

Transcript is computer generated and not reviewed for accuracy

Transcript

Rosemary Ferreira

Hello and welcome to the Table podcast where we unpack questions regarding race, diversity, culture, norm and current events. My name is Rosemary Ferreira.

Courtney Jones Carney

And I'm Courtney Jones Carney. I'm back from maternity leave and trying to adjust to the demands of working and continuing to prioritize my family. I was blessed to make it to the other side of the black maternal mortality crisis, and I'm sending love to all those who made it through, and particularly those who didn't. My heart is full for you.

Rosemary Ferreira

So grateful to have you back with us, Courtney. In this episode, we're going to be talking about the unique challenges undocumented student case and higher education. But before we really sit down at the table, we want to define some terms that you'll be hearing. Throughout this episode just so that.

Courtney Jones Carney

We're all on the same page.

Rosemary Ferreira

Each an undocumented student as defined by the national Immigration Law Center, is a foreign national who enter the United States without inspection or legal documentation or entered as a non immigrant with a valid visa that has been expired. Other terms that have been used to reference undocumented. Students include dreamers, generation 1.5 and aspiring citizen. You may have also heard some people refer to undocumented students as DACA. But while all DACA recipients are undocumented, all undocumented students don't have DACA. Dac is short for the third action for Childhood Arrivals, and it's a process that's available through the Department of Homeland Security that protects eligible on documented immigrants who came to the United States when they were children from deportation. Dac also provides recipients with a work permit and in some states, such as here in Maryland. The opportunity to pay in state tuition rates at local colleges and universities.

Courtney Jones Carney

It's important to note that DACA status is not permanent. In July of 2021, Judge Andrew Hanen of Texas ordered the DACA program to be partially ended. As of now. New applications are blocked from approval, although renewals are still being accepted. Immigration rights organizations have called for the Biden Harris administration to pass bipartisan legislation providing permanent protections for DACA recipients and those with temporary protected status, or TPS. But Congress has yet to do so. For those who currently do have DACA, recipients must renew their status every two years, which requires completing a stack of paperwork and paying a hefty fee of \$495. And in case. You were wondering? Yes, that's \$495 that must be paid every two years. That's not the only financial barrier that DACA recipients may face during renewal. The renewal process can be overwhelming and minor mistakes on the DACA

application can cause delays or worse, a complete rejects. Some DACA recipients decide to hire an attorney to ensure their application has been completed correctly, which can be an additional cost. But I can't blame DACA recipients for spending the money. How much would you spend to ensure that you can remain in the country that you call home? We should also note that the US government does provide fee exemptions for DACA applications and renewals under very limited circumstances. There are also local and national organizations that provide financial assistance to DACA recipients. We have links to those organizations on our website, which is super long. So just go to youmaryland.edu and you can search for either DACA or undocumented students.

Rosemary Ferreira

While we applaud these organizations for their meaningful work advocating for immigrants and providing vital resources, we must call out the US government harmful practice of erecting financial barriers that prevent this country's most vulnerable populations from receiving the support they both need and desire. Undocumented immigrants should not have to. Jump through bureaucratic hoops. And take on. Extreme financial burden to protect themselves from deportation. They're Americans and they deserve the same dignity and rights according to natural born and naturalized citizens. Part of that dignity is not just providing undocumented students. Access to their education or with the support that addresses their unique needs. Unlike you, as citizens, undocumented students, including those with DACA status, cannot receive federal financial aid, which puts them at a significant disadvantage in comparison to their peers. Undocumented students can be made to feel unsafe on college and university campuses because of administrative pressures to disclose their undocumented status or having to navigate a university culture that stigmatizes quote, UN quote, illegal immigration. Additionally, some students may feel unsafe when they find out that their university needs contractual partnerships with the Department of US Immigration and Customs Enforcement, also known as sites such as large universities. Right here in the state of Maryland.

Courtney Jones Carney

I'm sure most of us can. Do more to better serve. Undocumented students, but particularly there is more that can be done in higher education to support undergraduate and graduate students. So this episode is for all undocumented students who are navigating the challenges of school. It's also for faculty and staff looking to better support those students.

Rosemary Ferreira

Our guest is Laura Bohorquez Garcia, director of the AB 540 and undocumented Student center at the University of California, Davis. Here. She is introducing herself.

Laura Bohorquez Garcia

For today, I really wanted to share that I'm like, I'm a Chicana from this oil, which is like an area in in the like Mexico City area of Mexico and one of the things that I think connected me to that is that I rarely introduced myself also introducing my parents. But I've been in spaces where folks have done that and and it had just felt. It just felt different, right? It just brought a different kind of energy into this space. And so I also want to introduce my parents reporting seeing the Bible and bring them into this conversation because a lot of it in terms of like the topic and undocumented students and just immigration in general is a lot has a lot to do with their training as well. I'm also all of the elements and I

think this week especially I've been feeling all like the the watery elements in me with the dehydration, but also like the overflow of like really seeing and letting go and crying. And I think the last thing that I'll mention is I am. A cancer moon. And I am a fire sign. So you can imagine that I'm wild. But I'm also very soft and kind and loyal, and all the things that the two things come when they come together, it's like. Kind of a little bit of chaos. I saw this theme today that said, like Leo, all the things that they think and like all the things that they say and I'm like, Oh my God, let's see. So that's a little bit of me. I do also identify as the first Gen. professional pre previous first Gen. student and I am still actually. Currently undocumented with DACA.

