

September 8th, 2017

Dear Members of the Lewis & Clark Community:

I speak to you at the end of a smoky first week of classes for the College of Arts and Sciences. A difficult week for many in each of our three schools and elsewhere. Our hearts go out to those who have been impacted in Texas from Harvey; to those already impacted by and to those preparing for Irma in Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, and beyond; and to families impacted around Oregon and the Pacific Northwest in this very unusual fire season.

However, I was motivated to write to send a message of love to another group of Americans, those who have been identified as “Dreamers” and are directly impacted by the decision to rescind the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, program.

Earlier this week it was announced that the DACA program would be phased out over the next 6 months. The DACA program was created in response to the failure by Congress to pass the Dream Act and address the fate of these long-time, productive residents of our country. Congress now has 6 months to work on the issue of how we, as a country with significant numbers of immigrants, address the plight of these roughly 800,000 residents, young people who know no other home than the United States.

Please join me in wishing Congress the heart to welcome these unintentional immigrants, and the strength and wisdom to chart for them a path to citizenship. The administration’s action to rescind DACA has undoubtedly made the Dreamer community feel afraid, confused, and unwelcome. My message is that every member of the Lewis & Clark Community is welcome here, and we will do everything within our power to make Lewis & Clark a safe place for all.

More specifically, the [resources portion of the Diversity and Inclusion webpage](#) is in the process of being updated with resources for Dreamers. And [Dean of Diversity and Inclusion Janet Steverson](#) can be contacted by any member of our community who needs assistance with regard to DACA. She and I are committed to helping.

At this moment, as the school year unfolds before us, Lewis & Clark joins with hundreds of other colleges and universities in the country in reaffirming our commitment to our students and our values of inclusion and support for the entire community. I am thankful for our ASLC Cabinet for sending out a message of support this morning. We are proud that our students come here from nearly every state in the union and from dozens of countries. We are all made stronger through the diversity of our origins and backgrounds, and we welcome each and every one of you as one of us, as part of Lewis & Clark.

Sincerely,

David Ellis
Interim President