

The College & Financial Aid Guide for:
AB540 Undocumented Immigrant Students



THE AB 540 COLLEGE ACCESS NETWORK

THE RESOURCE GUIDE IS A COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE CENTER FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
POLICY ANALYSIS (CHEPA) at the University of Southern California, the Salvadoran American

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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
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Since the passage of Assembly Bill 540 in 2001, authored by the late Assemblyman, Marco Antonio Firebaugh, more than 5,000 undocumented students¹ in California have had improved financial access to higher education. AB 540 has become a pinnacle in the lives of students, who because of their immigration status, have historically been denied access to financial aid to fund their college education, despite demonstrated academic excellence. Even since the passage of AB 540 in 2001, many undocumented students remain unaware of the law as well as the rights and opportunities available to them in the United States. Through this resource guide we hope to inform not only those undocumented students who can benefit from AB 540 but also the counselors, teachers, and other advocates who support them.

It is estimated that every year 65,000 undocumented students graduate from high school across the nation², with the majority residing in California. Some students will attend a four-year institution, others will find their way to community college, and most will not pursue college at all because of the financial burden that paying for college poses to them and their families. The lack of financial aid available to undocumented students as a result of their residency status has left higher education financially out-of-reach for many.

This guide is the result of a collaborative effort by individuals who work and advocate for student's

Undocumented students include those students born outside of the United States, many of whom have lived in this country for a significant portion of their lives, and who reside here without the legal permission of the federal government. Some undocumented students and their families entered the country legally on tourist or work visas and chose to stay in the US after their visas expired. Others entered without any form of legal immigration status (Oliveroz, 2005)

According to Badger & Yale-Loehr (2006), undocumented students are foreign nation46T. natpd0o Bd

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS:

Q: What does it mean to be undocumented?

A: An undocumented person is a non-citizen who entered the U.S. without legal immigration status or who stayed after the period he/she was authorized to be here.

Q: If I am undocumented and interested in applying for residency, what should I do?

A: In order to find out if you are eligible to apply for legal permanent residency, contact a licensed immigration lawyer/attorney (*abogado*). DO NOT give your money to a “notario” (notary public). In the U.S., a notario is not a lawyer/attorney and cannot help you establish residency or “get your papers.”

Q: If I am undocumented, can I go to college?

A: YES, if you are an undocumented student you can go to any college or university in California as long as you are admitted/accepted. To avoid paying out-of-state tuition, you need to meet the AB 540 requirements listed in Section 2 of this guide.

Q: If I am undocumented, can I apply for financial aid?

A: As an undocumented student, you ARE NOT eligible for state (Cal Grant) and federal (FAFSA) financial aid. Some colleges and private organizations may offer

www.salef.org, www.usc.edu/chepa, and www.fastweb.com. For additional scholarship information see Section 4 of this guide.

Q: How do I qualify to pay in-state tuition?

A: In order to qualify for in-state tuition (at a public California college or university) under AB 540 you must have completed 3 years of high school in California and graduate or obtain the equivalent of a high school diploma. You must also complete an AB 540 affidavit (California Non-Resident Tuition Exemption Request form) at the college/university that you will attend stating that you meet AB 540 eligibility requirements. Each school has different procedures for completing the AB 540 affidavit so contact the admissions/registrar's office at the college/university that you will attend and ask about how and when to complete and submit the AB 540 affidavit. See the table in Section 4 for more information.

Or, if you or your family have taken steps to obtain or legalize your status (e.g. permanent resident, asylum, family unity program, etc.), you should consult with the college admissions officer to determine whether you are eligible to establish California residency for tuition purposes.

Q: Is the process for applying to college and university for undocumented students any different when applying under AB 540?

A: For all UC and most CSU, you must apply in November of the year before you wish to begin the following fall. Two sections must be left BLANK:

- 1) Social Security Number slot should be left BLANK or enter zeros.
- 2) Immigration Status slot should be left BLANK

Everything else should be filled out completely. Additional materials should NOT be sent with the application. Once you have been accepted by the university, you should fill out and send the AB 540 affidavit (California Non-Resident Tuition Exemption Request form).

For community colleges, you are required to turn in the AB 540 affidavit when you submit your college application. The section requesting your social security may be left blank or you may enter "please assign an ID number". For "immigration status," you may list "AB 540".

Q: What happens if I have already given the school a false SS# or stated citizenship?