Rosemary Ferreira

Thank you so much for sharing. I'm also a cancer woman and I'm very like, emotional and like watery I feel. Very ebbing and flowing. In terms of my emotions, so I'm definitely connect.

Speaker

With you in.

Rosemary Ferreira

That way. And thank you so much. That's very beautiful in terms of, you know, your own introduction includes the introduction of your parents. I think that's. Really a profound way. I think you were the first person that I engaged with to introduce themselves that way. So thank. You so much for doing that? So we would. Love to hear more about your story as an educator, an organizer, and advocate for undocumented students. Can you walk us through your journey?

Laura Bohorquez Garcia

Yeah, for sure. I mean, I think being someone who's been a part of the community since the age of five, that's when my when I moved to the US, My family had moved to the US four years prior to me. And so I think all of that led to always having to advocate for ourselves, always having to figure out what community care was. And it looked like even before I had the language to. Describe it as community care. And so I think that like what I've taken throughout my lifetime and organizing and advocacy spaces is that we've always had to be. The educators, right? Like like then that person who's had to translate documents from my parents. But I've also been that person who has had. To tell. People, when I was an undergrad, what it meant to be an undocumented student, what it meant to like, advocate for me, right? So I always have to be the educator in those spaces and I think. More recently, I'm starting to kind of think about the ways that I have been an educator in the have not had the opportunity to be an educator in the. Ways that I. Wanted to be. So, like, I wish more people would ask me, like, what does it mean for you to come from this place in Mexico? What does it mean for you to be able? To I don't know. Like share more about story telling you right like. Those are the types of things that I wish I would been asked more, but instead of have to be in. This kind of. Like advocacy, survival alongside my family and community. I sure that they say. Like I've always been an educator and I've always had to be advocate just because of the the the part of my identity, right, that is as a as an immigrant. But also I think the other pieces that I'm realizing now is that as I'm moving through the the my like mid 30s and I'm like well with 30s. I've also I'm starting to like reconnect back to family and reconnect to like practices and and now I'm like the educator in in terms of like giving access and having access to. My family to talk about. Like what? Our connection to land is. What are connection to these things that they

didn't have access to. But now I have access to because of the. And so I think flipping the narrative for myself has been really helpful because in the US as a undocumented person, but also someone fighting like as a woman of color always also fighting for other bipop folks. Oftentimes, it's very like deficit based, right, like you're always kind of putting out Flyers and so. I think this. This way of organizing and being an educator and advocate through a lens that's more about like what we already culturally have, like our gifts and all the things, is so much more joyful. And it and it has and has have. It's hard to be the truth. It's not something that that I can just because everything is always expected for support and service. And so I think just to kind of add some kind of moments in that, it's like I did go to undergrad and have worked with the mocking students since I was. In high school. You know, like the first spaces that I helped Co create was helping medicine, metals college Bowling Club because our town was primarily undocumented, primarily Mexican immigrants. Population was like less than 3000. And so that was kind of like the first phase where we have to kind of advocate for ourselves to kind of get college visitors to come up to our town. And flash forward to like undergrad. I didn't know I was doing this, but I decided to apply and then accept going to attend the university in the Canadian border. So between Washington City and Canada, and I didn't realize at the time because. I also didn't know. Immigration policy and the like 100 mile radius rule in terms of having enforcement. On the US borders, but also because you didn't hear about it in the news, you always hear about the. Southern border, right? So I moved to a university that was about 10 miles from the Canadian border, and so I would always see ice and enforcement around campuses or in the community surrounding, and that was the reason why I remember attending college and being. Wait, do they know that I'm here, right? Like I had to turn their lights. All these things and so and. And during that time in my college years, I also experienced one of my colleagues deportations from the same town that I grew up in. And so I got to see also how higher Ed didn't respond as a larger institution, but thought it was always. Hip hop folks. Trying to figure out how to support Bipac students and in this particular case and unblock. The student to figure out how they're going to tell their teachers at this student was in deportation proceedings and then eventually deported right men, and then knowing like to trying to keep the privacy of the student, but also trying to make sure that. People knew that they were going to be able to take their finals. So things like that are like moments where I'm like kind of push me to. Continue to be an advocate and. Organizer and eventually led me to my masters. Program in higher Ed. But also is what kind of continues to remind me of the ways that we've had to show up constantly for ourselves. And at the same time, how like how hard and tiring it is to have to be in those places as well?

