



Dear Cornell Community,

A few weeks ago, I met with a group of faculty and students who presented me with a petition signed by more than 2,200 Cornellians, expressing collective concern over potential shifts in federal policy in the wake of the November election and the impacts those shifts could have on segments of the Cornell community, particularly our Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) students. Since that time, several of our shared governance assemblies have passed resolutions endorsing the petition's sentiments.

I appreciate the opportunity to hear from many Ithaca campus stakeholders on this important issue. Last month, I added my name to a [joint statement](#) signed by more than 500 university presidents and chancellors expressing strong support for the DACA program.

In my prior, [November 22 communication to you](#), I described the University's financial commitment to our undergraduate Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) students. I also underscored the University's commitment to protecting the privacy of individual student information and to providing counseling and other services. In response to the petition, as well as to the related resolutions, I will elaborate on these commitments:

Financial Support for DACA Students: As I communicated last month, all currently enrolled undergraduate DACA students will continue to be eligible for need-based financial aid meeting full demonstrated need. New applicants (including transfers) with DACA status will be considered in the domestic need-blind admissions pool, and admitted students will be eligible for need-based aid meeting full demonstrated need for their entire undergraduate enrollment at Cornell.

We recognize that currently enrolled Cornell graduate students who hold DACA status and receive funding through the University may have concerns about their own situations should DACA, which includes federal work authorization, be discontinued. As Barbara Knuth, senior vice provost and dean of the Graduate School, announced earlier this week, all currently enrolled graduate DACA students will continue to receive funding for the complete length of time offered in their admissions letters (assuming satisfactory academic progress). Should DACA be discontinued and graduate students lose their federal work authorization, fellowship funding (which does not require federal work authorization) will be provided to these students instead of an assistantship. This will honor the funding commitment each received at time of admission to Cornell.

Privacy Principles: Cornell will vigilantly protect the privacy of student information and records from any unauthorized or unlawful intrusion. The long-standing practice of the Cornell University Police Department (CUPD) has been not to seek immigration status

information in the course of its law enforcement activities, unless related to criminal violations or threats of violent behavior. While Cornell representatives, including CUPD, will comply with lawfully issued subpoenas and warrants, it is neither the University's practice nor expectation to function as an agent of the federal government regarding enforcement of federal immigration laws.

Legal Assistance: The Cornell Law School is setting up a thoughtfully structured program to provide legal assistance to undocumented Cornell students who may wish to consult with a lawyer about the implications of the incoming federal administration's policies for their immigration status. These legal advisory services will be free of charge. A dedicated team of law school faculty will also offer legal assistance in the form of *representation* for DACA students in potential deportation proceedings, should the need arise.

Understandably, there would be costs associated with this special legal representation service for DACA students. The group who presented the petition to me have agreed to solicit contributions from colleagues who have signed the petition, among other sources, to support a legal representation fund.

As I indicated in November, our commitment to Cornell's founding principles is unwavering, as is our determination to support all students in their quest to pursue their education in an environment where all individuals are respected and their voices heard.

I wish each of you a wonderful holiday season.

Yours Sincerely,

Hunter R. Rawlings III
Interim President