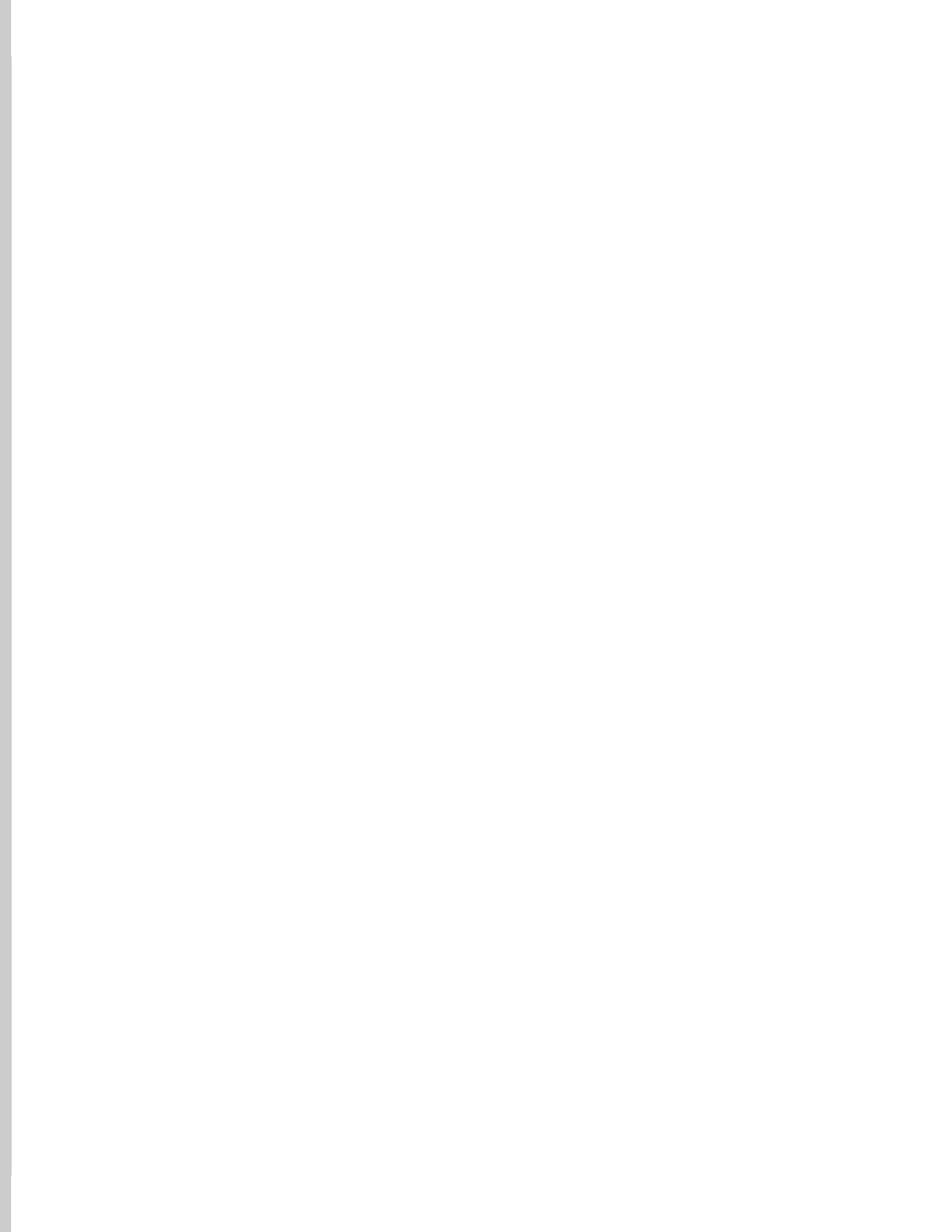
A: If you qualify for AB 540 but have falsified information in the past, you should seek legal advice about how to correct the information. For a list of low cost or nonprofit legal referrals in your area see Section 6 of this guide.

Many of these hard working students were brought here as pre-school age children, and all they know is our American educational curriculum. Throughout their educational trajectory they have been instilled with the possibilities of the "American Dream" by way of encouragement from their previous teachers and other school personnel. All of these years they were told that college is the only way for a better life. These youth need the necessary resources and support from the state and institutional sectors.

Richard D. Cortes, M.S.
Counseling Faculty, Santa Monica College

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- Undocumented immigrant students: A very brief overview of access to higher education in California"
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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR AB 540 STUDENTS:

A: NO, it does not matter how long ago you graduated from a California high school or attained the equivalent.

Q: Is there a maximum number of years for which I am eligible to receive this exemption (i.e., qualify to pay in-state tuition under AB 540)?

A: NO, there is no cap on the maximum number of years you can receive this exemption (i.e., qualify to pay in-state tuition under AB 540).

Q: Do I need to be in the legalization process to qualify l

AB 540 is the key to a better future and the ticket to achieving my dreams.

Mario Escobar
UC Los Angeles '07

A: NO, this type of private school would not meet the requirements of Section 48222 of the California Education Code, which defines a “high school in California” for the purposes of eligibility.

Q: Does qualifying for AB 540 allow a student to receive financial aid?

A: Undocumented students are not eligible for state (e.g. BOG Fee Waiver, EOPS and Cal Grant) and federal (e.g. FAFSA, Pell, and SEOG) financial aid. Some colleges may offer financial aid to undocumented students; visit your college’s financial aid office to find out. Scholarships are also available. See Section 4 for more information on scholarship opportunities. However, if the tuition exemption is granted, it could impact the amount and, possibly type, of financial aid the student might receive.

Q: I pay or have paid out-of-state tuition, but I am now eligible to pay in-state tuition under the new law (AB 540). Will I be able to get a refund?

A: You will not be eligible for a refund if you paid out-of-state tuition for any term before January 1, 2002. You may be eligible for a refund only if you have paid out-of-state tuition for any term that begins on or after January 1, 2002. Contact the university or college administration for more information.

Q: Does AB 540 change a student’s residence status?

A: NO, AB 540 does not grant residency status; rather, it exempts/waives you from paying non-resident tuition. You will continue to be classified as a non-resident.

Q: Is the AB 540 Affidavit confidential?

A: YES, the AB 540 Affidavit will be filed with the college or university you attend, not the USCIS (United States Citizenship and Immigration Service).

*With AB 540 I can focus more on my studies and become the person that I want and need to be...
I won't have to work longer days to afford paying for my education.*

Noemi Cazares

As an undocumented student, it is important to be informed of the laws that affect you. The legislation and bill information below provide historical background for you to understand your rights, restrictions and the advocacy needed to assist you in your pursuit of higher education.

Federal Law

1974: THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

The FERPA is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level.

Any information that a student shares with a college or university is protected by this Act.

1982: PLYLER V. DOE

The U.S. Supreme Court invalidated a Texas law authorizing school districts to bar undocumented students from public elementary and secondary schools.

The court noted that the statute imposed a "lifetime hardship on a discrete class of children not accountable for their disabling status."

The case did not address explicitly the question of postsecondary education, however, Legislative Counsel has suggested that Plyler v. Doe would not apply to postsecondary education.