Rosemary Ferreira

There's so many things that I want to point out from what you shared. One of the key things is you know, you mentioned flipping the narrative and you know we met at the University of Maryland, College Park, where you were the first undocumented program coordinator at the institution. And I took your undocumented training. We created a A3 part training for faculty, staff, students at the university to support and advocate for undocumented students, and that was one of the key things that I remember from that. Training is flipping the the narrative on undocumented students. What does it mean to to flip that narrative?

Laura Bohorquez Garcia

I appreciate you bringing that up because I yes, that is like a training that I helped create and I do think that it played its purpose for the time being at the university and I also feel like even that even then I

was still reinforcing a lot of like. The good immigrant narratives, a lot of, and by that I mean for example, like there was parts of the training where I did name like, why is it that we're always it's so easy to advocate for students, for resources when they have the full point OGPA or they're greatly involved on campus. And so they're full people know them, and they're willing to vouch for them. And all these things where, like the social capital. But it's so hard during my time at Maryland, I worked with two students who had who were in the process of fighting for a DUI who also were undocumented. And it was so hard to have those conversations not only with the student and their. Family, but with the institution, because at this point it. Had to happen to. Be cases that happened on campus. And so campus police was involved, and so things like that were not things that I brought up in the training. And I think those were things that I think have to have been brought up in the training to really understand the larger context and role that student affairs plays, right, but also. The fact that I didn't bring it up, I think it was also kind of like a let me show you the best things or let me not push that. All that hard because you just came into this space to this training and I don't want to scare you all kind of deal. But who was that protecting? That wasn't protecting students, right? That was, that was protecting white fragility that was protecting the institution. So, so I I appreciate that your reflection, but also like damn, I could have done better and at the same time I had to give myself. Face that I was doing what I can with what I had and at that time that was where my mental capacity was at.

Courtney Jones Carney

Laura had to walk a fine line between advocating for the full humanity of all of her students while also being careful not to rock the boat of a historically white institution. We see a similar method on a national scale in immigration rights activism in the United States, there is a need to push the envelope for the dignity and rights of undocumented immigrants while also having to navigate political offices that uphold power that cater to white, middle, and upper class citizens. To provide us with more context on the experiences of undocumented students, we asked Laura to walk us through the history of immigration rights activism.

Laura Bohorquez Garcia

I guess I want to take the opportunity to just kind of share some loggans to kind of give you a sense of like the timeline of of advocacy kind of starting from like 2000 up until now. So I'm going to go ahead and read these to kind of give you a sense of like, what happened, the slogans and the moments in history, that kind of help. Led to the openings of undocumented student centers, first starting in California. But now like there's some in the Midwest and East Coast and a lot of they have to do because there. Was consultations and. Information sharing and knowledge sharing like Courtney was saying across. The states, right? For an order for that for that. To be able to. Happen, but all of that advocacy. That's happening alongside advocacy at the national level. Whether it was like the National Dream Land, whether it was. Whether it was TPS, temporary protective status, whether it was like supporting refugees and and or coming in on the company minors, right, so there was like a whole array of like different moments in time where students have showed their power and resiliency and at the same time, there's kind of moments even within that where it's almost kind of like. You've made some repetitions or asks within the immigrant rights movement. So as I'm reading the slogans, I think you'll notice that. There's a lot of moments where we kind of were making an ask for comprehensive immigration reform and at the institutional level, we were making an ask for trainings on how to better support undocumented students. And like there were very different asks, right? And then there was

times where we were asking for institution at the state level, but at the institutional level, we were asking for like someone to be like appointed as a point person to talk to them documents. And and yet at the national level, we were kind of figuring out like, what is happening with like folks or unaccompanied minors, and how come we support, you know, folks at the border? So there's always kind of like different variants or grades of advocacy happening, and students like in the in the middle of this kind of being pulled in all of these different directions. And that tells the story of like, resilience and so much hard work. Like to like being pulled in like 3 different. All of these areas at the same time during the same time frame. So I'm just gonna go ahead and read these and so that you can get a sense of, like what the slogans have been in the moments of time and advocacy. So I'm going to start off by reading past the DREAM Act now. Migration is beautiful. Dare to dream. Pathway to citizenship. State DREAM Act. Undocumented and unafraid. Out of the shadows and into the streets. Not one more. Immigration is a black issue. Home is here, here to stay. Immigrants make America great. Defend DACA. I stand with refugees save DACA and TPS. We are home. Immigrants are essential. Pass a Clean DREAM Act no human being is illegal. Immigrant rights are human rights. Keep families together. We are not criminals, Deporter in chief. We are all immigrants and no one is illegal on stolen men. So this just kind of gives you a sense and this is not all of them. This is probably like until 20. I don't know 1617 or some of them, but yeah, you kind of kind of sense of like like the different kind of moments in history. What? What kind of? Prompted right, like these slogans or narratives around like advocacy.

Rosemary Ferreira

Lara, when you were.

