



# CHANGING LIVES

*One Work Permit at a Time*



**United We Dream**®

# CHANGING LIVES

## One Work Permit at a Time

How United We Dream's 2½ Years of DACA Implementation  
Experience Can Benefit Your DACA and DAPA Work



**100,000+**  
**Educated**

**1,310**

Workshops

**26,436**

Helped with  
Applications

**400+**

Leaders  
Trained

United We Dream is the largest immigrant youth-led network in the country with 53 local groups, 120,000 members and an online reach of nearly 2 million people. We have created a unique strategy for DACA and DAPA implementation unlike any other.

Together with national and local partner groups, we launched the Own the Dream Campaign (OTD), the only national legalization implementation program in constant operation since DACA's announcement in 2012. We connect the expertise of these national legal partners with Dreamers' innovation, expertise and cultural responsiveness.

**Are You Ready to Change  
5 Million Lives?**



# Introduction

*That's only about 600 of our 120,000 members!*

Nearly 5 million people may be eligible for temporary work authorization and protection from deportation through the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA) programs.

This report describes how United We Dream's two and a half years of DACA implementation experience may benefit those planning to implement DACA and DAPA.

We built our implementation program to adapt and grow. Today, we work on DACA and DAPA, tomorrow: implementing a permanent pathway to citizenship.

Turning policy victories into changed lives requires the leadership of those impacted by the policies. United We Dream – and our national legal partners – have innovated, worked through challenges and built a community-driven infrastructure which, we believe, is a model for the future.

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### The Results



## Building Teams of Empowered & Skilled People

Thoughtful management structures and job-specific training enable us to accomplish more and provide consistent, high-quality help to our community while developing leaders.

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# Structure & Management: The Keys to Ensuring High Standards, Efficiency & Creativity

Over two years and a half, our national management to field team ratio has been cut and our financial efficiency has increased.

**TRAINING NEW MANAGERS.** We move community leaders up a steep learning curve to become good managers fast, with trainings on process, policy AND leadership, project & personnel management & more. “Coaching style” supervision delivers accountability and personalized attention.

**COMMON MANAGEMENT LANGUAGE.** Staff and volunteers come to UWD with a wide variety of workplace experiences. To eliminate miscommunication, United We Dream uses language and role descriptions from The Management Center from volunteer teams to our national leadership.