Elementary and secondary education (K -12) is a fundamental and protected right. All children, including undocumented children, can attend any public elementary and secondary school free of charge.

1996: ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION REFORM AND IMMIGRANT RESPONSIBILITY ACT (IIRIRA)

(§§ 505-507) IIRIRA prohibits undocumented immigrants from accessing any postsecondary education benefits *unless* a U.S. citizen or national is eligible for the same benefit.

For example, any state that provides in-state tuition to undocumented students must also provide in-state tuition to out-of-state residents (both permanent residents and citizens).

Proposed Federal Legislation

NOTE: Legislation is subject to change. Check with your State Senators and Congress Members for updated information on the bills described here.

2005: THE DEVELOPMENT, RELIEF AND EDUCATION FOR ALIEN MINORS (DREAM) ACT (S. 2075)

The DREAM Act (S. 2075) was introduced in the U.S. Senate in November 2005. It could become law if passed by both houses of Congress and signed by the President before the end of 2006.

In March 2006, the Senate Judiciary Committee approved the “DREAM Act” as an amendment to the Committee’s comprehensive immigration reform.

If passed, the proposed legislation will have a far bigger impact on education, fairness to children, and American competitiveness than on immigration to the U.S.

The measure would provide that upon high school graduation, individuals who were brought to the U.S. as undocumented children and have grown up in the U.S. would be able to apply for six years of conditional legal immigration status which would be made permanent if they continue to go on to college or serve in the military.

It would eliminate a provision of law enacted in 1996 that currently requires lawful immigration status in order to qualify for any post secondary education benefit based on state residency.

2006: THE “NEW AMERICAN DREAM ACT”, H.R. 5131

Introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives on April 6, 2006 as a bipartisan bill.

Formerly known as the Student Adjustment Act, the American Dream Act is the House version of the DREAM Act.

H.R. 5131 still awaits consideration by the House Judiciary Committee, as well as the House Education and Workforce Committee.⁸

The objective of this bill is to amend the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996, to permit States to determine state residency for higher education purposes, and to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to cancel the removal and adjust the status of certain immigrant college bound students who are long-term U.S. residents.

This Act would provide higher education benefits for applicants.

California Law

1986: LETICIA A. V. UC REGENTS AND CSU BOARD OF TRUSTEES

In 1986, the Leticia A. law went into effect, asking public colleges and universities to treat undocumented students as residents for tuition purposes.

Between 1986 – 1991 at the UC system and 1986 – 1995 at the CSU system, students who met state residency requirements (1 year and 1 day) qualified to pay in-state-tuition and were eligible for state financial aid (CalGrant).

1991: BRADFORD V. UC REGENTS

David Paul Bradford, a UCLA staff person filed suit against UC asking that the original residency statute be declared constitutional. Despite appeals by the UC and CSU systems, Bradford won his case and as a result, undocumented students lost the right to state tuition and state financial aid.

In 1991, the UC system was forced to treat undocumented students as “non-residents” for tuition purposes.

CSU and California Community Colleges continued to treat undocumented as “residents” until adopting Bradford years later.

In January of 1992, California Community Colleges implemented the “Bradford Decision”. [Title 5, Division 6, Chapter 5, subchapter 1 sect 54045. Alien Students and ECS 68062 (h) (i)]. Under this decision, undocumented students may be classified as residents if they have taken steps to obtain or legalize their status (e.g. permanent resident, asylum, family unity program, etc.). These students would then be eligible for state aid, provided they meet any additional requirements set forth by those programs (e.g. Low-income).

2001: ASSEMBLY BILL 540

California’s AB 540, authored by the late Marco A. Firebaugh, is based on high school attendance, and is not an Immigration bill.

The bill permits students who complete three years or more of high school in California, and who are pursuing documented status, to be exempt from paying out-of-state tuition.

Unlike Leticia A., AB 540 does not provide state financial aid to undocumented students who are eligible.

Proposed California Legislation

2005: CALIFORNIA DREAM ACT, SB 160

Under Senate Bill 160, authored by Hon. Gil Cedillo: Requests the UC system, and requires the CSU and CCC to establish procedures and forms to enable students who are exempt from paying nonresident tuition, under AB 540, to participate in all student aid programs administered by these segments and by the State of California to the fullest extent permitted by, and

⓪ IA

Although I am not an AB 540 student, I believe SB 160 is an important bill because it will

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Additional Information

Since 2001, ten states have passed laws permitting certain undocumented students who have attended and graduated from their primary and secondary schools to pay the same tuition as their classmates at public institutions of higher education. Texas became the first state to allow undocumented immigrants who graduate from a state high school to pay in-state resident tuition at public universities. Nine other states have passed similar measures since then. The states are California, Illinois, Kansas, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York, Oklahoma, Utah, and Washington. Texas and Oklahoma also allow eligible undocumented immigrant students to receive state-sponsored financial aid.

For a complete list of bills proposed or enacted in your state, regarding immigrant access to higher education, please visit: http://www.nilc.org/immlawpolicy/DREAM/DREAM_Bills.pdf

High School attendance is the primary requirement to qualify under these bills. To qualify, all 10 states require the students to have:

Attended a school in the state for a certain number of years

Graduated from high school in the state; and

Signed an affidavit stating that they have either applied to legalize their status or will do so as soon as eligible.

These laws also provide that U.S. citizens or permanent residents who meet these requirements but no longer live in the state are able to qualify for the same tuition rate.

Federal law does not prohibit states from providing in-state tuition to undocumented immigrants. However, it is under the state's discretion to decide whether to do so or not. IIRIRA (§ 505) prohibits states from providing any higher education benefit based on residency to undocumented immigrants unless they provide the same benefit to U.S. citizens in the same circumstances, regardless of their residence (state).