Courtney Jones Carney

Doing the slogans, there were many that stood out, but one in particular, and I may not remember it verbatim, but it was something along the lines of keep families together and it just made me think about, like, how this is a historical tactic that has been used, particularly among bipac. Folks within this country to separate and really to try to, to create fear among folks and to force people to be obedient, whatever obedient means in that. And so it just reminds me that it's so important for us to understand, like the shared history and to understand the tactics. And so to understand that this is something that was perpetrated against indigenous folks as children were stolen from their parents. Something that was. Perpetrated against folks of African descent who were enslaved. We were quickly separated from family members without any thought about it, and so this idea that like families, will placeable and you should get over it tomorrow like you've cried your tears but. It's no big deal anymore, but I really think it's so important for us to really understand those shared histories so that when it happens again, we see, oh, this is that tactic that you attempted to use with this particular population. And we're ready for it. And so perhaps there are ways that we can advocate in, like, a pan racial pan. Ethnic sort of way so that we can address these issues because they're not specific to one particular group of. People, this is what you know, our our country has done over the over years. So I think it's super important for us to know those histories and share those histories with each other so that we can begin to strategize on ways that we can have some pan ethnic pan racial movements that are really impactful.

Laura Bohorquez Garcia

100% you make me think about this framing that I think I've been kind of sitting with now for maybe just this year. It's definitely something that I recently heard, but I feel like. What you said and other people

have said it's kind of embodied in this kind of statement and it's been like challenging the the language around like in solidarity or in community to be more, to change and more to really focus on like what you're what I'm hearing you say is like. Joint struggle, we are in joint struggle. We're not if we're. In solidarity, we can choose. To be. But if we're in joint struggle, then we're. In joint struggle. Right, like you're. Saying like all of these tactics, all of these collaborations, all of the work that can really happen. And I think that's one of the things I think within the making rights movement makes sense. Why we. One we haven't had. It's it's a. It's a young, it's a young space, right. I think a lot of. The organizing started in. Like a little bit right before the 2000s. And so it's a, it's a, it's a young space, but also there was a lot of molding of of immigrant youth coming into this space and being told like you have to be like the dreamer narrative, you have to do these things. And so I think now as folks including myself were like into their 30s and are growing out of this like mentality. And on learning all of this. We're like, yeah, you're right. Like, there's all of the ivory tower that I learned is is helpful and most helpful in that moment. But it's like no longer helpful. Let me let me learn. Like like where you're seeing me. Like, let me go figure out how else this can be a better way because. Clearly what we're doing is just repeating the same cycles of harm so. That's not working out.

Courtney Jones Carney

Thank you for sharing that as well. I've been in some higher edge spaces where folks have had this desire to treat undocumented students as international students. Can you talk a bit about the impact if there is one, of conflating the experiences? Those undocumented students with those of international students.

Laura Bohorquez Garcia

Yes, I appreciate this because it honestly brings me back to the times when I was an undergraduate applying for higher. Ed for my masters. Program and I remember it so vividly because I would like leave my room. I didn't feel comfortable enough to make these calls to admissions offices or like to talk to people in my own like dorm room, and I didn't feel comfortable. Like asking other friends to let me borrow their space because they had like houses. So I would rent out this like the little spaces of cubicles in the library and have these swollen conversations with the admissions folks and a lot of the questions were are you an international student and can you show us the like, the accounts that you are able to pay to be a student? And so when I think about like large largely and more broadly like you're saying like the completion between the two is that. It really leaves undocumented students in a place where they don't know what questions to ask, but also it puts them in a place where it's kind of like you're you're forcing folks to tell you that they're undocumented because they don't know. What visas are required to be an international student specifically, depending from what country they're coming from, but. It doesn't allow them to get into the financial, maybe, perhaps avenues that they might have resources. Or access to. And so I think a lot of the students that I've worked with over the course of the years and more particularly here in California, I've seen that a lot of folks. Choose not to question it and just and just as an admin, place students in that category and therefore they miss all of the deadlines for an institution or state financial aid process. But they also mean a lot miss A. Lot of the. Orientation dates that they were about meant for them to register for process and it puts them in a constant. Like kind of like backlog. Oh well, they they register for orientation on time. So now they're like on the waiting list for these classes that they need. And undocumented folks who really don't really have access. To financial support so. It pushes them back another year because that crosses only, you know, available in

the fall, for example. And so it's kind of like this constant. Domino effective barriers when folks are misplacing the different category, but also then folks are being told that they have to take tonsil tests or all of these things, right? And that they're like, no, I don't. But but they don't. But they don't know, right? They don't know. They just, they're they're most of them are first chance. So they don't know what they don't know. And so they. End up taking courses that are not applicable to them and that also pushes them back. I think the other piece is that there's also. There was a lot of big moment in immigrants rights movement where there was a lot big push for sanctuary spaces and there was all. There's always been the conversation of sanctuary spaces when it comes to like churches and like hospitals, but then there's conversation was more so around higher education spaces. And one of the things I think. We have to understand as a like it folks in the immigrant rights movement is that there, that no school can ever be free from ice or not have a relationship with. Customs enforcement because of because there is international students on campus and they have to, you know, follow up on their paperwork and make sure that students have visas, et cetera. So no place their own. So she. Can ever really be? Free from ice in in, in. That in that narrative, that scenario.