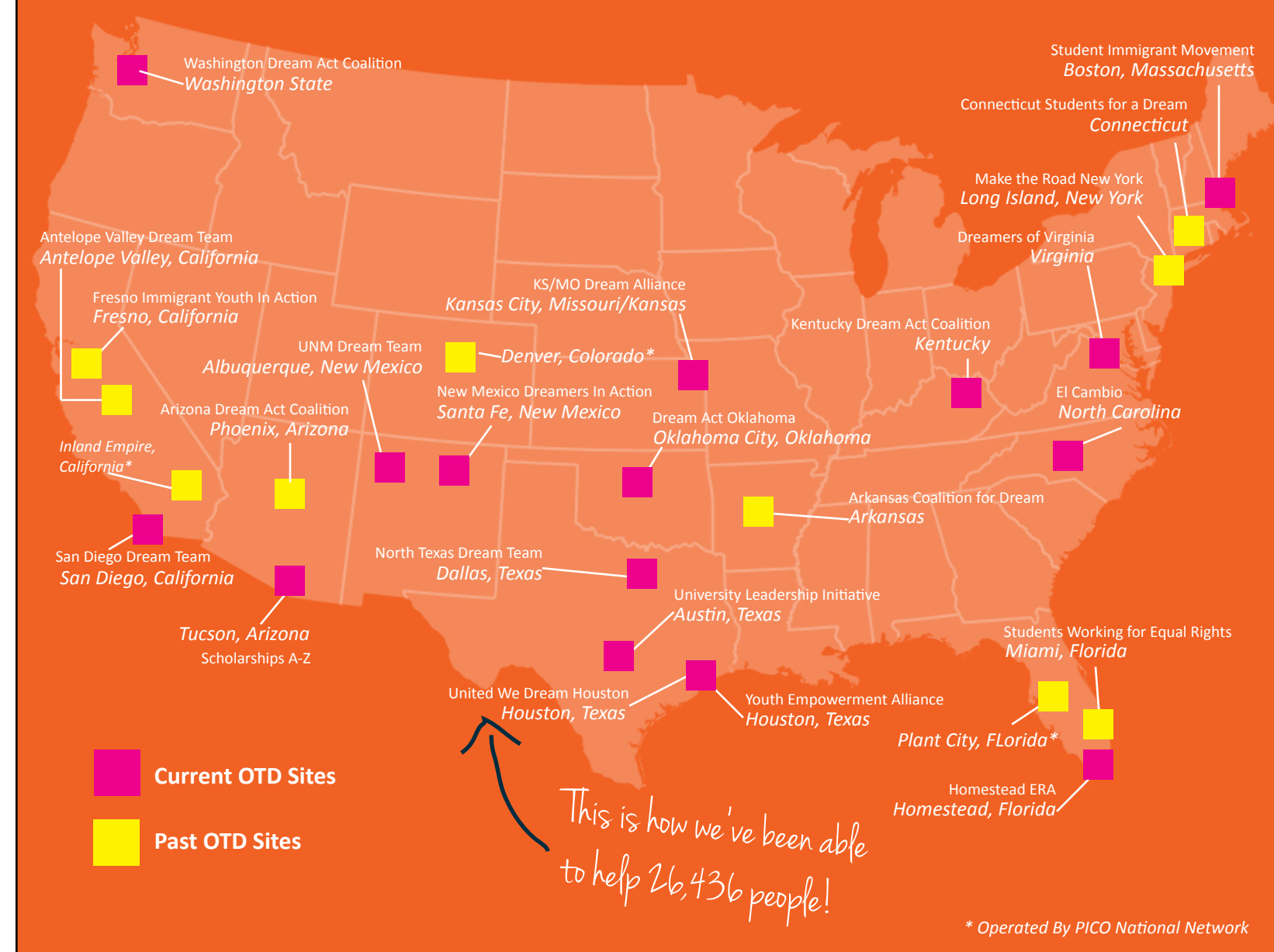
**CENTRALIZE ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES AND TIGHT CONTROLS.** Payroll and contracting, event insurance, communications and other needs do not need to be reinvented at the site level. Centralized services and consistent management ensures that United We Dream can maintain fiscal responsibility and legal compliance even though many sites are not managed by salaried staff.

**CUSTOM-BUILT DATA SYSTEMS.** UWD’s data and technology department developed a single, easy to train/easy to use, data system to ensure that every person who comes in the door is adequately screened, helped and can be followed up with.

**BALANCE HIGH STANDARDS WITH ENTREPRENEURIAL FREEDOM.** Local folks know local dynamics, resources and communities best. We don’t let high standards stifle local creativity.

**CROSS-ORGANIZATION MANAGEMENT.** The PICO National Network managed three local sites and was a sub-grantee of UWD. Our field managers worked as one team, co-trained field teams and shared the vision of community-led work. We each used our existing administrative structures & processes while working as one on the results.

**MULTI-DISCIPLINARY PROJECT PLANNING.** The formation of OTD was led by organizations expert in community organizing, policy and law, and communications together. National Immigration Law Center (NILC), Americas Voice Education Fund, UWD and PICO jointly developed the vision and framework for OTD and the project was initially fiscally sponsored by NILC.



**David Chung, National Field Coordinator**

“ I’m the National Field Coordinator for United We Dream’s Own the Dream program. I first got involved in the movement after getting help with my DACA at a workshop organized by the Minkwon Center in New York. Now, **I and my colleague Myrna supervise Own the Dream sites** across the country.

I’m the **interface between work on the ground and United We Dream’s** administrative, advocacy, data and communications support teams.

