent Activities

September 19

Dr. Sue Weishar attended a board meeting of Seashore Mission/EI Pueblo in Biloxi, MS.

September 12

Fr. Kammer participated in the Mission and Human Resources Committee meeting for Christus Health in Dallas.

September 12

On September 5 U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions announced that the Trump administration would end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) program in March. DACA provides temporary protection from deportation and work authorization to young immigrants who were brought to the U.S. as children. Through DACA, approximately 750,000 young immigrants, including 2,300 Louisiana Dreamers, have been able to work, continue their studies, serve in the military, and live their lives without the constant fear and anxiety of being torn from their families.



Loyola grad ('15) Karla Rosas is a DACA recipient and Dreamer who entered the U.S. from Mexico as a child over 20 years ago. Karla grew up in Cut Off, Louisiana, and calls herself a "Cajun Mexican." In high school she was president of her school's National Honor Society and on the homecoming court. At Loyola she was a member of *The Maroon's* editorial board and graduated with departmental honors in philosophy and political science. This past week Karla took time from her graduate studies at Tulane University and work at a law office to respond to questions about DACA.

Dr. Nik Mitchell and Dr. Weishar attended a meeting of Louisiana Advocates for Prison Alternatives at the Southern Poverty Law Center in New Orleans.

September 8

Dr. Weishar organized a phone conference between local faith leaders and Senator John Kennedy's office to discuss the Dream Act of 2017.

September 7

Dr. Weishar [was interviewed](#) by the Biloxi Sun Herald on the demise of DACA and the Dream Act of 2017.

September 5

Dr. Weishar [was interviewed](#) by the New Orleans Times Picayune editorial writer Jarvis DeBarry on the impact of ending DACA.

September 1

Dr. Weishar organized a meeting of advocates, including Loyola Dreamer Karla Ross and local faith leaders, who met with members of Senator Bill Cassidy's staff in Metairie to discuss the Dream Act of 2017.

August 31

JSRI released the State of Working Florida report authored by Dr. Bustamante.

She explained in an email what DACA has meant for her: "DACA has given me a chance to plan for my future: to work and save money, to go back to school, purchase a car, and help my mom with my siblings. It meant that rather than thinking day-to-day about survival, I was able to plan ahead and invest in my career, facilitated health care, and provide for my family's future as well."

After hearing of the decision to end DACA, Karla felt "tired, hopeless." But other Dreamers have restored her hope: "We keep each other motivated. We're still going to work, still going to school, still paying our bills, running our businesses, AND advocating for ourselves and our people. It's hard to mope around when you've got other people in similar situations pushing you to continue giving 110 percent. Also, in the aftermath of the decision, a lot of Dreamers have shared their stories, many for the first time. When I hear their stories, I'm filled with much pride and love. And I think most of the public feels the same way... We aren't letting this go without a fight."

Here's what Karla wants allies to do:

"Immediately, I want allies to consider [donating to scholarships](#) that have popped up to help eligible Dreamers cover the costs of renewing their DACA before October 5. The fees aren't cheap, and the deadline caught many people by surprise... I would hate for Dreamers to lose what may be their last chance at protection for a couple of years due to lack of money."

"In the long term, I ask allies to use their privilege as citizens and push their elected officials to support and pass the Dream Act 2017. The act is important because it would not only help 'Dreamers' like me but other equally deserving, hardworking young people who might have missed the cut-off date for eligibility when DACA was enacted in 2012."

The [Dream Act of 2017](#) was introduced by a bi-partisan group of U.S. Congress members in July. It would provide permanent legal status and a pathway to citizenship for immigrants who entered the country as children, pass a background check, and meet certain educational requirements. Please show your support for Karla and other Dreamers by urging your congresspeople to vote for the Dream Act of 2017 through this JSRI action alert [here](#).

Monthly articles reflect the opinions of the authors and not necessarily those of Loyola University New Orleans. Please send feedback to jsri@loyno.edu

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