Rosemary Ferreira

I see our conversation really starting to examine higher education and its impact on experiences of undocumented study. I wanted to zone in on particularly graduate level education. You mentioned some of the challenges you had pursuing a master's degree at the University of Maryland, Baltimore. We are primarily a graduate and professional level institution, so I also wanted to hear around like what are the unique? Challenges and documented students face as they're thinking about going to Graduate School or applying to Graduate School. Like that process between transitioning between undergrad and then graduate professional level studies.

Laura Bohorquez Garcia

Yeah, I feel like you might hear this very often and not just for, like, documentary students, but just by folks in general. I would say for funding, funding is always going to be an issue and specifically for the IT depends on the type of career that they're looking into, like if they're looking into edge engineering, aerospace engineer. All the things that require research or that require some kind of federal funding or grants or programming to be part of, or space that you need to intern at, especially if it's a government related, most programs and or funding will need will require residency or citizenship to be a part. Of that program. And so a lot of times. Marking into graduate students. While they might get an initial offer to be able to have like. Their first full. Year paid by the Institute by the university. Then they're going to be really struggle to find funding for the rest of their journey, right? Like whether that's three 5-6 years. Depending on their program. Because a lot of the funding that comes after their initial year does come. From the grants that. They're working with their professors or their grants that are. You know, available through their career track and so funding this has always been a big issue. Because of that. The other piece is that a lot of depending on the institution, it also depends on how their. Graduate assistant programs are set up so in other institutions are really known spaces or opportunities as graduate assistantships, and other spaces are known as graduate student research roles, right? So, like every institution has their own kind of structure, but the biggest thing that I've seen is that depending on that structure, it makes it either harder or a little bit easier to advocate. Or funding to be stipend based versus hourly or work. And my experience now Davis is that they are very more, much, much more structured as they they are a research institution, right. So the structure in terms of my funding is very

much around TA shift and research. And so then that means that a lot of the folks that are in Graduate School right now are having a really hard time. Accessing funding beyond that.

Speaker 4

First or second year?

Laura Bohorquez Garcia

And I think the other piece is. That a lot of students. Going back to like being first. And is that a lot of students don't know that even though the the department might be offering you a five year package and you know, and that would be able to cover all of your expenses. That the funding actually isn't a funding source that is eligible to provide that grant or that scholarship, and so then students find. Out a year or two. Into that program, but they actually can't receive the last three years of funding because it's coming. From a different funding. Funding source. And so then that's where students get pulled. Into the middle. Where it was the institutions fault for not like looking at where their funding sources were coming from, but also like how do you ask a student when you're not supposed to for their immigration status, right to like, clear, clear that up at the very beginning of. The you know of the conversation for, you know, offering admission. For a moment into this program. So I would say funding. I think the second biggest one is just community. I think community care and being able to create community is really hard. I see a lot of students who, you know, they're like that one or 2% people, especially by people in their course. But it then. It when it comes to like being on a. Documented student they're probably 1. I don't know in like 5 programs put together. And so it's really hard to create community one because there's so many few of them, but also because. Each department is so kind of siloed. It's very siloed, right? So you go to that one building and you go to class and. You go home or there's, like a particular routine because people have families. People have other responsibilities, and so it becomes a very lonely experience. And then that that's what we're seeing. So specifically and document students also take time off to, you know, be and create a family or community to help them move through the rest of their journey. So when they. Come back or? Because they have other familiar responsibilities that they. Have to take care of. Because they're like that one person who in their household, who might have access to funding from the university. And so therefore that funding is used for their own basic needs with their rest of their family. So it's like a shared responsibility.

Rosemary Ferreira

And I want to make sure we're putting the highlight on like as a higher education, how we're feeling undocumented students and providing them with the resources they need to be successful. Are there any resources that you have seen available that and documents this can utilize? In support of their graduate professional level studies.

Laura Bohorquez Garcia

Yeah, and. And I'm going to start off with the ones that are not specific to their studies, but that have been very helpful to help them move through their studies, so. A lot of questions that we get and that I've seen have been how do I prepare myself and my family and my community. So we've gotten a lot more questions on what is kind of known as like preparedness. Family plans. This would include like what would happen if there was a detention or deportation in my family, and what can my department head do? What can the institution or legal counsel do? What can access to lawyers and the institution

help with? So there's been like a larger conversation on, like, how do I feel better about where I am with my life to be able to then focus on like my studies and the rest of the thing. That has been one in mind, the national Nutrition Law Center has a lot of great resources on and templates on how to fill out a preparedness plan for yourself and your family. The kind of other one is the IRC, which I can name later because I'm blanking on the name right now, but they also. Your help with a lot of. Referrals to legal consultations in terms of like there's a lot of questions that students have who are moving out of state or or moving within their state.

