

# DREAMERS

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In the Rio Grande Valley, La Union del Pueblo Entero (LUPE) processed hundreds and hundreds of DACA applications on behalf of local residents and union members. LUPE's executive director Juanita Valdez-Cox said numbers collected by U.S. Reps. Henry Cuellar, Filemon Vela, and Vicente Gonzalez estimated 28,000 Dreamers live in the area.

Those numbers included parts of San Antonio and Corpus Christi, though the 28,000 DACA recipients living primarily in the Valley represented a significant chunk of the estimated 100,000 Dreamers across the state.

In Thursday's ruling, Chief Justice John Roberts wrote in the majority opinion that the ruling focused solely on whether the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) "complied with the procedural requirement that it provide a reasoned explanation for its action" and indicated the decision to rescind the program should be remanded to DHS for further review by administration officials.

Immigration advocates and those personally affected by the DACA program say that in light of the decision, it's more important than ever to register to vote, to encourage others to register to vote, and to show up on election day. Despite their legal status and having been raised and educated in the United States, DACA recipients are not citizens, have no path to citizenship, and cannot vote.

"Up to now, it feels like communities of color have felt such a heavy load on their shoulders. At every turn, this administration was trying to keep people of color, immigrants down as much as possible by not giving them the opportunities to fully become participants in this country — at least to work and contribute," said Valdez-Cox.

"The November elections are critical. Look at the treatment. Look at the separation of children from their families. Look at the incarceration rates. Look at the detention centers; look at what's happening right now at the deten-

tion centers with this pandemic. Keep all of that in mind. We have felt it. We have personally been hurt throughout these years in one way or another."

Harlingen-based software engineer Julio Maldonado received his DACA status when he was still a teenager. The program enabled him to chase opportunities and develop a successful career in a creative field. When COVID began, Maldonado said he gave up his lease in Seattle, moved back to Harlingen to stay with family, and began saving money in anticipation of his legal status being rescinded this month. He was surprised when the Supreme Court ruled in his favor on Thursday.

"It's surreal right now. It's not permanent. We should celebrate, but it's not certain," he said. Maldonado urged his peers to register to vote, to register friends, family members, and colleagues. "Biden has, at least recently, come out and said that he will protect Dreamers. I don't think he has explicitly said he will give us a path to citizenship. A path to citizenship is the only thing that will fully protect us," Maldonado said.

Many DACA recipients have taken on front line jobs. Javier Quiroz Castro works as a nurse in the COVID-19 unit at Houston Methodist West. On Thursday morning, he was exiting a patient's room when a colleague told him the news. Castro has a 1-year-old daughter and was overwhelmed with emotion, as he expected the Supreme Court to rule against him.

"I don't know how many more times I have to prove that I'm a good person for this country. I don't know what other kind of sacrifice I should be making for this country. I'm currently working this COVID-19 floor. We're getting huge spikes of patients right now," he said. "As soon as I saw it online, it was very emotional. I had to go hide. I had to literally remove myself from the unit. I called my wife. It really felt good to have the support of the Supreme Court."

Castro said of his daughter, "I would never want to be separated from her in any way, so this is why I have to keep fighting and pushing." Castro's family came from Mexico when he was 3 years

old. He went through college without DACA, meaning he wasn't eligible for financial assistance, couldn't take the state board exams, couldn't get his nursing license, and couldn't work. When he received his DACA in 2013, it opened up doors.

The nurse emphasizes the importance of sharing his experience where so many DACA recipients are afraid to speak, and with good reason. "Our biggest hurdle is ignorance and misinformation. I married into a family that is very conservative and when I had to let them know that I'm a DACA recipient, I had all of their support. I changed a lot of hearts," he said.

"We're not bad people at all. Yes, I'm here undocumented, but I didn't really ask to be here. I'm glad I'm here. If given the opportunity, I'm going to try to achieve as much as I can, and I can only hope that I'm given even more opportunities, that way I can continue to be an even better person. We've gotten so far with so little — just imagine if we can have citizenship."

In Chicago, Iara Aldape spoke of receiving DACA when she was 16. Aldape was born and raised in Edcouch and Mission and was able to attend college after she became a Dreamer. She said Thursday's decision was the largest victory in immigrant rights in over 30 years. "I still can't put it into words yet. It's so exciting. We're facing a lot of uncertainty through this pandemic, but DACA recipients — we've faced this uncertainty our whole lives. You literally don't know what's going to happen to you," she said.

"I'm safe from deportation right now, I can live my life, I have a job. But, one day it can all be taken away and I can be deported. We need our American allies. Hopefully our American counterparts can bring that to the polls in November and vote for people who are open to immigration and love immigration, because that's what this country was founded on. It's a small win, but it's not the end, and we're here to do our part and to do as much as we possibly can."

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PHOTOS BY MANUEL BALCE GENETA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Above:** Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer of N.Y., center, celebrates with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals supporters in front of the Supreme Court on Thursday in Washington. **Below:** Ivania Castillo from Prince William County, Va., holds a banner to show her support.

# DACA

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The 5-4 outcome, in which Chief Justice John Roberts and the four liberal justices were in the majority, seems certain to elevate the issue in Trump's campaign, given the anti-immigrant rhetoric of his first presidential run in 2016 and immigration restrictions his administration has imposed since then.

The justices said the administration did not take the proper steps to end DACA, rejecting arguments that the program is illegal and that courts have no role to play in reviewing the decision to end it. The program covers people who have been in the United States since they were children and are in the country illegally. In some cases, they have no memory of any home other than the U.S.

Trump didn't hold back in his assessment of the court's work, hitting hard at a political angle.

