DACA facts, status of Regis students discussed

By Matt K. Johnson
YourHub Contributor

Earlier this month in the St. John Francis Regis Chapel, a Regis University graduate asked important questions about his future.

“I really don’t know what I’m going to do if I have to stop working,” he said. “Am I going to lose my house? Am I going to be able to make my payments? What’ll happen in my life?”

His uncertainty was prompted by his status as the son of undocumented immigrants to the United States. While national laws regarding immigration and documentation are under Supreme Court review, the Regis College Center for Service Learning hosted a forum Nov. 19 to discuss the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program.

DACA was implemented in 2012 to protect children of undocumented immigrants from deportation and provide them with a work permit. Should DACA be declared illegal by the Supreme Court, many people — including some Regis students and alumni — may face new questions about their path to citizenship, employment status, housing and more.

ACLU Colorado public policy director Denise Maes updated students gathered in the chapel about DACA. Students and graduates also shared their stories — some through surrogates.

“I greatly wish that I could be here standing in front of you to tell this story, but I don’t have that luxury,” one of the anonymous students wrote.

Maes, who oversees legislative work that impacts civil liberties at the state and local level, talked about DACA’s history, federal policy surrounding it and its outcomes.

She also shared information from the ACLU’s research into the Aurora Immigration and Customs Enforcement Processing Center — where many undocumented immigrants are detained.

In the past two years, the center’s population grew from 500-plus people to more than 1,200, Maes said. The ACLU has proposed regular audits of the center, which is run by private contractor GEO Group, to assess its ability to take care of those it detains.

“Because [the center] is private, it is able to operate under a bit of a shroud of secrecy,” Maes said. “What we want to do is open it up.”

Maes said the ACLU is championing a legal defense fund that would be used on behalf of those detained at the Aurora center.

The Center for Service Learning provided resources for those seeking to support undocumented students and shared information about organizations such as Casa de Paz, an Aurora-based nonprofit that offers housing, meals and other support to families that have been separated by immigrant detention.

“The future of DACA and the future of our Dreamers hasn’t yet been written,” Maes said. “We can be that author.”

Matt K. Johnson is a writer and editor at Regis University.

Local performer, DSF alumna, to speak at TEDx

By Caroline Neal
YourHub Contributor

Jelie, no stranger to a performance stage. With a knack for the art of rap and spoken word, Jelie is putting her college education to work by running a successful business while growing her career as an artist.

Jelie will share how her college journey equipped her with the tools to forge her own path — both on and off the stage — at TEDxCherryCreek Women 2019 on Dec. 10. With a theme of “Bold and Brilliant,” this year’s TEDxCherryCreek Women event will feature Jelie alongside 16 other presenters and performers.

A short Q&A with Jelie:

When did you realize you wanted to pursue a career as a rap artist?

At age 4, I knew where I wanted my life to take me. I grew up watching my dad make beats and rap with his friends and started writing my own raps at age 8. I could easily memorize words and arrange rhymes — English was my best subject. I used to write my own Junie B. Jones stories when I was allowed to free write in first grade.

How did your high school and college education help you get to where you are today?

I took advanced placement music theory in high school. Like most AP classes, the course structure was entirely focused on the AP test and left me very little room to explore my art. This is when I first became aware that breaking the rules could help me find my own bold brilliance. But I had to learn the rules and continue my education first.

I knew I wanted to continue my education through college. Although I’m a first generation college student, my parents had always expected me to make the most of my education. DSF helped me get there.

In my performance ensemble class at the University of Colorado Denver, I watched groups performing vocal and instrumental pieces. When it was my turn to perform, it was really difficult to get constructive feedback from my peers and professors because no one else was familiar with my genre. I then realized that being solo in my class wasn’t about being confined — it was an opportunity for me to come into my own.

What makes your story your own?

Jelie
The Goddard Cares Fall Fest 5K and Kids Fun Run on Nov. 3 raised more than $20,000 for DIPG, or diffuse intrinsic pontine glioma, research. More than 720 students, teachers, family members and friends gathered at Central Park in honor of Luke Morin, a former student who died last year at age 5, just 17 days after being diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor known as DIPG. The money raised will go to the DIPG research team at Children’s Hospital of Colorado. Provided by Konnect Agency

By Linda Sommers, Attorney at Law

Estate Planning That Expresses Who You Are
5 Topics to Discuss with Your Family

You intend to pass along your wealth but what about your wisdom? Ensuring you accomplish both calls for a family meeting to talk about your money, legacy, and core principles. The holidays provide opportunities to have these discussions with your loved ones — even if a child or grandchild has to attend via video chat. Here are just a few of the topics you’ll want to visit during your family meeting:

1. Your rich life story: You may think it’s all been said before, but this is the perfect time to conduct recording sessions about your own personal life narrative. Allow your family members to ask about particularly fond memories of yours, knowing that you’re creating a time capsule of sorts that will contain the uniqueness of your personality and the experiences that shaped you into the person you are today. And perhaps most importantly, share the valuable lessons you’ve learned from your experiences.

2. How you’d like to be honored: Estate planning involves considering decisions when it comes to situations that may arise should you become mentally incapacitated. It’s important to share why you’re opting for the choices you feel most aligned with. This will ease those processes for your loved ones, should you become incapacitated.

3. Your family tree: Take this time to review your family tree and answer questions about your heritage. Getting a who’s who on paper and in a digital format is an excellent gift to your family, as they’ll be able to reference it and build upon it throughout the years.

4. Significant heirlooms: Every family has heirlooms, and every piece tells a story. Keeping the story of the object alive is often more important than transferring its monetary value to the next generation.

5. Your core values: Your estate plan can be customized to include language that carries your values, while still leaving room for your beneficiaries to grow and explore on their own terms. Your estate plan is about more than just your financial worth. Your estate plan can be customized to include language that carries your values, while still leaving room for your beneficiaries to grow and explore on their own terms. Your estate plan is about more than just your financial worth.

Call us at 303.984.9900 to schedule a FREE initial consultation to review your estate plan and to help ensure everyone is working on the same team. Our first available appointments are in January 2020, as Linda is recovering from knee surgery; however, now is a great opportunity to begin your New Years Resolution—of completing and/or updating your estate plan.

JELIE

By 16, I was performing in venues around Denver, and at age 19, I had launched my own production company, Kickback Couture. What makes my story my own is that I made my education work for me, as there was no audition track for rap. I was not fluent with any instruments nor was I educated about the status quo, too.

As a rising artist, my education laid the foundation for me to create a successful business. I design and produce online tutorials and give private lessons in music production and sound design.

While my story is my own, I am just one of many talented young people going against the grain today. I present the story of the lost, and the vision of raw truth. I want to show other young people with unconventional approaches to work that their dreams are valid. I want to show them that with the right resources, they can challenge the status quo, too.

Hear more from Jelie at TEDxCherryCreekWomen. Tickets are on sale at tedxcherrycreek.com.

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