Courtney Jones Carney

That are near.

Laura Bohorquez Garcia

What what is known as checkpoints alongside alongside the borders, right? So they're trying to figure out like, what their commute to this new institution will. Look like what? What it what is safe right to? Be able to. Be very close to a border. Can they move past checkpoints? Can they make that decision? So a lot of they? Also, IIRC, has a lot of resources on like understanding where the checkpoints are and what your rights are around checkpoints. And then there are more. Like resource funding kind of spaces. Like immigrants rising it, it started as an organization here in the Bay Area, but definitely has expanded to support like folks across the country. They do a lot of scholarship lists both for undergrad and graduate and professional students. But they also have a lot of new like boot camps and spaces for documents, so they have support groups that are like very specific to identity. So they're all like in document to like open to documented students, but they're also specific on affinity. So like if you're an API student, if you're not. Et cetera. But they also provide like law school, boot camp, they have a whole program on entrepreneurship out and then so they do a lot of like those more informational service oriented programming. I would also need pre health dreamers. It's basically a whole collective of undocumented undergraduate or graduate students currently in. Any health field. And they also have mentorship program also. It's a available starting in the California area but also available nationwide. And so they're doing a lot more programming around like scholarships, mentorship, what kinds of questions to ask the medical program or whatever program it is that you're interested. So I would start with those. I think every kind of organization has a little bit about a little bit about like the a focus for themselves. So I know that like United, return used to have some focus on like teaching and the partnership not necessarily partnership but. Like there were. Like sharing information on like Teach for America at one point. So it just kind of depends on like what the interest is some organizations. And attempt to focus on different support based on just relationship partner.

Speaker

Sure, sure.

Rosemary Ferreira

That's wonderful. Thank you so much for sharing that. And as you're speaking, I'm thinking about our censored into Cultural Center. And we do have a page that we created for resources for undocumented students and immigrants. Rising is definitely on there. And I'm, like, writing down these other ones that you are mentioning to put on the website. But Corny, I was wondering if you could also, since you were

President, talk a little bit about the history of the center, because our history is very much connected to activism and social justice too.

Courtney Jones Carney

Oh, OK. Pregnancy brain and I have. To remember things from years ago. I'm going to do my best. When you were talking about sanctuary spaces, sanctuary campuses, there was definitely a request for UMB to be a sanctuary campus and I guess 2016 was when a lot of students were advocating for it. And the institution was kind of apprehensive, like. How can we be a sanctuary campus? Truly right to a point that you made. But then the students kind of reconvened and said, OK, well, these are the things that we're advocating for. Can you do these things? Like if you can't say that you're a sanctuary campus, can you at least commit to these particular points? And the university was able to commit to those particular points? But just didn't really feel as though they were in a position to say like we are indeed a sanctuary campus because they couldn't guarantee certain. They did recognize those various points that were elevated by students and then additionally with that, students also were saying that they needed a space. A space for folks who were historically marginalized or might more likely be able to gather. To be able to build community across various social identities, and so they started to meet with different folks in senior leadership to talk about the creation of that space. And so eventually. That was approved, right. And so specifically the students were the ones who are responsible for the intercultural center being the intercultural Center, because there were probably years of students who were working together, who were passing notes to one another because our programs are different lengths. So there's some students who might be here for a year. Over here for two years, some here for eight years, but they were passing those notes along, who they met with, what sort of things they talked about, what their goals were, and eventually it was approved to create a center that could be a space.

Speaker 4

For folks.

Courtney Jones Carney

But yeah, absolutely. I mean, we wouldn't be here. Rosemary wouldn't be in her position and I wouldn't be in this current position if it wasn't for students advocating for what they thought they needed in order to be successful at the University of Maryland, Baltimore.

Rosemary Ferreira

At the intercultural Center, we are incredibly proud to be. A direct result. Of student advocacy. Since our launch in June 2020, we have organized policy events each year to honor and celebrate something marginalized and excluded students, including a workshop this past spring with Lauda to unpack the good immigrant narrative, professionalism and white supremacy culture. We also facilitate 2 dialogue programs. The table dialogue which occurs. Every month and the drop in dialog for anyone at UMB to join. And the critical conversations dialogue program, a four week cohort based dialogue on our website umaryland.edu/IE on the left hand bar, you can click intercultural center and you'll be able to find resources for student parents and caregivers, trans and nonbinary students, and undocumented. And lack of students. We're building out student advisory groups for student parents and caregivers and students with disabilities so that there's a direct Ave. for students to express their needs and experiences to university leadership. It's through this work that we hope that we are building spaces of

sanctuary for students who have been historically targeted and harmed. Our final set of questions in our interview with LOUDA focused on the power and resiliency that undocumented students brings to higher education with the US educational system as a whole can be to truly embody justice and equity, and how can educators and advocates also censor their self? Care and rest in this work.

