



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
DR. JOHN B. CLARK

February 12, 2018

As president of Western Connecticut State University, I am writing to fully support our DACA students in their quest to gain an education and achieve the American Dream. I enthusiastically endorse those State legislators' efforts to also support these student and allow them access to financial aid grants.

We are most proud that the leader of our system of higher education in Connecticut, the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU), President Mark Ojakian, has been at the forefront in fighting for our DACA students in their quest to achieve a quality CSCU degree and a better life for themselves and their families.

From my own experience with the students I know, who are American in every respect but legal standing, they are excellent examples of the kinds of residents we want in Connecticut. They are intelligent, hardworking and motivated to succeed with plans to become medical doctors, police officers, business persons and teachers, and enter other professions that will add to both Western Connecticut's and the State's future prosperity.

We have long encouraged and supported the students at the University. Two of our alumni — twin sisters from Brazil — have led the DACA movement in Connecticut for several years. Western's Chief Diversity Officer, Jesenia Minier-Delgado, chairs an "UndocuAlly Task Force" that meets regularly on campus with students, faculty and administrators. The aim of the task force is to make Western's campus more welcoming toward undocumented students. In addition, U.S. Rep. Elizabeth Esty held a community forum at the University in January 25th of this year to discuss the issues of DACA students and concerns of our citizens. At the forum, I spoke in support of our students and their families who would great benefit from a Federal DREAM Act.

I have seen how access to higher education benefits these young people, and how it benefits Connecticut and the country to embrace our Dreamers and make them part of our communities.

I advocate that as a state we do all we can to help DACA students begin and complete their college and university education. Giving them access to the benefits of institutional financial aid would ensure that more of them will graduate and contribute fully to the towns and cities where they live. As with our other students, they are part of our future generation and should be treated as such, that is, with the greatest support and respect that they so richly deserve.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John B. Clark", written over a horizontal line.

Dr. John B. Clark
President
Western Connecticut State University