On a weekly basis, I convene weekly calls with each team to **monitor** progress, **coach** them on areas for improvement and **develop leadership and management skills**.

I consider myself successful if, as the weeks go by, our leaders become better skilled at getting the work done, managing and retaining staff and volunteers, using technology and data to optimize our implementation work and more.”

# Developing Leaders and Community-Driven Implementation Teams



United We Dream places **Dreamers and community members at the forefront** of the leadership roles at all levels. In fact, over 75% of OTD organizers running DACA workshops identify as Dreamers. Since OTD is designed and coordinated by Dreamers who share the experience of having grown up undocumented, our implementation model provides a **unique space through which the organizers and attendees can meaningfully connect** through their shared immigrant identity.

Their cultural responsiveness comes directly from their ability to understand the complexities of being undocumented that go beyond the DACA or DAPA policy - fears, shame, pride, humor - understanding these dynamics is the key to successful outreach, building trust and long term empowerment.

## TRAINING & CURRICULUM

With over **two years of improvement**, our training systems and curricula enable us to quickly bring on staff and volunteers, while maintaining legal and financial controls and the ability to pivot our program as policy changes occur.

OTD has **delivered over 3,300 hours of high level training** to new implementation professionals through 550 coaching sessions and 5 national trainings. Over 400 leaders have been trained on how to do the work as well as managing and training others.

### BUILDING UPON CULTURAL COMPETENCIES.

Dreamers and community members know their communities and already serve as a bridge between their families and government by translating and more. We don't turn these experts into clinicians, we adapt our curricula and methods to support their strengths.

**INFORMATION RETENTION:** Trainings are fun, challenging and engaging both because we want the experience to be enjoyable AND because information retention is critical. If it's boring, it doesn't work.

**ROLE-SPECIFIC TRAINING MODULES:** Our five training modules grow in complexity along with the role an individual plays. It is not necessary or efficient for everyone to learn everything and it's critical that everyone "working" at an Own the Dream event understand the role they play and the limitations of that role.

**SIGNED AGREEMENTS:** Depending on their role, personnel and volunteers sign agreements related to client confidentiality, Unauthorized Practice of Law prevention and other topics as needed. These help to ensure consistency and provide volunteers with a sense of accomplishment following their training.

**COMMUNITY BUILDING:** Trainings emphasize the human experience to ensure that events are empowering experiences and increases the likelihood that they will, in turn, become volunteers, recruit others to participate and become involved in our movement for change.



UWD has a five module training system that can be worked through in stages and online if needed. Modules have been developed and improved for two years alongside our national legal and policy partners. At all levels, community members are trained on what they can AND what they can't do in order to maintain our high standards.

**LEVEL ONE:** Greeters, registration, engagement, general duties

**LEVEL TWO:** Document check, filling out applications

**LEVEL THREE:** Screening assistance (attorney supervised)

**LEVEL FOUR:** Organize and give an information session on their own

**LEVEL FIVE:** Can lead and manage teams, lead application clinics and train others

# Making the Most of Local Legal Expertise

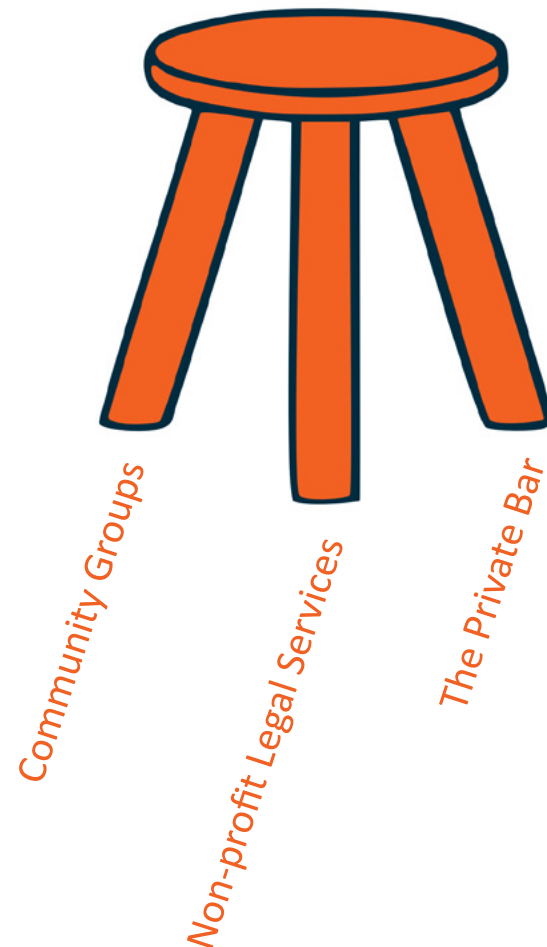
No single organization, sector or methodology can provide the service our community needs.