Laura Bohorquez Garcia

I'm going to actually connect this if it's OK with you with the with the other question too, which was kind of like what would an educational system might look like if it embodied justice and equity? And I think it fits in perfectly with this, because while I'm no longer a student, I'm still within, I'm still within higher Ed, right? And I think I think the biggest thing that I've kind of taken throughout the years. Is that if? Accountability and conflict were normalized. I think a lot of things were would change within higher education and specifically when it comes to justice and equity, I think a lot of times I know that I grew up being a very conflict averse person because I was, you know, told with narratives of like. Don't make a big deal. Whatever we want folks to know by your status or explains you right. So there was a lot of moments where that kind of fed this narrative to not be conflict, to be conflict averse. And I think. In higher the spaces where, when, when they talk about Accountability, Act when we talk to administrators or like. Talk about these. Systems and how they are harming undocumented. Students and marginalized schools. A lot of The thing is like well. They knew they knew what they were getting into, which is a real answer and obviously not accountable and or we don't want to share this resource publicly because in more on document, as soon as we're in account and we are not set up to serve them clearly. So I think if there was more accountability. And that was normalized. We would change a lot of the ways that then we could show up for ourselves, right, like. If we're saying that we want to support a documented students, but also if someone who's undocumented currently working in that space is telling you that they're like, overworked, underpaid, and there isn't accountability, and like what it looks like to pay them more, what it looks like to give them more staff, what it looks like to provide more funding for the programming that students are asking for, then there is an accountability right, like you're just. Getting into the cycle of fatigue overworked people all the time and then that that look eventually trickles down to students. Well, and so I think it would definitely be a space where there was more focus on also intergenerational support. I think a lot of the work that I'm trying to do now more in my role is how do we bring in? Family members and or community members because we know that while students while they attend the institution. Are gonna be here for 3-4, six years, maybe, but then they have a really hard transition out of the university because that was the only place where they were where they were receiving a scholarship to help with their family. That was the only place where they were maybe getting us a food voucher that help with their family. Right. And so all of a sudden, like, they're caught off from all of the. Things that in that the institution was able to provide, but isn't actually sustainable long term. So I think those spaces for conversations on how we are you know collectively caring for the community and it is of focus on entry generation will be then I think that's where higher Ed could play a better role for sure. So that's what I think justice would look like for knocking with students. OK, so this is something I think that I I struggle.

Courtney Jones Carney

With sometimes with like the. Being someone who is, you know, part of a social identity, your social identities, that have been historically oppressed in this country and then also feeling compelled to do the work in order to make changes happen. So like internally trying to balance. The work that I'm doing

and recognizing that I did not create these problems, I did not create these injustices. However, because I am directly impacted, therefore I want to be involved in the solution but. It's not really. My responsibility. And so like, I'm wondering if you have some thoughts around that as well as. It relates to. Folks who are undocumented and being involved in this work when they did not create. The problems but. Still trying to, you know, address those injustices that they are facing on a regular basis, whether they created the problems or not.

Laura Bohorquez Garcia

Yes, you made me think of two things. Was I often hear I have to. Repay my family sacrifices or my community sacrifices. And then the other big thing that I hear is if I don't do it, nobody will. And I think This is why capitalism flies, right? Because it's all of the free labor that we're giving now because we know that it's true and it's not that if we sometimes don't do it, it won't happen. And at the same time, because that that is how we're being positioned, we're giving away all of this emotional labor and all types of Labor, not just emotional, so. It's really hard when I. Think it's kind of also connected to what you were saying, Rosemary in your question on like how do you, how do you, how are you? Doing in this work. I think I have to really start to practice my boundaries because I I'm I'm not going to die for this job. I'm not gonna die for any job. I think I've gone through that experience and organizing spaces that come through experience and. Right. And I'm at the point where I'm like, I will give my job 45 hours, 5 extra hours next week, and if it doesn't get done? This week, no one's going to die. The institution, no one's going to get detained and. And those were like, kind of like I have to put really high. And it sounds hard and and maybe like really rigid, but like if no one's in detention, dying or like something like it's going to be fine. And so I think I've had to remind myself that. Like I'm also not a savior. I am not the one that's gonna fix it because it sometimes it does come from my ego, and I have to remind myself that. And at the same time, it's just I have to, I have to model like I have to model for myself and other folks to be able to say no, because we're always going to be inclined to say yes because it is personal because it doesn't impact us and because we see the the realities right of the of the impact. But I also want. To be like happy. I also want to go to that.

Rosemary Ferreira

Like I don't know.