Introduced in 2005, the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act, S. 2075, is currently pending in the U.S. Congress. The DREAM Act would provide a path to legal status for individuals who are undocumented, even though they were brought to the U.S. years ago as children and have lived most of their lives here. It would also repeal the provision of law discussed above that penalizes states that provide in-state tuition to undocumented immigrant residents by requiring them to provide the same benefits to students who do not reside in the state. Although the DREAM Act eliminates the federal penalty, it does not require states to provide in-state tuition to any undocumented immigrants. Therefore, even after the DREAM Act passes, each state will have to determine for itself whether to do so.⁸

⁸ Most of the DREAM Act description was obtained from NILC's "Basic Facts about In-State Tuition for Undocumented Immigrant Students" (July 2005).

Helpful Websites:

Center for Community Change
www.communitychange.org

Friends Committee on Legislation of California
www.fclca.org

Legislation Information of California
www.leginfo.ca.gov

Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund
www.maldef.org

NAFSA: Association of International Educators
www.nafsa.org

Salvadoran American Leadership and Educational Fund
www.salef.org

The California Immigrant Welfare Collaborative
www.nilc.org/ciwc

The Coalition for Human Immigrants Rights of Los Angeles
www.chirla.org

The National Council of La Raza
www.nclr.org

The National Immigration Law Center
www.nilc.org

U.S. Department of Education
www.ed.gov

Information about policies and programs to assist undocumented immigrants can be found at the following websites:

Facts About Immigrants
http://www.nilc.org/immspbs/research/pbimmfacts_0704.pdf

Further Demographic Information Relating to the DREAM Act
http://www.nilc.org/immlawpolicy/DREAM/DREAM_Demographics.pdf

La Agencia de Orca Launches New PSA Campaign for MALDEF
<http://www.hispanicbusiness.com/news/newsbyid.asp?id=9586>

Overview of Immigrant Eligibility for Federal Programs
http://www.nilc.org/immspbs/special/pb_issues_ovrvw_042005.pdf

I support SB 160 because I believe that in order for this country to prosper we need a more educated society. SB 160 will allow AB 540 students to apply for financial aid and reach their educational goals and contribute to society.

J.B.

Getting Into College

As mentioned earlier, you CANNOT be prevented from attending a college or university in California solely based on your residency status. Undocumented students can attend a California Community College, California State University (CSU), University of California (UC), and many private schools. However, you should be aware that the process of applying for admission to college can be a confusing and expensive process. Undocumented students should seek assistance with their college applications to insure that you correctly complete immigration-related questions and receive application fee-waivers when possible. If you think you meet the eligibility requirements for AB 540, speak to an admissions representative at the college you plan to attend to find out how to complete the California Nonresident Tuition Exemption Request form (AB 540 Affidavit).

The tables on the next pages provide an outline of various aspects of the college admissions process for California Community Colleges, California State Universities (CSU), Universities of California (UC), and private colleges/universities, including:

Admissions application deadlines

Application fees

Application fee-waiver eligibility requirements

Admissions requirements

Required documents and residency information

Admissions notification

Scholarship information

AB 540 points of contact

Existing AB 540 support groups

	Comments	California Community College	California State University	University of California	Private Schools
Application Deadline	Always check with the individual campus. Deadlines may vary.	There is no formal application deadline, however, you are encouraged to apply early in the final semester of your senior year.	November 30th is the deadline for Fall Admissions. Some campuses extend this deadline.	November 30th is the deadline for Fall Admissions. The University of California publishes specific guidelines on how AB 540 students should proceed with the application. Contact a college counselor or university representative for specific information.	"Early decision" or "Early action" take place in November. Regular admissions application deadlines typically takes place in January but can vary by campus.
Application Fee		None	\$55.00 per campus	\$60.00 per campus	Varies per campus but is often around \$55.
Fee Waiver	AB 540 student eligibility for fee waivers differs by each institution type.	N/A	Request to Waive Admissions Fee forms can be obtained online, from a university representative, or from a college counselor. Fee waiver eligibility is determined based on the online admissions application income criteria calculation and residency requirements.	Fee waiver eligibility is determined based on the online admissions application income criteria calculation and residency requirements. A UC fee waiver waives fees for up to four campuses. Contact a college counselor or university representative for specific information.	Contact the respective campus. If you participated in the College Board's SAT® Program Fee-Waiver Service, you may also be eligible to waive application fees at the private colleges to which you're applying. Fee-waiver eligibility is determined on a case-by-case basis.
Admissions Requirements		Students must be 18 years old and/ or have a High School Diploma or GED. www.cccco.edu	www.csumentor.org	www.universityofcalifornia.edu	www.aicccumentor.org www.commonapp.org
Required Documents and Residency Information		Yus but04 302.30 1 gs119.2.12549 scn0 Tw(s5ra.commonappA 0 0 9 211.59 co,11.2 TD0.025 Tw(Docum			

	Comments	California Community College	California State University	University of California	Private Schools
Admissions Notification	Each campus has its own timeline for notifying students of admission. Some campuses begin notifying applicants of an admission decision soon after the receipt of an application.	You are admitted once you file an admissions application.	The timeline for notifying students of admission varies.	The timeline for notifying students of admission varies. You will be notified beginning late-March through early-April.	The timeline for notifying students of admission varies. Ask about rolling admissions.
Scholarships					

Succeeding in College

FINANCING YOUR EDUCATION

Affording school is not a matter of “making thousands of dollars, but of saving pennies”. As an undocumented student, you must be creative in order to finance your education since you are ineligible to apply for state and federal financial aid (i.e., FAFSA, BOG Fee Waiver, Pell Grant, Cal Grant). Remember, you can obtain a higher education with hard work, resourcefulness, and support!