There aren't enough affordable immigration attorneys or Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) Accredited Representatives to meet the needs of the 1.4 million potential DACA applicants in the U.S., much less the millions more eligible for DACA expansion and DAPA. Therefore, we developed cutting-edge strategies to increase our ability to serve more potential DACA beneficiaries by working with trusted immigration attorneys. All of our training materials and online tools were co-created with our national legal service and policy partners. Building these relationships, ensures that our tools are accessible to our non-attorney volunteers and provide clarity and confidence for our attorney volunteers on the ground.

**WORKING HAND IN HAND WITH ATTORNEYS.** In order to ensure a high quality experience and develop trust, we do not allow volunteer attorneys to directly solicit clients while they are volunteering. However, attorneys do gain valuable "community bonafides" by volunteering at our events where they become known as being supportive of our communities.

**VALUE ATTORNEY TIME.** We seek to minimize training and down time at events. Attorneys are invited to participate at the time when they will be needed, not beforehand, and are made to feel like they are a part of the empowerment experience with our well-rounded training.

## THREE LEGGED STOOL OF LEGAL HELP



## ATTORNEY ROLES & TRAINING

Our symbiotic relationship with attorneys continues to make the OTD program stand out as we learn from each other's expertise.

Attorney recruitment and retention takes time so we've designed clear and engaging trainings for two types of attorneys. This ensures that attorneys make the most of their time - only needing training for the level of support they plan to give.

**LEVEL ONE:** Trained with an introduction to the OTD model, information sessions and workshops, and training on the DACA policy.

**LEVEL TWO:** Attorney leads organize, supervise and train other attorneys in order to provide a constant flow of attorney volunteers at information sessions and workshops. They are trained in detail about OTD legal practice as developed by UWD and our national legal partners and other aspects of immigration law.



## SCREENING TECHNOLOGY

In order to streamline the intake process, United We Dream digitized the screening criteria developed by national legal partners and seamlessly integrated it with our custom-built data systems for case management & follow-up. We've also used web and app-based tools developed by Immigrant Advocates Network and national partners to improve efficiency.

## REMOTE REVIEW

This process was developed by national legal partners and UWD to connect remote attorneys with communities where local pro-bono attorneys are difficult to find. Organizers on the ground introduce the DACA application process and the attorney. The applicant and attorney then connect through online video chat or through a teleconference for DACA or other immigration benefit screening. The organizers help the applicant assemble a complete application packet, which is scanned and stored in a secure file hosting server to which only the organizers and attorney have access. The attorney reviews the packet and either gives final approval for submission or flags issues which need to be corrected. If necessary, the attorney and applicant communicate again.



# National Legal Partnerships and Collaboration

The unique relationship between United We Dream and our national legal partners is a critical pillar of our DACA implementation work and continues to evolve through our public education work on DACA expansion and DAPA.

Dream leaders and legal experts, through a collaborative called the National Legal Implementation Strategy Team (NLIST), have created standard applicant screening forms, training curricula, public education materials, technology tools and more. We and the dedicated legal fellows of several partners collaborate both nationally and on the ground to continuously identify challenges, innovate and improve.