Laura Bohorquez Garcia

The date with my partner, whatever it is. And I think the other thing that I. Realized is that even if I'm not doing emails or whatever it is during my hours of work that there's always things in my mind. So I'm like I'm already giving them all the head space, like I don't need to like include more things into like what I'm giving away and like the energy that I'm that I want to keep for myself. I think the last thing that I'll name about this is. But I've also noticed that I want to give some of the energy that I have every day to myself, because I've noticed that I start off my day usually like focusing on going to work and like getting ready for work, and that that 90 and meeting or whatever. But now I'm like, Nope, I won't have meetings until 11 like these two hours. You're going to be for myself. And I will work through the rest of the thing and figure it out, but I'm like, damn, I'm so tired of people taking all of my good energy. And then when I get. Home, I'm. Exhausted and like. Not wanting to do something for myself, you know so.

Courtney Jones Carney

So thank you for that. You brought up some really good points and I think that during COVID-19 that's when I realized perhaps how expendable I was at an institution and I really had to like just stop and reevaluate. And so we had the vaccine mandate. It's like, am I going to give vaccine if I don't get vaccine going to get? Is that that? That's how. It's just that simple. It's just busy. This and so that was like this point for me, where it's like, OK, well, you really need to examine how much you're willing to put in to an institution that perhaps doesn't see you as an individual when they're making these large decisions and then signing out those pregnant. Like, OK well. I have to prioritize that I can't prioritize the institution and what the institution needs in all of these competing demands. And so yeah, becomes really important to. But there's a lot of privilege in being able. To do that but it. If you are able. To it is important to be able to create those healthy boundaries so that you can be a whole person and not just someone who is like a martyr for the institution that sometimes. May cause you harm.

Rosemary Ferreira

And there's so much more that I want. To go into so much more because you're talking. About the privilege. And like, louder, you talk about like, the like. One of the things that folks tell themselves is like wanting to do this for their families, right. And they think about, like, sometimes for myself, like. My parents are essential workers and have been working this whole time and like if I don't push myself like it's not fair, like there's just a lot of guilt, right? That also comes in in this work to at least speaking for myself.

Courtney Jones Carney

Our conversation with Laura highlighted the challenges undocumented students face, but also how some colleges and universities are currently supporting undocumented students, including you and me. However, there's still work to do to help all undocumented students feel safe on campus and have the support they need to succeed. Universities can do the following. Make sure undocumented students aren't classified and treated as international students. Open up financial aid and scholarships to all students, regardless of citizenship status. Designate a staff member to serve as an undocumented student coordinator. Provide free legal and financial support to students applying for DACA, informed staff, students and faculty about their rights and responsibilities. When it comes. To ice raids or on campus visits develop and enforce policies that campus. Police should not. Act as immigration agents. Develop and enforce policies that state staff, faculty and students should not ask individuals about their immigration status unless absolutely necessary and on marketing materials for services, job positions and scholarships. Make a note if those opportunities are available to undocumented. Students so students don't have to disclose their immigration status in order to participate.

Rosemary Ferreira

If you have any additional thoughts on how universities can support undocumented students, especially here at UV, we want to hear from you. Send us an e-mail at i.e. At umaryland.edu. Finally, we want to. End this episode. With a message from Nora, which is. Particularly for undocumented flows.

Laura Bohorquez Garcia

I think I would want to ask like undocumented folks who are looking into Graduate School or just folks looking into what it means for them to continue to exist in the US to kind of really ask yourself, like, what? What am I beyond this narrative or the status that I'm that I am? In in the US. That's because I

think for me, once I started to really ask that question, it led me to really try to figure out who I want, who I really want to be and how I'm showing up for them, for, for myself and right. And I I have to take off the layers of like, well, I'm no longer an undocumented student because I'm not a student. So there goes that narrative. And now I don't have a family, so there goes the narrative of keeping families together. I'm not work a farm worker, so I'm not even fit into, like, the immigrants are essential narrative. Right. So it's it's kind of like once you like, go off all these narratives. Like who, who you really are and who you really wanna, how you really want to show up. It's going to help you not have to go. Into a lot of. Different like trauma spaces or and really kind of focus on like. The things that you where you really. Truly, truly wanna build.

Speaker 4

The table is a production of the intercultural center and the Division of Student Affairs at the University of Maryland, Baltimore. It's hosted and produced by Courtney Jones, Carney and Rosemary. Ferrera this episode. Was Co written by Rosemary and me. Angela Jackson, senior marketing specialist in the Division of Student Affairs. I'm also the show's executive producer and editor. A big thank you to our guest. Laura Bojorquez Garcia for joining us at our table and thank you to everyone who has sent us their questions, comments and episode ideas regarding race, ethnicity, culture norms and current events. We've read every single one of them and are working on some answer. As a reminder, we always want to hear from. You the listeners. So e-mail us at LSE at umaryland.edu if you'd like to be anonymous, just let us know in. The body of the e-mail. For more information about the intercultural center, including events where students can learn more about race ethnicity. Culture norms and current events visit umaryland.edu/ILEC. Thank you again for listening, and we'll see you in October.