FUNDRAISING TIPS

Below is a list of various ways AB 540 students have raised money to fund their college education:

- Work.* If you have a work permit, that provides you the right to seek employment in the U.S.
- Stipends.* Undocumented students may be eligible for privately funded stipends.¹⁰
- Donations.* Ask for donations from former teachers and/or current professors. Do not be afraid to ask! Many individuals are willing to support you in one way or another.
- Fundraisers.* Hold “house parties” to raise money from friends and family; Organize carwashes, food sales, book sales, graduation sales (candy leis, teddy bears, etc.); or, attend comedy shows (a group gets paid for attending tapings of shows).
- Scholarships.* Undocumented students are eligible for many private scholarships. Use scholarship search engines like www.fastweb.com to look for scholarships.

SCHOLARSHIP TIPS

Scholarships are a great way to fund your education, especially if you do not qualify for state/federal financial aid. Below are some tips to help finance your education:

There are organizations and individuals that provide scholarships to undocumented students; however, these are limited in number and becoming increasingly competitive.

non-profit organizations, student groups, or your campus scholarship office for more information on available scholarships.

PRIVATE AID

Some private universities, companies, and organizations may provide financial assistance to help undocumented students pay for college. Contact individual groups or colleges/universities about resources that may be available to you.

NETWORKING

AB 540 Student Networks are a great way to get connected with other undocumented students at your college/university.

When visiting college campuses, talk to:

AB 540 advocates and allies

AB 540 student organizations

Chicana/o Studies Department

Diversity/ Minority Recruiter

Support/ Outreach Programs (EAOP, EOPS, UCLA AAP, Cal SOAP, etc.)



There are many students who want to contribute positively to this country by getting an education. It is only fair that we receive financial aid to help us continue with our education without worrying about our economic situation.

Paola Leon
Cal State San Marcos

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT COLLEGE:

Q

For more tips on writing your essay/personal statement, check out the following websites: www.collegeboard.com

Letters of Recom

generally, they may be counted toward your college degree. Contact the community college of your choice to find out if you qualify for the following:

Dual-Credit Student: High school student enrolled in courses that receive both college credit and credit toward meeting secondary school requirements for graduation.

Dual (Concurrent)-Enrolled Student: High school student enrolled in college courses while continuing to be enrolled as high school students. The college courses are only used for college credit.

Q: How much does it cost to attend college?

A: The costs of college attendance will differ depending on the college. For example, community colleges are the least expensive colleges to attend, as tuition is typically less than \$1,000 per year. Attendance at a California State University costs about \$2,864 per year for tuition and \$6,530 for room & board. Attendance at a University of California costs about \$6,141 per year for tuition and \$11,928 for room & board. The costs of tuition and housing at private schools can range from \$20,000-\$50,000 per year. Regardless of the uni-

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Graduate/ Professional School

There are no restrictions to prevent undocumented students from attending public Graduate/ Professional schools in California. However, some professional schools require employment as part of their curriculum (e.g. graduate teaching credentialing programs). There may be some exceptions if you are interested in attending a School of Education, for instance, but the difficulty is securing employment once you have earned your degree. These types of professions require that you be legally eligible to work in the state of California.

Obtaining Certifications/ State Licenses required for some professions is also difficult for undocumented immigrants due to requirements such as background-checks, a social security number, and state examinations. For more information on obtaining certifications/licenses, please refer to the Department of Consumer Affairs license lookup web page: [http://www2.dca.ca.gov/pls/wllpub/wllquery\\$.startup](http://www2.dca.ca.gov/pls/wllpub/wllquery$.startup).

If you are interested in practicing law in the state of California, please go to the following website: http://calbar.ca.gov/calbar/pdfs/admissions/sf_legal-edu-outside-us.pdf.

Because undocumented AB 540 graduate/professional students are not eligible for any type of federal or state financial aid, paying to attend college remains a concern. You are strictly dependent on your own financial resources, such as private scholarships, grants, and/or loans. Obtaining loans is one possible method of paying for your tuition. The most suggested methods of obtaining a loan are private lending institutions. If you reside in CA without legal immigration status, a legal permanent resident/ U.S. Citizen co-signer is often required.

Employment

Some undocumented AB 540 students who are in the legalization process are eligible for a U.S. work permit. This permit may be adequate for you to work legally. There also may be opportunities to start your legalization process through employer sponsorship under rigorous requirements. For more information, consult a licensed immigration attorney. Violating the terms of your visa status may be enough to prohibit you from future adjustment of your status.

Sometimes, entrepreneurship¹¹ is an option. For example, you may be able to apply for a business license and start your own business.

My dream and promise to my parents of becoming a pediatrician will soon come true. Thanks to the late Marco Firebaugh and AB 540, I have more hopes now than ever.

Jhovanna Rojas
CSU Dominguez Hills '07

¹¹ Entrepreneurship refers to the organization, management, and assumption of risks of a business or enterprise, usually implying an element of change or challenge and a new opportunity.

Internships/ Fellowships

Internships are often made available to high school students, college students, and/or recent graduates interested in receiving supervised practical training in their field or profession of interest. Internships are a great way to get “real world” experience while applying to graduate/ professional school. In doing so, you will get work experience and/or community service experience. Internships are also a great way to meet people and develop networks that may help you while you are in college, and after you graduate and are seeking employment. Fellowships refer to money granted by a university, foundation, or other agency for advanced study or research. Fellowships are often financial grants made to a fellow in a college or university. Fellowships can be viewed as paid internships, for which some undocumented AB 540 students may be eligible.

Research

Working on your own research with faculty members at a college or university is one way to get research experience and possibly earn money. Sometimes undocumented AB 540 students are paid for this type of work in the form of a “stipend.” A stipend is a sum of money allotted on a regular basis, such as a salary for services rendered or an allowance. Undocumented AB 540 students may be eligible for stipends if the source of funding is tax-exempt. If the stipend comes directly from a public college or university’s funds, undocumented AB 540 students are not eligible. Remember, government funds are not available to undocumented AB 540 students.