Together, we consider our resources to be the “gold standard,” which the entire OTD structure makes real on the ground and online.



**DEDICATED LEGAL FELLOWS FROM PARTNER GROUPS ARE ABSOLUTELY CRITICAL.** Through much of the last two years, key legal partners were resourced to hire legal fellows dedicated to bring their expertise directly to implementation work on the ground and nationally through trainings, materials production and working through systematic challenges and legal questions.

**SERVE AS A VISIBLE MODEL OF CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION.** Tensions between attorneys and non-attorneys in some areas are real and should not be papered over. We leaned in to those challenges to resolve them and our collaborative relationship will continue to serve as a model for collaboration to regional, state and local efforts where tensions might exist.

**NON-RIGID, COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIP.** Dedicated legal fellows at partner organizations enabled us to imagine new methods and products based on learnings from the field. The institutional relationship was not rigid - the legal fellows and United We Dream’s own attorney and field staff worked as a cohesive team with a single work plan.



*“I was dreading the training about unauthorized practice of law but Patrick’s (American Immigration Council) session rocked - and Aidin from ILRC is our Dreamer/lawyer broadcast star.”*

Camila Bortolletto, UWD Program Coordinator  
DACAdmented Dreamer from CT

*“In Oklahoma, we needed to try remote review to deal with our attorney shortage - Kamal, Angelo and the NILC team helped us experiment.”*

Freddy Valencia, Oklahoma Lead Organizer  
Dreamer from Oklahoma



*“Rosa (National Immigration Project) embodies the vision for highly trained non-lawyers, non-BIA accredited leaders who can provide expert help and Pat at the Immigrant Advocates Network is so great - their Pocket DACA and web tools help speed things up on the ground.”*

Frances Valdez, esq.  
United We Dream Legal Consultant for Implementation

*“Tatyana and Ilisa (Catholic Legal Immigration Network) brought CLINIC’s existing training curricula together with our field experience to create a program that works.”*

Myrna Orozco, UWD’s OTD Deputy Director  
Dreamer from Missouri





## Building Effective and Efficient Events

After two and a half years, our methods have improved in efficiency and effectiveness. We help people get their DACA and prepare for DAPA while empowering people and building our movement for change.

- 18 Community Education & Application Assistance: How We Do It
- 20 Custom Built Data Systems & Technology for DACA & DAPA

# Community Education & Application Assistance: How We Do It

Our systems are designed to support DACA applicants with streamlined cases from beginning to end. Eligible applicants whose cases are more complex and have an increased risk associated with filing are referred to trusted legal counsel.

Application workshops are one part of the process but need to be integrated seamlessly with other aspects of the program and we've designed and refined the "user experience" over the last two and a half years. While every locality is different, our way of doing the work ensures that all communities - rural, urban, young, older and more - receive the high quality and experience they deserve.

**SET THE CONTEXT AND ENGAGE.** Explaining the story of how we got to this moment and everyone's role in winning more serves as a catalyst for engagement and assists with volunteer recruitment and retention. Every person in the room is a part of making history - we ensure they know that.

**"USER DRIVEN" PROCESS.** Our processes are developed from the perspective of the attendees and the volunteers who do the work. We make it easy and fun, while maintaining high standards.

**COMMUNITY-LED OUTREACH.** Dreamers and community members are natural outreach experts. We coach them to improve upon natural instincts and thrive.

**CREATING SAFE SPACES.** Own the Dream spaces reflect the world we want to create. For example, we welcome LGBTQ individuals with data intake systems which don't restrict genders to only male and female, explicitly speak of LGBTQ issues, and invite participation in UWD's LGBTQ program.

**SPECIALIZED EXPERIENCES FOR VARIOUS AUDIENCES.** Older Spanish speakers may learn differently and have different needs than younger individuals. We customize the experience to facilitate learning and engagement.

**FOLLOW UP IS KEY.** Our data systems ensure that we don't lose touch with people at events. We can help them complete their applications, connect them to "Life After DACA", updates about DAPA and eventual application help, and community services while engaging them in our movement for change.