"These horrible & politically charged decisions coming out of the Supreme Court are shotgun blasts into the face of people that are proud to call themselves Republicans or Conservatives. We need more Justices or we will lose our 2nd Amendment & everything else. Vote Trump 2020!" he wrote on Twitter, apparently including the LGBT ruling as well.

In a second tweet, he wrote, "Do you get the impression that the Supreme Court doesn't like me?"

Later, he said the decision showed the need for additional conservative justices to join the two he has appointed, Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh, and pledged to release a new list from which he would choose a nominee if another opening occurs on his watch.



Both of his appointees dissented on Thursday, though Gorsuch wrote the LGBT rights ruling.

Democratic presidential contender Joe Biden pledged to send Congress proposed legislation on his first day in office to make DACA protections permanent.

Roberts, with whom Trump has sparred, wrote for the court that the administration did not pursue the end of the program properly.

"We do not decide whether DACA or its rescission are sound policies," Roberts wrote. "We address only whether the agency complied with the procedural requirement that it provide a reasoned explanation for its action. Here the agency failed to consider the conspicuous issues of whether to retain forbearance and what if anything to do about the hardship to DACA recipients."

The Department of Homeland Security can try again, he wrote. But any new order to end the program, and the legal challenge it would provoke, would likely take months, if not longer.

"No way that's going to happen before November," said Stephen Yale-Loehr, a professor of immigration law practice at Cornell University Law School.

The court's four conservative justices dissented. Justice Clarence Thomas, joined by Justices Gorsuch

and Samuel Alito, wrote that DACA was illegal from the moment it was created under the Obama administration in 2012. Thomas called the ruling "an effort to avoid a politically controversial but legally correct decision."

Alito wrote that federal judges had prevented DACA from being ended "during an entire Presidential term. Our constitutional system is not supposed to work that way."

Justice Kavanaugh wrote in a separate dissent that he was satisfied that the administration acted appropriately.

DACA recipients were elated by the ruling.

"We'll keep living our lives in the meantime," said Cesar Espinosa, who leads the Houston immigration advocacy group FIEL. "We're going to continue to work, continue to advocate."

Espinosa said he got little sleep overnight in anticipation of a possible decision. In the minutes after the decision was posted, he said his group was "flooded with calls with Dreamers, happy, with that hope that they're going to at least be in this country for a while longer."

From the Senate floor, the Democratic leader Chuck Schumer said of the DACA decision, "I cried tears of joy."

"Wow," he went on, choking up. "These kids, these families, I feel for them, and I think all of America does."

# SCHOOLS

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Thursday's 43 reported fatalities was the second-highest day in a month.

The actual number of people who have contracted the virus is likely higher because many people have not been tested and studies suggest that people can be infected and not feel sick.

Despite the soaring figures, Abbott has been aggressive about re-opening of the state's economy and suggested this week that he didn't intend to slow down.

The Texas State Teachers Association cautioned against being too quick to reopen schools and said that any moves must consider the safety of teachers and staff. The TSTA wants daily symptom testing and a mask available for

"everyone entering a school building."

"We can't be in too big a hurry to reopen schools. Despite what some political leaders would have us believe, we still are in the middle of a pandemic that is getting worse," said TSTA spokesman Clay Robison. "We are not confident the governor and TEA have adequately prepared for this. But they don't have to be in school buildings. Teachers and students do."

# VIRUS

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The outbreak has killed about 118,000 people in the U.S. and nearly a half-million worldwide, according to Johns Hopkins' count, though the real numbers are believed to be higher. Potential vaccines are in early stages of testing, and it is unlikely any will be ready before early next year.

Experts note that a rise in deaths could take awhile to show up in the U.S. statistics. Stay-at-home orders imposed in March, combined with the use of face masks and other social-distancing measures, have been bringing down the daily death toll since mid-April, and the U.S. as a whole is still seeing the positive effects, even though people are starting to work, shop and eat out again.

Doctors watching for an uptick in deaths will be on the alert for certain signals to emerge in a specific order, Shahpar said.

First, cellphone data will show people moving around more. Next, doctors will

report more flu-like illnesses, and the proportion of people testing positive for the virus will rise. Hospitalizations will then go up and, finally, so will deaths.

Several factors are believed to be pushing the curves for deaths and cases in opposite directions.

Rising case numbers can partially be explained by the wider availability of testing. Mild cases, previously undetected because of limits on who could be tested, are now showing up in the numbers.

As for the drop in deaths, "it is probably several things happening at once," said Dr. Shmuel Shoham, a professor of medicine at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. Lessons learned from the "awful early days" are now benefiting the severely sick and people in nursing homes, Shoham said.

It looks that way in Washington state's King County, where the first nursing home outbreak in the U.S. killed 45 people at the Life Care Center in suburban Seattle. County data shows deaths in similar facilities declining over the past two months. And no single facility in the county

has come close to the death toll at Life Care, which was struck unaware.

While it is unclear how much specific treatments may have contributed to the decline in deaths, doctors are trying antivirals such as remdesivir, plasma donated from people who have recovered from the virus and steroids such as dexamethasone, which grabbed attention this week with reports confirming it can save the lives of many of the sickest patients.

While all viruses mutate, scientists say the coronavirus so far is not changing in a way that has made it less deadly.

The decline in deaths this spring might well be tied in part to warmer weather as people spend more time outdoors where circulating air disperses the virus. But that does not bode well for the U.S. come this fall and winter.

Mokdad noted that deaths are on the rise in the Southern Hemisphere, where it's now winter.

"This virus is going to have a second wave. It's going to follow the pattern of pneumonia," he said. "What we're seeing in the Southern Hemisphere will be happening here."



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