Networking

If you want to increase your opportunities for employment upon graduation, networking with college/university staff members and faculty while you are in college is extremely important. You should also try to connect with local professionals in your field of study to determine the types of job opportunities that may be available to you after college. Other students on your college campus may also be able to provide you with this type of information or connect you with people who can help. The size and quality of your academic/professional network will largely determine your access to opportunities and information while in college and when you begin exploring potential careers.

I've learned that the world would be a better place to live in if we all work together and give back to our community. By becoming a Spanish teacher, I want to be a leader and guide my future students to find their unique abilities.

Erika Sanchez
CSU Los Angeles

FREQUENTLY ASKED IMMIGRATION QUESTIONS:

Q: I am a nonimmigrant with a currently valid visa (for example, a student or tourist visa). Do I qualify for in-state tuition?

A: You do NOT qualify for in-state tuition under the law (AB 540). However, you may qualify for in-state tuition as a “resident” if your nonimmigrant status allows you to “establish domicile” in the U.S. and you satisfy other requirements for residency. For example, persons with “V” or “K” visas, and citizens of Micronesia or the Marshall Islands should be able to pay in-state tuition if they have lived in the state for more than one year.

Q: How do I apply for a social security card?

A: To obtain a social security card, you must be a U.S. citizen, Lawful Permanent Resident, or have been lawfully admitted to the U.S. You must complete an application, and prove your age, identity and lawful status. There is no charge for a social security card. For more information, go to www.ssa.gov or call, toll-free, 1-800-772-1213. This information is also available in Spanish at www.segurosocial.gov or call, toll-free 1-800-772-1213.

Q: My parents use a number for their tax returns. Is this a social security number?

A: Your parents probably have an Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN). This number is issued by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to persons who are not eligible for a social security number. It does not provide you with the employment authorization and does not grant you any immigration status. To apply for an ITIN, you must file a Form W-8 or W-8SP (in Spanish) with the IRS.

Q: How do I apply for a California driver’s license or ID?

A: To obtain a California driver’s license or ID, you must have a social security number and meet other requirements. If you are not eligible for a driver’s license or ID, you should apply for some other form of photo identification. For example:

Apply for a passport at your local consulate office. If you are from Mexico, you can apply for a “Matricula Consular” or Consular Identification Card at the Mexican Consulate. Sometimes you can use the card to get a library card, public utilities, and to open a bank account. The card does not provide you with employment authorization and does not grant you any immigration status.

Q: How do I select an immigration lawyer?

A: There are a number of guidelines for selecting an immigration attorney that you must take into account. Remember .

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2. MABA of Los Angeles County Lawyer Information Referral Services:
www.mabalawyers.org

3. Visit the California Bar website at www.calbar.org to verify whether the individual is licensed to practice within California and has had disciplinary proceedings brought against him or her.

4. California Immigration Lawyers:
<http://www.lawinfo.com/attorney/Immigration/California>

Q: How Do I Become a Lawful Permanent Resident While in the United States?¹²

A: *Background*

An immigrant is a foreign national who has been granted legal permission to live and work permanently in the United States. You must go through a multi-step process to become an immigrant. In most cases, USCIS must first approve an immigrant petition for you, usually filed by an employer or relative. Then, an immigrant visa number must be available to you, even if you are already in the United States. After that, if you are already in the United States, you may apply to **adjust to permanent resident status** (If you are outside the United States, you will be notified to go to the local U.S. consulate to complete the processing for an immigrant visa.)

Where Can I Find the Law?

The Immigration and Nationality Act is the law that governs immigration in the United States. The part of the law concerning most types of permanent resident status, is Section 245.

How Do I Apply?

To find out how you can apply to become a lawful permanent resident (LPR) of the United States, please consult with an immigration attorney or an informational website for application and processes. After you submit your application materials, you will be asked to go to a USCIS office to answer questions about your applications.

Will I Get a Work Permit?

Applicants for adjustment to permanent resident status are eligible to apply for a work permit while their cases are pending. You should use USCIS Form I-765 to apply for a work permit. You do not need to apply for a work permit once you adjust to permanent resident status. As a lawful permanent resident (LPR), you should receive a permanent resident card that will prove that you have a right to live and work in the United States permanently.

Can I Travel Outside the United States?

If you are applying for adjustment to permanent resident status, you must receive advance permission to return to the United States if you are traveling outside the United States. This advance permission is called Advance Parole. *If you do not obtain Advance Parole before you leave the country, you will abandon your application with USCIS and you may not be permitted to return to the United States.*

How Can I Check the Status of My Application?

Please contact the USCIS office that received your application. You should be prepared to provide USCIS staff with specific information about your application.

¹² Some information was obtained from the following source: <http://uscis.gov/graphics/howdoi/legpermres.htm>.

How Can I Appeal?

Some applications for permanent residency (Form I-485) can be appealed to the Administrative Appeals Unit (AAU). Decisions from immigration courts can be appealed to the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA).

Generally, you may appeal within 30 days after the immigration judge decides to remove you from the country. After your appeal form and a required fee are processed, the appeal will be referred to the Board of Immigration Appeals in Washington, D.C. For more information, consult with a community organization or licensed immigration attorney.

Can Anyone Help Me?