**STACK EVENTS IN A SERIES.** At *information sessions*, applicants receive general information

## ELEMENTS OF THE UNITED WE DREAM PROCESS



1) Community outreach and local coalition building



2) Information sessions



3) Document preparation events



4) Application workshops



5) Office hours



6) Follow up

about the DACA application process, including an overview of the forms, filing fees, and documents needed so they can gather supporting evidence before the document preparation workshop. All participants learn how immigrant youth won this victory to receive DACA and have a chance to share their personal stories in a supportive environment.

At *application workshops*, applicants are screened for DACA eligibility and other forms of immigration relief, receive help with form completion and document organization, and have their completed application packet reviewed by an attorney or BIA Accredited Representative. We can't do it all at events, our follow up system enables some sites to offer *office hours*, *remote assistance* and more.

*"Parents, Dreamers & everyone we interact with are informed, helped, empowered and we can stay connected."*

*-Lucas Da Silva, Organizer & DACAdmented Dreamer*

# Custom Built Data Systems & Technology for DACA & DAPA

Our vision - to work with organizations so they can benefit from our tools.

United We Dream technologists and organizers built a unique data and technology system for DACA and DAPA implementation because no product on the market met the needs of community driven work.

After two years of testing by field organizers and technical improvements, our **DreamConnect** technology is easy to use, fully handles DACA, DACA renewals, DACA expansion and DAPA, and has cut training and supervision time in half.

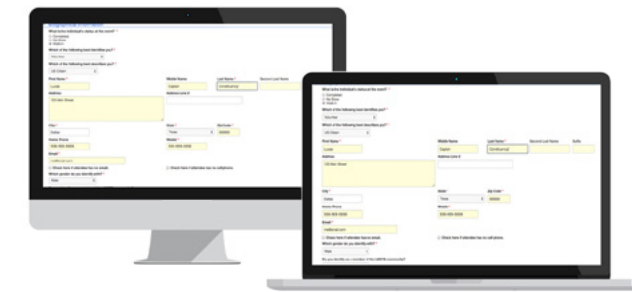
Built by Dreamers for our communities.



***“We built our technology from the ground up to meet our needs. Screening, case management, follow up, analytics - our system does it all.”***

***Adrian Reyna, UWD Data and Technology Manager  
DACAmended Dreamer from Texas***

## DreamConnect



**EASY TO USE, LOW HARDWARE COSTS.** We challenged ourselves to bring hardware costs close to zero for most sites and succeeded. Trained volunteers can use their own laptops or tablets while maintaining data security. And our intuitive interface has cut training and coaching time in half.

**DATA SECURITY.** Protecting the data of our communities is of paramount importance to the Dreamers who built this system. All data security protocols have been developed with strict legal guidance and access to varying levels of data is strictly controlled.

**CUSTOMIZED FOR OUR COMMUNITY.** The simple fact that many in our community have two last names throws off conventional data systems. We eliminated that problem and have added all custom fields necessary to support case management, follow up and academic research.

**DESIGNED FOR ORGANIZERS.** For two years, our organizers have served as working testers of our systems. We’ve improved our data systems and local event structures together to develop a seamless system that just works.

**INTEGRATED ELIGIBILITY SCREENING.** Screening criteria developed by our national legal partners have been digitized and seamlessly incorporated.

**INTUITIVE INTAKE AND EXIT PROCESS.** Easy to use, gathers the information we need to manage case progress over multiple events, follow up and support academic research.

**DATA CLEANING, FORMATTING AND MATCHING.** Errors in volunteer inputted data is unavoidable. Our custom system cleans up common errors, matches and clears duplicate records and more. Our robust back-end has cut the staff time needed to maintain databases.

**BUILT FOR FOLLOW UP.** Our system makes follow up communications via phone, text message or email easy. We customized tools traditionally used for conventional online organizing and voter engagement for DACA and DAPA work.

