

# LGBT DREAMers and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)

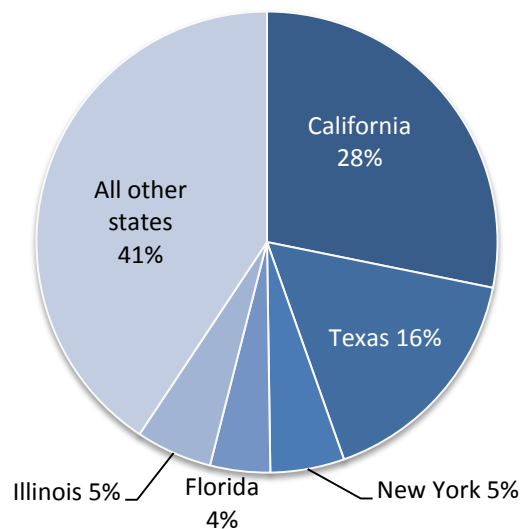
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## There are Over 75,000 LGBT DREAMers; 36,000 Have Participated in DACA

The Williams Institute estimates that there are over 75,000 LGBT DREAMers in the U.S. and over 36,000 have participated in Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), including 24,000 who renewed in the program. The vast majority of these LGBT DACA participants live in California, Texas, Illinois, New York, and Florida.

**Figure 1. First-time DACA Applications from LGBT Individuals Accepted by the Department of Homeland Security by Top 5 and All Other States as of March 2016**



In June 2012, President Obama’s administration announced the creation of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program which allowed undocumented immigrants who entered the United States before the age of 16, and met other requirements<sup>1</sup>, temporary work authorization and protection from deportation for a renewable two-year period. This cohort of youth and young adults is often referred to as DREAMers, in reference to the proposed Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act. The Migration Policy Institute estimates that there are approximately 1,705,000 DREAMers who are eligible to participate in DACA, or would be eligible if they satisfied the program’s educational requirements (e.g., enrollment in a GED program).<sup>2</sup> The Williams Institute estimates that approximately 75,000 of these DREAMers are LGBT.<sup>3</sup>

DACA provides work authorization for a two year period; thus, reducing employment barriers for those who participate in the program. DACA participants report, on average, a 45% increase in hourly wages, from under \$12 per hour pre- DACA enrollment to over \$17 per hour afterwards.<sup>4</sup> Many also report getting a job with improved working conditions after enrolling in DACA. Enrollment in DACA can expand educational opportunities for some participants. Some states allow DACA participants, but not other undocumented individuals, to enroll in colleges and universities in the state. Some states also allow DACA participants to qualify for in-state tuition and make available state-based financial aid. The majority (92%) of DACA participants report pursuing educational opportunities that they would not have been able to access prior to participation in DACA.<sup>5</sup>

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) reports that, between the inception of the DACA program and March 2016, approximately 820,000 DREAMERS submitted first-time DACA applications and were accepted. Among all DACA participants the Williams Institute estimates that there are over 36,000 LGBT youth and young adults, as well as almost 24,000 who renewed in the program. The majority of DACA participants live in California, Texas, Illinois, New York, and Florida.<sup>6</sup>

**Table 1. Estimates of the Number of LGBT DREAMers and DACA Participants as of March 2016**

	Number of Individuals Eligible for DACA (Currently or After Satisfying Education Criteria)	Number of LGBT Individuals Eligible for DACA (Currently or After Satisfying Education Criteria)	First-time DACA Applications Accepted by DHS	First-time DACA Applications from LGBT Individuals Accepted by DHS	To-date DACA Renewals Accepted by DHS	To-date DACA Renewals from LGBT Individuals Accepted by DHS
U.S. Total	1,705,000	75,000	820,000	36,000	539,000	24,000
California	499,000	22,000	231,000	10,000	156,000	7,000
Texas	234,000	10,000	134,000	6,000	86,000	4,000
New York	97,000	4,000	43,000	2,000	27,000	1,000
Florida	92,000	4,000	35,000	2,000	21,000	1,000
Illinois	86,000	4,000	44,000	2,000	29,000	1,000

## About the Williams Institute

The Williams Institute on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Law and Public Policy at UCLA School of Law advances law and public policy through rigorous, independent research and scholarship, and disseminates its work through a variety of education programs and media to judges, legislators, lawyers, other policymakers and the public. These studies can be accessed at the Williams Institute website.

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## Endnotes

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1. Additional requirements include having entered the US prior to June 15, 2007 and resided in the US consecutively since that time, at least 15 years of age at application, and thus eligible for a criminal background check, under the age of 31 on June 15, 2012, and in-school or have completed high school or a GED or have been honorably discharged from the US Armed Services or Coast Guard. For full list see <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/consideration-deferred-action-childhood-arrivals-daca>
2. Hipsman, F, Gomez-Aguiñaga, B, Capps, R. (2016). *DACA at Four: Participation in the Deferred Action Program and Impacts on Recipients*. Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute.
3. We determined this estimate by multiplying the proportion of young adults, 18 to 29, who identify as LGBT and are undocumented (4.4%), as reported in Gates, GJ. (2013). *LGBT Adult Immigrants in the United States*. Los Angeles, CA: Williams Institute, to the (rounded) number of individuals eligible for DACA, as estimated by the Migration Policy Institute in Hipsman et al (2016). We believe that 4.4% is a conservative estimate of the percentage of LGBT individuals among 15 to 34 year olds eligible for or participating in DACA (as of March 2016) because larger proportions of high school age youth identify as LGB than young adults. The national average for the percentage of high school students who identify as LGB is 8.0% (Kann, L, Olsen, EO, McManus, T, et al. *Sexual Identity, Sex of Sexual Contacts, and Health-Related Behaviors Among Students in Grades 9-12—United States and Selected Sites, 2015*. MMWR Surveillance Summary 2016; 65(No. SS-9):1-202). In addition, 4.3% of 18 to 34 year old non-citizen participants in the 2015 California Health Interview Survey self-identified as LGB as per a January 23, 2017 on-line retrieval from Ask CHIS (<http://ask.chis.ucla.edu>), again, suggesting that 4.4% LGBT is a reasonable, albeit conservative, estimate of the LGBT percentage.
4. Wong, TK, Richter, KK, Rodriguez, I, Wolgin, PE. (2015). *Results from a Nationwide Survey of DACA Recipients Illustrate the Program's Impact*. Washington, DC: Center for American Progress.
5. Wong et al. (2015)
6. We determined this estimate by multiplying the proportion of young adults, 18 to 29, who identify as LGBT and are undocumented (4.4%), as reported in Gates (2013), by the actual number of DACA applicants accepted by DHS as reported in USCIS. Number of I-821D, Consideration of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals by Fiscal Year, Quarter, Intake, Biometrics and Case Status: 2012-2016 (March 31).