If advice is needed, you may contact the following organizations:

NON-PROFO

Public Counsel Law Center

601 S. Ardmore Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90005
(213) 385-2977
www.publiccounsel.org

Immigrant Advocates & Organizations:

APALC

(Asian Pacific American Legal Center)
1145 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90017
(213) 977-7500
www.apalc.org

CARECEN

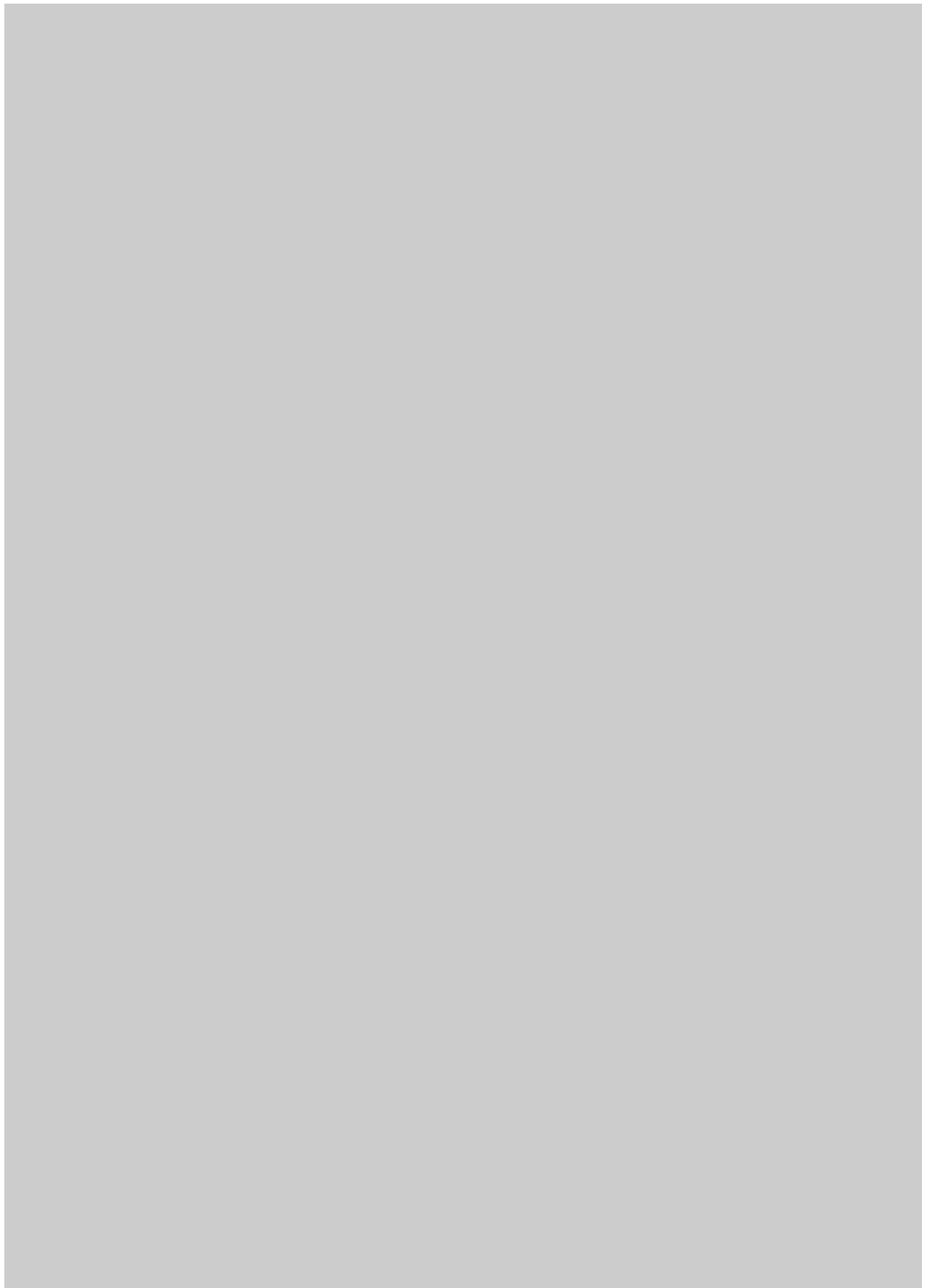
(Central American Resource Center)
2845 W. 7th St.
Los Angeles, CA 90005
(213) 385-7800
www.carecen-la.org

CHIRLA

(Coalition for Human Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles)
2533 W. 3rd St. Suite 101
Los Angeles, CA 90057
(213) 353-1333
www.chirla.org

KRC

(Korean Resource Center)
900 S. Crenshaw Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90019
(213) 937-3718



CALIFORNIA'S FOUR SYSTEMS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Information Source: http://www.eaop.ucla.edu/0405/pub_calif4system.htm