**SUPPORTS ASSESSMENT AND RESEARCH.** We are a living assessment and research project to help us improve how we work and to power our advocacy mission in Washington, DC. How far do attendees travel to events, ages, income and education levels, barriers faced - the analytics potential is endless.

**ONLINE LINKED WITH GRASSROOTS.** Traditional websites are inadequate for the job. UWD educates and helps tens of thousands online by replicating the “experience” on the ground - personalized communication via email, text and social media. **DreamConnect** links online and grassroots work seamlessly.

**WORKFORCE, EDUCATIONAL & FINANCIAL HELP.** It could be months before attendees at events can apply for DAPA or DACA renewal and they need services after getting a work permit too. **DreamConnect** can link people with college, GED, financial literacy, tax filing, workforce development opportunities and more.



## The Results: Changed Lives and Bringing UWD's Experience to Other Organizations

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# Changed Lives and a Growing Movement for Change

UWD conducted a national survey with Prof. Tom Wong of the University of California San Diego (UCSD) which revealed that upon getting DACA, 70% took a first job or moved to a new one. There is no question that DACA has been a monumental success as nearly 700,000 now hold work permits and are protected from deportation.

Whether online or on the ground, Dreamers - and now parents eligible for DAPA - are coming to UWD for information and help about their rights, the application process and even living full lives after they receive their work permit. High school teams, parents, workers and educators are now a part of the United We Dream movement and this is only the beginning.



*"Since I received DACA, I've had so many new opportunities. I got my first job and first car in the summer of 2013."*

**Sheridan Lagunas Aguirre,**  
DACAmended Dreamer from Texas



*"Thanks to DACA I will be able to continue my education. I am awaiting acceptance into Nursing School and am able to support my son as a single mother. I was able to purchase a car and I have a great job helping kids with special needs. Thanks to DACA I am making my dream come true!"*

**Anayeli Soto**  
DACAmended Dreamer from California



*"I received DACA in December of 2012. Being able to work has empowered me in many ways. Working with United We Dream on finance and accounting, I have the dignity of not only being able to provide for myself, but help my family as well."*

**Jean-Yannick Diouf**  
DACAmended Dreamer from Maryland



*"After attending the DACA clinics I am no longer scared to say I'm undocumented and I've volunteered 26 times. I plan to continue my studies and want to help others who have the potential of becoming someone great but because of similar life circumstances, don't believe in themselves. In the next three years I see myself working, and graduating college with a bachelor's degree in business."*

**Rodrigo Trejo**  
DACAmended Dreamer from Texas



*"Thanks to DACA, after working low income jobs I now work in the emergency room at Holy Cross Hospital as a patient registration representative. I got my first credit card and now I am working on getting a car and a house. I am also going to go back to school to become a nurse. Having DACA has given me a lot of confidence to do a lot of things."*

**Jessica Olivera**  
DACAmended Dreamer from Maryland



## Bringing the United We Dream Experience to Other Organizations

Results that **change** lives.

National, regional and local organizations and collaboratives looking to begin implementing DACA and DAPA today are facing a set of dilemmas similar to those faced by United We Dream as we formalized our implementation program.

They will likely be based in an organization's existing administrative infrastructure; will have to work collaboratively with partners and re-grant organizations; operate multiple sites led by salaried and non-salaried employees; face a myriad of vendor choices; receive conflicting legal advice; and face ebbs and flows of financial resources.

From granular concerns like data privacy and financial or legal accountability to broader ones like long-term engagement and skill building, we've created a road map to overcome them.

We hope that this report has provided you an opportunity to envision what community-driven implementation could look like where you live. The infrastructure you build now will help with DACA and DAPA today and one day soon: bringing citizenship to 11 million.

*“We want to work with organizations and networks to help them take advantage of UWD’s years of experience, trainings and groundbreaking data systems.”*

*- Cristina Jimenez, Co-Founder & Managing Director  
United We Dream*

# Imagine How You and Community Members Can Change Lives

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