

10 Dreamers' Stories You Should Know

VOXXI

Gaby Pacheco

Gaby, born in Ecuador, is one of the best known Dreamers. She and three others walked 1,500 miles from Miami to Washington, D.C., in 2010 to raise awareness of the plight of undocumented immigrants. As political director for United We Dream, she helped persuade President Obama to announce the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program. She now heads the Bridge Project, a pro-immigration reform advocacy group.

Felipe Sousa-Rodriguez

Felipe, born in Brazil, joined Gaby to participate in the 1,500-mile walk dubbed the "Trail of Dreams." After that, he went on to become one of the top voices of undocumented LGBTQ people. Earlier this year, he pushed to ensure LGBTQ families were not left out of the Senate immigration reform bill. As co-director of the gay-rights group GetEQUAL, he is currently advocating for the rights of the LGBTQ community.

Julieta Garibay

Julieta, born in Mexico, was nicknamed "DREAM Elder" in 2010 when she turned 30 years old and no longer met the age requirements of that year's DREAM Act. She also doesn't qualify for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals because of the program's age cap. Despite all this, she hasn't given up. As a leader with United We Dream, she is advocating for an immigration reform bill that would allow her to gain citizenship.

Erika Andiola

Erika, born in Mexico, is a national leader in the immigrant rights movement and a well-known advocate of the DREAM Act and immigration reform. She has done everything from participating in civil disobedience actions to confronting politicians on their tough stance on immigration. Last year, she mobilized to stop her mother's deportation. She is currently the outreach director for Rep. Kyrsten Sinema (D-Ariz.).

Joaquin Luna Jr.

Joaquin, born in Mexico, took his own life the night after Thanksgiving in 2011 because he feared his undocumented status would forbid him from realizing his dream of going to college and becoming a civil engineer. He was 18 years old and months away from his high school graduation. His story has become a symbol of the psychological distress and depression some Dreamers feel because of their undocumented status.

Cesar Vargas

Vargas, born in Mexico, holds a law degree and wants to become a military lawyer. Aside from advocating for legislation to allow Dreamers to serve in the military, he has been advocating for immigration reform through a political group he launched last year called Dream Action Coalition. The group is known for challenging lawmakers on their stance on immigration and highlighting the political power of Latino voters.

Mohammad Abdollahi

Mohammad, born in Iran, was one of the first Dreamers to participate in a civil disobedience action. In 2010, he and three others did sit-in at Sen. John McCain's office in support of the DREAM Act. Since then, he has led similar civil disobedience actions, the most recent one being the border crossings of the Dream 30 and Dream 9. He is co-founder of both DreamActivist.org and the National Immigrant Youth Alliance.

Perna Lal-Schubiner

Perna, born in Fiji, describes herself as undocumented, unafraid and unapologetic. She isn't afraid to speak her mind about President Obama's record on immigration, which she once called "depressing and dismal." Besides working to stop deportations, she also advocates for the rights of LGBTQ immigrants. She is co-founder of DreamActivist.Org and currently serves as a board member for Immigration Equality.

Julio Salgado

Julio, born in Mexico, calls himself an "artist." He began using art to deal with being gay and undocumented, or "undocu-queer." It wasn't long before Dreamers from across the country began using his artwork in campaigns and rallies to advocate for the DREAM Act. Now, through

Dreamers Adrift, a media project he co-founded, he encourages Dreamers and ‘undocu-queers’ to tell their stories using various art forms.

Ju Hong

Ju, born in South Korea, was one of the first Asian and Pacific Islander Dreamers to publicly proclaim he is undocumented. He did so in a big way by participating in an act of civil disobedience in 2010, hoping it would empower other Dreamers to also come out about their status. He is currently involved with the National UnDACAmented Research Project, a study that seeks to understand the effects of the DACA program.