Community Colleges

AB 540 Student COLLEGE PREPARATION TIMELINE

Junior Year	Senior Year
<p>September</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Inquire about the PSAT test date, time and location in October - this test is a preparation for the SAT Reasoning Test and is a qualifying test for several national scholarship programs, including: National Merit, National Achievement, and National Hispanic scholarships. » Meet with your guidance/track counselor and your college counselor to make sure that you are taking college preparatory (A-G) courses and plan for your senior year. » Strive for mostly A's - your grades are especially important this year. CSU/UC schools require you to earn a C or better in A-G courses. 	<p>September</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Apply for a FAFSA PIN, only if you are already in the process of establishing residency. » Sign up for the SAT Reasoning Test or ACT. » Meet with your guidance/track counselor or college counselor to review your academic records for accuracy and to be sure that you have met the eligibility requirements for the colleges that you plan to apply to. » Get applications from the colleges you will apply to. Many colleges now require students to apply online, so be sure to look at each college's website to determine how to apply for admission. » Be sure to keep your grades up during your senior year. THESE GRADES MATTER!
<p>October - November</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Take the PSAT/NMSQT. » Think about colleges you are interested in attending; research them online, at your school's college center, at college fairs, and call them to request brochures. » Start a file on the colleges that appeal to you. 	<p>October</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Consult with your college counselor to review your final list of colleges. » Get information about college application fee waivers from your college counselor if the application fees would be a financial burden to your family. <i>NOTE: AB 540 students ARE eligible for fee waivers for the UC's, but NOT for the CSU's. AB 540 students may be eligible for fee waivers for some private universities, so you should contact the schools to find out.</i> » Attend college fairs at your high school. » Gather information needed for college applications and mark deadlines on your calendar. » Begin requesting letters of recommendation. » If applying early decision or early action, send application now and prepare applications for back-up schools. » Sign up for December/January SAT Subject Tests (if recommended by schools you plan to apply to). » Start submitting admission applications to colleges.
<p>December</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Receive results of the PSAT. Read the score report and consult your school counselors about your strengths and areas where you can improve. » Think about when you'll take your college entrance exams (SAT Reasoning Test or ACT). If you take the exam in the spring of your junior year, you'll have another chance to retake the test in the fall. 	<p>November</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » <i>Application submission deadline for UC/CSU is November 30th.</i> » Take SAT Reasoning Test and have scores sent to colleges you will apply to. » Check with your counselor for information about scholarships awarded by your school, local companies and community groups.
<p>January</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Begin searching for scholarships. » A list of scholarships for AB 540/ undocumented students can be found at: www.maldef.org. » Look at your high school's college center for scholarship information. 	<p>December</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » File your last college application! Make sure you meet the deadlines. » If you are eligible, obtain the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and Cal Grant GPA Verification Form from your college counselor. » Take the ACT (if applicable to schools you are applying to), and have score sent to colleges. » Early decision notifications should arrive.

AB 540 Student COLLEGE PREPARATION TIMELINE

Junior Year	Senior Year
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- February**
- » Meet with your guidance/track counselor and your college counselor to talk about the colleges you are interested in.
 - » Start preparing for the SAT Reasoning Test or ACT if you'll be taking them in the spring. Guidebooks with testing strategies and sample questions are available at public libraries, bookstores, at your school, or online.
 - » Ask your college counselor if your school will offer an SAT prep course.

- March**
- » Evaluate the college literature that you have collected.
 - » Begin visiting the campuses of the colleges that interest you. Call ahead to participate in a campus tour and presentations about academics, admissions, financial aid.
 - » Register for AP Exams.

- April**
- » Select challenging senior y63 00 c0.025 Tw(Select challenging senior y63 0 0 Tih9Receive acceptanc71j8 0 0 25 0pm63 0 TD(h)Tj-1.8595 -1.2 TD(»)T

- January**
- » Take the SAT Subject Tests (if applicable) and have scores sent to colleges.
 - » Request that your counselor send the transcripts of your first semester grades to colleges you have applied to.
 - » Attend a Cash for College FAFSA or AB 540 Workshop, at a location near you.apply to.

- February, March & April:**
- » Submit FAFSA & Cal Grant GPA Verification forms by March 2nd (if applicable).
 - » Call colleges to make sure your application materials were received.
 - » Receive acceptance letter and decide on the college you will attend.

COLLEGE KNOWLEDGE GLOSSARY DEFINITION OF TERMS

About Classes:

A-G requirements: This term refers to the list of high school courses that are necessary for eligibility for admission to University of California (UC) and many California State University (CSU) campuses. Each high school should have a list of A-G courses available to students.

Advanced Placement courses (AP classes): Advanced placement refers to honors-level classes offered to high school students who seek the most rigorous possible academic preparation and potential college credit upon passing a national exam (see AP tests). The AP Program currently offers 34 courses in 19 subject areas. Different high schools offer different classes. Each course is developed by a committee composed of college faculty and AP teachers, and covers the breadth of information, skills, and assignments found in the corresponding college course.

About Exams:

Advanced Placement tests (AP tests): Advanced placement tests are the final component of AP classes. The AP Examinations are administered each year in May and represent the culmination of college-level work in a given discipline in a secondary school setting. Students who receive a passing score of 3-5 on the AP test earn college credit for that particular subject area.

American College Test (ACT): This test is a standardized test that some universities accept in addition to, or in place of the SAT test (see definition below). The ACT Assessment is designed to assess high school students' general educational development their ability to complete college-level work. The test covers four skill areas: English, mathematics, reading, and science.

Preliminary SAT (PSAT): The PSAT/NMSQT (Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test) is a program co-sponsored by the College Board and National Merit Scholarship Corporation. This test assesses skills developed in a wide range of courses as well as through experiences outside the classroom. The PSAT/NMSQT consists of three parts: Critical Reading, Math, and Writing Skills. Students who take this test are considered for many scholarships. Don't miss out!

Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT): The SAT is a test that measures verbal, mathematical and reasoning skills. Many colleges and universities use the SAT as an indicator of a students' readiness to do college-level work. SAT scores can be used as a basis for awarding merit-based financial aid. The SAT is typically taken by high school juniors and seniors and is administered several times each year.

About Financial Aid:

NOTE: As an AB 540 undocumented student, you are not eligible for state and federal financial aid. The information below is provided in the event that you become eligible by establishing legal permanent residency or U.S. citizenship.

Free Application
For Federal Student
Aid (FAFSA):

To apply for federal student financial aid, and to apply for many



This publication is dedicated to the author of CA AB 540:

Marco A. Firebaugh - Gracias por darnos voz, iluminar nuestro camino, y darnos esperanza para luchar por nuestro derecho a la educación.

CSUDH Espiritu de Nuestro Futuro
espitudenuestrofuturo@yahoo.com

Marco Antonio Firebaugh - You will always be remembered for your dedication to equality and social justice. Thank you for improving our access to higher education. You will be missed!

IDEAS of UCLA
ideas@ucla.edu



chepa

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University of Southern California
701 Waite Phillips Hall
Los Angeles, CA 90089-4037