



December 11, 2017

## **Catholic Leaders Stand with DACA Recipients, Urge Congress to Pass Legislation to Protect Them**

**What:** Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County and the Diocese of San Jose, along with Santa Clara University, community leaders and faith leaders, are informing DACA recipients, their families, and the undocumented community that they must not give up hope that they can have a path to citizenship. We must urge Congress to pass the DREAM Act and protect Dreamers from deportation. These youth were brought to the U.S. as children through no fault of their own, they did not decide to break a law. They are now productive members of our congregations and communities, students in our schools, and workers in our businesses. We cannot turn them away.

**Who:**

Most Reverend Patrick J. McGrath, Bishop of the Diocese of San Jose  
Gregory R. Kepferle, CEO, Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County  
Fr. Michael E. Engh, S.J., President, Santa Clara University  
Robert Yabes, Program Director, Immigration Legal Services, Catholic Charities  
Mina Ciurea, Attorney, Immigration Legal Services, Catholic Charities  
Fr. Jon Pedigo, Director of Advocacy & Community Engagement, Catholic Charities  
Fr. Robert Fambrini, S.J., Pastor, Most Holy Trinity Church  
Omar Rodriguez, Kooltura  
(Father Jon speaks fluent Spanish. Robert Yabes speaks fluent Tagalog.)

**Why:** It is important to pass legislative solution to protect Dreamers because they are American youth, woven into the fabric of our society. They should be allowed to go to college, find legal work, and help support their families. We also want to inform Dreamers and the undocumented community that they should also explore other paths to citizenship, and Catholic Charities' Legal Immigration Services is available to help with this process.

**When:** Thursday, December 14, 11:00 am to 12:30 pm

**Where:** Most Holy Trinity Church, 2040 Nassau Drive, San Jose, CA 95122. *Media to gather in front of Church, or inside if it is raining.*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Catholic Leaders Stand with DACA Recipients, Urge Congress to Pass Legislation to Protect Them**

SAN JOSE, CA—December 11, 2017—Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County and the Diocese of San Jose, along with Santa Clara University, community leaders and faith leaders, are informing DACA recipients, their families, and the undocumented community that they must not give up hope that they can have a path to citizenship.

“We must urge Congress to protect Dreamers and pass the DREAM Act to protect them from deportation,” said Gregory R. Kepferle, CEO of Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County. “These youth were brought to the U.S. as children through no fault of their own, they did not decide to break a law. They are now productive members of our congregations and communities, students in our schools, and workers in our businesses. We cannot turn them away.”

Speakers will talk about the importance of legislative solution and how their organizations are helping DACA recipients lead productive lives despite an uncertain future. Catholic Charities Immigration Legal Services will also explain how there may be other paths to citizenship for Dreamers and the undocumented community.

“Our undocumented friends and neighbors need to know that there are other paths to citizenship that they should explore,” said Robert Yabes, Program Director, Immigration Legal Services, Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County. “Catholic Charities provides free Citizenship Workshops where attendees can be screened for eligibility for these options to attain citizenship.”

Nearly 800,000 young adults are enrolled in the DACA program. While most DACA recipients are from the Latin American community, the Asian Pacific Islander (API) community is especially affected by the rescinding of DACA. Young adults from the API community make up about 10% of DACA recipients.

Since the administration’s announcement on September 5 to wind down the DACA program by March 5, 2018, approximately 77% of eligible DACA recipients applied by the one month deadline of October 5 to renew their status, which provides legal work authorization and

protection from deportation. Unfortunately, on March 6, 2018 approximately 1,400 Dreamers will lose their legal work authorization and will become subject to deportation *daily*.

“The mass migrations caused by persecution, civil war, the collapse of social safety nets in many countries and terrorism challenge us to be the Lord’s ‘light and salvation’ to those who have lost hope,” said Bishop Patrick J. McGrath, head of the Diocese of San Jose.

It is important to pass legislative solution to protect Dreamers because they are American youth, woven into the fabric of our society. They should be allowed to go to college, find legal work, and help support their families. Passing the Dream Act will give Dreamers a path to citizenship, allowing them to eventually petition for their eligible family members to also become citizens.

### **DACA Renewal Requests Affected by Mail Service Issues**

We also want to notify DACA recipients that USCIS is accepting applications that were affected by mail service issues. There are two different scenarios that resulted in the denial of many DACA applications: (1) USPS had mail service delays which affected some applications getting in on time and (2) some applications were at the designated USCIS station by the filing deadline, but were still denied.

For those individuals who were affected by the USPS mailing services issues, they can re-submit their DACA renewal request with individualized proof that the request was originally mailed in a timely manner and that the cause for receipt after the October 5, 2017, deadline was the result of USPS mail service error. For those who were affected by the USCIS issue, USCIS will proactively reach out to those DACA requesters to inform them that they may resubmit their DACA request.

### **FREE Citizenship Workshops for the Community**

One of the largest service providers for the immigration community in Santa Clara County, Catholic Charities Immigration Legal Services has served 1,500 DACA clients since 2012. The Immigration Legal Services team encourages Dreamers to be screened for immigration remedies that can put them on the path to citizenship. Free Citizenship Workshops are offered twice a month. See below for upcoming dates.

Dates for upcoming Citizenship Workshops:

- December 14, 2017, 2:00 pm, at Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County Headquarters (2625 Zanker Road, Suite 201, San Jose, CA 95134)
- December 16, 2017, *Time TBA*, at Mexican Consulate of San Jose (302 Enzo Drive, Suite 200, San Jose, CA 95138)
- January 12, 8:00 am, at Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County Headquarters
- January 19, 8:00 am, at Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County Headquarters

The community can find future dates online at: <http://catholiccharitiesscc.org/upcoming-presentations-and-workshops> or call (408) 944-0691.

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### **About Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County**

Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County stands with immigrants and their families. Our faith tradition leads us to support and serve the most vulnerable.

Our experience working with immigrants and especially youth and young adults who have been recipients of DACA has shown us how great a contribution socially and economically these young people offer our country and communities.

Catholic Charities will continue to support immigrants by providing the most up-to-date and accurate information available regarding the White House administration's decision to rescind DACA and to inform about other potential legal remedies.

Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County has worked to strengthen families and build economic self-reliance for the poor and vulnerable in the county for 62 years. Each year, more than 500 employees and 1,000 volunteers serve more than 38,000 individuals of all cultures and beliefs through 34 programs in more than 80 sites. Program areas include behavioral health, youth and family services, economic development, employment, financial education, housing, immigration legal services, in-home and long-term care, older adult services, refugee resettlement, refugee foster care, and more. Catholic Charities is working to reduce poverty with social change goals that target the alleviation, prevention, and reduction of poverty in our communities. Learn more at <http://catholiccharitiesscc.org>.

### **Media Contacts**

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